



**Abadit Abreha – Tigray Region**

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**Child/adult** [Abadit Abreha, 15, Female, Maicheka village, Basic Education, School Health and Nutrition (SHN) club]

**Themes** [Education]

**Related interviews** [N/A]

**Summary**

Abadit Abreha is a student in grade seven at Maicheka full cycle elementary school in Tigray region of Ethiopia. She is an active member of the school Health and Nutrition club that was established and supported by Save the Children. As a club member her role includes delivering key messages to her fellow students in the school and at community level. Save the Children has constructed and furnished a school in the nearby village where more than 250 school children are currently attending their education from grade 1-8. Before the construction of the school in Maicheka village many children used to travel on foot every day up to 1:30 hours to the nearest village to get an education.

Education gives the opportunity for children to reach their potential and fulfill their dreams; in view of this, Save the children through its basic education program is closely working with the local government giving children the chance to go to school in those places where there is no school.

**Abadit's story in her own words**

My name is Abadit Abreha, I am 15 years old. I am a student in grade seven here at Maicheka full cycle elementary school in Maicheka village. I have four sisters and two brothers. It takes me 15 minutes to walk from my home to school. Two of my brothers are in Mekele attending their high school education. Three years ago my father died due to unknown illness and now I live with my mum and my sisters. Before the construction of the school in our village many children used to travel long distance to get education, as a result most of them dropout from school. Now because the school is close to our home we are able to attend our education and we no more need to travel to far places to get education.

I myself and all my sisters and brothers go to school. Mathematics and English are the two subjects I like the most. When I grow-up and finish school I want to be a doctor, I understand that it is important to study hard and finish school, in order to be what I want to be.

I like all of my classmates and I love to play with them when we have free time. My close friend is called Elleni Hadush, she is my best friend in the school, we study together and we support each other.

When it comes to girls' education, I believe that education has great benefits to girls. If girls get educated, then they will be able to limit the number of children they want to have. They can also negotiate with their partners and resolve their differences very easily. This way they can avoid conflicts arising from misunderstanding. Similarly, they can become leaders in their community and contribute for the overall development and transformation of their country. On the other hand, it is women's first responsibility to manage the household;



that is why it is said, educating girls is educating the whole family.

My mother is my closest supporter and my source of motivation. She encourages me to pursue my dream and to focus on my education. She does everything she can to make me happy and become a better student in school.

As members of the school Health and Nutrition club we prepare messages in different forms like literatures, poems, and dramas. In this way, we support our fellow students understand the importance that nutrition has to a healthy development of a child and also for adults. This time we see a lot of changes in our school and in the community in terms of health and hygiene. Now in this school, a separate latrine for boys and girls has been constructed by Save the Children. And so whenever we want to use the latrine we can use it without any fear and embarrassment. We now have more privacy than before.

**Interview conducted by Seifu Assegid and Amerti Lemma, during a recent communication assignment to Tigray region in [December, 2013]**

### **Location and background**

Tigray is located in the northern part of Ethiopia. It is home to a total population of 4.3 million, of which about 51% are female. The estimated population of children between 5 and 9 years is 1,752,374 (868,052 female), those between 1 and 4 years old are 511,210 (251,414 females), and children under one year are estimated at 118,307 (58,532 females). Among the 46 districts/ woredas Save the Children reaches only five. Hintalo Wajirat is one of the districts that Save the Children has long been implementing its educational program. Maicheka and Shimena villages are located in this district. Majority of the population is reported to be directly dependent on rain fed agriculture and dry land farming as a livelihood means.

As a result, Tigray region is characterized by dry climatic condition, severe natural resources (land, water and vegetation) degradation and cyclical droughts. Traditional farming practices and inadequate involvement of women in all aspects of development compounded with the above factors have significantly affected the performance of the regions' agricultural production and productivity. Consequently, numerous rural households have been subjected to chronic food deficit failing to feed their family in general, their small children in particular throughout a year and over years.

Tigray region has long been among the major war zone of the country during the civil war which lasted nearly two decades and claimed many lives. The area has been impacted heavily by the war and is most remembered by the drought that affected many livelihoods in the area. Because of the war many schools have been destroyed and children were forced to drop out of school. This has influenced the access to education and leaving the region to be among the least developed regions of Ethiopia.

### **Project background**

Since 2006, Save the Children through its Basic Education project has constructed more than 46 primary schools and 12 Early Childhood Care and Development Centres and 72 intervention schools for SHN in Tigray Region of Ethiopia. So far the project has benefited more than 36,500 children. Save the Children is working with the Ethiopian Government to improve the quality of education through construction of schools, provision of in service training for teachers, capacity building of community representatives, woreda expertise and supply of books and vital equipment to educational institutions.

Save the Children Basic education integrated with Food Security project provides economic support to those families who are food insecure which enables them to send their children to school.