

JeCCDO

NEWS LETTER October 2008

"I saved my son's life"

JeCCDO encourages community members to become active participants in informing and teaching each other about common health problems in their locality. For this purpose peer educators are recruited among guardians of orphan and vulnerable children in all areas where the organization works. In 2007/08, 20 peer educators (95%females), were selected by JeCCDO's target community in Kebele 07. They were trained for 3 days on HIV AIDS prevention and control. These active peer educators have begun saving the lives of their own families and community by creating increased awareness on transmission prevention of HIV AIDS.



Peer educators in Debre Zeit city creating awareness among their community on HIV AIDS prevention and control

One of the trained peer educators, Alem Kifle tells of her personal experience

“You see, I live with my husband and my 15 years old son. My husband and I are HIV positive but my son is HIV negative. One day my husband I started to quarrel, my son tried to step in to cool the argument unfortunately my angry husband bit my son. When I realized what had happened I rushed my son to hospital. This is because I had information about the availability of a prevention drug for post exposure to virus. My son started to take the drug for 28 days as prescribed by the doctor. We then went back for a test and found out that my son is not HIV positive. I was able to save my son's life. This is because through a training JeCCDO's has organized on HIV and AIDS, I have come to know about a drug currently available to stop transmission of HIV within 72 hours after exposure to the virus.”

By: Sr. Lensa Amanuel Health Officer Community Development Programme Office - Debre Zeit City



JeCCDO

My Successful Life: Working as a Voluntary Education Facilitator



Nitsuh is an Education Program Facilitator in Sefeneselam kebele. Her parents died when she was quiet young. She lived with aunt until she reached grade eight. But life became difficult for her when her aunt whose only source of income was selling Tella, a local home made beer, was no longer able to support her.

JeCCDO found about Nitsuh from her community. The organisation reached out to support her until she completed grade 12 (age 16). After that, JeCCDO gave her the opportunity to attend First Cycle Teachers' Training Education for one year so that she can serve as tutor in Education Program the organization run in her own kebele (neighbourhood). Tutors serve their community as volunteers and receive pocket money from JeCCDO.

Nitsuh explains what JeCCDO has done for her. She said:

“My life was a problem before JeCCDO started helping me. Although the Orthodox Tewahido Church was supporting me with clothing and educational materials for some years, it stopped the support when I was in grade four. My poor aunt tried to help me but stopped when she was no longer able to afford. The future seemed dark for me at that time. But two years, JeCCDO reached and supported me to start my education again in the evening program. After I completed 12th grade JeCCDO gave me the opportunity to get Teacher's Training Education Program for first cycle which led me to become tutor. The empowerment program of JeCCDO has a significant role in helping me and my family to bring about change in our daily life.

She concluded by saying: “JeCCDO is my life I have nothing to say more than this!”

By: Mulugeta Mekonnen Education Officer Community Development Programme Office, Bahir Dar



JeCCDO

Life Changing Support

Ten year old Dubale Kassahun lost his father (a soldier) at the age of six. He now lives with his mother, Abaynesh Mengistie in a small rented room in Kebele (neighbourhood) 02 of Debre Berhan Town.

Dubale and his mother used to live on a monthly income of 30 Birr (about £1.50) earned through making Injera (a traditional bread - the staple of any meal in Ethiopia) and laundry services to her better off neighbours. The income was insufficient to sustain the household and because of this Dubale had to dropout of school at grade 3 (age 9) in 2006.

Dubale describes his feelings as follows

“ I was very sad and depressed when I discontinued my education; my mother was too poor to send me to school.”

In 2007 Dubale was fortunate enough to qualify for JeCCDO’s Orphan and Vulnerable Children Care and Support Programme. Ever since then he receives a monthly financial subsidy of 100 Birr (about £5.50) educational materials, clothing and medical care. This has enabled him to go back to his former school. He really appreciates the changes this has brought to his life

“ I am now very happy, for JeCCDO has helped me to continue my education. I am also working and studying very hard. When I grow up I wish to become a medical doctor and support my mother.”



JeCCDO

Empowerment for schoolgirls

Addis Bekalu was born in Denkaka town found in Ester Showa. Her parents divorced when she was ten years old. Like many other children in her area, she had started school at a later age. At the time of her parents divorce she was in grade one. Since her parents were no longer able to support her financially, she began living with her grand mother. Addis's grand mother, not being educated about the problems of early marriage, made Addis marry according to the local tradition in the area.

Addis was very eager to continue her education. Unfortunately, her husband was against the idea. Finally, she left her home and started working as a house cleaner in her area. This enabled her to earn income that enabled her to rejoined school. Today Addis is in tenth grader at Adea Model High School.

She began to benefit from JeCCDO's activities focusing on empowerment of adolescent girl's in her school through attending a tutorial program that is conducted through out the week days. In the tutorials students are encouraged to talk about the issues of reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and women rights. This is very important in equipping the students with important information about issues affecting their lives.



Addis studying in the school compound

Addis confidently says

“As a student of this school I benefited from these valuable activities. Many students share my experience about my life during the co curricular activities such as debates and discussions. They are much aware how to cope with challenges and become successful. Now I am living my dream.”

By: Zebiba Hassen Mohammed Education Officer Community Development Programme Office **Debre Zeit City**



JeCCDO

Vocational Skills Training For the Youth

JeCCDO trains older orphans in various vocational skills. The organisation also provides them with startup capital to enable them to start their own small business. This helps them to become more self-reliant and to contribute to the local economy of their area. In Debre Zeit city JeCCDO provided vocational training to 9 unemployed (2 females & 7 males). These young people were trained in hairdressing and general mechanics according to their area of interest. The organisation designed the training to equip the youth with skills that would help them engage in income generating activities (IGAs).

Monthly follow up and support was given to the trainees. Reports of the follow up show that the training has enabled the young people to acquire skills. They are now on their way to becoming confident entrepreneurs.

Among the youth are Meseret Tulu and Tsion Tsige who were trained in hairdressing they say

“.....we have sufficient knowledge in hairdressing and we are now performing well. After completion of our training, we will use the start up capital to start our own business.”



Mesert and Tsion learning new skills

By: Getachew Anberber, Social Development Program Coordinator,
Community Development Programme Office, Debre Zeit City



JeCCDO

Self Help Group (SGH) Celebration Day

The “Gebriel Siman” Self Help Group (SHG) celebrated its first anniversary of establishment on September 3, 2008 in the presence of government officials, non-governmental organizations and some representatives of the other group of SHGs at Kebele 07 Assembly Hall in Debre Zeit city. The SHG members prepared their own local bread, which is called “Difo Dabo”, coffee and soft drinks for the invited guests.

Wayzero Serawork Bekele, representative of the SHG, presented the annual report to the audience. Participants discussed various social issues of concern in their community. One of the members of the SHG said “This celebration is important. It creates a good working environment and relations with the concerned government bodies. They then are more supportive and will hopefully give us technical support.”

JeCCDO uses SHGs to organize disadvantaged women in order to empower them. SHG meetings are used to discuss social issues like family planning, HIV and AIDS, problems of orphan children in the locality. These meetings aim to build the confidence of the members. The SHG also addresses economic problems of its members by encouraging savings and borrowing to start up small businesses.



One of the representative of Gebriel Siman reporting on activities

W/ro Alemnesh Awilachew is around 45 and is one of the members of the Gebriel Siman SHG. She has adopted an orphan child. She lives with her husband and is engaged in selling local bread (‘Abasha’). W/ro Alemnesh is the first member of the SHG to receive the first round loan of Birr 300.00 (about £17). After she repaid the first loan, she took another loan of Birr 500.00 Birr (£27). W/ro Alemnesh is a positive thinker and a good role model. She is responsible for the implementation and participation of group income generating activities. She has developed a great concern for her group and thinks of each member's welfare as well as her own.”

By: Belete Debre Nesser, Livelihood Promotion Program Office **Debre Zeit City**



JeCCDO

Case story on Guardian's Economic Empowerment

An important part of JeCCDO's sustainable strategy is to support orphan and vulnerable children through guardian's economic support. In Bahir Dar, one of the supported children is Yihunabren Wondmeneh who is 17 years old. He lives in one of JeCCDO's intervention areas of the town, Sefen Selam, with his elder brother named Getachew. They lost their parents six years ago. Yihunabren remembers by saying,

"We were disappointed with the way our lives were going. So my brother and I decided to drop out of school. We even began to live on the street as there was no one to support us. But thanks to JeCCDO, we began to receive financial support and counseling. We were also reunited with our family."

Three years after JeCCDO began its support, Yihunabren's older brother Getachew was able to enroll in the orphan guardian economic support program. Through the program Getachew received 2000 (£110) birr initial start up capital from JeCCDO. With the money the brothers purchased a 21 inch TV. They also took a loan from an electronics shop to buy a video tape player. They then rented a house to show different films and soccer games for youngsters. This became an effective business since most of the youth in their community do not have TV in their houses.

Currently the brothers are able to save birr 30 (£1.50) per day from their business. They have also paid back their loan. In addition they managed to maintain and furnish their house. Furthermore, the brothers bought a refrigerator to sell soft drinks and started a mini shop. Today their lives are completely improved. Yihunabren is also continuing his education.

The brothers enthusiastically run their business. In their community, they are models of successful businesspersons to many youths and their friends. Currently, the brothers have requested for an additional loan from the Community Development Association to scale up the business. They reflect their intentions as follows:

"We work hard in the business, we feel confident we can change not only our life but also others. JeCCDO is above all, and it is our parents."

By: Yihenew Melku Social Development Officer and Coordinator
Community Development Programme Office - **Bahir Dar**



Eager to learn Adult Education

Adult education is one of the development activities facilitated by JeCCDO in Dire Dawa city. Sheriff Mohamed is one of the participants of the functional adult education programme. Sheriff is 33 years old and lives in Gende Ada village. He is a father of two and a guard at a school in the village.

After he attended the adult education for one year, Sheriff was capable of reading and writing. In addition he can now do basic mathematics and has acquired better skills in understanding his life and the possibilities for him to progress.

Sheriff says

“In the past I felt as if I was living in dark. Now I feel I am coming in to the light”.

After starting the class Sheriff made sure his children are educated. Despite his financial difficulties he made it possible for his son Kedir and his eleven-year-old cousin to attend school. This indicates the attitudinal change Sheriff developed because of his exposure to adult education. His change in behaviour will also certainly motivate other to around to join and follow the programme in the future.

Before the programme began Sheriff spent his spare time at night chewing chat (a mild local narcotic). Now he studies. The Community Development Programme office of JeCCDO in Dire Dawa city also helps Sheriff’s family by giving financial and material assistance to the children, making it possible for them to go to school.

Saide Ali, a teacher who facilitates the evening class states the advantage of the program as follows:

"I have taught this program for more than a year now. The surrounding community has a great desire to attend lessons. Even though most of the participant lead their lives as daily laborers facing the challenges of the current life situation. They attend the program by sacrificing their spare time. I am very glad since I am teaching my neighbors, uncles and aunts. I follow their change closely."

**By: Guadie Baye Education Officer
Community Development Programme Office
Dire Dawa**



JeCCDO

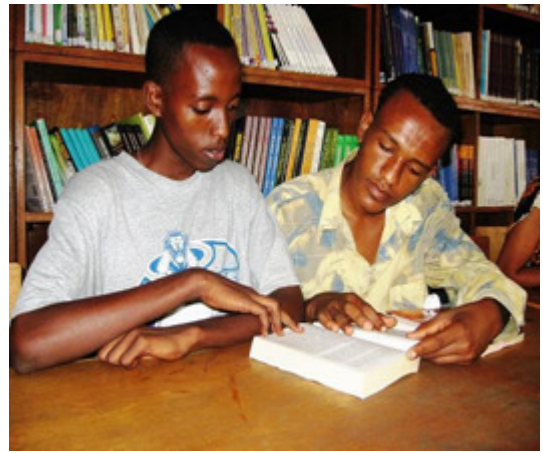
Moving on to Higher Education

Jafar and Gion are beneficiaries of JeCCDO under its direct support package in Addis Alem, Dire Dawa City. Both of them lost their mothers at an early age and live with their fathers who are old and economically very weak. They have been receiving support from JeCCDO for the last four years including school materials and uniform.

Since elementary school both of them have an outstanding record in their school performance. They both won a scholarship to join one of the best private high schools (Besrate Gabriele School) in Dire Dawa. Every year Besrate Gabriele school gives a scholarship to a limited number of marginalised school children who have the best performances.

Jafar and Gion won scholarships when they graduated to grade eight with the best marks in their School.

Jafar and Gion are both regular users of the library JeCCDO established in Addis Alem. Besides using the library resources they also serve voluntarily in the library in the evenings. Both boys have gained a reputation for their hard work in their studies. Their determination is paying off, they have scored very good results enabling them to join University in the forthcoming 2008/09 academic year. Both boys acknowledged JeCCDO's support and consider it unthinkable that they would have achieved the successes they have without the organisation's support.



Jafar (left) and Gion reading in the library

Asked what they want to be in the future, Jafar says he wants to be a medical doctor while Gion would like to be an Engineer. Both of them want to support orphan and vulnerable children in their area in what ever way they can. They both know what it is like to struggle in this way.



By: Sisay Getachew Social Development Officer and Coordinator and Daniel Hailu Librarian
Community Development Programme Office **Dire Dawa**



Journey to Self-Reliance

Serkut Ayitenfisu, 38 years old, is a woman who lives in Goro Butiji in Dire Dawa town. She is a widow heading a family with four children. The whole burden of winning the daily bread of the family falls on the shoulder of Serkut as her husband died in 2007. Serkut used to work as maid in the neighboring kebele for a very low payment. It was very difficult to cover the daily needs of the family let alone the school materials for the kids. She tried to supplement her income by selling firewood and charcoal. Her two elderly children usually helped out with this activity. Even so, it was very difficult and challenging for Serkut to cover regular daily food requirements for her family.

In the year 2007, Serkut was selected by the village community committees as one of the priority households needing direct care and support package from JeCCDO. She states:

“This support helped me to cover some of the basic needs that I could not before. Among other things it helped two of my kids to regularly attend school.”

In the same year, Serkut also became a member of Self Help Group (SHG) called ‘Yesetoch Tamsalet’ (literally meaning “women role models”). Through the SHG she, along with others members of her group, attended a training given by JeCCDO on the importance and advantages of SHGs.

After the training the group started saving money and five months later, the SHG started providing loans for the members. Serkut is one of the first members to take the loan amounting to 200 birr (£10). Serkut added 100 birr (£5) from her own savings and started producing and selling hollow bricks made of mud used widely in local construction.



Serkut unloading soil for hollow production

With the cost of living going up, people with low income are no longer able to afford the rising price of construction materials. In Dire Dawa city, hollow blocks made of cement cost 4 birr (20 pence) per block while the cost of blocks made of mud is 1.25 birr per block. As a result, the demand for mud blocks is increasing.

Serkut is now producing around 30 hollow blocks per day and continues to sell firewood and charcoal. She totally earns about 20 birr (£1.10) a day.

Asked what she plans for the future and the challenges ahead Serkut stated;

“In the future, I have a plan to expand this activity and even to start producing hollow blocks made of cement after I fulfill all the



Serkut Producing blocks with her eldest child

JeCCDO

necessary working materials. The most challenging thing in doing blocks is shortage of working materials like a water tank, mesh and a storage place for blocks.”

Finally, Serkut thanks JeCCDO and is quoted as saying:

“Thanks to God and JeCCDO, things are going from bad to fair. When the organisation trained me how to save and invest, I developed self confidence and learnt that the poor can prosper if they get empowered with appropriate skills and the means with which to work”

**By: Chala Legesse, Livelihood Officer
Community Development Programme Office
Dire Dawa**

Emebet’s Story

Emebet is now a 17 years old, her father died at the battle front during the Ethiopian Eritrean War when she was ten years old. Soon after this her mother passed away leaving her alone. No one could look after her.

But one of her neighbours discussed her problem Emebet with a Community Development Association (CDA) member. The CDA is made up of volunteers who organize themselves to oversee the implementation of projects by JeCCDO. The CDA member informed Emebet about JeCCDO. He also made sure that his CDA recommend Emebet to JeCCDO to become selected as a beneficiary. This is because of the sad condition Emebet was in.

JeCCDO supported Emebet for four years with financial and material assistance. The organisation also trained her in audio-visual training according to the interest she showed. Upon completion she was able to get full time work in a photography studio. Emebet now earns a monthly salary 600 Ethiopian birr (£33).

Emebet is also an active participant in an anti-HIV/AIDS clubs in her school, sharing her knowledge with other peers.

“I thanks JeCCDO for the over all support. My life would have been very difficult without their help”

**By: Elias Metalign, Health Officer
Community Development Programme Office
Bahir Dar**



JeCCDO

Bio- Intensive Gardening And Poultry Keeping and its potential to improve household food security and income

Kemero Osman, a 45years old, widow, is head of an extended family of 15 including her 5 children. They live in Goro Butiji Dire Dawa. She is a JeCCDO beneficiary through its urban agriculture programme. In 2006 Kemero received training in bio-intensive gardening and received tools, seedlings and chickens. Kemero had a relatively large piece of land, a hand dug well and enough labour (her family). However these resources were not utilised properly until she received the training. She says:

"Before the training I used to produce peppers, tomato and kale on a small area year after year. The production was very poor. Some times there was no harvest due to stunted growth, early flowering and other problems. When this happened, I left the land fallow as a remedy and I sat idle."

The training according to Kemero equipped her with various skills including controlling pests and diseases, using cultural practices such as crop rotation, adopting appropriate land preparation and planting, as well as keeping the soil fertile by using organic household compost. Following the training and support she received from JeCCDO, her family started growing pepper, salad, Swiss chard, eggplant, beetroot, cucumber, papaya, oranges and lemons. As they worked harder and harder the family became more successful in harvesting fresh vegetables and fruits for domestic consumption and for sale.



Picking peppers for sale

Today Kemero and her family consume vegetables as much as they want and as frequently as they need. They also sell the surplus product, enabling them to secure 70 birr (£4) a week. This money goes covers the cost of electricity for the hand dug well and also covers their household expenses, and stationery materials for the children. Through practicing urban agriculture, the daily nutrition of Kemero and her family has improved. The number of her family members who become sick from communicable diseases common in her locality is relatively low and children have a clean backyard to play in. When asked about the main challenges after the training Kemero explains:



Feeding her chickens

"I had problems with stem and root rot as well as bacterial diseases, but in consultation with the JeCCDO officer I overcame the problem by spraying tobacco leaf extract, using ash on soil, by crop rotation and burning the plant stock after harvest."

Kemero now also owns 17 chickens. This is because the 5 chickens given to her in 2006 by JeCCDO have reproduced.

Kemero collects 5-8 eggs every day . Now she secures 18 birr/week (£1) from egg sales. In the future Kemero plans to start dairy farming

By: Banchi Ayehu, Agriculture and Environmental Programme Officer, Dire Dawa

