



Gidey Nigus – Tigray Region

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Child/adult [Gidey Nigus, 26, Female, Maicheka village, Basic Education, School Parent and Teachers Association member (PTA)]

Themes [Education]

Photo references [picture ref numbers]

Related interviews [N/A]

Summary

Gidey Nigus, 26, is a mother of two boys and lives in the small rural village called Maicheka, in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. She is a member of the School Parent and Teachers Association (PTA). This is a school committee in which parents and school teachers work together to improve the overall education in the school. Education gives the opportunity for children to reach their potential and fulfill their dream; in view of this, Save the Children through its basics education program is closely working with the local government giving children the chance to go to school in those places where education is a top priority for the community.

Gidey's story in her own words

My name is Gidey Nigus. I am 26 years old. I have two children. My oldest son is eight years old and is in second grade, and the youngest boy is five years old and is currently enrolled in the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) center here in this school.

The major problem that existed before the construction of this school in our village was the lack of schools nearby. As a result, we were forced to travel on foot to faraway places up to two hours to get education. For this reason I had to drop out of school in grade eight. Soon after, I got married and became pregnant. At the time, if I had had the chance to go to school, I would have not been married and would have delayed having children. Now, because of the construction of this school near our village, our children have got the chance to get education near their home. In addition to that, many of the children in our village, especially girls were able to continue their education up to grade eight and beyond. I wish my children could finish their education and become successful in their lives and will be able to support me. I will do whatever I can to support my children to fulfill their dreams.

On behalf of my community, I would really like to thank Save the Children and those people who supported us build this school near our village. Their support has enabled our children get the chance to go to school. As members of the PTA, we work closely with the school teachers to improve the situation in the school. For example, this year we mobilized the local community and were able to engage in agricultural works inside the school compound. We are expecting to produce up to 10 quintals of wheat; which will help the school with additional income to run its activity.

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.