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A Decade of Action in
**Creating Opportunity
for Ethiopian Youth**

CMC Road Bole Sub city Wereda 06 Near to Century Mall Senper Bldg. 3rd Floor #308 & #310, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2023

YEAR AFTER YEAR, WE EXPAND OUR FOOTPRINT BY INCREASING THE DEPTH OF OUR PROGRAM INTERVENTIONS.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



THIS INITIATIVE IS SUPPORTED BY

USAID INTEGRATED YOUTH ACTIVITY – KEFETA
DECEMBER 2023



Biggest Mindset Shifts

Medhanit Shototo

Medhanit Shototo is 28 years old, married and a mother of one child currently living in Dilla Town was searching for work as income generation. During community mobilization period **Medhanit** meets the YCDF_Kefeta team members and hears the key messages of Kefeta_IYA Project where Literacy for Out-of-School Youth and SACCO is part of the activity. Then after she internalizes as she cannot read and write but she knows everything is possible, so she becomes part of team, and she started the “Youth literacy Programs”. She completed level-II Functional Literacy Program, and she is listed under Top-12 where she gets recognition for her academic achievement.

“Medhanit also heard as Kefeta_IYA started a series of different soft skills for youth development that focuses on showing the most important soft skills for key youth outcomes — including youth success in the workforce and youth violence prevention and reproductive health (RH) and where she has been part of it. The skills training for the youth are set of skills, behaviors, and personal qualities that enable them to effectively navigate their environment, relate well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals”.

These different soft skills training courses helped her with her personal attribution and interpersonal abilities that enabled her to interact effectively with others. Indeed, they are also crucial for other young people as they lay the foundation for future success, helping them communicate, collaborate, and adapt in various personal and professional settings.

Now while aspiring to her future, she shifts from employee mindset to entrepreneur mindset and learned how to plan and manage her own business where it is a major one in her career path being self-employee. After having a discussion with her husband, she starts working in her own outdoor coffee shop business. Now she decided to continue formal education at evening class while she is working in daytime. As part of the program, she has been supported with learning support materials to continue her education.

Medhanit, now has a good hope to continue work and to be educated women to overcome different socio-economic challenges.



Aspiring For a New Career Path

Aster Asrat

Aster Asrat, 18 years old, currently living in Harowelabu sub-city, Dilla Town is a grade 9 student. She lives with her family and continues her education. Meanwhile she lost her mother, and she failed in economic crises to continue her formal education then she was confused either to continue or dropout her class. But once upon a day she heard an important information from Kefeta project team, and she got constructive advice and counseling from the team members.

"She heard as Kefeta initiated a series of different skills development trainings on youth hubs specially focused on life skills, sexual and reproductive health, business development skills, financial literacy, active citizenship, entrepreneurship, advocacy, and effective work habits. So, Aster become one of the trainees who took life skill training provided by Kefeta."

"This important training gave her the ways of looking for work. She understood that it is not about sitting and waiting or applying for just a job and waiting for a response. As a result, this has been a major shift in how she thinks about her future. She learned how to plan and start working hard either in public or private sector in addition with continuing her class".

Aster said ".....Through Kefeta team members support I've been recruited in one of the private sectors as sweeper to sustain my life and to help my vulnerable families.....".

Now **Aster** has full ambition of continuing her class and continues as cleaner until she will get a decent job. She also acknowledges team members of Kefeta for having secured current employment linkages.

Empowering the Youth Towards Big Ambition

Tesfahun Tamene



Tesfahun Tamene, 25 years old, currently living in Harowelabu sub-city, Dilla Town and had completed grade 8th. He is married and lives with his wife and he is a father of one daughter. He has a lot of responsibilities as head of his family but due to unemployment (Lack of income generating work) him and his families' faces psychological and economic crises.

Once upon a day I heard important information from the Kefeta project team, and I got helpful advice and counseling services. As told by Tesfahun "..... I heard as Kefeta initiated a series of different trainings on youth hubs specially focused on developing life skills, Sexual and reproductive health, business development skills, financial literacy, active citizenship, advocacy, and effective work habits so I am one of the trainees who took life skill training provided by Kefeta.....".

Indeed, 'This important training gave me the ways of looking forward towards to my career path. I also understood that it is not about sitting and waiting or applying for just a job and waiting for a response, but also it is important to shift my thinking for self-employment about my future work and career' said **Tesfahun**.

Right now, "Even if I decided to be self-employed (shoes cleaner in street) as one option for income generation, I have no money to buy important materials for stating this job then I became worried and stressed" as conveyed by **Tesfahun**.

".....with the support of Kefeta youth coalition I started this work and I want to acknowledge Kefeta staffs because they gave me adequate materials for starting my pre-intended work (shoes cleaning).....".

In general, now I am very happy and working hard to support myself and my family and I plan to scale my effort. Thanks to God and Kefeta staffs again said **Tesfahun**.

Life and Employability Skills

NOVEL APPROACHES TO BREAKING THE NORM AND CREATING NEW ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Dibora Besufikad

Dibora Besufikad is a 23-year-old energetic young lady with a physical disability from Hawassa City. When she reached school age, she began her education, but she faced financial difficulties and psychosocial issues as a result of the death of her father, the family's primary economic source. Debora's family became dependent on small-scale activities as a result, and her and her family's living situation was hand-to-mouth. This income problem spared out to other social problems, making it difficult for her to maintain her good academic performance.

"When I was in eighth grade, I was dealing with complicated health issues caused by malnourishment, and as a result, I couldn't take the Ministry Exam properly," Dibora explained. Despite these obstacles, she completed high school, attended private college for three years, and graduated in Accounting.

She remained unemployed for a long time after graduation, causing additional psychological stress in her and her family's lives. Deborah stated that she applied for more than 30 jobs but that none of them were successful for her.

It was at this time that she learned about the USAID Kefeta project and its services for young people like her. **Dibora** joined right into the USAID Kefeta project through youth coalition and received training in life skills, employability (effective work habits), sexual and reproductive health, and advocacy.

"Kefeta supported me in all aspects, such as seeing my inner capacity and giving me skills important to my personal life and related to job search and readiness, which I didn't know before I received the trainings," Debora said.

Dibora overcame a number of her limitations in networking, job search, and work readiness capacities after receiving Kefeta training services, and she gained skills that helped her get her first job in an NGO as a Finance and Admin officer in Addis Abeba.

"Kefeta and the team provided me with the support and strength to look beyond what was around me and face new challenges and utilize opportunities," she said.

Finally, she stated, **"I would encourage girls in a similar situation to mine to join Kefeta and benefit from its services in order to bring about progressive change in their lives, as I did through patience."**

Kefeta Hawassa's youth capacity development program, which provides life and soft skills, is making a visible difference in the lives of many young people by encouraging them to explore their inner capacity and take advantage of the opportunities that Kefeta has brought into their lives.

A Journey to Achievement with Kefeta Project

Genet Mekonen

Genet Mekonen, a determined 23-year-old residing in Dilla Town, had a burning desire to become a highly skilled and disciplined professional nurse. With her parents' support, she enrolled in Paradise Valley College, Dilla branch, to pursue her education. Throughout her academic journey, Genet displayed exceptional dedication and consistently ranked among the top students in her college. Her hard work paid off when she not only passed the national exit exam with flying colors but also received a prestigious medal from her esteemed college.

As **Genet** approached her graduation, she learned about the Kefeta Project, an integrated youth initiative offering various service packages to the community, particularly for young individuals like herself. Since her goal was to find an opportunity to learn and get employed, she sought out capacity-building training provided by Kefeta. Luckily, she had the opportunity to participate in a digital literacy training program in Dilla, which was specifically designed for job seekers. This training proved to be invaluable as it equipped her with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate different social media platforms for job hunting. Her proficiency in using social media for professional purposes improved significantly, thanks to the Kefeta Project.

On October, **Genet** saw the opportunity for Youth Friendly Health Provider position for Kefeta-Dilla on LinkedIn.

Intrigued by the opportunity, she carefully reviewed the requirements and decided to apply. Despite her lack of work experience in the field, Genet's determination and enthusiasm shone through, and she was selected as one of the candidates for the written and interview exams. Her hard work and potential impressed the hiring team, and she was asked to work with in the position as an intern to learn.

Currently, **Genet** is wholeheartedly fulfilling her responsibilities as outlined in her job description. She actively assists youth-friendly service providers in various sexual and reproductive health/family planning activities, diligently performs data encoding tasks, and actively participates in YFHS training, meetings, and workshops. Her unwavering passion lies in becoming an expert nurse with exceptional discipline. As part of her short-term plan, Genet aims to be deployed as a full-time youth-friendly service provider within the consortium.

In conclusion, **Genet Mekonen** expresses her heartfelt gratitude to the Kefeta Project and its dedicated staff for their invaluable support in various aspects of her journey. With their guidance and the opportunities provided by the project, Genet has transformed her aspirations into tangible achievements, setting herself on a path to success in her chosen profession.



Functional literacy and life skills:

A PATH TO BETTER DECISION-MAKING AND LIVING A MORE HOPEFUL LIFE

Emush Birehanu

Birehanu, 25, was born and raised in Wolaita Sodo and now resides in Hawassa City. She is the sixth child in her family, and her mother died when she was a child, leaving her family to live in poverty with many problems, which is why she was unable to register for formal education, so she became illiterate and signed with her very fingers shamefully, especially in cities.

When she was 23, she and her family faced a major challenge in which they were unable to obtain even food. The only option she had was to come to Hawassa to process a visa in order to find work in an Arab country, and she landed a job in Dubai. That year, she moved to Dubai and began working as a housekeeper.

She explained that her job was so difficult that she worked nearly 20 hours a day, but it was the first time she had a salary and was able to help her family back home. She had no way of saving her salary because she was sending all of her earnings to her family, who were in a difficult situation.

Her contract expired after two years, and she returned to Ethiopia, but she discovered that the family had spent all of the money she had sent, and she found herself in the same situation after a few years. She began fighting for her life again in Hawassa, and after a year she married and had a child, which presented another problem in her life because she couldn't feed her child. After about a month, she began looking for another job in Dubai.

On her way to the immigration office to renew her passport one day, she encountered two of IYA Kefeta's functional literacy facilitators who were registering illiterate youth.

They told her everything about the project and the training, but she didn't respond because she has no hope to live in Ethiopia. After discussing the program in depth, she agreed to register and stated that she would attend until her passport process was completed. After a week in the functional literacy program, she was able to identify letters and begin writing her name for the first time. Her interest in learning grew day by day, and after a while, she was able to participate in Life skill training, SACCO orientation, sexual reproductive health, and a service center visit.

"Especially after I took life skill training, I started getting hope and thinking of a better tomorrow," Emush said. My only mission prior to joining IYA_Keketa and these trainings was to travel to Dubai. She added, "every hour I spent in trainings began to change my way of thinking".

After using Kefeta's services, she decided to stop her plans to travel outside of Ethiopia in favor of working here and changing her life and the future of her child. She cancelled the process of renewing her passport and began looking for work. Within a short time, she began working as a housekeeper, and this is the first step in moving her life forward with great hope.

She stated that her future plan is to save my earnings in SACCO and then obtain credit to start her own business. Kefeta completely transformed my life. Now that I can write and read, I began signing with a pen and am no longer embarrassed to do so in public. Finally, I would like to thank Kefeta project for all of the changes in my life; it is a path of change for Ethiopian youth who are in a similar situation to mine.

A Journey of Overcoming Adversity and Finding New Purpose

Eyerusalem Abera

In the inspiring tale of **Eyerusalem Abera**, we witness the power of resilience and determination in the face of hardship. Born in the small town of Yirgalem, Ethiopia, Eyerusalem's early years were marked by dreams of a brighter future. She took a leap of faith, leaving her secondary education behind to pursue opportunities in Hawassa.

Eyerusalem's initial excitement was met with challenges as she entered the workforce as a line worker in the Hawassa Industrial Park. The reality of a meager salary and mounting expenses weighed heavily on her shoulders. Determined to support her family, she reluctantly engaged in unique activities suggested by her boss, hoping to secure additional income. Despite her efforts, she remained unaware of the specific opportunity that would change her life.

A turning point came when **Eyerusalem** noticed the transformation of her close friend, Mekdes. Inspired by Mekdes' success, she decided to seek a path that would lead to a better life. With Mekdes' guidance, she set out to discover the means of changing her own circumstances.

Through a fortuitous encounter, **Eyerusalem** connected with a compassionate mentor who provided her with invaluable advice and support. Armed with newfound knowledge, she embarked on a journey that would redefine her future. However, her path took an unexpected and harrowing turn when she found herself in a situation that threatened her well-being.

In a display of extraordinary strength, **Eyerusalem** bravely fought against the injustice inflicted upon her. Escaping the clutches of her assailant, she emerged as a survivor, resolute in her determination to overcome the trauma she endured.

With unwavering resilience, **Eyerusalem** left her previous occupation behind and ventured into entrepreneurship. Establishing her own coffee house, she created a safe space where she could rebuild her life and find solace in her newfound independence. Alongside her personal journey, Eyerusalem became a beacon of hope for others facing similar challenges.

Recognizing the importance of healing and growth, Eyerusalem sought support from dedicated professionals who provided her with counseling and guidance. Through their assistance, she navigated the complex emotions and aftermath of her traumatic experience, emerging stronger and more resilient than ever before.

Eyerusalem's story serves as a testament to the indomitable spirit of individuals who refuse to be defined by their past. Her triumph over adversity not only reshaped her own life but also ignited a flame of change within her community. By sharing her experiences, Eyerusalem inspires others to break the silence surrounding gender-based violence and seek the support they deserve.

Today, **Eyerusalem** stands tall as a symbol of empowerment, resilience, and the limitless potential that lies within each individual. Her journey from hardship to triumph serves as a reminder that success is not measured solely by external achievements but by the strength of one's spirit and the courage to forge a new path.

If you have any further questions or if there's anything else I can assist you with, please let me know.



Empowering Dreams:

**TEMESGEN ABEBE'S JOURNEY TO
SUCCESS WITH KEFETA PROJECT**

Temesgen Abebe

Temesgen Abebe, a 28-year-old ambitious resident of Hawasa city, had always nurtured bright hopes and dreams. After successfully completing his bachelor's degree in management, he embarked on a journey of professional growth, working in various offices as a business professional and trainer, delivering diverse training programs.

Driven by his innate desire to empower and assist others, Temesgen actively sought opportunities to fulfill his passion for training. It was through word-of-mouth recommendations from his friends that he discovered the Kefeta Project. Intrigued by the project's reputation for offering a wide range of impactful trainings, Temesgen decided to explore the possibilities it held. Taking his first steps towards success, he joined Kefeta as a voluntary facilitator for training sessions.

As time went by, **Temesgen's** dedication and commitment were recognized, and he was presented with the chance to participate in a Training of Trainers program. This opportunity aligned perfectly with his aspirations, allowing him to become an entrepreneurship and business skills trainer within the project.

Through his work, he not only honed his own work ethic but also gained invaluable experience from collaborating with fellow trainers, engaging with the youth, and learning from the supportive Kefeta team.

During his journey, **Temesgen** had the privilege of working closely with the Economic Empowerment Officer at Kefeta. This experience proved to be transformative as he learned immensely from her expertise and guidance. When she eventually moved on from her position at Kefeta, it marked a significant turning point in Temesgen's professional life. Recognizing his dedication and potential, the Kefeta team provided him with a remarkable opportunity to take on the role of an Economic Empowerment Officer at Kefeta-IYA in Youth Cultural Development Foundation (YCDF).

Currently thriving in his position, **Temesgen** is making a tangible impact as an Economic Empowerment Officer. Through his work, he is actively contributing to the economic advancement and empowerment of youth within the community. His involvement with the Kefeta Project has not only allowed him to fulfill his passion for training but has also facilitated personal and professional growth, enabling him to pave a successful path in his chosen field.

Transforming Lives Through Informed Decisions

A courageous female worker from an Industrial Park reached out to the Kefeta Youth-Friendly Health Services (YFHS) provider. She had previously attended counseling sessions where she received valuable information. With newfound confidence, she called to share her concerns about heavy bleeding, irregular menstruation, and instances of sexual intercourse with coworkers.

Recognizing the significance of her case, the dedicated Kefeta YFHS provider immediately provided personalized support through the Youth Integrated Activity program. Taking a comprehensive approach, they conducted individual counseling sessions and educational interventions, covering crucial topics such as family planning and managing sexually transmitted infections. Through these empowering sessions, the provider educated her about the various factors that can cause irregularities in menstruation, including stress, hormonal imbalances, or underlying health conditions.

Understanding the importance of professional medical assistance, the provider referred her to a healthcare professional at the nearby Adare Health Center, which is a partner of the Kefeta project. They encouraged her to schedule a visit to the healthcare provider who could conduct a thorough examination, discuss her medical history, and offer personalized advice based on her unique situation.

Following the provider's guidance, she visited the health center and underwent an examination. The pregnancy test came back negative, and it was discovered that her irregular menstruation was a result of the contraceptives she had received after engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse. After starting a course of combined oral contraceptives (COC), she regained a normal menstrual pattern. With each subsequent cycle, she experienced positive changes in her reproductive health.

Inspired by her transformation and newfound knowledge, she gained confidence and visited the Kefeta YFHS provider to share her success story. She became an advocate, spreading awareness among her coworkers about the importance of making informed decisions and seeking help from the Kefeta project.

This success story stands as a testament to the impactful collaboration between Kefeta and Plan International. Through their partnership, the Kefeta Project has successfully addressed crucial health issues faced by industrial park workers. By employing a youth-for-youth approach, the project has fostered a safe and comfortable environment, enabling workers to communicate openly and address their health concerns. The dedication of the Kefeta YFHS provider and the comprehensive support provided have empowered workers to take control of their health, leading to positive changes and the dissemination of knowledge within the industrial park community.



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Basic Adult Education:

**A PATH TO MENTAL
AND ECONOMIC FREEDOM**

Addisu Bushura

Addisu Bushura is a 27-year-old young man who was born and raised in Aleta Chuko but never attended school due to his rural family's low economic status. As the first child in his family, he bears a great deal of responsibility for financially supporting his impoverished family through petty business ventures. But, once upon a time, he was caught red-handed engaging in illegal business activity from Moyale to Hawassa and was imprisoned for one and a half years.

According to him, being in this situation was not his childhood dream, but his illiteracy and lack of awareness about life options led him to engage in illegal business activities; and this is the same story for the majority of the young men and women in the Hawassa Prison.

As he stated, **unlike their agetmates in the community, the majority of young men and women in prison have never had the opportunity to receive formal education to write and read, and almost all live-in depression in the prison and cannot imagine their lives will be better in the future.** By the time the Kefeta Hawassa functional literacy team found a way to reach the prison youth for the functional literacy program, 82 youth (30 female) had been enrolled to educate themselves on their new lifepath to changing their future, and Addisu was among them.

Youth prisoners attending basic adult literacy program

According to him, myself and others found the program to be life changing, with basic writing, reading, and numeracy skills that we never imagined would happen in our lives at our current age.

From those who enrolled in the level 1 program, 52 students advanced to level 2 with good grades, and these youths began to request other Kefeta service packages, such as training, that could help them change their lives in the future.

As a result, Kefeta provided them with life skill and entrepreneurship training at the initiative of functional adult literacy program facilitators, and the group decided to start urban agriculture in the prison compound after the training. As he stated, the team approached prison administration about providing farmland, and administration was very supportive of the idea and provided land for this activity. The youth have saved over 15,000.00 ETB to support this initiative and are currently preparing the land for vegetable and fruit planting. In addition to urban agriculture, Addisu wanted to develop his skills in order to generate income once he was released from prison, so he began working in a prison barbershop.

Finally, he thanked Kefeta-IYA for the basic education and training assistance that gave him and his friends confidence and the ability to see a bright future. He also stated that the team's goal is to expand the current urban agricultural activity and to establish a social enterprise as a business entity.



Youth prisoners engaged in land preparation for urban agri.

Empowering Youth Employability Skills Through Kefeta

Hiwot Desalegn

Hiwot Desalegn, a determined and resilient individual, has emerged as a shining example of success in the face of adversity. At the age of 25, Hiwot overcame physical disabilities to pursue her education and successfully graduated with a Diploma in accounting. However, the post-graduation phase proved to be challenging as Hiwot encountered difficulties in securing employment opportunities.

Despite her academic accomplishments, **Hiwot** found herself disheartened as she faced a lack of job openings and a lack of response to her applications. The prevailing requirement of experience and specific skills further compounded her challenges since she was a fresh graduate with no prior work experience. These experiences left Hiwot feeling pessimistic about her economic prospects.

However, a ray of hope entered **Hiwot's** life when she learned about the IYA - Kefeta Project, being implemented Youth and Cultural Development Foundation (YCDF) that aimed to empower youths with life skills, soft skills, and employability training. Filled with excitement, Hiwot wasted no time in joining the IYA-Kefeta skill development training program held at Shashemene Polytechnic College under the facilitation of YCDF.

Over the course of one month, **Hiwot** underwent a transformative journey through the life skills training provided by the IYA - Kefeta Project. This training not only shifted her mindset but also equipped her with invaluable skills necessary to navigate the job market and thrive in her socio-economic life. Hiwot's confidence soared as she realized that she was just as capable as anyone else and possessed the ability to achieve her aspirations. Her Personal Development Plan (PDP), comprising both short and long-term goals, became her roadmap to success.

Today, **Hiwot** stands tall as a testament to the transformative power of the IYA - Kefeta project and her dedicated YCDF training facilitator. Their unwavering support and provision of mindset-changing skill training have been instrumental in her journey toward personal and professional growth. **Hiwot** extends her heartfelt gratitude to the IYA - Kefeta project and Youth and Cultural Development Foundation (YCDF) and her training facilitator for empowering her with the skills and mindset needed to overcome challenges and pursue a prosperous future. With newfound confidence and determination, **Hiwot** is now ready to embark on a fulfilling career path, leaving no obstacle unchallenged.



Unlocking Potential Through Kefeta Integrated Youth Activity Project

Meron Sornesa

Meron Sornesa, a 20-year-old individual, embarked on a transformative journey through the IYA - Kefeta Project, with the goal of enhancing life skills. Meron candidly admits that prior to undertaking the Kefeta life skills training, they lacked the necessary skills to engage in meaningful conversations and effectively express their thoughts and emotions. This lack of confidence and self-awareness left Meron unsure of their life goals and aspirations.

However, the Kefeta life skills training proved to be a turning point for **Meron**. Through this training, they discovered their true selves and gained a clear understanding of their life goals. The training empowered Meron to develop a personal plan for their life, enabling them to chart a course towards success. The newfound ability to articulate thoughts and express ideas with confidence became a catalyst for personal growth.

Furthermore, the Kefeta life skills training equipped **Meron** with essential emotional intelligence and conflict management skills. They learned to navigate their own emotions and effectively manage conflicts that arise in various aspects of life.

This newfound understanding and skill set paved the way for improved interpersonal relationships and enabled Meron to handle challenging situations with ease and grace.

Today, **Meron** stands as a shining example of personal growth and empowerment. They are equipped with the skills to effectively communicate, express ideas with confidence, and manage emotions and conflicts. The IYA - Kefeta Project has not only transformed **Meron's** life but has also provided them with the necessary foundation to achieve their life goals and aspirations.

Meron is deeply grateful to the Integrated Youth Activity - Kefeta Project for providing the opportunity to undergo life skills training. This experience has not only empowered them but has also opened doors to new possibilities and endless opportunities for personal and professional success. With newfound confidence and a clear life plan, **Meron** is ready to navigate the future with purpose and determination.



Empowering Personal Growth Through Kefeta Integrated Youth Activity Project

Yeamanuel Girma

Yeamanuel Girma, a 24-year-old graduate in psychology from Shashemene city, embarked on a transformative journey through the IYA - Kefeta Project's life skills training. Despite his academic background and theoretical knowledge of life skills, Yeamanuel realized that he lacked practical application and a true understanding of concepts such as self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

The life skills training provided by the IYA - Kefeta Project proved to be a game-changer for **Yeamanuel**. Through the program, he gained a deeper understanding of the importance of setting clear, SMART goals. Previously, his goals were merely oral or scribbled in notebooks, lacking structure and specificity. However, the training taught him how to create a one-year plan with well-defined short-term goals. **Yeamanuel** also learned the significance of prioritizing these short-term goals to effectively achieve his long-term objectives. To support his goal-setting process, he started documenting his daily and weekly plans, ensuring accountability and progress tracking.

One of the most valuable lessons **Yeamanuel** took away from the Kefeta training was the ability to identify his strengths and weaknesses. While he initially believed he had a good understanding of himself, the training prompted him to reevaluate and gain a deeper insight into his personal attributes. This self-reflection allowed **Yeamanuel** to recognize his strengths, empowering him to leverage them for personal and professional growth. Simultaneously, he became aware of areas where improvement was needed, paving the way for targeted development efforts.

In conclusion, the Kefeta life skills training program has been transformative for Yeamanuel. The training provided him with practical tools and techniques to evaluate himself objectively and identify areas for personal growth. The newfound knowledge and skills acquired through the program will undoubtedly have a positive impact on both his personal and professional life.

YOUTH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH YOUTH COALITIONS:

A powerful means to meaningfully engage youth in community development actions

Hawassa Kefeta Youth Coalition is one of the youth coalitions established in Kefeta intervention cities as a grassroots platform to bring youth from various walks of life together with the goal of building a youth network, collectively advocating for their rights, amplifying their voices, and realizing community actions.

As a result, **Hawassa Kefeta Youth Coalition** was formally established in mid-April/2022 with networks of various interest groups represented by representatives from each interest group.



Youth Coalition after completing organizational management and leadership training

Hana Gerawork is a 24-year-old young woman who has led the coalition for the past year after being democratically elected by the general assembly. According to her, there are deeply rooted societal cultural and traditional negative attitudes and mindsets that prevent meaningful engagement of youth in community development actions; youth are unable to develop their inner potential and positively contribute to their family and community.

However, the majority of them are regarded as incapable; a burden on society as well as the cause and perpetrators of violence. Furthermore, there were no permanent platforms for youth to connect for collective voice, to challenge societal norms, and to share their experiences in order to develop positive behaviors, utilize their inner capacity, and contribute to community development in an organized manner.

By the time, Kefeta arrived in Hawassa and began implementation focusing on youth, it formally establishing Hawassa Kefeta youth coalition, which connects youth from various interest groups, and establishing a formal structure in which I was chosen as a leader, she explained.

According to her, Kefeta provided various youth capacity development training to the youth coalition executive committee and other coalition members in areas such as life skills, advocacy, active citizenship and civic engagement, organizational management and leadership, fund raising, community mobilization, and community kick-off, all of which improved youth self-efficacy and leadership capacity. Apart from changing the personal lives of coalition members, including myself, these packages of various capacity development training have enabled the youth coalition to participate in a variety of community-level development activities, she explained.

According to her, the coalition assessed the school called Gebeya Dar and discovered a severe environmental sanitation problem due to poor solid waste management and an unfavorable latrine sanitation system, with most of the school environment serving as

mosquito breeding grounds, and teachers reporting high rates of student absenteeism and dropout. As a result, the coalition team developed social action project proposal to improve school conditions and make them suitable for teaching and learning activities through interventions such as improving the sanitation system and beautifying the compound and class rooms, and submitted the proposal to Kefeta for matching funds and being awarded and implemented the social action project with active participation of youth coalition from different interest groups engaging school and local community.

This school sanitation improvement action had brought the most dramatic impact on the lives of the school community; the coalition is proud of positively changing the community's attitude toward youth capacity and their role in community development.

Finally, she thanked Kefeta for bringing the youth together to network, for building their capacity, and for providing significant support for the community's social action project.

According to her, the coalition aspires to grow its members, participate in more community development activities, continue to change perceptions of youth within community and government bodies, and influence and improve the youth's bargaining power in local decisions.



Hawassa Kefeta youth engaged in cleaning school environment, planting seedlings and making school compound friendly and attractive for students and safe for teaching and learning process



Kefeta Hawassa youth are making educational paintings on the walls and compound with their skills and talents



OUR VISION

To see empowered, progressive and well-equipped youth who are change agents in the development of their communities.



MISSION STATEMENT

To work with youth by assisting them gain social entrepreneurial and developmental skills through training, education, cultural exchange programs and provide them with community capacity engagement.



CORE VALUES

Honesty and Accountability, Equity and Equality, Inclusiveness Innovativeness and Creativity, Professionalism, Teamwork, and Excellence

OUR PROGRAM FOCUS AREAS



SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT



SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & PARTICIPATION



PROVISION OF BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT





HUMAN RIGHTS & PEACE EDUCATIO




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