



SUCCESS CASE STORIES



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Transforming Lives, Building Futures

Facilitator for Change, through its Awi Srasri – Building Better Future for Children Project, has made remarkable strides in 2024 despite the challenges posed by ongoing peace issues. The project, dedicated to child protection and development, socioeconomic empowerment of women, and the promotion of innovative agricultural practices, has significantly impacted communities by fostering resilience and sustainable progress.

This brochure highlights inspiring success stories that showcase the transformative changes brought about by the project. From empowering women with economic opportunities to protecting children's rights and introducing innovative agricultural techniques, these stories reflect the dedication and perseverance of the project's beneficiaries. Through their voices, we celebrate the achievements of 2024 and reaffirm our commitment to building a better future for children and their communities.

We hope these stories inspire you. Happy reading!

● Breaking Barriers: Maritu's Journey to Academic Excellence

Maritu Engida, a 13-year-old girl from Gewona Kebele in Ankesha Guagusa Woreda of Amhara Region, Ethiopia, faced immense challenges in pursuing her education. She is the youngest child among her six brothers and sister. Her family's livelihood depends on agriculture. Due to the economic challenges in her family, she frequently missed school to help with labor work. The family was unable to provide her with educational materials. Her dream of an education seemed out of reach, and she was also not very active in school. As a result, she faced discouragement and constantly worried about her academic performance.



Everything changed with the intervention of the Awi Srasri-Building Better Future for Children Project, implemented by Facilitator for Change (FC). Through this initiative, Maritu became a sponsorship beneficiary, receiving essential school supplies, including exercise books and pens, every year. Her mother, an active member of a women's group supported by the project, gained financial stability, ensuring Maritu never missed school again. As of the 2024/25 academic year, she is now a 6th-grade student.

Beyond material support, the project transformed Maritu's school environment. Teachers, PTSA members, and students were trained to foster a safe and inclusive learning space. Community awareness programs educated families on children's rights and the harmful effects of abuse. These efforts created an environment where Maritu felt secure and motivated to learn.



Figure 1: Child Maritu in the classroom

With newfound support, Maritu's academic performance soared. In the 2023/24 academic year, she ranked first in her class, scoring an impressive 86% average in Grade 5. Her achievement earned her recognition and enforcement materials from the school. Encouraged by her mother's guidance and her teachers' support, Maritu now embraces learning with enthusiasm. She actively participates in the Girls' Club and attended Child Resilience Workshops in the year 2023. In her free time, she enjoys playing with her friends.

Today, Maritu is a confident and ambitious student who loves reading—her favorite subject being Amharic. The economic burden on her family has eased, and her worries have faded, replaced by a clear vision for the future. With unwavering determination, she dreams of becoming a doctor, a goal she now believes is within reach. Maritu's story is a testament to the power of education, community support, and the right opportunities. With continued encouragement, she is on the path to transforming her dreams into reality.

● A School of Transformation: Empowering Belaynesh for a Brighter Future

Belaynesh Shiferaw, a 48-year-old woman from Gewona Kebele, Ankesha Guagusa Woreda in the Amhara Region of Ethiopia, has experienced a remarkable transformation in her life thanks to the Awi Srasri - Building Better Future for Children Project, implemented by Facilitator for Change (FC). Her story is one of resilience, hard work, and the power of empowerment. From a family struggling with food insecurity, limited knowledge, and insufficient income to one now thriving through improved agricultural practices and increased family income, Belaynesh's journey highlights the profound impact of community-based support and empowerment.

Before the project's intervention, Belaynesh's family primarily relied on agriculture for their livelihood. However, their income from agriculture was insufficient to meet their daily needs. Financial challenges, including the inability to purchase essential Agricultural inputs, lack of knowledge about improved farming practices, and high interest rates on loans, kept them from improving their agricultural production. Additionally, there was no access to credit systems, which further compounded the family's inability to invest in income-generating activities.



Belaynesh Shiferaw

Supporting her children's education became a significant struggle. Belaynesh faced difficulties affording notebooks, uniforms, and dormitory fees, which forced her children to take up labor work, missing one to two days of school each week. This disruption in their education made it even harder for them to keep up with their studies. In addition to the educational challenges, the family was also grappling with very low food security. They lacked awareness on how to improve their situation, and this not only affected their nutrition but also hindered their ability to properly support their children's education.

Furthermore, Belaynesh had limited knowledge regarding child care, management, and community integration, which kept her isolated from opportunities for personal and community development. The family's main challenge was the lack of capital to engage in income-generating activities, which meant they struggled to properly meet their needs and secure a better future.

The turning point came when Belaynesh joined the Nib Women group under the Awi Srasri –Building Better Future for Children Project in 2022. The project, aimed at empowering women to meet their basic needs and provide quality education for their children, gave Belaynesh the tools and support to turn her life around. Through the project, she learned about savings, social integration, and various income-generating activities, which significantly improved her financial situation.



Figure 2. Belaynesh Shiferaw's farm for carrot vegetable production

Initially, the Nib Women Group, consisting of 21 members, provided Belaynesh with the knowledge and resources to improve her financial practices. Her weekly savings increased from 1 Birr to 10 Birr, and she engaged in various activities such as cultivating backyard vegetables like carrots and beetroot, as well as improving livestock management, including poultry, sheep, and dairy cattle. With the project's support in providing improved vegetable seeds, Belaynesh successfully cultivated and sold carrots, earning 30,000 Birr. This income enabled her to meet her family's basic food needs and make significant improvements to her household.



Figure 3: Belaynesh Shiferaw, a woman, showing her carrot vegetable production farm

The income from these activities also enabled Belaynesh to renovate her home and improve her agricultural practices, including better cultivation of Maize and Barley crops. With the financial stability she gained, Belaynesh could now afford to support her children's education, which had previously been a significant challenge. Moreover, through the project, she gained new skills in communication, negotiation, and social interaction, which helped her make informed decisions for her family's well-being.

Belaynesh also accessed credit through the Nib Women's group. Initially, she took a loan of 500 Birr, and through her vegetable farming, she earned a total of 12,000 Birr. Encouraged by this success, she took a second loan of 1,000 Birr, which allowed her to expand her agricultural activities. By cultivating more backyard vegetables, she earned an additional 15,000 Birr.

These loans played a pivotal role in helping Belaynesh expand her small-scale farming ventures, which in turn increased her income and significantly improved the quality of life for her family.

Belaynesh sees the organization as a transformative experience, almost like a form of schooling. In her own words, “The FC has been like a school for me. It has completely changed my perspective. I believe that with the continuous support from the organization, I will be able to achieve even greater things in the future.”



Figure 4: Belaynesh Shiferaw's beetroot vegetable production farm

Looking to the future, Belaynesh plans to further expand her income-generating activities. She aims to open a small shop in the city, which will allow her to save more and enhance her family's financial situation. Her goal is to continue improving her family's quality of life and provide a better future for her children.

Belaynesh's journey showcases the power of empowering women through knowledge, resources, and community support. Once struggling to provide for her family, she has transformed into a role model, proving that with the right support, lasting change is possible. Her success highlights the immense potential within individuals when given the opportunity to learn and grow.



Figure 5: Belaynesh Shiferaw's husband while managing their beetroot vegetable production farm

● A Bright Future: From Displacement to Dreams

Tigist Abebe, a 15-year-old girl, is currently in sixth grade at a Jarmarta primary school in the Amhara Region, specifically in the Ankesha Guagusa Woreda of Awi Zone area. She was residing with her parents in a small, rented house. Approximately four years ago, when she was grade three Tigist and her family faced challenges due to intense fighting that erupted in the town called Chagni. Tigist and other children in her town were forced to discontinue their education due to the ongoing conflict. Unfortunately, this situation has had a profound effect on their education.

After discussing with her parents, she moved to live with her grandfather in a kebele called Bekafita three years ago to resume her education and achieve her goals, as she has a strong desire to do so.

“It was hard for us to go to school at that time and I was forced to stop my education. Due to the conflict, one year of my life has passed without an education,” she said.

When the project was introduced in 2022, her grandfather was selected by Kebele leaders and administrators and became a member of the farmers' learning group (FLG) as a beneficiary of the project. Repeatedly, he has received training on saving, child rights, and entrepreneurship skills. As a result, he was able to send his granddaughter to school. Every year, the project provides educational materials to her. With this, her grandfather is happy and supports her education.



Figure 6: Student Tigist Abebe.

“With the support of the project, I started my education from 3rd grade and now I have reached 6th grade. When I first started, I was busy with homework and missed school when I was busy. I had no time to read. As a result, my academic performance was weak. However, with the training and support that my grandfather received from the project, his understanding of education significantly improved, and I was able to stay in school consistently. This support has allowed me to attend my classes regularly and have time to study,” she said.

Tigist is happily learning today. She is pursuing her education by being an example to her friends. She has a big dream. Her teachers and her grandmother are happy with her academic results.

"Now, I want to focus on my education. I scored an average of 95.2 and ranked 1st when I was promoted from Grade 5 to Grade 6 last year (2023). When I finish school, I want to be a doctor. Because I believe that I have a passion for taking care of people. I wish I could become a doctor soon so I can help my parents. I think peace and education are the most important things to achieve our dreams in life," says Tigist.

● "I was dependent but now everything has changed"

Fernus Muluneh is living in Bekafita kebele of Ankesha Guagusa Woreda of Amhara region, Ethiopia. She is 45 years old and lives with her family of four children (three sons and one daughter). Her family's livelihood is dependent on farming activities, especially crop production. However, Fernus was struggling to make ends meet to feed her children and husband. In addition, she could not provide school supplies for her children.

Fortunately, in August 2022, she became a member of the Women group supported by Facilitator for Change (FC). Her group is named 'Endeg' (which means let us grow) and has 22 members. She serves as a group secretary because she attended adult education. Together, the women realise their potential. They learn small business and financial management skills and save money as a group. The group then provides loans to its members, to enable them to create their own small businesses; the women in the below group are shown with their savings and loan books. The women also have the chance to share their ideas, skills, and resources and come up with solutions to their social and economic problems. Often, when a woman is struggling to tackle a problem by herself, we find she is more than capable of overcoming it when she joins hands with other women.

Fernus said: "Previously, I did not know saving. I used to produce maize and wheat in a small amount and had no other income-generating activities (IGAs). Mostly, I spent my time as a homestead."



Figure 7: Fernus Muluneh at her home, handling group bookkeeping

Over the last 18 months, Fernus has gradually contributed more to her group's savings, and been introduced to small business skills and financial management training. She took out a loan of 1000.00 Birr from the group for the first time and started IGA with poultry production. She earned 600.00 Birr income from the sale of eggs. When the opportunity came to Fernus, she seized it and made it her own.

In the middle of 2023, she received training in backyard vegetable production and was introduced to improved carrot seeds through support from the project. As a result, she was able to generate an income of 25,000 Birr from growing carrots, not including the food used for her family. Shortly after, she purchased three sheep for rearing and fattening, and their numbers have now increased to six. This has significantly changed her livelihood.

"I had never thought of creating my own source of income before. I was dependent on my husband but now everything has changed. I could not meet the basic needs of my children. But now a new light has dawned in my house and I have started to improve my income and raise my children with care and love. Because of this, my daughter, Eyerusalem became a clever student and was ranked first in her class. I am grateful to God and the FC organization for this change in our lives. Surprisingly, I can buy a mobile phone, talk, and feel equal to wealthy people in my community today. In the future, I plan to work hard to expand my business to cattle fattening and achieve financial success. My goal is to own a house and a shop in the town", she said.



Figure 8: Fernus Muluneh managing her sheep-rearing and fattening business

The group members are now able to provide educational materials for their children. This will further increase their sons and daughters' chances of a bright future. We were delighted to hear from our beneficiaries recently that all members have decided to quit their jobs and send their children back to school instead. Eyerusalem, the daughter of Fernus, is a shining example of this positive change.



Picture 8: Fernus Muluneh with her husband and two children

“I am confident that I will succeed because my dream is coming true”: Eyerusalem

Eyerusalem Assifaw is a 12-year-old girl who is attending Grade 4th at Urana Primary School and is supported by the project. Before the project was introduced to the district, she was frequently absent from school and struggled with her education. Despite her love for education, her hopes and dreams were dim, and she had doubts about continuing her education. However, now her optimism has been restored, and she is successfully learning and making progress.

Eyerusalem shares her experience: “During my early school days, specifically in grades 1 and 2, my interpersonal communication and class participation was very weak. I also didn’t have enough time to study at home, which affected my academic performance negatively. However, with the support of the project, my family’s awareness and income have significantly improved. The project provides me with educational materials every year and has offered training in life skills development and how to combat harmful traditional practices. This support has helped me prioritize my education, create a study plan, build my confidence, and communicate effectively with others. As a result, my cognitive abilities have increased; I scored an average of 96.6 and ranked 1st when I was promoted from Grade 3 to Grade 4 last year (2023/24). I am currently actively participating in class activities and engaging in various school clubs, including the Girls Club, Environmental Protection Club, and Mini Media Club.”



Figure 9: Student Eyerusalem Assifaw

Eyerusalem concluded by saying: “In the future, I want to become a doctor and help people, especially those living in the rural areas. I want to thank all the people who have helped me in my efforts to achieve my goal. I want to say thank you to FC and the donor, my beloved parents, and my teachers. Through their continued support, I am confident I will succeed because my dream is coming true.”

photo gallery



CRW graduates along with their facilitating teachers.

Children advocating against child rights violations during international children's days



Children showcasing their cultural dance talents during the graduation ceremony of CRW participants' children