

Disability and/or mental illness isn't caused by a curse/sin

Written by Administrator

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Ato Destaw Nega, a married and father of 3 children, lives at Wukro kebele, Guna Begemider Woreda, South Gondar Zone. He is 45 years old living with the local culture and traditions in the area. His first child, Worku Destaw is a mentally and physically impaired boy from the womb and cannot walk on his own. As a result, for the past 19 years, he has not been able to play, learn, and socialize like his peers.

He is a subsistence farmer and has two oxen, one cow and 0.375 hectares of land. He also rears sheep and a retailer of grains, which transport via donkey, to supplement his living expenses. His wife and 3 children help him with the farm. But his first child is physically impaired and needs special family support. The parents were also worried about their son's future.

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The Inclusive Health, Economic and Social Development program (IHESDP) project, which is funded by Hope and Healing International, has been working to improved wellbeing of girls, boys and families, with disability and at risk of disability in trachoma epidemic communities in Amhara Region. Ato Destaw also benefits from the project as his first child, a member of his family, is physically impaired. The project has trained him in sheep rearing and to take part in value chains to improve the lives of his physically impaired child and his families. As a result, in 2020, he was donated two ewes and one rams and become beneficiary in sheep rearing.

“I have been benefiting from rearing of sheep, which I was donated by the project. Last year I sold 2 new lamps for 1,300 and 1,200 and bought agricultural inputs like soil fertilizer. This year, from the sell of 2 lambs for 2,100 and 1,350, I am going to buy one calf for my child Worku.” He said. Ato Destaw now has a total of four ewes and two lambs.

Ato Destaw thanks ORDA Ethiopia, an implementer, and Hope & Healing International, for

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financing the project, which they assist in improving the lives of his family. He said he would be happy if his physically impaired child received a wheelchair and special needs education.