ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

# SUCCESS STORIES OF RESILENT CHILDREN IN ARBAMINCH TOWN

BY

TEKALIGN AYALEW

JULY, 2009

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TEKALIGN AYALEW

Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

Advisor: Dr. Gebre Yntiso

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TEKALIGN AYALEW

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By Tekalign Ayalew

College Of Social science

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Chairperson of Department, Graduate committee — Signature

Advisor — Signature

Examiner — Signature

Examiner — Signature

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# Abstract

This thesis focuses on the success stories of former vulnerable children in Arbaminch town. The central purpose is to explore the risks they encountered and the protective factors that helped them remain resilient and finally became successful. Primary data for the study was collected mainly through in-depth life history interview, observations and focus group discussions. A total 55 key informants were interviewed in detail. Life history method was employed to generate data from 30 successful children and young adults. Three focus group discussions were held with 8 successful children, 11 teachers, and 9 parents.

The thesis first identifies the major risks to children and youth in the family, schools and the community environment. The common risks in the family include poverty and family disorganization resulted from divorce, loss of biological parents and parental conflicts which pushed a large number of children to the streets or exposed them to various kinds of abuses. Many of government schools are also not effective. The common problems in schools include limited students' participation in teaching learning process, illegal video and drug centers around schools and shortage of educational facilities, prevalence of student misbehaviors and low academic performances and achievements. The community environment is also not safe and comfortable for positive child development. The major challenges in the community include high rate of substance abuse (mainly chat and shisha), crime and violence, unemployment and idleness, expansion of illegal video centers and absence of recreational centers. These factors tend to affect the intellectual developments of children and expose them to child abuses and exploitations.

However, some children and young adults coped with all these challenges and finally became successful. In this case, the 30 children and young adults, whose case histories are analyzed, successfully adapted and transformed their early life difficulties into success. Those informants enjoyed various types of protective factors. Some of them enjoyed consistent family advices, encouragement and guidance about healthy cultural and religious values and life skills. Others took fair responsibilities in the family early where they learned practical social skills. But the majority obtained material, financial and technical supports in critical moments of their early life from others .Attachment to positive peers and role model individuals also encouraged and helped children and young adults to search own talents and explore surrounding resources .Those protective factors in turn helped informants to develop skills of entrepreneurship, positive self-regard and dependable personalities. In addition, children's individual qualities such as hard working, saving, resourceful planning and communication abilities served as an important means to create social and economic capitals. Children's internal strengths and external supports not only helped them to remain resilient but also to be socially and economically successful. Some of them become investors with a capital of more than 500,000 Birr. Their social standing improved because some participated in administrative capacities, while others earned degrees and diplomas.

The study concludes that proper socialization, financial, material and technical supports in difficult times, involving children in solving family problems and attachment to positive peers and role model individuals could nurture resilience capabilities in children and adolescents who are growing in risk situations. It could also facilitate goal attainments. Furthermore, children need to be promoted with their individual capacities such as saving and hard working abilities so as to effectively use external supports and encouragements.

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# Glossary of Local Terms

| | |
|---|---|
| *Areqe* | local alcoholic prepared from cereal through distillation, commonly consumed by poor people. |
| *Birr* | Ethiopian currency. |
| *Chat* | a stimulant drug, the leaf is chewed. |
| *Dergue* | the Marxist style military government, ruled Ethiopia from 1974-1991. |
| *Diqaala* | a child who was born out of legally or culturally accepted marriage. |
| *Equb* | a traditional saving institution, people in the same community deposit and collect money weekly or monthly |
| *Gulit* | a small daily, open market in urban areas of Ethiopia where poor women usually engage in petty trade. |
| *Haleko* | a green leaf of tree serves as vegetable food in place of cabbage in southern Ethiopia, commonly consumed by poor people. |
| *Injera* | a traditional pancake and staple food of Ethiopia, made of cereals, mainly from teff. |
| *Kebele* | the lowest administrative unit in Ethiopia |
| *Kolla* | traditional agro-climatic zone of Ethiopia characterized by high temperature but not as high as desert or semi-desert. |
| *Kolo* | a type of food prepared from roasted cereals usually sold on the streets by street vendors. |
| *Kurkufa* | traditional food prepared from corn flour mixed with green leaves of vegetables, commonly consumed by poor people in Gamo society. |
| *Qiyoske* | a mini supermarket in which service is provided through windows. |
| *Senbet-timirtbet* | (Lit. Sunday school) religious programs in Orthodox Christian Church, youth and children study , the Bible and moral values. |
| *Shuruba* | traditional females' hair making style used for beauty purposes. |
| *Teff* | cereal crop from which *injera*, staple food in of Ethiopia, is prepared. |
| *Tej* | local alcoholic prepared from honey. |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Tella* | local alcoholic, prepared from maize or barley, commonly sold by poor women in urban areas of Ethiopia. |
| *Woreda* | an administrative unit encompassing *kebeles* in Ethiopia, accountable to the zone. |
| *Woyaala* | assistant taxi or Isuzu car driver whose income is very low |
| *Yeegizer Dildiy* | (Lit. God's bridge) the natural landscape (bridge) that separates the two lakes, Abaya and Chamo. |
| *Zebegna* | a less paid guard of private or government institutions. |
| *Zone* | administrative unit encompassing *woredas* (districts) in Ethiopia, accountable to the region. |

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background

It has been widely recognized that poverty, loss of family, divorce, lack of access to basic services such as education, family problems such as conflicts and substance abuse are the major risk factors that intensify or aggravate child abuses and exploitations mainly in urban areas of Ethiopia (Kebrom, 2008;Nardos, 2007; Getenet, 2007; MoLSA, 2002). This in turn threatens children's emotional, moral, cognitive and intellectual or social developments which play a very important role in their adult life (Kebrom, 2008). Abuse, neglect and violence against children exact extraordinary costs to society and linked to lifelong social and health problems: post traumatic stress disorder, depression, antisocial and aggressive behavior, substance abuse, physical damage, impaired academic and work performance, problematic peer relations, and greater involvement with criminal activities (Lomi, 2002;Hairu, 2006).

According to the 2003 National Policy Document of the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture, the Ethiopian Youth (age 15-29) are facing many problems and challenges. The major ones include: unemployment (67%), shortage of vocational and technical schools as well as recreational centers for talent development, and weakness of child related institutions for positive experiences of moral and life skill development. Consequently, many youngsters in urban areas are forced to involve in anti-social activities such as substance abuse (chat, shisha, and alcoholism), commercial sex work, begging, street life and criminal activities.

Arbaminch town is one of urban areas characterized by high rate of substance abuse, streetism, rural-urban migration of children, deep poverty, unemployment, idleness, child abuse , orphanism, crime and violence, and a feeling of insecurity (GTZ-Is, 2003).For instance, the unemployment rate of the town is 14% ,and 62% of the total population is migrant(ROSA,2007). Education and health coverage of the town are 60% and 41% respectively (CSA, 2005; ROSA, 2007; Hairu, 2006). From the above reports it is apparent that growing up in Arbaminch involves risks to positive child and youth development.

It is equally important to note the fact that the town hosts a number of self-reliant, industrious and successful children and youth who were once in risk situations in the past. In this regard, some of former shoe shiners, abused waiters, migrant street boys, urban gangs and children from destitute

families have became self-reliant and socially competent. Some of them become investors with a capital of more than 500,000 Birr. This is because of their internal strengths and external supports and encouragements from family members, positive role model individuals and peers as well as government, welfare organizations, religious and educational institutions. The purpose of this research is to explore the common risk factors that threaten healthy development of children, the protective factors and developmental assets that facilitate their successful adaptations and transformation despite the presence of adversities.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

As many sources indicate a number of Ethiopian children and youth are at-risk and vulnerable. There are 4.6 million orphans (MoLSA, 2002; Getnet, 2007) and more than 150,000 street children in the country (MoLSA, 2002). Many of them are vulnerable, destitute, neglected and abused (Lomi, 2002; Getnet, 2007). Poverty, lose of family, drought, rural-urban migration, lack of basic services such as education, exposure to violence and serious parental problems such as substance abuse increased vulnerability to children(Nardos, 2007).

However, despite the presence of risks and obstacles there are stories of success achieved by children who were once vulnerable and victims of various types of adversities. But most of the existing researches focus mainly on challenges that children face and only on children who are victims of risks. No or little (if any) attention is given to resilient children who demonstrated competence to avoid vulnerabilities such as exploitations and abuses or recover from such ordeals. Therefore, this research intends to explore success stories and child resilience to adversities. New sources of knowledge about coping abilities of vulnerable children could be a lesson for others. The findings of this research will fill some information gaps and pave the way for learning, awareness rising, and possible policy/program interventions.

Previous studies on children focused on major cities such as Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, and Adama. But this study was carried out in the town of Arbaminch for the following reasons. First, many children arrive from rural villages such as Konso, Dorze, Bonke, Genta and Sile in search of better life opportunities. Second, the town's proximity to the southern outlets of the country to Kenya and Somalia facilitated drug (Shisha and Chat) trafficking, which in turn aggravated the vulnerability of children to abuses and exploitations. Third, the presence of natural treasures near the town (lakes and parks) attracted tourists, which encouraged the flow of children to the streets of the town.

## 1.3. Objectives

### 1.3.1. General Objective

This research aims at exploring success stories of former vulnerable children in Arbaminch town with the objective to understand the risks they have experienced, protective factors that helped them remain resilient, and the success attained.

### 1.3.2. Specific Objectives

1. To describe and analyze risk factors that resilient and successful children had experienced.
   - What are the general risk factors to children in Arbaminch town?
   - What were the specific challenges that the successful and resilient children and young adults had experienced?
   - What were the vulnerability factors that increased their susceptibility to the various risks?
2. To identify and analyze protective factors and developmental assts that helped vulnerable children to cop with adversities and become successful.
   - Why is it that some children and young adults in difficult socio-economic environments have become industrious, self-reliant and even triumphant while others are idle, addicted, delinquent, trafficked, abused and never recovered?
   - What makes them apparently immune to the factors that negatively affected others?
   - What are the types and sources of developmental assets and resources that some children enjoyed?
3. To explain and analyze socio-economic achievements, and individual competences of successful children and young people who were previously at risk.
   - What are the manifestations of their resilience status (social competence)?
   - What are the indicators of their success and achievement level?
   - What are the levels of their individual competencies?

## 1.4. Significance of the Study

It is a fact that the population age structure of Ethiopia is usually pyramidal in shape, with children occupying the broad base. This means that the youth and child population of the country take the lion's share of the total population of the country. It is also true that productive young people are the future of the country if their physical, emotional and intellectual development is ensured. These valuable assets in their life could be obtained from the family, the school, peer groups, community's traditions, customs, values and other organizations.

Within these contexts resilience research would elucidate the lives of successful high-risk children in time of growing concern about the effects of poverty, homelessness, maltreatment and violence on development. It also reveals the consequences of youth problems, including teenage pregnancy, school failure, and crime for youth and for society.

The findings of this research would benefit the policy makers and NGO's as well as other stakeholders who are concerned about child development and child rights. New knowledge about coping strategies, abilities, potentials and developmental assets that helped vulnerable children to be successful could be lessons for others in schools and other institutions. These new knowledges include the importance of attachment to positive and productive peers and role model individuals as well as financial technical and material supports in critical moments of child's life (e.g. starting small trade, after school failure and death of parents). In addition, children's internal strengths such as achievement motivations, persistence, industriousness, saving, social and problem solving skills also could serve as a power to cop with or overcome adversities. Moreover, proper socializations such as consistence follow ups, guidance and encouragement by a family member and involving children in solving family problems still appeared as important protective factor. Thus, the findings could be useful for both formal and informal educators, the family and caregivers to nurture resilience in their children so as to make them more ready to cope with any life adversities.

In addition, NGOs and other caregivers who are concerned with vulnerable children would use the findings to design different types of intervention/support strategies to help children who are victims of adversities, resilient children, and those who recovered from abuses separately. NGOs and caregivers could learn the importance of providing part-time jobs, life skill trainings, counseling services, financial and technical supports for those who recovered from abuses according to their

needs and capacities. They could also work with religious leaders for children's moral and intellectual developments.

Further, this study's findings and suggestions on the importance of promoting resilience would call for other researches in the area extending resilience based studies for positive child and youth development. It is mainly important to see children in difficult socioeconomic conditions with strengths and finding and learning ways of promoting these strengths. Thus, it will fill some information gaps and pave the way for learning, awareness rising, and possible policy/program intervention.

## 1.5. Research Design

### 1.5.1. Informant Selection and Category

Informants of this research were obtained from three categories. The first category includes 30 children and young people aged 13-29 years. In the second category 10 informants were included. They were obtained from experts in Youth Affairs, Representatives of NGOs, Labor and Social Affairs, Women's Affairs, Police and Zone HIV AIDS Secretariat. For the third category 15 informants were taken from parents of resilient children, community leaders, religious leaders, elderly, teachers and coordinators of MSEs(Micro and Small Enterprises) .These key informants were selected based on their level of influence and recognized knowledge of the needs, problems and strategies of children and the youth. Informants were selected mainly purposively based on the local contexts and realities. In the first two weeks of the research a list of potential informants for the three categories were collected and rapport was built with the help of local advisors, assistant researchers, other knowledgeable individuals and agencies which had contacts with children and the young people in the town. Totally 55 key informants were selected from the list for each category.

The first category that consists of 30 children and young people of both sex groups were the main focus of the research. This category represents successful children and young adults who were previously vulnerable and experienced different types of adversities in their early lives. But they have gone successful adaptation and transformation. In the beginning of the research 52 such types of informants were identified through chain method of community relations, contact, and by the help of local advisors. Those informants came from education centers (preparatory schools and

colleges), small and large scale business enterprises (formal and informal), civil service offices, NGOs working with development projects related to children and the youth (namely, OSA, Red Cross Associations and Mecane Yesus Church), and youth associations and organizations (members of MSEs development associations and anti HIV/AIDS clubs) in collaboration with Arbaminch Town Youth Sport and Environment Development Bureau. With the knowledgeable individual the researcher tried to make contact with those informants. But only 46 became volunteer and accessible and out of which the 30 informants were selected randomly through lottery method.

From the 30 children and young people, 15 were selected purposively and their life stories were explored in detail. The purposive selection was based on their competence level, success they achieved, capacity to remember and narrate life experiences and intensity of adversities they faced. Since age affects children's capacity to cope with risks and as well as the accumulation of experiences, different questions and approaches were used to children and youngsters between 13 and 29 years old. Thus, the 30 informants were divided in to three groups based on their age: 13-17, 18-22 and 23 -29. Children above age 13 years were taken since the researcher could not find successful children bellow 13 years old in the list of volunteer and accessible potential informants as the study was about success stories of resilient children. Young adults (19-29 years of age) who overcame early life adversities and became more successful were included to see sources of their resilience capabilities and achievements.18 years old children were categorized with young adults based on their maturity and achievement levels.

**Table 1: Age Category of Resilient Children and Youth**

| Age category | Sex | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | |
| 13-17 | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| 18-22 | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| 23-29 | 12 | 2 | 14 |
| Total | 22 | 8 | 30 |

At the beginning of the research it was designed to have 10 informants in each category. But in the field the researcher could not find10 informants (equal number of males and females) in each age

category in the list of volunteer accessible potential informants. The majority of the most successful potential informants were males and their ages were 18 years and above.

### 1.5.2. Data Collection Methods

Data for this research was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Three primary data collection techniques were employed: interview (mainly life history interview), observations, and focus group discussion. The secondary data was collected from documents, reports, letters and other recordings of children and youth situations in the town. These sources include archival materials; published or unpublished books and journals.

#### a. Life History Interview

The life history interview was the central method used. A total of 30 successful children and adolescents were interviewed about their life experiences. The life history method was mainly employed to generate data from 15 successful children and young adults. This method is well suited to exploring a child's life time historical experiences within local and extra-local contexts. It helped the researcher to understand the children's and youngsters' current situations, how they have influenced by events and decisions in another time and another place. The life history method was used to produce information about the way how children and young adults view their own lives, their perception of social attitude towards them, and the implications of these views and perceptions. Data were collected by getting children and young people tell their individual stories in their own words. This was done by beginning the interview with the informant's early childhood experience and proceed to the present i.e., from simple to complex and sensitive personal issues after building rapport and intimacy with them. In-depth interview was also held with the other two groups of informants to strengthen information already obtained by life history. It was used to get information about the risks and opportunities as well as developmental resources of children in local and extra- local contexts in the town in general.

#### b. Observation

Systematic and organized observations were used to see not only the everyday life of successful self-reliant child informants and young individuals but also the physical, socio- cultural and economic constraints or opportunities under which they operate. Planed observation was used to see the working and living environment and activities of successful children and young people. It helped the researcher to see the housing conditions and their capitals in kind at the moment so as

to estimate/express their living standards. It was also used to countercheck whether what they are saying in the interview and case histories correspond with the ordinary life they are actually leading. Systematic observations were also used to investigate risk factors such as substance abuse and others affecting child development in the community and school environments. For example, illegal video and Shisha centers and Chat shops in the community were observed and enumerated by the help of assistant researchers. In the schools teaching learning processes, availabilities and qualities of educational facilities were carefully observed and recorded. During observations photos were also taken to supplement the data.

### c. Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)

Three FGDs were conducted with resilient children (8 members), parents (9 members) and teachers (11 members). This method was used to get more information about the general risk factors and opportunities to the children and youth in the town as well as ways of positive child development. It also helped the researcher mainly to identify causes of ineffectiveness of some the government schools, magnitude and causes of substance abuse and delinquent activities in the town.

## 1.5.3. Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed qualitatively. Life histories, diaries, interviews and other recorded information were carefully transcribed and translated. Living ethnographic evidences of case histories were provided at all stages so as to support the whole argument of the research. Here language experts were used to translate the transcription into forward and backward so as to minimize distortions and bias of original narrations of case histories. The gathered data then was sorted thematically. After that it was analyzed and interpreted in detail. Some resilience literatures were also used for comparative analysis of resilience factors. Finally, the reports of research findings were written up by considering the logical order, flow of ideas and arguments.

## 1.6. Ethical Issues

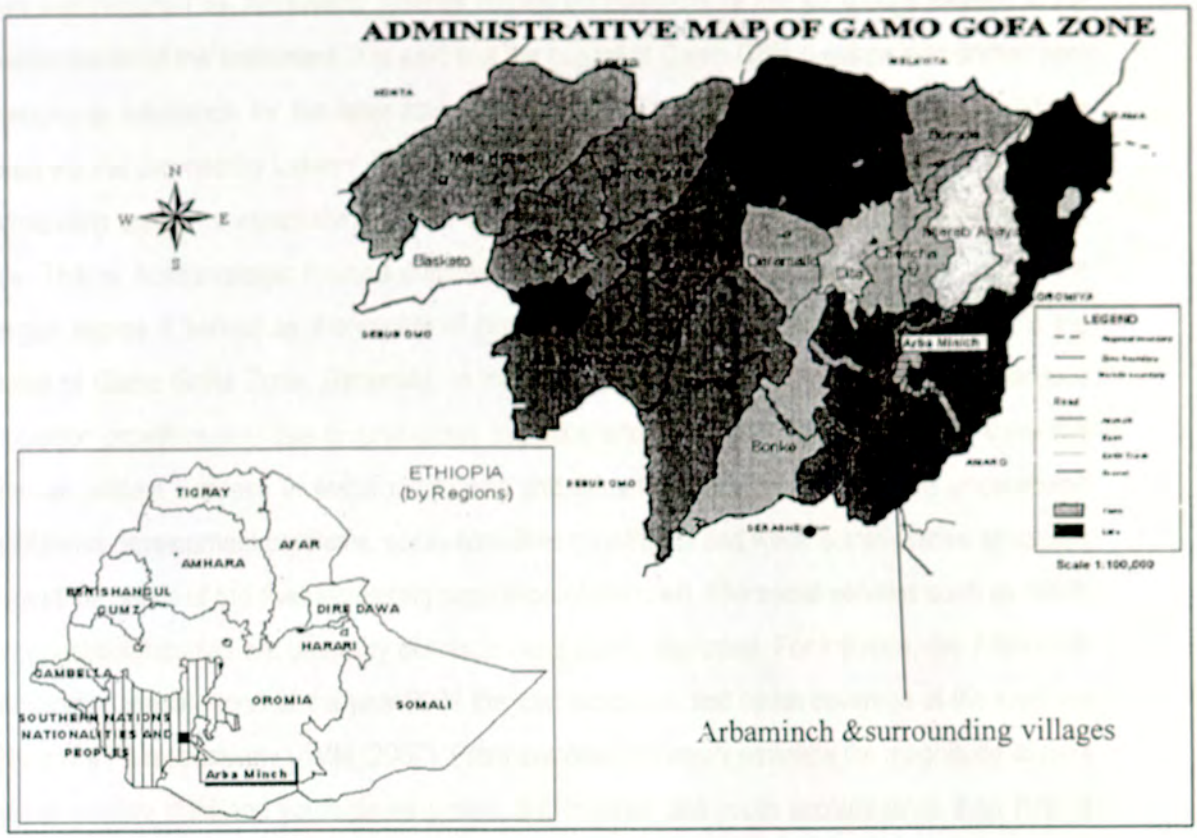
All ethical issues, moral conditions, norms and child rights were considered in all stages of the research. The study was participatory and child-friendly. It recognized children's potentials and competences in such a way that they are independent and knowledgeable social actors. The researcher also respected the freedom and dignity of all informants by preventing any sort of injury

or emotional pain as well as obtained their voluntary consent. He informed them about the research. Informants were told that they could refuse or withdraw from participation. Questions of complicated personal issues of former vulnerable children were handled with high sensitivity considering that it may trigger discomfort. Real names of the majority of the former vulnerable children were used since they were happy about their current success level and willing their real names to be mentioned. But one informant who was not volunteer that her name to be mentioned, pseudo-name was used. Regarding confidentiality and anonymity, informants were told that who will have access the data and what will happen to the data after the completion of the study.

## 1.7. Description of the Study Area

### 1.7.1. Location and Physical Setting

The town of Arbaminch is located in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region. Arbaminch is found to south of the capital-Addis Ababa, at a distance of 505kms. Its geographical position is $6^0$4' N latitude and $36^0$40' E longitude with the altitude of 1200m-1400m above sea level. Since it lies within the Great African Rift Valley, Arbaminch has relatively hot (Kola) climate with the annual average temperature and rainfall of $29^0$c and 800-1000mm respectively. Owing to its hot climate the town is an ideal place for the breeding of mosquitoes causing malaria. Hence, the prevalence of malaria compounded with poor and inadequate health service facilities threatens the physical wellbeing of children (mainly age under 5). The town stretches itself over a total area of 2184 hectares and is divided in to four sub-towns namely Shecha, Nechsar, Sikella, and Abaya which in turn are sub divided into sixteen administrative kebeles. However, more than 80% of delinquent youths and street children are found in Shecha and Sikella sub towns (Hairu, 2006; Birru, 1997; ROSA, 2007).




*Map of Gamo Gofa Zone and Arbaminch town*

*Source: Gamo Goffa Zone Finance and Economic Development Office*

The town is bordered by Sile Bridge and Lake Chamo in the south, Hare River in the north, following the rural villages of Dega and Kola Shara, Ganta and Ocholo in the west, and Nechsar National Park, and Lake Abaya in the east. Many of street children usually arrive to the town from these villages (ROSA, 2007; Hairu, 2006).

Arbaminch town is surrounded by natural gifts and attractions of spectacular landscapes, water bodies and forests. The major natural treasures include Lake Abaya and Lake Chamo, the 40 springs, Arbaminch Natural Reserve Forest, Nechsar National Park, the famous Crocodile Ranch and, Ye egizer Dildiy (lit. "God's bridge") which separates the two lakes. These beautiful landscapes and forests with diverse fauna and flora species have made the town tourist center. This in turn provided some children and youth job opportunities in the form of tour guides and waiters and waitress in ever expanding hotels in the town. But, it also pushed some disadvantaged children to the streets mainly induced by tour guides (ROSA, 2007; (AMM, 2007).

The town of Arbaminch was established in 1963 as a capital of the former Gamo Goffa province with ethno-linguistic name called 'Garo' which in the language of Gamo means town. Later, the

town was renamed as Arbaminch ,after its natural endowments of the 40 springs located in the eastern border of the settlement. It is said that the capital of Gamo Gofa province was shifted from Chencha to Arbaminch for the latter has relatively easy access to Sidamo (present day Sidama Zone) via the two nearby Lakes ( Abaya and Chamo),flat topography and Teff productions in the surrounding areas. Its establishment was, thus, in line with the shift in philosophy of cities at the time .That is, from strategic focused administration centers to economic development. During the Dergue regime it served as the capital of North Omo province with slow growth. Now it is the capital of Gamo Goffa Zone. Generally, in the past four decades the town showed tremendous population growth mainly due to rural-urban migration and physical expansion. Though there has been an evident increase in social institutions and infrastructure, the town still has encountered multifarious development problems, socio-economic constraints and week administrative structures to meet the needs of the ever increasing population of the town. The social services such as health and education facilities are unevenly distributed and poorly equipped. For instance, the Arbaminch municipality annual report of the year 2007 the total education and heath coverage of the town are 60% and 41% respectively (AMM, 2007). From this one can easily estimate the magnitude of risks against positive child and youth development. But children and youth account more than 70% of the population in the town (CSA, 2005; ROSA, 2007).

### 1.7.2. Population and Demographic Setting

The population of the town increased from 40,200 in 1994 (CSA, 1996) to more than 75,000 in 2005 with the growth rate of 5.1% (CSA, 2005). But as to Arbaminch municipality report of the year 2007 the total population is 82,847. However, as to estimate of the Town's Administration of the year 2007, the total population is 120,000. In addition, according to ROSA Development Project, which was funded with European Union Framework program ,the total population of the town is 78,843 (ROSA, 2007). Thus, as to the above sources, the town's population is more than 75000. The ever increasing population growth is mainly because of rural-urban migration from the surrounding villages searching for better life. Thus, 62% of residents are migrants. The town's population is mix of people from various ethnic groups. Of the total population the Gamo ethnic group constitute the largest portion (44%) followed by Amhara (24%), Oromo (7.79%) and Wolayta (7.07%) (ROSA, 2007). When we come to see ratio the female population accounts 52.5% whereas the balance percentage (47.5%) is accounted by male. However, 30% (3851) households are headed by females with average household size of 5 individuals (AMM, 2007; ROSA, 2007). Thus, taking the females economic status in the country one can easily estimate the level of

poverty and the consequent challenges and risks of child development in such types of households in the town.

The dependency ratio is 38.41% in the town (ESP, 2005/06). The active and productive population (age 15-64) carries the social and economic burdens of unproductive population in the town (SEP, 2005/06). In this regard the youth 15-19 age category covers 14.33% of the total population followed by age category 5-9 which accounts 14.1%. Thus, the town has high young dependency ratio and child population. For instance children age between 0 and 14 accounts 37.29%. This indicates the demographic fact of developing third world countries (ESP, 2006). Thus, since 75.29% of total population is under age category between 0 and 29, the town is populated with large number of socially insecure and economically vulnerable and dependent child and teenage population (ROSA, 2007). This again indicates another socioeconomic risk against positive child development in the town.

### 1.7.3. Social Setting

Arbaminch town has a few and unevenly distributed socio-cultural institutions. The town has 7 kindergartens, 10 primary schools, 2 high schools, 1 preparatory school, 9 colleges (of which only two are governmental: 1 technical and 1 health science colleges) and 1 university. There is also 1 Boarding School. The normal class size expected in schools is 50 students in a class, but the average class size in the town is 80 students in primary schools and 85 in high schools (AMM, 20007). This indicates the overcrowdings of students in the schools and the consequent degradation of quality of education. Health services are also scanty in the town. There is only one government hospital and one government health station. The rest 20 small clinics are private and their service charges are costly particularly for the poor section of the population (AMM, 2007). This again threatens the physical and social wellbeing of mainly children in the town.

Regarding religious institutions the town has 5 Orthodox, 7 Protestant, 1 Adventist and 1 Catholic Churches and 3 Mosques. Accordingly from the total population 35% are protestant Christians, 30% are orthodox and catholic Christians, 25% are Muslim and 10% have their own religion (ROSA, 2007). Some children and youngsters got moral and ethical educations from these religious institutions and consequently restrained themselves from involvement in anti-social activities such as substance abuse and delinquent activities (AMM, 2007; ROSA, 2007).

In addition, though there is high tolerance among people to one another and respect to ethno linguistically heterogeneous population which become the socio cultural foundation of the society, there are counter sub-culture called delinquent culture and many other social problems. The major ones include streetism, abandoned children, some ex-fishers who are idle and some times involve in criminal activities because of the lakes' "legal protection", commercial sex workers, jobless rural migrants poured on the streets and the corners, of mainly Shecha and Sikella sub-towns (ROSA, 2007). Some delinquent groups of the town behave arrogantly towards the people. Regarding their socio-cultural origins most of the street children are the migrant petty traders and daily laborers who are sparing the night in the town. Some of them are victims of abduction and rape by the urban gangs and sexually harassed by their fellow male migrant petty traders who usually intoxicate with local drinks (ROSA, 2007). These all increase feeling of insecurity mainly for the other descent and productive migrant children on the streets and informal sectors. Thus, it becomes another risk factor in the community environment against successful child development.

The town also lacks other infrastructures such as emergency fire bridge, modern sewerage and waste disposal systems and adequate pure water and sanitation services (AMM, 2007). For instance, 7503 housing units have no private connection of water supply through pipe lines. In addition, the town's waste disposal coverage is only 15% (AMM, 2007). These indicate the threat against health wellbeing, mainly for children in the town.

### 1.7.4. Economic Setting

The livelihood and income sources of residents in the town include: industry, trade, service and agriculture. The urban and semi-urban dwelling farmers grow banana, maize, different fruits and rear cattle. In this regard banana is the most important cash crop that many youngsters in the town engaged as export merchants or produce it in the surrounding fertile lands of the town mainly around the two lakes. A significant number of women are engaged in low income petty trade and labor in preparation of local drinks as well as collection of fuel wood. But a few people are engaged in industry and service provisions (ROSA, 2007).

#### a. Industrial Activity

Arbaminch town is less endowed with the advanced machine processing production practices. Hence most of the urban productions are manual and mechanical. Yet there are some industrial activities which are part and parcel of the economic endeavors to the town's development. These include: Arbaminch Textile Factory, Arbaminch State Farm, Fish Processing Factory, and some

mechanically driven industries such as coffee and grain mills, wood logging machines, welding and soldering machines, garage, and micro enterprises. Never the less these small scale enterprises and mechanically driven industries absorbed more than 60% of employed youth in the town (AMM, 2007; ROSA, 2007).

The potential one is the smokeless industry called tourism which is accounted by the naturally endowed beauty than artificial glorifications or human established architectures. The areas around the town are endowed with wonderful landscapes, natural forests, and a variety of wild animals and birds species because of the presence of the two lakes (Abaya and Chamo) and Nechsar National Park. The town is also the gate way to tourist attractions in South Omo and Mago National Park via the towns of Konso and Jinka. Thus, the town is benefiting from these natural treasures. For instance, according to Gamo Gofa Zone Tourism and Transport Department annual report of the year 2005/06, 47091 foreign and 18189 inland tourists visited the town's attractions and a total sum of 2,529,639 Birr income was collected. Here many children and youth benefited as tour guides and waiters and waitress in hotels mainly by collecting tip money after serving foreign tourists (ROSA, 2007).

Some children and youth are also engaged in the emerging Micro and Small Scale Enterprises (MSEs) activities. The major activities include textile and garments works, producing construction inputs, metal and woodworks (house and office furniture) and food processing. Some youngsters produce in their own private workshops and others are organized under the government's youth development package programs. The package was designed to reduce unemployment and facilitate the development of middle and large scale industries and enterprises in the country. In this regard the town's Trade, Industry and Transport Bureau in collaboration with Enterprise Development Bureau organized 1976 unemployed youngsters under 148 associations in various MSEs activities in four years (2004- 2007). The associations have been benefiting from the technical, financial and material (logistic) support provided to them by the government. But in most it is proved to be ineffective, insufficient and futile. Hence many associations failed to succeed (AMM, 2007). Some members in the associations, also, have no business and industrial skills as well as determinations to succeed. In this case more than 60% of associations were failed and dispersed. Some of the successful young members of the few associations are those who have personal strengths and skills as well as enjoyed appropriate technical and material supports from their relatives and government. Some of them have also got the formal training and licenses in

wood and metal works from Arbaminch Mekaneyesus Vocational School. They were also former vulnerable children who came from poor families (AMM, 2007).

**b. Means of Income**

The livelihood and sources of income to Arbaminch town population is from diverse social and economic practices as it is true for other urban centers in Ethiopia. According to ESP-component 3 report (2006) 23% of the residents are partially employed with monthly income of 700-1500 Birr and 17% possess fulltime work with monthly income of Birr 500-1000. In addition, 33% do domestic work and their monthly income is between 300 and 450 Birr, 11% causal work with monthly income of Birr 100-300, 5% receive pension 70-100 Birr monthly and 10% are unemployed.

The municipality list government employment as the major source of income in the town. This is mainly due to the town's capital hood for Gamo Gofa zone, Arbaminch Zuria woreda, Arbaminch Town Administration, and municipality, as well as government service and industrial activities. Trade is also emerging as the main livelihood of many young migrants in the town. But more than 50% of the urban dwellers have monthly income less than 450 Birr. On the other hand the urban population is growing in higher rate than its industrial development. Unemployment rate is also increasing mainly because of the privatization of lakes, ground water and forests without alternative livelihood measures. Thus, the rapid demographic increase together with low income earning capacity explains the low standard of living, prevalence of poverty and the extent of unmeet demand for adequate socioeconomic facilities to children and youngsters in the town. This in turn pushes many youngsters to substance abuse and involvement in other antisocial activities such as idleness, commercial sex work, crime and violence (ROSA, 2007). Hence, one can easily estimate the consequent risk factors to children in the community environment.

## 1.8. Organizatoin of the Paper

This paper is structured in to six chapters. Each of which in turn has a sub-section of its own. Chapter one is about the introduction of the thesis. It includes the background, problem statement, objectives, and significance of the study, research methods and description of the study area. Chapter two discusses the literatures related to the study. The chapter intends to explore whether the local and international studies on resilience could support this research or not. Thus, it identified other studies that support findings in this research. Accordingly the concepts of resilience

and childhood, risk factors, protective factors and developmental assets in childhood and risks and resilience experiences among the Ethiopian children and youth are reviewed. Chapter three discuses about the risks and challenges children and youth experienced. It has two sections: the first section is about common risks to children and youth in the town and the second section deals with the major challenges and tragedies that the 30 children and young adults encountered. Chapter four focuses on the protective factors. These include proper socializations, attachment to positive and productive peers and role models, supports and encouragement from others and individual strengths and qualities of some children and young adults that helped them to be resilient and finally to become successful. Chapter five is about achievement indicators of the resilient children and young adults. It includes their economic and social achievements and academic levels and performances. Finally, in the six chapter conclusions of major findings are provided and recommendations are forwarded for practitioners and policy makers.

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1. Concepts and Definitions

### 2.1.1. The Concept of Childhood

Childhood perceptions and definitions vary significantly from society to society and culture to culture. But, for this paper I use the common concepts and themes recur in the most influential studies of child development (James et al., 2005; Damon, 2004; Masten et al., 1997; Polou, 2004). In western societies and most urban areas of developing countries, childhood is seen as a long protracted and protected period of dependence in which going to school is a dominant future (Damon, 2004). The above sources further noted that children are thought to be dependent beings that should be molded according to the needs and values of parents and society. They are the raw materials for the future of society and great emphasis is placed on the family as the site of responsibility for the child's welfare (Poluha et al., 2000). But scholars of child development also see children as not simply passive recipient of their parent's socializing endeavors but as actors themselves and active in the construction of their own lives. However, what they think and do will be closely dependent on the knowledge and experiences they have had (Damon, 2004). It is also a fact that children live multifaceted environment: The family, the school and global world at large. All these contexts provide risks and opportunities as well as developmental assets for their wellbeing of cognitive, emotional, social and moral development. Within these contexts they make and remake their lives, cultural patterns and political behavior of the society at large (Poluha, 2004).

Childhood is a time when children are allowed to grow and develop to their full potential. Healthy children in schools and at play are growing strong and confident with the love and encouragement of their family and at extended community of caring adults (Werner, 1984). Gradually they take the responsibilities of adulthood, free from fear and safe –safe from violence, abuse and exploitations (UNICEF, 2005). In this regard William Damon in his study of positive youth development argues that every child has talents, strengths and interests that offer the child potential for bright future. It is true, he believes, that child development is affected by factors such as poverty, abuse, family disorganization and etc. But a fully able child eager to explore the world, gain competence and acquire the capacity to contribute importantly to his life and the world. Hence educating and

engaging children in productive activities are essential for their overall moral, cognitive and emotional development and the consequent success in their later life (Damon, 2004).

### 2.1.2. The Concept of Child Resilience

#### a. Definition

Scholars of resilience and child development studies have defined resilience in many different ways. But for this study I use the common themes and concepts appear in the most influential works of resilience researches. Thus, resilience refers to a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversities such as abuse and neglect, poverty, family disorganization and other catastrophes to development (Luther et al., 2000). Similarly Benard (1991) defined resilience as a set of qualities or protective mechanisms that give rise to successful adaptation and transformation and even turn a life trajectory into success despite the presence of high risk factors during the course of development. Linquanti (1992) further elaborates the concept of resilience as follows: resilience is "... that qualities in children who, though exposed to significant stress and adversity in their lives, do not succumb to the school failure, substance abuse, mental health and juvenile delinquency problem they are at greater risk of experiencing..."

Resilience is a product of both internal and external forces. Hence, personal characteristics such as optimistic perspective, social competence, problem solving skills and critical consciousness and environmental resources such as caring and supportive relations, positive and high expectations and opportunities for meaningful participations produce adaptive responses to adversities. If children and youngsters are provided and promoted with the resilience factors and developmental assets in their early life or critical moments in their lives, it sets their pattern for dealing with adversity for the rest of their life (Damon, 2004). Hence, resilience is a dynamic process rather than fixed individual qualities in a child. It is an outcome of interactive process between resilience resources within individual child, the family, the school and the community at large (Germazy, 1983). Children also may be more or les resilient at different points in their lives depending on the interaction and accumulation of these individual and environmental development resources (Luther et al., 2000; Winfield 1994).

#### b. Characteristics of Resilient Children and Youngsters

Resilience studies (Germazy, 1983; Winfield, 1994; Luthar et al., 2000) have identified individual characteristics of resilient children in high poverty areas and problematic families who succeed

despite their disadvantaged circumstances. These characteristics include wide array of social skills, positive peer interactions, a high degree of social responsiveness and sensitivity, intelligence (Measured by IQ), empathy, a sense of humor and critical problem solving skills, critical consciousness, and autonomy and sense purpose.

***Social competence:-*** involves the capacity to integrate cognition, affect and behaviors to achieve specific social tasks and positive developmental outcomes. It is the way of acting and interacting according to the contexts of culture and situation. It is having the qualities like responsiveness, i.e., the ability to elicit positive responses from others, flexibility, empathy and communication skills (Germazy, 1983).

***Problem solving skills: -*** encompass the ability to plan and to be resourceful in seeking help from others and to think critically, creatively and reflectively (Benard, 1991).

***Critical consciousness: -*** refers to a reflective awareness of the structures of oppression around them and creating strategies for overcoming the surrounding threats (Werner & Smith, 1992).

***Autonomy: -*** is having a sense of one's own identity and an ability to act independently and to exert some control over one's environment, including a sense of task mastery, internal locus of control and self-efficacy. The development of resistance (refusing to accept negative massages about one-self) and detachment (distancing oneself from dysfunction) serves as a powerful protector of autonomy (Werner, 1984).

***Sense of purpose and future:-*** is a belief in a bright future, including goal direction, educational aspirations, achievement motivations, persistence, hopefulness, optimism and spiritual connectedness (Howard et al., 1999).

Germazy (1983) additionally identified the following characteristics of resilient individuals: Positive peer and adult interactions, low degrees of defensiveness and aggressiveness and high degree of cooperation, participation and emotional stability, a positive sense of self, a sense of personal power rather than powerlessness.

### C. Types of Resilient Children

To know types of resilient children it is better first to understand children at risk- those who are vulnerable for various obstacles of development. Some children at risk are abused, because of their presence in difficult socio economic environments such as poor and problematic family and

street, while others are not abused due to internal and external protective factors and developmental resources. From the abused groups, some of them recover from trauma and become triumphant in their later life. But when risk factors are too much in their early life, some children cannot manage the trauma and fail to succeed. Hence, they are not resilient. Therefore, the resilient children are those who manage to recover from traumas of abuses and neglect and those who succeed in avoiding incidences of abuses, exploitations and failure (Masten et al.,1997). In this regard Masten and his colleagues have identified three kinds of resilience: first the overcoming odds type of resilience which is commonly used to refer to the belief that individuals have a particular quality or personal strength that enables them to withstand adversity. Secondly it can refer to coping in the face of sustained and acute negative circumstances (e.g., continuous family conflict) and thirdly it can refer to recovery from trauma of life tragedies such as lose of family and destitutions and finally become successful (Masten et al., 1990).

## 2.2. Risk Factors in Childhood and Youngsters

Risk factors are disabling, cultural, economic or medical conditions that deny or minimize opportunities and resources for a child and place him or her in jeopardy of failing to become a meaningful member of the home, school, and community. There are two sources of risk factors: internal (within the individual) and external (involving the family, the school and the community environment) (Benerd, 1995).

### 2.2.1. Internal Risk Factors

Internal or individual risk factors are hyper activity, concentration problems, restlessness, early involvement in antisocial behaviors, disability and beliefs and practices favoring deviancy. Some children are also aggressive and impulsive in temperament. These kinds of children in school resist the constraints of school, learn poorly, attend badly and leave early (Werner, 1993).

### 2.2.2. External Risk Factors

External risk factors found in the family, school and community environment.

#### a. Familial Risk Factors

Risks in the family environment include low family income, large family size, parental criminality, lose of family, poor child rearing practices, displacement, mobility and etc (West, 1982). Poverty,

substance abuse divorce, and abuse and neglect are major risk factors in the family that threaten children's moral and intellectual developments.

### b. School Environment Risk Factors

Major risk factors in the school environment include:- poor quality and quantity of educational inputs, overcrowding, high student/teacher ratio, insufficient curricular and course relevance, low academic achievement, weak and inconsistence adult leadership and absence of productive and role model teachers, absence of broad range of learning styles and others. Students in this type of school cannot thrive socially and motivated for learning (Germazy, 1991 cited in Winfield).

### c. Community Environment Risk Factors

The following situations and events in the community threatens positive child and youth development: High levels of neighborhood disorganizations, drug or gang activities, few adults to monitor children's behavior, high mobility rates, media violence and absence of role model individuals and affluent families. Children and youth in these types of community are vulnerable of substance abuse and involvement in Juvenile delinquency (Winfield, 1994).

## 2.3. Protective Factors

### 2.3.1. Types and Sources of Protective Factors

Protective factors are behaviors and characteristics of a child or environmental resources that moderate or counteract the potentially negative outcomes of the risk variable involved. Themes of protective factors that recur across studies involve the importance of close relations with supportive adults, effective schools, and connections with competent pro-social adults in the wider community, talents valued by self and others, faith and religious affiliations, and learning opportunities for qualifications and advancement in the society (Benard, 1991; Germazy, 1983). Resilience can be cultivated by providing and promoting these protective factors in child's life (Benard, 1995). Scholars of resilience study categorize two sources of protective factors: Internal (individual's talents and competencies) and external (family, school and community inputs) (Germazy, 1983; Masten et al., 1990).

Internal protective factors include the individual qualities such as the ability to take control, be proactive and make decisions about what to do instead of just letting things happen. It is also about

knowing one's ability and limitations, goal direction and realistic about his or her goals and having positive outlook and developing coping and stress reduction strategies (Grothberg, 1995).

External protective factors are sorted by scholars in to three themes: Caring and supportive relations, positive and high expectations and opportunities for meaningful participations (Werner and Smith, 1992).

### *i. Caring and Supportive Relations*

Caring is a way of being in the world, a way of relating to youth, their families and each other that conveys compassion, understanding, respect and interest. In this regard a family member may give the youth a sense of belonging and purpose within the family unit and value his or her abilities and may additionally tell the child that she/he can and will be successful (Masten et al., 1990). Schools can support children to develop resilience by providing safe learning environment, setting high yet achievable academic and social expectations and organize clubs for life skill trainings, moral developments and learning motivations (Benson, 1996). Role model teachers also develop confidence and help students to identify their personal talents. In addition, community neighborhood can offer a context where youth can be exposed to positive influences. Elders, mentors or religious leaders in the community give advice about social skills, ethical values or strategies for a child how to avoid trouble (Benard, 1991; Lyons, 1991).

### *ii. Positive and High Expectations*

A family member, a teacher or any care giver could convey messages of high and positive expectation, in every occasion of interactions. They could encourage children to be autonomous through praise, love, affection and helping them to do things independently. In this way children learn to believe in themselves and in their futures with high self-esteem and optimism. In this regard schools can play a great role through providing comprehensive curriculum, instructions with broad range of learning styles and with evaluations focus on multiple intelligences (Benard, 1991; Lyons, 1991).

### *iii. Opportunities for Meaningful Participations*

Children can participate and teste that they are capable and valuable when they get chances. Specific programs, associations or clubs can offer opportunities for children and youth to acquire skills and invest in pro-social activities; they foster persistence (Winfield, 1994). In this case schools can provide practices such as asking questions for critical thinking; participating students

in rule making, curriculum planning and cooperative learning with peer helping. Children also need to participate in solving family problems. These all facilitate to develop their life skills and special talents which could be invested for the success of their adult life (Werner, 1984).

### 2.3.2. Characteristics and Process of Protective Factors

Protective processes have to be reinforced constantly so that the potential for young people to be resilient when faced with risk factors and vulnerabilities remain intact. In this regard there are three characteristics in the process of fostering resilience.

First,

the process is long term and developmental: Resilience occurs over a long period with appropriate combination of resilient factors in the individual, schools, family and community along with opportunities to learn with experts, mentors that gifts and talents to be developed (Garbarino & Granzel, 2000).

Second,

the process view children with strengths rather than with defectives/risks. With internal strengths children could also persist and succeed despite overwhelming odds against them (McCubbin et al., 1988).

Third,

nurturing protective process for children: Resilience resources need to be continuously nurtured so as to make children ready for future adversities (Winfield,1994).

In this regard (Rutter; 1987) describes four types of protective processes. Those that reduce risk impact or reduce a person's exposure to risk; those that reduce negative chain-reactions that follow bad events or experiences, those that promote self-esteem and self-efficiency through achievements and, finally positive relationships and new opportunities that provide needed resources or new directions in life.

To reduce risk impact or exposure to risks of children mainly from poor and disorganized families or drug exposed and violent communities, schools can provide basic needs in collaboration with welfare agencies and classroom strategies that emphasize positive peer interactions (Benson, 1996). The family also could provide children appropriate advice and guidance in peer choices and social skills. They could also develop in their children the habit of going to church for moral and

ethical educations as well as constructive use of leisure-provide firm and consistent guidance without repressive or rejecting attitudes (Winfield, 1994).

Resilience can be fostered by reducing a negative chain-reaction following risk exposure. Impacts of risks like teen pregnancy, school failure, poverty /destitution/ or substance abuses can be reduced by providing counseling, skill-trainings, part time jobs, technical or material support and information about options, resources and strategies to manage life challenges from either government agencies, positive peer or a relative or role model teachers (Grotberg, 1995).

Self-esteem and self-efficacy are developmental resources that are learned primarily in two ways: In positive interactions with peers or adults and in successful accomplishment of tasks. Children also develop self-efficacy when they learn that they have some control over certain things in their environment and that they are not helpless. In such a way accomplished tasks, part time jobs, involvement with youth serving agencies and church experiences in the community provide lessons of self-efficacy to children and youth (Winfield, 1994).

When specific programs offer opportunities for children to acquire skills and invest in pro-social activities, they foster persistence (McCubbin et al., 1988). Trainings of life skills and peer educations in clubs or positive peer attachment or role models heighten children's sense of personal control academic self-concept and increased efforts to achieve future goals (Ruter, 1987).

## 2.4. Developmental Assets to Children and Young People

Developmental assets are individual or environmental resources that help to increase the possibility of achieving positive outcomes in the context of risk conditions that otherwise lead children and youth to abuses, involvement in antisocial activities and failure to be successful in their life (Howard et al., 1999; Benson, 1996). Many resilience scholars use the concept of protective factors and developmental assets, interchangeably. But, for practical and detail analysis of this paper, I treat both concepts separately. Thus, I use the 40 developmental assets in children, identified by Search Institute in Minneapolis, USA (Benson, 1996). The institute proposed the following principles of asset building process: all children need assets, relationships are key, everyone can build assets, asset building is ongoing process, delivering consistent messages is crucial and duplications and repetitions are necessary. There are, as to the institute, two types of assets: external and internal.

### *i. External Developmental Assets*

These assets refer to the positive developmental environments and experiences that surround young people. The main builders of these assets for young children are parents and other care givers. As children grow older especially through adolescence, external assets accumulate through interactions with parent, neighbors, educators, congregations, coworkers and peers. As to the institute, external assets include support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations and constructive use of time (Benson, 1996).

Support assets refer to ways the young people experience love, affirmation and acceptance as well as the kinds of environments where young people feel welcome, safe and comfortable. Children and youth need to experience support, advice, encouragement, care and love from their families, organizations and institutions that would heighten their emotional development. Empowerment assets address that everyone's need to be valued, and feel valuable. Empowerment focuses on the community's perception of youth and the opportunities that youth have to contribute to society in meaningful ways. Children and youth need to be valued by their community, and have opportunities to contribute to others; for this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure (Benson, 1996).

On the other hand, boundaries and expectation assets provide clear signals about what is approved of and celebrated as well as what is not. Children and youth need to know what is expected to them and whether activities and behaviors are "in bounds or out of bounds". These messages should be consistent in the family with clear rules and consequences and monitors children whereabouts. In schools and community settings, parents, older siblings, and positive peers who act in ways which show the child desired and acceptable behavior both within the family and towards outsiders. These people introduce the child models of morality and positive and responsible behavior and consequently develop children's ability of social competence (Howard et al., 1999).

The constructive use of time assets involves creating environments which offer opportunities of meaningful experiences and skills development. Children and youth need constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities & lessons, positive relationships, supervision of youth programs (sports, clubs) congregational involvement and quality time at home i.e., appropriate usage of media and positive family relations(Germazy,1983).

### *ii. Internal Developmental Assets*

These assets refer to the resource, skills and values needed for strong character. Thus, internal assets include: commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. Parents and other care givers nurture these assets from infancy to adolescence. During the teen years, these assets help provide young people with an "internal compass" that guides them to make wise choices (Garmezy, 1985; Rutter, 1987).

Commitment to learning assets is crucial to success in the work place and for engaged citizenship. Parental attitudes, encouragement, involvement and modeling are essential for children to develop a lifelong commitment to education, learning and achievement motivation. Positive value assets, on the other hand, help develop, the belief system and convictions that guide positive decision and behaviors. Children and youth need to develop strong values that guide their choices, such as; caring to others, justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility and restraint of antisocial activities such as substance abuse (Masten et al., 1990).

Social competence assets are the attitudes and skills that help youth function as independent and capable individuals. It helps children and youth for positive choices and builds positive relationships. These assets are used during planning and decision making. It also includes sensitive interpersonal relations with different cultural groups, or resisting negative peer pressures in dangerous situations and peacefully resolves conflicts. Finally positive identity assets help develop in young people a sense of direction, purpose, and initiative. Children and youth need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth and optimism about their future (Rutter, 1987).

The search institute finally provides the following ways of effective implementation of the above developmental assets:

1. The more assets children and adolescents possess has been shown to increase healthy development
2. The more assets children and youth have the less likely they are to engage in risk taking behaviors substance abuse, depression, school failure and etc.
3. All organizations, institutions and individuals in the community can play a role in building assets for children

4. Asset building requires consistent messages. For asset building to be woven in the fabric of community life, it needs to be reinforced throughout all sections of the community (Benson, 1996).

However, the general critique on resilience and specifically on the Search Institute's, developmental assets, comment that to make effective use of development assts, resilience research has to take in to account three issues: (1) it should explore multiple conceptions of resilience and thus adapting a theoretical framework or conceptual definition; (2) the social context within which the research is carried out and (3) children's understanding of the key concepts such as risks which may well differ from those of adult researches i.e. taking into account children's view points and understandings of issues of risks and resilience (Howard et al., 1999).

Finally, child resilience and sources of skills for their moral and social developments are also well expressed in Dorthy Famous Poem that Children Learn What They Live (Bequle, 1995).

> If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn; if a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight; if a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy; if a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient; if a child lives with encouragement, he learns confidence; if a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate; if a child lives with fairness, he learns justice; if a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself; if a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world.

## 2.5. Conditions of Children and Youth at Risk in Ethiopia and their Competence Experience

### 2.5.1. Conditions of Children and Youth at Risk

Researchers have identified that the number of children at risk is mounting in Ethiopia. There are 4.6 million orphans and about 200,000 street children in the country (MOLSA, 2002; Kebrom 2007; Getnet, 2007). Many of them are vulnerable, destitute, neglected and abused. Poverty, divorce, displacement, lose of family, drought, limited access to basic services such as education, conflicts and substance abuses in the family and in the community are major risk factors that aggravate or intensify child abuses and exploitations(Getenet,2007; Lomi,2002). This in turn threatens their moral, emotional, cognitive, intellectual, social as well as physical developments which play a significant role in their adult life. Consequently many of them become involve early in anti-social activities such as drug use, delinquency, and alcoholism and in fact fail to be meaningful member of the society (Lomi, 2002). In this regard, according to the remarks of Richard Mabala in the 5th annual conference of ESSSWA, the vast majority of children in Ethiopia are vulnerable as the

result of poverty and drought and they are denied basic necessities and in fact more than 50% of adolescents are not in school.

It is also true that the magnitude of child abuse and its effects are also mounting in the country (Getnet, 2007). In sub-Saharan Africa including Ethiopia one-third of children aged under 14 work in various kinds of hazardous jobs, but the vast majority of children is between age five and fourteen. Children also migrate to towns and cities searching for better life. However, since urbanization is not balanced with the growth of industrialization and cities are poorly equipped with infrastructures and social services, migrant children are exposed to labor, sexual, physical, verbal and emotional abuses mainly on the streets and in the exploitative informal sectors. Even in the family many children are abused and neglected because of poverty and other socio-cultural factors (CYAO and Italian cooperation, 1995).

Similarly there are a number of challenges and problems that the Ethiopian youth (age 15-29 according to Youth, Culture and Sport Bureau) in urban areas are facing. But unemployment, idleness (lempnenes), and the consequent involvement in criminal activities and substance abuse are the major problems identified by Ministry of Youth Sport and Culture Bureau (MYSCB, 2003). For instance, the Central Statistics Authority's 2006 labor survey in the country indicated that, there are 1,890,249 people aged between 15 and 64 are unemployed and the youth accounts 1,260,177 (67%) (CSA, 2006). In another survey of youth delinquency held between July 2001 and June 2002, 143169, youth delinquents are registered in the country (MYSCD, 2003).
The policy document of the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture identified the major socio economic problems of urban youth. Low qualities of education that is weakness of co-curricular activities for special talents to be developed in the schools; shortage of special education, vocational and technical schools and trainings; shortage of youth recreational and sports centers where the youth can well develop physically and emotionally are mentioned as the main challenges. In addition, the weakness of institutions such as family, mass media, cultural and religious centers to be a source of information and skills for a positive moral and ethical developments; shortage of theatre centers, libraries and other information sources for positive experiences of life skills and achievement endeavors are indicated as obstacles of positive youth development (MYSCB, 2003: 15-21).

The above socio economic problems in turn lead the vast majority of urban youth and children to involve in anti-social activities such as juvenile delinquency, substance abuse (taking dangerous

drugs, alcoholism), commercial sex work, begging, street life and other social problems. In addition, many youngsters never know or appreciate or use the country's positive cultures and values like tolerance, honesty and hospitality as well as dressing and heir styles. In fact they are victims of inappropriate foreign cultures mainly due to abuses of international media, internet and expanding illegal video centers (MYSCD, 2003).

The Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sport Bureau is working to reduce the above problems focusing on creating employment and expanding youth recreation and learning centers. It is organizing the youth in various associations for income generations mainly by expanding Micro and Small Scale Enterprises and technical and vocational schools, so as to increase employment opportunities. However, the policy strategy never seriously taken into account problems and prospects of other institutions (family ,schools and religious organizations) which are highly related to positive child and youth developments. It is a fact that the youth problem start with children in the problematic families, ineffective primary schools and disorganized and violent community environments. In this regard the country even lacks an appropriate and organized child development policy and direction.

Arbaminch town is also no exception of the above ordeals. There is high rate of substance abuse, crime and violence (mainly youth delinquency), rural-urban migration, unemployment, and idleness mainly among youngsters, street life and various kinds of child abuses and neglect (Gtz-Is, 2003, Birru, 1997, ROSA, 2007). For instance, the unemployment rate is 14% in the town and the vast majority are the youth aged between 15 and 29 (Gtz-Is, 2003). The impact of unemployment is also manifested in crimes and youth delinquency. For instance, theft and robbery cases by unemployed youngsters and children account 50% of the total crime committed in the years between 2001 and 2002 in the town (Gtz-Is, 2003). Regarding to rural-urban migration, 62% of total population is migrants from rural areas and many of them are children and youngsters who are exposed to various kinds of abuses and exploitations on the streets and informal sectors (ROSA, 2007; Hairu, 2006). From the total population of 78,843 75.29% is below age 29 (CSA, 2005). But though children and the youth occupy the largest portion of the total population, the social services, infrastructures and facilities for productive child and youth development are still poor both in quality and quantity (Birru, 1997; ROSA 2007). There are delinquent, idle and substance addicted children and youth in the town (ROSA, 2007).

According to the Situational Analysis Report on Child Rights in Arbaminch by UNICEF- Ethiopia 2006, there are many situations and incidences of child abuse and neglects in the town. Physical, sexual, psychological and emotional (beating, canning, humiliations, hazardous works, torture, restrains, rape, harassment, harsh punishment) are the major types of abuse. Children are abused by parents, guardians/baby sitters, and criminals. The major causes, identified by the report, of abuses are shortage of awareness about child rights and ways of positive child development by guardians, and some families, family disorganization which pushes children to the streets and poverty. For instance, in Sikela sub- town alone there are 180 street children who come out to streets due to lose of family, unhappy with the situation in their family (beating, conflict and neglect) and "freedom" on the streets considered to be pulling factors. Many street children are also used by criminals for theft or to attack other peoples believing that children are not accused of any offenses because of their age (Hairu, 2006).

### 2.5.2. Resilience among Children and Youth at Risk

Within all the above risk situations in the country, many children and the youth strive for better life, education and show sense of motivation for achievement and in fact some of them become successful (Nardos, 2007). It is also discovered that children are actors in their own, meanings that children do have their voices that show how they can both produce and some times even promote change in events and institutions around them. The societal values and expectations are also continued in children's life. However, since they live in two broad contexts local and global influences, their development endeavors are either promoted or retarded by the amount and magnitude of the two contexts' risks and resources (Polluha, 2004).

Thus, it is a common fact and few sources also prove that many children and young people in difficult socio-economic environments-streets, slums, in destitute families or orphans and in the exploitative informal sectors in urban areas show great level of resilience (competence).This is because of their internal strength and external support and encouragement (Kassa,2006). They are becoming self-reliant and in fact some of them have become triumphant in their life (Bistrat, 2005). For example, some AIDS orphan children and adolescents in the city of Addis Ababa seen to succeed despite stressful situations and risks in their lives due to loosing their family to HIV/AIDS. They have high self-esteem, sense of purpose, social competence, perform good at schools and etc (Bisrat, 2005; AIDS Alliance, 2003).

Those resilient children and adolescents enjoyed the major external protective factors such as caring and supportive relations, positive and high expectations and opportunities for meaningful participations. They got these types of support and encouragement from agencies, supportive schools, extended families and role model teachers (Bisrat, 2005; kassa, 2006). In this regard Bisrat carried out a research on 300 AIDS orphans aged between 13 and 18 in Addis Ababa and he discovered that 2/3 of them were resilient. He identified the following protective factors: good academic performance and educational status, living with supportive care givers/mentors, access to basic needs and attachment figures, participating in community activities (clubs), and using coping mechanisms (looking for advice and use of prayers over other coping mechanisms such as substance use). Thus, they become socially competent, develop high self esteem and successful in their education. However, 1/3 of them who never enjoyed the above protective factors could not be able to overcome the stress and failed to be socially competent and academically successful (Bisrat, 2005).

Similarly one can easily see that in Arbaminch town many children and youngsters who were once on the streets, in destitute families, informal sectors as well as orphans in past are motivated to achieve, self-reliant and industrious and some of them become triumphant. For example, some shoeshiners, daily laborer and even criminals overcame adversities and succeeded economically and socially in the town due to their internal strengths and external supports and encouragements.

# CHAPTER THREE

# RISKS AND CHALLENGES

## 3.1. Common Risks to Children and Youth in Arbaminch Town

The common risk factorsidentified to children and youth in Arbaminch town can be categorized under three of child's development ecology: in the community, school and family. Risk factors in the community include high rate of substance abuse, crime and violence, unemployment, idleness and absence of children and youth recreational centers. Risks in the school include the presence of illegal video and drug centers around schools, shortage of educational inputs or teaching-learning facilities, absence of variety of learning styles, students' misbehaviors, and low academic achievements. Risks in the family include child abuse, child neglect, poverty and family disorganization.

### 3.1.1. Risks in the Community

#### a. Substance Abuse

Many youngsters and children use the following substances in the town: chat, shisha[1], cigarette and alcoholic drinks. Chewing chat, smoking shisha and taking alcohol afterwards (*chepsi)* become a normal practice and in fact a fashion among the youth in general and the unemployed groups in particular. Many of unemployed youth, school boys and girls and street children usually resort to shisha and illegal video centers in the afternoons to chew chat. This in turn is threatening their physical, social, intellectual and economic developments. It is also aggravating crime and feeling of insecurity in the town (GTZ-IS, 2003; ROSA, 2007). This is because many of drug addicted youngsters are usually involved in theft and robbery cases to satisfy their addiction needs.

The inventory result of chat distribution centers and shops in the town indicates that there is a high consumption rate of chat in the town. In Arbaminch town, there are totally 103 chat shops in four sub-towns (Shecha 37, Sikella 34, Nechsar 11, and Abaya and Limat areas 21).

An estimated some 5444 Aqááras (bundles) or about 1815 kgs of chat arrive daily from Gidole, the near by town. According to observations and FGDs, the majority of chat consumers were youngsters. For example, in Sikllea sub town alone there are 11 illegal movie and 8 Shisha centers and 24 local coffee houses.[2] In each center many children and youngsters used to chew chat in the

[1] 'Shisha' is a name of a drug which can over stimulate and bring an excessive confidence to an individual when it is smoked while chewing chat.

[2] Local coffee houses are a kind of local cafeteria made of woven bamboos and serve coffee ceremony in traditional way on the side of streets

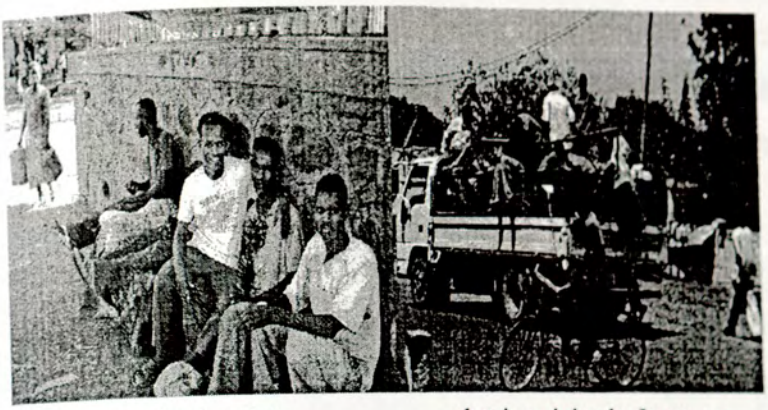
afternoons. They were wasting their productive time daily in the afternoons. As it is indicated in the photos below, one can easily see that street boys and idle daily laborers used to chew chat on the verandas, corridors and on the side of main streets .These groups are the most visible ones. There are much more youth and children who chew chat in their own homes. For instance, Ato Admasu G/Mariam, Children and Family Expert in Gamo Goffa Zone Social and Labor Affairs Office, reported the prevalence of chat consumption in the town as follow: "... chat and Shisha are becoming an epidemic. Almost everyone chews chat and smokes Shisha. You can see joy and smile on everyone's face daily when chat arrives. The majority of youngsters and adults chew chat in the afternoons. And then at night many of them are involved in robbery and theft to satisfy their needs of addiction. So the night is unsafe in the town..."

Thus, chewing chat is taking the productive time of many of youngsters in general and unemployed groups in particular. It is killing their industrious sprits and pushing them to criminal activities so as to satisfy their addiction needs related to chat.

School teachers indicated that, it is also one factor for students' misbehaviors. It is evident that when school doors are closed for late comers and opened for a break, many school children both males and females resort to the above movies and chat centers and chew chat with delinquent youth. The researcher observed that, in kebele 03 in Sikela sub town in 4 video centers 4 to 6 school girls were chewing chat in the afternoons with lempen youth.

The visible impact of high rate of chat consumption on children and youth is that it is taking the largest portion of their productive time. That is they hide and cheat themselves rather than searching their talents for further creativity and development. Children are also wrongly socialized by considering consuming chat as a normal activity. This is because everybody chews chat openly.

Chewing chat in the afternoons is also becoming a usual practice for many adults. Some civil servants usually miss working hours and spend their afternoon time while chewing chat. It is true that some individuals may engage in some work while chewing chat. However, children in this kind of family are likely to adapt and consider chewing chat as a useful and normal practice. In supporting this case, one youth expert expressed as families' chat consumptions: "...how can you avoid drug addiction among youth since many children are growing up serving their fathers chat and cigarette ..."



The youth chewing chat
On the side of street

chat is arriving by Isuzu car

youth &children
chewing &selling chat

Similarly, Shisha is an emerging drug recently invading children and youth in the town. The majority of the informants agreed that many of those children and youngsters who chew chat also smoke Shisha. In this case Arbaminch town police department identified 41 Shisha centers in the town in the year 2008. The researcher, however, counted 49 Shisha centers. Each center provides three round service (in the morning, afternoon and at night) and different customers visit each center at different times. Observation of 5 Shisha centers in Sikella sub town indicates that an estimated 15-25 children and youngsters smoke shisha daily in each center. He also observed more than 45 individuals who were smoking Shisha in a single center.

Informants reported that, Shisha has recent history not more than 5 years. It was introduced five years ago from Moyale via Konso and Gidole,the nearby towns, to Arbaminch. The first users were bar ladies and then followed by urban gangs and drivers of Isusu cars. The first Shisha center was opened by an ex-bar lady in Shecha sub town. Gradually the number of consumers and its centers increased at alarming rate and now many of chat chewers smoke Shisha and it is considered as a normal activity. For instance, according to Commander Altaye Charko, the police department head in shecha sub town, one day police caught a lawyer with his girlfriend smoking Shisha in the above illegal Shisha centers. Police was taking measures by capturing and destroying shisha instruments. But, the majority of users privately owned the instrument and in most cases it was used in hidden and shanty areas in the town. The researcher personally observed 10 individuals who owned and use the instrument privately.

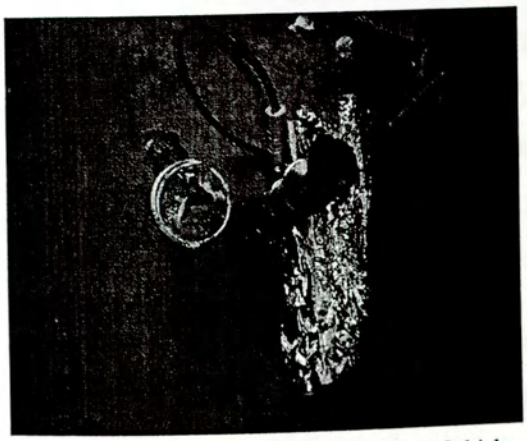
Thus, what is the impact of smoking Shisha on children and youth mainly on unemployed groups? It is widely reported that shisha and chat have many health problems for the consumers and pushing some unemployed youth for crime mainly theft and robbery cases to satisfy their addiction needs. It is true that the health impact of the above substance abuses on the consumers need

further medical (laboratory and psychiatric) analysis. But the fact is that high prevalence of substance abuse is producing wrong role model individuals for descent children in the community. This is because children usually consider their elders activities, both in the family and in the community, as an "acceptable practice".

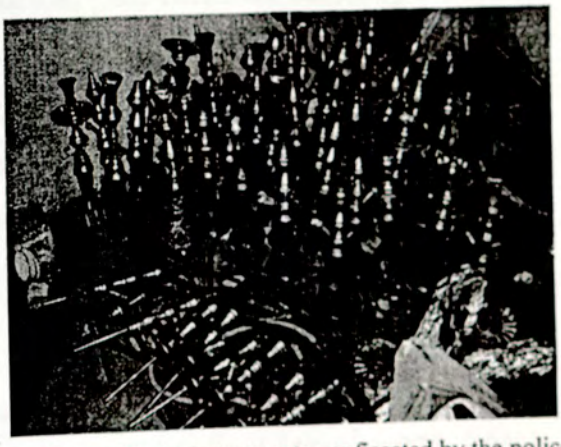
In this case Dorthy's famous poem (Bequle, 1995) which is entitled as "Children Learn What they Live" supports the above argument. It explains that children consider and adapt the repeatedly occurred actions and events in their family and in their community as a normal act. Thus, the high rate of substance abuse in the community magnifies children's exposure for negative socialization.

The Police also associate some crimes and youth delinquencies with the above substance abuse. Commander Aynishet Borka, head of Arbaminch Town Police Department, reported the impact of chat and Shisha on children and youth in the town. He narrated as follows:

> ...Many of school boys and unemployed youth smoke Shisha and chew chat. Urban gangs, criminals, and lempen groups spend their day times in Shisha centers. I personally caught 5 gangs in these drug centers. They design a plan how to make theft or robbery at night. Stolen mobile phones and other ornaments are negotiated for sale in these drug centers. You can usually see 15-25 lempens or criminals in each center in the afternoons. Some times dangerous drugs such as heroine are smoked together with Shisha. After taking those drugs the unemployed youth fear nothing; ignore police and run as fast as machine. We realized that Shisha provide over confidence for consumers. Drug intoxicated gangs usually rape children. For instance, within the first 3 months in 2008 3 children age of less than 14 years were raped by these groups in Shecha sub town alone...



Many people share this single pipe line of shisha at a time



Some Shisha instruments confiscated by the police

Thus, the above witness and other sources also prove that one of the major causes of youth delinquency and their involvement in criminal activities in the town is the high consumption rate of the above substances (Gtz-Is, 2003; ROSA, 2007; AMM, 2007).

### b. Crime and Youth Delinquency

There is also high rate of crime, violence and youth delinquency and consequently feeling of insecurity in the town. The majority of offenses and violence are committed by children and youth under the age category between 15 and 29 years. The following table proves this fact relying on data obtained in three years (2005-2007) of time.

***Table 2: Crime, offender's employment status and age category***

| Years | №. of crime | №. of offenders | offender's age category | | Offender's work and employment status | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 15-29 | 30 and above | Unemployed youth , daily laborers | Petty trader | Drivers, brokers, students | Others |
| 2005 | 805 | 969 | 671 | 298 | 700 | 120 | 110 | 39 |
| 2006 | 819 | 1159 | 1024 | 132 | 925 | 110 | 111 | 20 |
| 2007 | 922 | 1492 | 1100 | 392 | 980 | 200 | 202 | 110 |

Source: Gamo Goffa zone, Arbaminch Town First Instance Court (2008).

The above table reveals that in almost all of the three years, the majority of offenders (more than 70%) were children and youngsters under age category between 15 and 29 years. In addition, more than 65% of crimes and offenses were committed by the unemployed youth and daily laborers. Moreover, the above table also indicates that, group crimes are increasing in the town. For instance, in 2006 report number of crimes is 819 but, the number of offender was 1159 and in 2007, 1492 offenders were involved in 922 cases. Crime rate is also increasing. Similarly, according to the police department and other sources about 86% of crimes and offenses were committed by school dropouts and people in the lower strata of economic activities (ROSA, 2007; AMM, 2007; Gtz-Is 2003).

Besides, the data shown above and informants also reported that the major causes of the youth involvement in the criminal and violent activities are high rate of unemployment , high consumption rate of substances such as Chat, Shisha, alcohols and their consequent addictions(GTZ-IS,2003). In addition, the expansion of illegal video centers where children and youth frequently watch violent movies and pornographies are commonly observed places and causes for youth delinquencies. Moreover, failure in school and children's less educational attainments are other factors that limit

the youth capacity to reason out and compete in labor markets and hence get involved in criminal activists. Negative peer pressure was also reported as another cause of the youth delinquencies.

The urban gangs and delinquent youth were reported that they arrogantly behave towards people at night. They also initiate violence and conflicts in hotels and usually abuse poor and disadvantaged children on the streets and slums. They sexually and physically harass school girls. After committing crimes, they usually escape to the two lakes namely, Abaya and Chamo lakes. In this case, ato Gersu Zada, Gamo Goffa Zone Labor and Social Affairs Office Team Leader, reported that the escaped criminals and gangs also physically exploit children around Abaya and Chamo lakes.[3] Street children are forced by those criminals, for instance, to pick girls from schools, pick pocket, to look for one's compound for theft whether someone is in the compound or not and to attack innocent people. These gangs use street children believing that children would not be accused because of their age. Hence, the name given to those children who were involved in sort of crime is "*Asteqwash*" .It means a child who provides information for a criminal. Urban gangs and lempen groups usually cheat, harass and rape teenagers in the schools.

For instance, according to Arbaminch Town First Instance Court Report of the year 2007, 22 cases of child abuses (rape, physical injury and sexual harassment) by urban gangs were brought to the court. Therefore, the prevalence of crime among youngsters and the presence of large number of lempens and gangs in the community are threatening positive child development in two ways. Firstly, these groups are abusing the above disadvantaged children on the streets and slums. Secondly, they are becoming negative role models by teaching children crimes and violence.

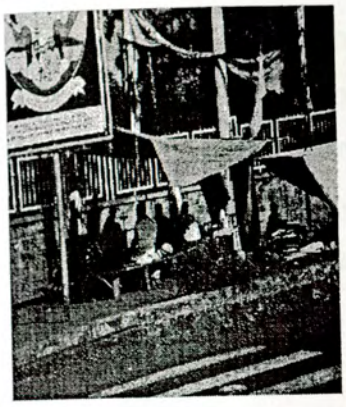
### c. Unemployment, Idleness and Absence of Youth/Children Recreational Centers

The unemployment rate in Arbaminch is 14% and the majority of unemployed groups (more than 70%) is the youth under age category between 15 and 29 years (GTZ-Is, 2003; ROSA, 2007). Similarly, according to Arbaminch Town Youth, Sport and Environment Development Office survey result of 2008, there are 11,334 youth in the town and out of which 3,086 (28%) are unemployed. There are also 4220 (37%) school dropouts who are partially employed. However, the survey never included street children and youth. It also not included criminals /gangs who settle or live around

[3] As to the office there are more than 300 children around Abaya and Chamo lakes who serve gangs by cooking food and carrying heavy loads of fish to the town daily for nothing since there is no law and police around lakes

the two lakes. Thus, it is estimated that there are about 20,000 youth in the town and out of which about 7000 (35%) are unemployed.

Similarly, hundreds of children and youngsters are idle. One can easily see them gathered in local coffee houses (totally there are 57 local coffee houses in the town) and in verandas. The researcher observed 6 local coffee centers in Sikella sub town and in each center about 12-17 youngsters spending in the afternoons while chewing chat, chatting as well as harassing passengers mainly school girls.



Youth gathered in local coffee center& chewing chat

Idle youth & children gathered in verandas

Youth chewing chat on the side of the street

On the other hand, the town has no children and youth recreational and sports centers for spending their spare times and gaining mental and physical development. There is also no cinema and theater houses legally serve for moral educations as well as experiences of life skills. On top of this there is no well equipped and rich public library for entertainments as well as socioeconomic information. The town also lacks technical and vocational schools for talented and interested students in vocations to enhance work and employment creativity. In the past there was Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational School, from which many successful youth obtained vocational/technical skills mainly in wood and metal works. But now it becomes college with the change of educational policy and only those students who achieved well in school leaving national examinations (10th grade) can join it and other vocational colleges. But, many of school boys who have interests and talents in constructions and mechanics work, in their free times, in private garages and workshops.

To reduce unemployment and gradually develop and expand medium and large scale enterprises, the town's Trade, Industry and Transport Office in collaboration with Enterprise Development and Youth Affairs Office organized many unemployed youth in various kinds of Micro and Small Scale Enterprises (MSEs). In four years (2005-2008), 1976 unemployed youth were organized under 254

associations in MSEs activities of trade, industry and service. However, only 146 associations are survived and be active. But 108(43%) associations failed to continue. In addition, no association is graduated to join medium and large scale enterprises with capital more than 500,000 Birr. Informants identified many causes of failures for the above association. But, lack of effective technical, material and financial support from stakeholders and concerned government officials, lack of coordination and attention among some government institutions to solve youth problems, and lack of business and technical skills as well as experiences among the members of associations were mentioned as the major challenges. Absence of coordination, cooperation, determination and entrepreneur skills among members of some associations were also reported as another obstacle. Hence, according to informants and the following sources, unemployment is the major cause that pushes many youth to substance abuses ( chewing chat and smoking shisha) , to be involved in criminal activities, and commercial sex work in the town(Gtz-Is, 2003; AMM, 2007; ROSA, 2007). These in turn are threatening their moral and entrepreneurial developments.

The other threat to positive child and youth development related to the above problems is the expansion of violent and pornographic films. In Arbaminch town there are 23 illegal video centers in four sub towns (3 in Abaya, 4 in Nech Sar, 11 in Sikella and 5 in Shecha).

These centers are entertaining quit large number of children and youth daily. Since there are three rounds shows (at 10 am, 4 pm and 7 pm) many children and youngsters daily watch those illegal movies in the town. The researcher observed 11 illegal movies centers which entertained about 45-50 children and youngsters in each center and more than half of customers were kids under age 10. The most preferred movies are suspense, actions, war and violent films of India and America. Moreover, pornographies or sex films are more preferred by many of the customers. In these video centers sex films are openly shown two times in a week. The researcher observed in 5 video centers in Sikella sub town an estimated 8-15 school children in each video center, both males and females, with their uniforms were spending much of their time in the afternoons in illegal video centers. In addition, they were chewing chat, smoking cigarette and practicing gambling in these video centers.

Therefore, one can easily estimate the negative consequences or risks to children and youth related to these illegal movies. In the first place all movies shown were not checked and never taken in to account children's age levels. Secondly, pornographies and violent movies are

socializing or inducing children and youngsters for violence and involvement in early sexual activities. These factors together with drug abuse and absence of sex education bring about those kids and lempen groups to violence, and wrong values such as disobedience, aggressiveness and arrogance.

In addition, there are 10 DSTV stations in the town and in each show about an estimated 150 individuals involve watching European football. Many of these customers are children and youth. European football is capturing quiet a large number of the youth and children's mind in the town. Many children and young adults read newspapers, attend media and discuss merely European football daily. It is true that the European football is entertaining many of the town's youth and children cheaply.

However, watching football alone, and to the worst, addicted with illegal movies could not provide an entertainment that could enhance or provide life skills, educations of moral values and motivations of creativity. As Winfield (1994) discusses children and youth need an entertainment that can provide opportunities for participations which can serve as developmental assets for meaningful experiences and life skills. These types of entertainments include volunteer activities in clubs and associations to help others or protect environments, congregations, and sports activities. These kinds of activities can both entertain children and help them to test that they are capable and valuable. The local media can also play a great role by giving large coverage for children and youth focusing on movies, dramas and talk shows that can promote moral developments and other life skills.

### 3.1.2. Risks in and around the Schools

In Arbaminch town there are 20,056 students in primary and secondary levels of both in governmental and non government schools. But the majority, that is, 18,632 (93%) of students is found in government schools and many of risks are also found in government's schools (AMM, 2007). Hence, the fieldwork was carried out in four government schools (2 primary and 2 secondary schools): Kulfo and Chamo Primary Schools, Arbaminch Preparatory School and Chamo High School where more than 12,000 students were found. The major risk factors include illegal drug and video centers around the schools, shortage of educational inputs and facilities, absence of variety of learning styles, student misbehaviors, and poor performances.

### a. Drug and Illegal Movies Centers around Schools

Around the four schools where the fieldwork was carried out, there are 4 shisha centers and 6 video centers. But in sikela kebele 03 which is near Kulfo Primary School and Arbaminch High School there are 4 illegal video centers and 3 shisha centers where the researcher observed about 10-15 students resort each center daily. During school times, usually in the afternoons, many students spend their time in these drug and illegal video centers. In all schools, as observed, doors are open during break times. Thus, when doors were opened for break and closed for late comers, many students tend to leave for chewing chat, watching illegal movies and smoking shisha in those centers. The researcher also observed in the 4 illegal video centers in sikela about 10-15 students with their uniforms (mainly students from Kulfo Primary School) chewing chat and watching illegal movies (e.g. sex films and violent movies) in each center in the afternoons. Thus, these students are not only wasting their productive school times but also are exposed to drug addiction and adopting wrong values such as aggressiveness and violence.

### b. Shortage of Educational Inputs and Other Facilities

Many government schools in the town are poorly equipped with educational facilities. For instance, in four of the focus schools there is only one laboratory for all of the three science subjects and in the case of Chamo High School there are no laboratory instruments. In addition, classes are overcrowded, that is, more than 85 students in a class and poorly furnitured as well as highly suffocated. Thus, classrooms are uncomfortable for the teaching learning process. It also becomes obstacle for active learning and critical inquiry because it is difficult to involve students in all stages of teaching learning process. There is no enough, well equipped and rich libraries. Textbooks are also limited (1 to 2 or sometimes to 3 student's ratio). Furthermore, except HIV/AIDS clubs there is no any other club which is functional or active in operation. Hence, there is no chance for students to search special talents as well as opportunities for participation so as to develop their self-esteem. Finally schools lack other facilitates such as cafeteria, enough water supply, quality sport fields, and trees for shade. Hence, these all have made the school environment uncomfortable for the teaching learning process and decreasing students' motivation for learning. It is also pushing some students to the surrounding drug centers.

Doors closed for late comers, Chamo School

Overcrowded classes

Laboratory lacks instruments

The uncomfortable sport field

### c. Absence of Broad Range of Learning Styles

According to observations in 9 different sections of the above four schools almost all (i.e. 8) teachers depended on lecture method alone. In addition, during FGDs with teachers and, informants agreed that, in most cases there are no discussion, self-reflection, critical inquiry as well as grouping students for cooperative learning. During class observations many of the students were less motivated and doing something else when the teacher was taking too much time for talking and writing on the board. Moreover, in high schools the plasma is taking more than 35 minutes and only about 5 minutes are left for student-teacher face to face discussion and interactions. Though the effectiveness of learning through plasma needs further investigation, the fact is that students have no ample time for critical inquiry and cooperative learning, which is one source for resilience capability in children, in classrooms.

### d. Students Misbehaviors

Many students have problem of behaviors in the focus schools. Observations revealed and teacher informants in the schools reported that there were different types of students' misbehaviors in the schools. But, cheating, coming late and leaving early, quarrel and violence among each other, classroom disruptions, chewing chat and smoking cigarettes in schools, not willing to learn, coming with knives to schools, humiliating teachers, not accepting orders and moving here and there in and around schools during class times were the major ones. For instance, the principals and teachers of Chamo High School caught 10 students while they were chewing chat and smoking cigarettes in the school in the first semester of 2008 academic year.

Informants reported many factors as the cause of students' misbehaviors. The expansion of illegal video and drug centers where children learn violence, depression resulted from chat consumptions, and the overcrowding of classes in the hot environment, physically weakened students and

teachers during class times. Teachers' dependence on lecture method and poor school facilities also become less attractive for the students. In addition, lack of determination, achievement and motivations among some students, some parents' negligence about their children's school performances were also repeatedly mentioned as causes of students' problem behaviors. Some teachers are also becoming negative role models-run for chewing chat with their students, smoke cigarette in the school compound, and they do not come to classes well-prepared. Finally, teacher informants complain that many students coming from primary schools are not academically well prepared and ethically shaped to be effective in high schools. Hence, when they face difficulty in their performances in high schools they begin to show misbehaviors mainly classroom disruptions. Thus, even though sources and impacts of student misbehaviors need further study, one can easily understand its influence on teaching learning processes, students learning motivations and achievements.

**e. Students Poor Performance and Low Academic Achievement**

Through In-depth interviews, FGDs with teachers and classroom observations the researcher identified that many of students in the said government schools poorly perform and achieve below the standards. The researcher observed in 9 sections only an estimated number of about 10-15 students out of 85 were attending well, came to classes get prepared and actively participated in the classes by asking and answering questions. But the rest students were doing other things in class when the teachers were teaching. Teachers also reported that these inactive groups of students mostly depend on cheating during examinations. In this regard Chamo High School brought 642 10$^{th}$ grade students for National School Leaving Examinations in the year 2007. But only 160 students (25%) succeeded in the examinations by scoring 2.00 and above average grade points, whereas the rest 75% failed (scored below 2.00). These all indicate the overall low quality of education in the town. This in turn is threatening children's intellectual development and reducing their competences in the competitive labor markets. It is also increasing unemployment and dependency in the town .

Ato Bogale Endashaw, a unit leader of Chamo High School who has 30 years of teaching experience in the town, narrates the whole challenges and risks in the school from his personal experiences as follows:

> ... We are in danger. Students are beyond our control. They come to schools with knives. I personally caught 5 students this year with knives. We can't force students to obey the rules and regulations of the school since the policy never allow us to do so. The youth come to the school after chewing chat and smoking Shisha. They never accept orders and respect regulations. In class times they move here and there in the compound. They come to schools being ready for violence. Majority are poor in their performance. In a class of 100 students only 5-10 students are willing to learn. The rest 90 students are passive. They totally depend on cheating. They have also one or more problem behaviors. Many students who come from primary schools are academically poor. There is no failure there since teachers are evaluated as weak if many students fail. In most cases they give unnecessary marks for students and all weak groups simply pass. No family member visits and asks us about their children progress or failure. We have 2000 families but during the annual meeting, the only meeting we have with families, only 130 families came. If we order students with problem behavior to bring their family they bring someone else. We have no contact with their family... The school has also no income to run clubs effectively and fulfill other facilities. We have one laboratory which is poorly equipped for all science subjects and no enough textbooks, 1 for 2 and for some subjects we have no text books...

The above narration indicates the ineffectiveness of Chamo high school: prevalence of students' problem behaviors, low performance and achievements, weak learning motivations, and families' negligence. It also shows that the school and families are not working together effectively for the quality of education.

Therefore, what does it mean all of the above risks to children in those schools? It is a fact that the above risks could negatively affect children's intellectual and moral developments in general and their resilience capabilities in particular. Resilience scholars identified that schools could promote resilience and achievements in children. They could enhance social competence, critical consciousness, positive self regard as well as problem solving skills (Winifield, 1994; Benard, 1995).

This is true only when schools are effective: the learning environment is safe, free and comfortable; qualities and quintiles of educational inputs are sufficient; students are disciplined, goal oriented and motivated for achievement; classrooms are stable and not overcrowded. In addition, as Benard (1995) argues that to promote resilience among students curriculum should be thematic and challenging, instructions should focus on board range of learning styles based on student's interests and capacities as well as create opportunities for critical inquiry, problem solving and dialogue. Finally good academic records, attentive and caring role model teachers are necessary.

Effective clubs are also useful to create opportunities for participation so as to identify special talents and gifts as well as gain moral and life skill experiences.

It is in this type of schools that students could be motivated for learning and achieve academic objectives as well as become resilient. Hence, many of government schools in Arbaminch town are not strong enough to produce large number of resilient children. It is also widely recognized that the ineffectiveness of schools is one of the major factor for school dropouts, failure in national examinations and the consequent high rate of unemployment, crime, and violence in the town (Damtew, 2000; GTZ-IS, 2003; ROSA, 2007; Amm, 2007). Thus, since more than 20,000 students are learning in government schools, weakness of many government schools is the greatest threat to children's intellectual developments in the town.

### 3.1.3. Risk Factors in the Family

#### a. Abuse, Neglect and Abandonment

In Arbaminch there are various kinds of sexual, emotional and physical abuses and neglect to children in the family (CYAO and Etalian Cooperation, 1995; GTZ-Is, 2003; Hairu, 2006; ROSA, 2007; AMM, 2007). Some female children are sexually harassed and raped by their own friends, family and guardians. According to Arbaminch Town Women Affairs Office report of 2008, within three months of the year 2008, 5 children were raped by their own relatives, guardians and friends. In this case one child, 13 years of age was raped by her own father. In addition, abortion case reports in health centers indicate the presence of high rate of sexual abuses in the town. For instance, Mary Stops International Ethiopia, Arbaminch Center, an international NGO working on safe abortion and family planning reported that within three months of the year 2008, 109 teen pregnant girls of age under 17 years visited the clinic for the service. All of the clients were school girls who dropped out their education due to complications resulted from teen pregnancy. This is the visible cases reached to the medical centers or court.

The most common and visible type of abuse and neglect that children face in the hands of their own family and guardians are physical abuse-battering, burning, abandonment, inattention to health cares, deprivation of basic needs such as education, food and clothing. In this case the Gamo Goffa Zone Police, Child Convention and Child Right Protection Office Report 2008 indicated that many children were severely treated and oppressed by guardians and alcohol intoxicated families. Some guardian burn children by iron, deprive food, education and physically exploit. In the first half of the year 2007, 17 such type of cases reached the office. Those children

were physically injured, suffered from verbal attacks and deprived attention as well as confined in kitchens. Police reached those children through information supplied by neighbors of those children. But these were the visible ones. There would be much more invisible physical and sexual abuse cases in the family. Thus, it needs further investigation.

The unaffordable conditions in the family, that is, child abuse together with poverty and family disorganization forced many children to leave homes for streets in the town. According to Gersu Zada, Gomo Goffa Zone Labor and Social Affairs Office Team Leader, there are more than 500 off the street children in the town. They usually spend their day time on the streets and come back to their destitute families at night. The office also has identified some 80 street children who left homes due to abuses, neglect and poverty. Those street children are also further abused on the streets by urban gangs and criminals. They were not only deprived basic needs such as food and clothing but also are wrongly socialized being involved in criminal activities and practicing gambling while playing with money on Joteni [4]. The office further mentioned that there are also more than 300 children around the lakes( Chamo and Abaya) who are physically exploited by serving escaped gangs as well as practice fishing in hazardous stormy lakes.

Street children, some of them practicing gambling, playing on Joteni

Street children, some of them left homes due to poverty

Street children, of some left homes due to poverty and family disorganization

In addition, many children under the age one year are usually abandoned or left over around bridges, health centers and on the side of main streets in the town. In this regard the Gamo Goffa Zone Social and Labor Affairs Office Report 2008 indicated that, within two years (2006 and 2007), 95 abandoned children, age under one year, were discovered in the zone and some of them were given to NGOs for adoptions. But 42 (44%) of them were found in Arbaminch town. As to

[4] Most of street children in the town usually play Joteni, a kind of table Tennis which engage up to 4 children at a time and children play it by paying money and practice gambling

informants, unwanted and teen pregnancy, large family size, poverty and cultural factors, are major causes of child abandonment in the. [5] Informants also reported that many of the mothers of abandoned children were commercial sex workers, house maids, school girls and fuel wood carriers.

The major causes of child abuses in the family in the town are poverty and family disorganization resulted from divorce, family conflict and death of family (Hairu, 2006; AMM, 2007). Lack of awareness among some families about child rights and ways of positive child development and father's alcoholism are also reported as other factors that are aggravating child abuses and neglect.

**b. Poverty**

The majority of the town's population is poor and destitute (ROSA, 2007). More than 50% of the population has monthly income less than 450 birr, 14% is unemployed and 11% is engaged in casual works such as fuel wood carrier, petty trade and daily laborers with monthly income less than 300 Birr(GTZ-IS,2003;CSA, 2005; ROSA). In addition, 3851, households (30%) are headed by females. The average family size is also 5.5 individual (CSA, 2005; ROSA, 2007; AMM, 2007). The high rates of poverty and unemployment together with large family size made the largest portion of population powerless to maximize their children's successful development. Thus children in those poor families are vulnerable. Poverty made their families powerless to satisfy their basic needs. That is why large number of children left homes for the street. About 93% of children in the town are also learning in government schools, which are, in most cases, ineffective, as their families could not afford to send them to best private schools (AMM, 2007). In addition, Hairu(2006) reported that many of street children in Sikella sub town left their homes because of poverty.

**c. Family Disorganization**

The commonly occurred and visible family problems in the town are parental conflicts, divorce and death of biological parents (one or both of them). The Arbaminch Town Administration Women's Affair Office report of 2008 indicated that within the first 5 months of the year 2008, 146 severe parental conflict cases were brought to Arbaminich Town First Instance court through the Women's

[5] According to the tradition of the Gamo society if a girl gives birth to a child out of legally or culturally accepted marriage , it is "*Gome*" (misfortune) for the family and she is also despised among her families and friends.

Affair Office. Out of which 7 families were divorced. The number of children in each family is more than 4 and majority of children are below age of 14 years. Hence, hundreds of children are in stressful situations because of the above parental discord. However, this number is the only cases reached to the court. Thus, there could be much more invisible vulnerable children in the town because of family discord. The office report further indicated that the major causes of parental conflicts is double marriage (husbands remarry without the knowledge or recognition of their first wives), domestic violence, large family size, poverty, father's alcoholism or frequent intoxication and refuse to support the household economy. In addition, women usually run away leaving children on the shoulder of husbands. This again aggravated family conflicts. *Woizero* Workinsh [6] Woshengo, also complains the court's oversimplification of divorce cases and not working with community elders to re-mend the cracked families.

Thus, children in the above damaged families may face double stresses and neglect. Primarily, continuous parental conflict means immersing children in stressful life. Secondly it may lead to divorce and the consequent stresses. It also forces children to leave homes for streets or migrate. In relation to this, Hairu (2006) argues that more than half of street children in Arbaminch town are those who left their homes because of family disorganizations.

In addition, there are many orphan vulnerable children (OVCs) in the town. According to Arbaminch Town Administration Health Office Repot 2008 there are 2300 OVCs in the town. Out of which 200 are living with HIV/AIDS. The office data is based on the school reports and kebele administrations inventory results. But it never included children on the streets, living with guardians and under school age groups. Hence, the office estimates the presence of about 5000 OVCs in the town. Thus, loss of family made the above children vulnerable for the impacts of poverty, depression, and stress.

The above risks in the family, school, and community show us that there are many challenges and threats against positive child and youth development in Arbaminch town. But some children and young people coped with all these risks and finally became successful due to individual strengths and appropriate external supports that will be discussed in detail in chapter four.

[6] Woizero Workinsh Woshengo is Human Rights and Organization expert in the Town's Administration Women's Affair Office. Interview carried out on 15th January 2008

## 3.2. Major Challenges and Tragedies the Resilient Children and Young Adults Encountered

This section explores the major challenges and risks the 30 successful children and young adults encountered. Accordingly they are categorized in to three groups: victims of abuses and exploitations but recovered, vulnerable but never abused or exploited, and perpetrators of anti social activities. Details on each informant are provided in the annex of informants profiles.

### 3.2.1. Recovery from Abuse and Exploitation

Some of the 30 informants experienced various kinds of abuses, neglect and exploitations. However, the type and intensities of abuses and neglect vary depending on the type of work they were engaged in, the living environment, sex and age categories and socio-economic backgrounds of their families. Thus, it was mainly some of migrants, street children, orphans and children with destitute families suffered a lot. Some of them were abused and neglected by their own parents or step parents, guardians and closest relatives. Others were abused by teachers in the schools and the rest by employers, urban gangs and criminals in the community. Some children were beaten, harassed, and exploited by their fellow friends and urban gangs when they were on the streets

Many of them faced both abuses and exploitations. They encountered labor exploitations and physical abuses by employers, guardians, step parents and their own families. Some of them had involved in hazardous works such as fishing, weaving and long distance trade carrying heavy loads between Arbamich and the surrounding rural villages during childhood. They starved and were denied educational opportunities at some points. They were also physically torched, verbally humiliated and insulted mainly by their step parents and guardians. Because of this many of them dropped out education and left homes for the street or migrated from rural areas to the town and were exposed to further abuses and exploitations. In this regard, the following case best illustrate the physical abuse, exploitations and neglect they had encountered.

Case 1. Abebe Boricha, who received support and became self-reliant, had the following, to say about his past.

> ... I suffered a lot in the hands of my brother's wife after the death of my parents in Bonke. First, I lost my father. After two years my mother died. I was 7 years old at that time. My brother's wife never gave me food. She served best foods to her children and sent them to school while I was sent to the garden for farming. She usually kicked on my head whenever I refuse order. One day she had thrown me in a hole where I stayed for two days. Then I became sick for a year. She forced

me usually to rise early from my bed and fetch water from the distant river while her children were sent to schools. Then I left home and joined my uncle who was beggar on the streets. After one year, I migrated to Arbaminch and was employed as a house servant in Limat area (suburb of Arbaminch) for an old woman for a year. The woman again never sent me to school. I was given only food. I cleaned her cattle's room. I carried heavy loads of garbage ... Then I went out to the street and lived there until I obtained support from my friends and the Red Cross Association...

Many others were exploited by employers after their migration to Arbaminch. They were poorly paid, less than 100 Birr monthly, while working for more than 16 hours a day. Some of them were usually confined in the Kitchens of employers at day times when they were employed as cooks and cleaners in hotels and private houses (see the profiles of Paris and Ayele in the annex attached).

In addition, some female informants such as Kuchi, Mihiret, Aster, and Mantegbosh encountered physical and sexual abuses .They faced chronic sexual harassment by teachers, urban gangs and step fathers and were forced to drop out of schools. They had to shoulder heavy domestic chores. They were asked sexual favors by some teachers in relation to grades. They were shamed and humiliated in front of school mates in classrooms. Moreover, they were humiliated and beaten by urban gangs and lempens on the way to schools. Female informants also performed heavy domestic chores such as take care of their younger siblings and cooking during early age. These negatively affected their school performances and achievements.

The following case best illustrate abuses and exploitations that the female informants had encountered.

Case 2. Kuchi Kabu

... I encountered many problems in my life. But it was in Beto (Maale) I suffered a lot when, with my four younger sisters, our father was transferred there leaving my mother in Sawla town. Our father again was transferred to Zala Woreda leaving us in Beto. I took care of my sisters. I never studied hard. I never played as my friends. Some teachers also harassed me and humiliated me in front of my friends in classes when I was in grade 8. This is when I refused my friends' inducement for an affair with teachers. Then I dropped out education for a year. Later on my parents quarreled and divorced. My mother hated me when I sided to my father. I spent much of my school time with stress. At the end I failed in school leaving national exams. I was disappointed and get sick of gastric. My father sent me Arbamich for computer training. It was in Arbaminch I gradually recovered. Thanks to my good friends ...

It is evident in the stories of Kuchi that one risk factor or abuses in child's early life leads to the another risk factors and vulnerabilities. Her father's, transfer, mobility, and parents' divorce put the domestic

responsibility on her shoulder early in life. This again became one cause for her failure in education. Her health problems and stresses were also resulted from her parents divorce and the physical exploitations as well as neglects she had encountered by her own family.

### 3.2.2. Vulnerable, Non-Abused/Exploited

Some of the successful children and young adults were vulnerable in the past due to poverty, family disorganization (loss of biological parents) and migration.

#### a. Poverty and Destitution

More than half of the successful children and young adults lived and grew up in poor families with large size. According to their life histories, many of them encountered abject poverty and destitution. Poverty deprived them enough food and clothing, and forced them to travel on bare foot and dropout schools in different times. It was mainly because of their families' type of livelihood and consequent shortage of income and manmade catastrophes such as forced displacement due to development programs which caused loss of their families' economic resources that those individuals tested the above effects of poverty. For instance, some had a family of smallholder farmers who had even no traditional farming instruments or utensils and oxen .Some of them again were half orphans who grew up in shanty areas in the town with their mothers' meager income whose livelihood was petty trade of *'tella'*, *'areqe'* and *'enjera'* (preparation of local food and alcoholic drinks). Again others had family income sources were father's pension salary and later became "Zebegna" (lit. guards/security,) after retirement and their mother's supplemented household economy as cleaners and house maids. The rest informants had a family of lower class government workers with monthly income less than 600 Birr. Hence, many of them took early responsibilities in their family involving in various kinds of income generating activities so as to help themselves and their families' meager income.

Furthermore, poverty and destitution were some of the major risk factors not only deprived their basic needs but also forced them to feel ashamed, humiliated and took away their dignity and respect among their friends in the community until they became self-sufficient and gradually successful. It also exposed them for further risks and vulnerabilities after migration or leaving homes for streets. Some of them also terminated their formal education before completing high schools and faced difficulties to compete in the labor market. The following case illustrates how poverty made them vulnerable to adversities.

Case 3. Wondemagegn Gebretsadique.

> ... My mother was a janitor in Arbaminch Hospital. My father died before I became matured. We were poor. I and my three younger brothers had no income for food, clothing and school expenses. We usually ate Haleko' and 'Kurkufa' (corn flour mixed with green leaves of vegetables). I usually get tiered of hunger in school. I traveled from Shecha to Sikella (5kms), to school, on bare foot. Until grade 8 I had no quality school equipment as to my friends. My cloth was dirty and torn. Usually I was ashamed of it. Then I started to involve in income generating activities such as selling sugar cane, renting bicycle on the streets. Later I became assistant carpenter ...

Therefore, as it is mentioned in chapter four, until he became self-reliant through his personal efforts of income creations and the government support, poverty deprived Wondemagegn not only the basic needs but also threatened his dignity (see also profiles of Honey, Kassahun and Kastro annexed).

**b. Migration, Mobility and Displacement**

Some of the successful children and young adults were migrants from rural areas who came to the town searching for better life and educational opportunities when they were under 15 years old. As child migrants who left their family care and support behind, they faced various kinds of challenges. Until they became self- reliant to run their own business or restart their formal education and succeed in it, they had encountered shortage of basic needs such as food, education. Some of these groups were not only forced to dropout their schools at different times but also worked and lived on the streets for years as shoeshine, bicycle renter, porters and street vendors.

Some informants also moved from place to place with their family because of forced displacement due to development programs during Dergue regime. As a result, their families lost their land, economic resources and dignity and finally became poor. Hence, their children suffered from poverty and mobility related stresses in their early life.

Case 4. Adane Gurshaye. He recalled his migration and mobility experiences as follows:

> ...I moved from place to place with my father. First we migrated from Konso to Arbaminch when our land was taken by Dergue government. We became poor. Then my father was employed in Lake Chamo as sea transport coordinator. But later he was fired when he quarreled with his boss. After that he became lorry driver and was transferred to Assab. He took me with him to take care of me. But, after one year he died due to car accident. Then I came back to Arbaminch and joined my poor mother who was *tella* (local alcoholic drink) seller. Since my mother's meager income could not support the family of 6 members I dropped out education and became fisher in Lake Chamo to support my mother. Until I became self-reliant I suffered from impacts of poverty. I wasted much of my education time through mobility and struggling with poverty...

## c. Family Disorganization and Orphanism

Some of the successful children and young adults were orphan vulnerable (OVCs) who lost one or both of their biological parents at different times during childhood. As it is mentioned earlier some OVCs encountered severe types of physical and sexual abuses and exploitations. But they recovered through their internal strengths and external support. The other OVCs suffered from impacts of abject poverty such as shortage of basic needs after they had lost one or two of their biological parents. Some of them had lost the full support and love of their biological parents and encountered stressful situations. Due to the above challenges they were forced to dropout education at different times, migrated to the town from rural areas. Others left homes for streets. But they had never exposed themselves to extreme cases of abuses and exploitations. In addition, though some of them were on the streets, they never been involved in other anti-social activities such as substance addiction or criminal acts. Rather, they were involved in self-help activities such as small scale income generating activities (e.g. petty trade, shoeshine, house maid and etc). Gradually, they became self-reliant through their own efforts and support from positive friends, kin groups, NGOs, and government.

The following informants faced challenging situations due to loss of one or both of their biological parents. For instance, Cherinet Ayalew, 17 years old boy lost his father when he was 12 years old. His mother brought him from Gonder to Boreda, a rural woreda in Gamo Gofa Zone, when they were displaced. But later he again lost his mother. Until he enjoyed supports from NGOs and generous individuals, he faced shortage of basic necessities. Similarly, Abeje Asefa, 22 years old boy, being in conflict with his step mother's neglect he left his home and migrated to Arbaminch. As a migrant street boy, he encountered hunger and forced to dropout his education in grade 9 and became shoeshine. Then he became assistant carpenter and gradually professional builder. Temesgen Wolde, 19 years old boy, also lost his parents when he was 9 years old. He dropped out his education and left his home in Walyata and went to Nazareth where he became house maid. When his employers were transferred to Arbaminch he again migrated to Arbaminch and became street boy. Until he enjoyed the support from his friend and Red Cross Association through his teachers' facilitation, his livelihood was shoeshine and street vender. Now he became self-reliant and joined Arbaminch Preparatory School. In addition, the case below best illustrates how family disorganization threatened their early life.

Case 5. Muluken Amare

> ...After my parents were divorced, first, I lived with my mother who had married another husband. But her husband who is laborer in Arbaminch Textile Factory used to get drank at night and quarreled with my mother. We usually spent sleepless night. As he is my step father he usually insulted me. He says "*yemanim diqaala ene alasadigim*" (I do not care about illegitimate and a leftover child). I worried a lot. I left home and went to my father in Koira (near by rural village). However, I faced the same thing. My father married another wife there. His wife hated and neglected me. She never showed me a smiling face. She never gave me enough food. Then I came back to Arbaminch and told all of my problems to my uncle. After that my uncle, who is a teacher in Kulfo Primary School, rented a room for me and my brother. When he saw my persistence for education he covered me school expense. Now through his assistance and my friends' encouragement, I jointed to the preparatory school...

### 3.2.3. Perpetrators of Antisocial Activities

Some of the successful groups involved in various kinds of antisocial activities: substance abuse or addictions (alcoholism, chewing chat and smoking cigarette), practicing gambling, involving in criminal activities such as theft and robbery and group fights. All of them reported that their substance addiction was due to negative peer pressure or inducement. Some of them also complained their family's negligence to follow up and support their academic progress. Their day to day practices were chewing chat and watching violent movies, smoking cigarette, gambling and designing plan how to attack people or get money through illegal ways. At night they used to dance and take alcohols in night clubs and hotels. They got money to satisfy their addiction needs mainly through stealing from their own family or organizations and sometimes involved in robbery, snatching a passenger at night and other times through "qiffela or feleta".[7]

Because of the above antisocial activities and addiction, some of them were fired from schools at different times. Others failed in school leaving national examinations and the rest were accused and thrown to jail for years. Moreover most of them lost respect, trust and dignity among their descent friends and families until they had recovered from their addiction and stopped their involvement in violence and criminal activities or excessive substance abuse. In this regard the following two cases illustrate how the perpetrators of antisocial activities involved in risk full activities in their early life.

[7] "Qiffela/feleta" is a kind of begging that convincing someone in humble way to give money or offer an invitations to drink alcohol or chew chat together

Case 6. Konso Girma

> ... My life was bad when I was in Tegbareid School. I had bad friends. Usually we chew chat and drink alcohol. My friends were lempens. We were addicted to chat and alcohol. We stole properties from the school and from our family to satisfy our addiction. Later on, some of my friends were fired from the school as they were caught when they were stealing a spare part of woodwork machine from the school. Then I also dropped the school and became idle until I changed my life through the help of my productive friends. Till then many people in the town suspected and hated me because of my bad personalities...

Case 7. Tamiru Demissie.

*Tamiru was also urban gang. At first he was trafficked by a weaver from Dorze(Gamo High Lands) to Sidama by his own uncle who was weaver. There he became child weaver or servant for three years without salary and educations. Then he went out to streets in Yirgalem town. He adapted gambling and addicted with chat and cigarette. Later on he came back to Dorze. However, since his poor mother had nothing to support him he again migrated back to Arbaminch. He became urban gang for three years while practicing gambling and renting table tennis and bicycle on the streets. In one occasion he also attacked his own teacher when he was in grade 10. After that he was fired from the school. He began to change his life only after he became protestant Christian by the support of his teachers and friends*

(See also the profiles of Daniel, Yapo and Mesfin in the annex attached).

The 30 children and young adults faced various types of adversities. One risk factor led them to another risks and challenges. But they escaped and managed life time tragedies and difficulties with their internal qualities and appropriate external supports. Thus, the next chapter deals with these protective factors and developmental assets.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

This chapter explores the protective factors and developmental assets that helped some children and young adults avoid child abuse/exploitations or recover from abusive/exploitative situations and antisocial activities. These include consistent family advice, encouragement and follow ups; taking responsibility early; supports and encouragements from others; and individual strengths and qualities.

## 4.1. Family Advice, Encouragement and Follow up

Some of the successful children and youth have enjoyed consistent family advice, follow ups and encouragements with love and affection from infancy to adolescence. Their family members put pressure on them through warning and guidance not to violet values and norms. They did it with love and affection not through insulting, quarrel or nagging. Children were given responsibilities for their own life. They appreciated at least one of their family member-either their elder brother's, father's or mother's greatest contribution in their moral and social development: Mother's usual encouragement and blessing after every task accomplishment and father's consistent and lovely advice about life skills, values of good ethics in every occasions of actions and interactions. These in turn increased their achievement motivations and bestowed hem good personalities. It also heightened their self-esteem and industrious sprits.

Even though their home environment was not comfortable during their childhood either because of absolute poverty or loss of one or both of their biological parents or before poverty and destitution forced them to leave homes for streets or migration, their family members taught them various kinds of life skills. They obtained information about life alternatives, good ethics, moral and religious values and norms in every actions and interactions. The following two cases illustrate the role of proper socialization in child resilience to adversities.

Case 1.Paris Jemal

> ... I love my father. He was poor. But he loves me and advices me always good things. He told me and convinced me that it is bad to be addicted with alcohol in Islam. If I violate Islamic laws, I will fail in life. He warned me. He also told me that if I am honest, neat, pray and work hard (as usually we did in our family) Allah would increase my success. Since I respect and love my father I accepted his paternal warnings and advice. Until today I have no addiction of any kind. Before I migrate to Arbaminch he also told me that every employer needs trustful and dependable workers. To check this they may leave money here and there. If you see that, do not touch it, said my father... when I was employed in Soma Restaurant, in Arbaminch, the owner tested my loyalty. However, by the help of my father's advice I have not only passed the critical test but also I was appointed as a dependable cashier and controller of other waiters in the restaurant. I worked for eight years in the restaurant until I saved sufficient money to start my own business...

Case 2. Kinde Endale

Kinde appreciates and recalls the way his father and his elder brother interacted with him as follows:

> ... Our father always advised us at night. He was retired and we depended on his meager pension of 130 Birr and on my mother's little income from selling "Tella"(local alcoholic drink). But he is lovely and nice father. Usually at night our father collected and told us different teaching stories about the rewards of good behavior and punishment of bad ethics. He taught us the values of good ethics from stories in the Bible: stories of Moses, Joseph and others. I learned from these stories the values of honesty, patience and hard working. Now I am patient and respect people. People also like and respect me. We usually go to church and learn not to do bad things (lying, stealing, killing, etc). My brother also loves me and usually took me to his woodwork shop. He showed me his strength. He is also a good person. He helps people who are powerless. He is always hopeful. Since he is a good person he is successful. Now he is in USA. He always encourages me to work hard. So I am also working hard and following the foot steps of my strong brother. My mother also always blessed me when I helped her and accepted her orders. This gave me comfort and confidence. Thus, I think my behavior is the result of my family's guidance..."

Arguing in a similar vein West and Farrington (1973) and Benard(1991) stated that consistent family guidance and care could facilitate positive child development. They agree that family could nurture resilience through consistency and quality of care and support provided during infancy, childhood, and adolescence. Accordingly, adequate and consistent parental role models and harmony between the parents, parents who spend time with children in order to pass verbal or social attainments could increase children's self-esteem. Parents who provide firm and consistent guidance without repressive or rejecting attitudes and parents who provide for and take an interest in constructive use of leisure could also promote and provide resilience in children. These in turn

not only help them to recover from impacts of risk exposures but also facilitate their socioeconomic and moral developments.

## 4.2. Taking Responsibility in the Family Early

The majority of the successful informants took fair responsibilities in their family early. They were involved in solving family problems either through independently running small trade or got part time jobs in organizations. They were also participating in family problem solving discussions. Some of them were given responsibilities to run their family's small businesses such as shop keeping or petty trade after got trust by their family. This in turn encouraged them to be autonomous and provided an opportunity to develop their problem solving skills. This is because when they realized that they were helping their family they tested as well as felt that they are useful and valuable. It also created practical opportunity to learn business skill how to make profit or create income starting from infancy. This in turn helped them to learn how to communicate effectively and convince others. Gradually some of them shouldered the whole responsibilities of their family either because they were elders or dependable. Then they started work hard, motivated to achieve and felt that they are the only one to change both of their families' life and their own. In addition, since they were busy and have vivid vision from childhood to adolescence they had no time for substance addiction. It was also one factor that helped them to refrain themselves from negative peer pressure and resorting to illegal video or drug centers to chew chat, watch pornography films or to take other substances.

The following two cases show the importance of taking responsibilities in the family early in childhood resilience to life challenges.

Case 3.Wondemagegn Gebretsadique

> ...As I was the eldest I started to help my poor mother when I was kid. I sold sugar cane, rented bicycle and street vendor. When I helped my mother I felt happy. She guided and encouraged me. She also controlled me fairly. Until grade 8 I was working as assistant carpenter and later as assistant welder in private wood and metal work shops. It was there I began to appreciate wood works. When I saw beautiful, newly produced furniture I was surprised that how man made that. At that time my deepest interest in wood works and constructions engraved in my heart. I grew up, from childhood to adolescence, while I was helping myself and my family. Usually I asked my self when and how I can live a better life. I knew I had no one to depend. Then I felt responsibility for my life. During my childhood work I learned many things: constructions, wood works and social communications. Since I was busy I had no time to chew chat or take other drugs. There I also set my goals in my heart to have my own workshop. This was the foundation for my all of entrepreneurial efforts and development...

Thus, his childhood work and fair responsibilities created him an opportunity to obtain practical trainings of constructions and effective communications as well as motivated him for further achievements. As he had vision, it was then he started to exploit opportunities and resources around him.

Case 4. Ksahun Admasu

> ... My family was very poor. As the eldest I felt the responsibility to help my only mother because I love her very much. She was a hard worker. I first started trade when someone gave me 30 cents. I bought 9 Bananas from market with the 30 cents and sold it for 1 birr and 50 cents on the streets. When I gave the money to my mother she blessed and kissed me. After that, I felt more responsibility and security. I started renting bicycle and working as daily laborer and save the money in my mother's hand. She usually encouraged me. In this way I became street vendor. She collected 300 Birr from 'Equb' after saving my money and opened a small shop for me. In my small shop I learned trade, saving and social skills. Gradually I expanded my business after studying the demand in our quarter (his quarter is little far from central town). Whenever I helped her she told me that I will be successful at sometime. This made me happier and encouraged me to work hard. To make my mother free I have tried many types of work staring from childhood: Welding, brokering, renting table tennis, renting movies and etc. I was restless to escape poverty. Gradually I expanded my business. One success led me to another one... My mother usually trusted me. She consulted me in every occasion to solve the household problems. Because of this I felt more responsibility from childhood to present day. Through this way I learned trade, the importance of saving, household management, how to get along with others and make profit. Since I had responsibility and I was busy I had no time for alcohol or chat as some of my friends. Now I am on the right truck of success. I have many of the things I wanted...

In this way the above informants and others who took fair responsibilities in their family early learned social skills and effective communications during their income generating endeavors starting from childhood. They also realized early that the only option to escape poverty is working hard. Their involvement in income generating activities early provided them an opportunity for practical trainings of entrepreneurial skills such as profit making and in some cases construction skills. It also created an opportunity them to appreciate critically structures, resources and options as well as risks around them. Hence, it enhanced problem solving skills inside them.

## 4.3. Supports and Encouragements from Others

### 4.3.1. Peer Influence and Role Models

Many of the successful informants got positive peers who have played pivotal roles in their entire endeavors for development and overcoming adversities in their early life. They got positive and supportive friends either because of their critical selection of good friends and creating moody

environment for friendship relations or fortunate encounters. Their positive and productive friends not only served them as positive role models but also provided them the necessary ideas and information about life skills and other alternatives.

Industrious, descent and productive friends encouraged them for productive and wise use of time including their leisure. These types of peers usually brought the above informants to churches for moral educations and to their own business centers. They showed and taught them practical ways of profit making and income creations. Moreover, the successful ones always talk about further success: education attainments or profit maximization. This in turn encouraged children and young adults to search their talents for their development. It also enhanced their industrious sprits and achievement motivations. Some of the above informants also enjoyed material, technical, and financial supports from their friends at a critical moment of their life such as after school failure, and starting small business activities. They showed and encouraged them to exploit resources around. Many of them recovered from stressful situations such as family disorganizations by consulting their worries and challenges to their closest friends. Their positive friends helped them in getting jobs and adopting new environments. In this case migrant street boys learned urban way of life from their productive friends who came from same locality before. Thus, together with other protective factors, attachment to positive and productive peers not only distanced the above informants from antisocial activities but also helped them to recover from addictions and created an opportunity to gain practical life skill experiences as well as financial and material resources. The following cases show the importance of attachment to positive peer to cope with or overcome life time challenges in childhood.

Case 5. Konso( Basazinew) Girma

Konso, who is currently producing various kinds of small machineries (e.g. coffee processor, onion and juice crusher and etc), is one of the successful informants with the capital of more than 500,000 Birr. He recalls his friends' role in his life as follows:

> ... Because of our bad personalities I and my friend Yapo were fired from Tegbareid School. We became lempen. Later Yapo went to battle field... One day I went to Yapo's parents to visit them. There I found his brother, kunchare, who later became my best friend. He is descent and interactive. He has many successful friends such as Belay, Honey and Solomon who are the richest youth in the town. Kunchare introduced me to his friends. They hated and suspected me at the beginning because of my bad history. But gradually through kunchare they trusted me mainly when I began to work hard. I usually appreciate kunhare's friends. They used to talk about

business and success. They have no time for chat or alcohol. People appreciate and respect them. Kunchare and his friends usually advised me to work hard and change my bad image. They used to take me to their business centers. Then I was motivated to look like them. I also stopped chat and alcohol after I was employed in their organization. One of them, Solomon Belay employed me in his coffee processing organization. Solomon again provided me a place for metal workshop behind his company when he saw my special talents in metal works and maintenance. His company also offered me an opportunity to introduce myself for great and known individuals. This was the turning point in my life...I started to enjoy market for my small machineries...

Thus, his positive friends created him an opportunity to develop his talents. They served him as positive role models as they motivated him for further success and achievements after helping him to extract himself from addictions by providing jobs. His friends provided him moral and material supports in the critical moments of his life: when he was idle, lempen and helpless. Consequently he developed his special talents in maintenance and machine production (See also the profiles of Kuchi, Abebe, Paris, Ayele & Kastro in the annex of informants' profiles attached).

Therefore, attachment to positive and productive peers created for the above informants and others a new opportunity for life skill experiences. In addition, their productive and successful friends' achievement motivated them for further success. It also provided them material, financial and technical supports in very crucial moments in their early life. On top of that it helped some of the above informants to recover from traumas resulted from various kinds of risk exposures. Hence, as Grotberg(1995) argues that external supports from positive friends and other institutions reduce the impacts of risks to children. In this case attachment to productive and positive peer is one of the protective factors that enhanced resilience among the above informants exposed to different kinds of adversities during childhood and adolescence.

On the other hand, many of the successful children and young adults appreciated and were motivated to follow positive role model individuals in the community during childhood and adolescence. Their goal orientations and motivations to achieve those goals were increased and reinforced when they were attached and began to appreciate individuals in their schools, in the family, in the neighborhood and in their work places for their socioeconomic achievements or unique talents. Sometimes they appreciated institutions such as hotels, buildings and technological products to own it or produce it at some point. In this regard Benson (1996) also argues that children who grew up in affluent neighbor or community could be more resilient than those who grew up in shanty areas. This is because children may strive to have comfortable life in future as to

their neighbors. The following case indicates the importance of attachment to role models for positive child developments.

Case 6. Daniel Beyene

Daniel was urban gang who used to fight after he had intoxicated with alcohol. He was also involved in various kinds of criminal activities with his lempen friends when he was school boy. He simply appreciated engineers and constructions. But he never worked hard. Later he became driver after he failed in school leavening national examinations and by chance got employed in Arbaminch University with a small salary. There he found his best friends who were lecturers. His friends were very younger than him. But usually they talk about great things such as educational attainments (master's and PhD degrees) and having modern villas and cars. Then, Daniel was surprised and asked himself great questions: "who am I, where am I". In addition, his friends helped and encouraged him to start evening classes for his Advanced Diploma in civil engineering. Daniel did it and got the diploma. After that, he was further motivated to upgrade. He got his first degree in civil engineering. He changed his job position with best salary in the university. Now he is striving for studying his master's degree.

In this way his productive and successful friends ignited his industrious sprits and led him to the subsequent successes in education and the resultant salary increment. They also became his positive role models and initiated him for further efforts to achieve his goals.

Role model individuals and institutions provided direct and indirect lessons of entrepreneur's skills for the successful informants. They learned from positive role model individuals values of good ethics and hard working due to closest intimacy with them or employment in the successful individuals' organizations. Therefore, attachment to positive role model individuals and institutions encouraged and helped those informants to work hard and search their talents as well as find opportunities and resources around them. In this regard Winifield (1994) argues that resilient children have enjoyed the presence of at least one significant adult in their life. Thus, the positive role model individuals in their family or in their work places have taught the above informants desired and acceptable behaviors, creativity, problem solving and entrepreneurship skills.

### 4.3.2. Kin Groups, Government and NGOs Support and Encouragements

More than half of the 30 successful informants had enjoyed technical, material and financial supports as well as encouragements from kin groups, government organizations and NGOs at very

critical moments in their early life. Some had enjoyed the support when they were in primary schools since they lost both or one of their biological parents. Others enjoyed it when they became unemployed after they had failed in school leaving national examinations. The rest obtained the above supports at the moment they were starting their business endeavors. Thus, they were able to expand their businesses, enterprises, and some have achieved their academic goals.

Some orphans such as Ashenafi, Haymanot and Mantegibosh who lost one or both of their biological parents in early life enjoyed financial and material supports from NGOs. At first they got financial backup and encouragements to go to schools from their closest relatives and neighbors. Then through teachers, school and kebele administrations they enjoyed financial supports for their basic needs and school expenses from the following NGOs and international organization in the town: OSA, Red Cross Association, Irish AIDS. Mecane Yesus Church, UNICEF and the Catholic Church. These organizations also provided various kinds of life skill trainings, peer educations and counseling services for students in the schools while prioritizing orphans. The school administration also has prioritized those orphans for every advantage in the school. These orphans repeatedly appreciated teachers' encouragement and material support for their academic success. In collaboration with the school, the town's Administration also provided uniforms and school equipment for the above orphans. Besides, it facilitated getting part time jobs such as shoeshine (by providing materials and work places along main streets), facilitating Anti HIV AIDS clubs and as waiters and waitress in the cafeterias. Thus, these orphans self helped through these job facilities together with other supports and encouragements from kin groups and positive friends. The above supports and encouragements in their hard times heightened their self-esteem and enhanced their motivations to learn. Consequently they have become successful in their education as they have joined preparatory school with good results in 10th grade school leaving national examinations and equipped themselves with bright futures and positive thinking.

Some informants enjoyed financial and material supports as well as encouragements from their closest relatives. This was after they had failed in school leaving national examinations and starting their smallest business activities. Consequently they were able to expand their small trade or enterprises and finally became successful. Since they are busy, they distanced themselves from substance addictions. The following case aptly illustrates the importance of kin support to reduce risk impacts in child's life and the consequent success.

Case 7. Kastro Kasa, who was a migrant street boy,reported the external support he enjoyed as the following:

> ... I came to Arbaminch from Welayta following my uncle when I was 16 years old. In Arbaminch, I suffered a lot to the extent of traveling on bare foot to schools. I was street vendor and shoe shine. I also later failed in the school leaving national examination. But I never gave up. I continued being street vendor and shoe shine. In the mean time my uncle gave me a photo camera and showed me the technique when he saw my determination... I became mobile photographer. I realized that photograph service is the best business in the town. Again my uncle provided me a land near his home. There, with my saved money, I opened a small shop and modern photo studio. Since the place was near the main street I enjoyed great demand for my shop and photo services. My uncle usually advised and encouraged me to save money and not to be addicted with substances such as chat. Gradually I expanded my business; I worked hard ... now I am successful... I have more than 300,000 Birr capital...

On the other hand, some informants obtained technical, material and financial support from the government. In fact, before the government support they had already started small business activities such as wood and metal works or small trade after their failure in school leaving national examinations or migration to the town. Some of them were also diploma graduates in Wood Works and Auto Mechanics from Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational School when they were in high schools. After they had failed in the school leaving national exams they started producing house and office furniture privately. However, though they had the skill and determination to work hard, they had no scientific business planning skills as well as the capital to expand their enterprises. Hence, it was during this moment that the Town Administration Office in Collaboration with MSEs Development Office provided loans and trainings of business planning. The office also provided them with urban lands, and kebele house for their workshop and to sell their products. As a result they were able to expand their enterprise. Hence, the government's support reinforced their achievement motivations.

The following case shows the importance of government's support in child resilience to adversities as well as their socioeconomic achievements.

Case 8. Belay Mekonnen. Belay, who grew up in abslute poverty and who later became a well known young investor in Arbaminch town, reported the government's support in his early life as follows:

...We (Belay, Honey and Kefyalew) were the first youth to be organized in a group to run an enterprise together in the town. We started producing house and office furniture when we failed in ESLCE. We came together with our individual experiences of one year and customers after contributing 500 Birr each. Three of us were diploma graduates in Auto Mechanics and Woodworks from Arbaminch Mechane Yesus Vocational School when we were in high schools. We became productive and our products were of high quality and we enjoyed high demand. This was because each of us had different skills and we worked in a very cooperative and friendly way as we were best friends. But at the beginning we had no enough capital and business skills to further expand our enterprise. At this moment after realizing our determination, persistence and strength, the government supported us. The Town Administration and Youth Office provided us a kebele house and land for our workshop and to sell our products. The office also facilitated to gain loans from Omo Micro Finance Institution. It also helped us by finding markets mainly through helping us to win bids in government organizations. We also obtained business planning trainings. Thus, we became known in the town and expanded our enterprise. This was the turning point in my life. Later on when I had enough capital I got investment license and began to run the enterprise individually...

One can see from the above narrations and explanations that the government's financial, material and technical supports in the decisive moments of their early life enhanced their business endeavors. This was because they enjoyed capitals and skills to expand their business and enjoyed markets for their products. In addition, since they have internal strengths and some of them have skills in wood and metal works obtained through formal trainings in the above vocational school they have effectively used the government supports and encouragements.

In this regard Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational School contributed a lot to many of the successful youth in the town. As to informants and observations many of the successful and productive youth in metal and wood works in the town are former graduates of the school. But now with the educational policy change the school became vocational college and only those who succeeded in school leaving national exams can join it. It was also said that this school expanded the tradition of metal and wood works among the youth in the town. This is because it was the first and the only school that formally trained the youth with metal and wood works in the town. For instance 4 out of the 15 most successful informants are the former graduates of the school in wood and metal works and auto mechanics. When they failed in ESLCE their skills from the school created them an immediate employment opportunity and laid the base for their present success as well as increased efforts to achieve their goals. This is because relatively they became more competent in the labor market compared to other unemployed youth in the town. Their products

(office and household furniture) are also of high quality and as a result they enjoyed good market for their products.

Therefore, additional supports and encouragements from a positive peer, relatives, government and NGOs in early life served the above informants as one of the major protective factor and developmental assets. Information, material, technical and financial supports in vital moments in their life from childhood to adolescence heightened their self esteem as well as achievement motivations. This is because they felt that they had some control over challenges and risks around them and they were not helpless. Thus, because of the above supports and encouragements some of them became successful in their education. Others successfully expanded their business activities and enterprises. And still the rest recovered from substance addictions and traumas resulted from family disorganization or disintegration.

The above discussion is also supported by resilience scholars' such as Grotberg (1995) and Winfilld (1994) arguments that resilience can be fostered and positive developments could be sustained by reducing negative chain reactions following risk exposure. These scholars further noted that children and youth who are exposed to the impacts of risks such as school failure, unemployment, poverty, substance addiction and family disorganization could recover and succeed in their developmental efforts when they are provided with appropriate supports. These types of support include skill trainings, part time jobs, technical or material supports and information about options, resources, and strategies to manage life and minimize the surrounding risks. As we have seen above these kinds of support and encouragements can be obtained from positive and productive peers and role model individuals, kin groups, NGOs, and government organizations that are concerned with positive youth and child developments.

## 4.4. Individual Strengths and Qualities of the Successful Children and Youths

### 4.4.1. Problem Solving and Social Skills

Most of the successful children and youth are aware of their own power and limitations as well as opportunities and risks around them. Thus, according to their personal profiles, from childhood to adolescence they have appropriately exploited their own potentials and the surrounding resources. Since many of them are aware that they had no one to depend, they have worked hard and convinced themselves that their destiny is in their own hand. They have also usually planed critically and resourcefully. They know when and how to act and quite. In fact they know whom to

tell and share their problems and feelings and where to go for help when they found themselves powerless. As they opened their mind for better things, they have learned from other's success and failure around them. Moreover, they are committed for learning. They have also fast learning capacities. These helped them to solve their socio economic problems and become successful in their lives.

Life stories and observains revealed that those informants interacted positively and friendly with colleagues, and employers. These in turn have made them loyal and dependable to their employers and further facilitated their business and development endeavors. They also well know about what is honored and valued among the society and what is hated and despised. In this case they mentioned that if they are poor, lempen as well as addicted with substances no one appreciate or respect them. They will be despised and dishonored. Hence, they always worry about and exert great efforts to increase their academic and socioeconomic achievements. Thus, they focused on healthy cultural and religious values in the society. In addition, they have used their leisure productively. Usually they have resorted to religious centers for moral education or doing physical exercises or reading for knowledge. Therefore, these qualities have not only created opportunities for the successful individuals to overcome risks but also helped them to create opportunities within an opportunity. This in turn maximized their self-reliance and further success. It also helped them to use the existing opportunities effectively. The following case story illustrates the importance of problem solving and social skills in child resilience to life difficulties.

Case 9. Haymanot Tsegaye

Haymanot's parents were migrants in Dimeka, South Omo. After her parents death she began to live with her elder sister. Under her sister's guardians she was very clever in her education. But when she was in grade six she again lost her only sister. After that , with her younger brother she became helpless since they have no relative there. On the verge of dropping out her education she consulted her problems to her English teacher who liked Hymanot because of her activeness in the class. Her teacher brought Hymanot to the nearby NGO, Catholic Church Charity Organization. There she was introduced to a volunteer white woman. The women promised to help Haymont if and only if Haymanot work hard to succeed in her education, achieve well and not to worry about other things including for her sole brother. Haymanot agreed and with the woman's financial support and encouragement she revived from traumas resulted from loss of biological parents and the consequent poverty and became active in her education.

After grade 8 she came to Arbaminch for her high school education and the Catholic Church Charity Organizations again offered her a living room in the compound of its Arbaminch branch. But she worried a lot and became restless about her only brother who was left behind and became shoeshine in Jinka town. One day, fortunately, many foreign tourists arrived at Haymanot's compound. Haymanot knew that some foreign tourists like Ethiopian coffee ceremony. Then, she prepared nice local coffee ceremony in her room and invited those tourists. They accepted as well as satisfied with her warmly reception and the nice coffee service. When they asked her about her background, she narrated the whole thing about herself and showed them that she was very clever academically but financially powerless orphan. After that those tourists were convinced and contributed money for her. They also promised Haymanot to help her and her brother. They began to send dollars after she built intimacy with them through continuous communication trough E-mail.

Now, with the assistance of those tourists and the volunteer woman, she and her brother are leading better life in Arbaminch town. She has scored very good results in 10th grade National Examinations and joined Arbaminch Preparatory School. She managed her stresses and become optimist about her bright future and academic success as she said, "... Now I fear nothing. I am happy. I am sure that I can join the best university and department in the country..."

Thus, Haymonot's life history shows us her social and problem solving skills. She had shared her problems with appropriate individuals at the moment; teachers and tourists. She had planned resourcefully that preparing coffee ceremony could create an opportunity to convince those better-off individuals (tourists). Therefore she had not only created opportunity but also used the existing opportunities effectively. Consequently she overcame her financial problems and finally succeeded academically.

Moreover, some of the successful informants also consciously and appropriately used modern information sources such as print and electronic media, books and success stories in nobles. They were committed for learning. Besides they productively used their leisure through searching valuable information in the above sources while their friends spent their leisure time by chewing chat. In this case Kinde, Daniel, Konso, and Tamiru have developed the habit of reading for knowledge and skill development. Kinde usually reads success stories in nobles and other magazines in his shop. He searched himself and his talent. For the first time he was motivated when he read the success stories of artist Serawite Fikre in a magazine. This motivated him to work hard. Similarly Daniel and Konso attend electronic media and read latest information from

news papers and magazines. Thus, ideas and information from the above sources enabled them to develop their confidence and social interaction. In this regard as the researcher observed during the interview, Daniel and Konso were rich with interesting information and they had much productive ideas. Hence, they entertained themselves productively and creatively.

In addition, they used their general knowledge to develop their business or be effective in their work places. For instance, Tamiru used his general knowledge while he was preaching and coordinating the youth program in his Church. His knowledge and skills that he developed through reading helped him to manage the youth development and HIV prevention project in his church. Konso used it to get new knowledge to develop his machine technology and get market for his products. And Daniel used it when he is expanding his academic achievements. Hence, Konso sold his machines for more than forty Hotels and cafeterias in southern Ethiopia and Daniel upgraded his academic levels as he became civil engineer after he failed school leaving national examinations. He also opened modern clothing shop with the capital of more than 40,000 Birr after he had studied the demand in Shecha sub town.

### 4.4.2. Having Positive Values

The successful children and young adults have equipped themselves with positive values from childhood to their present status. The positive values that are commonly reported in all of their success stories include: goal orientation and achievement motivation, persistence and determination to achieve their goals, positive social interactions and maximizing their social capitals, optimism and hopefulness, accepting failure and success as a normal phenomena in human life and commitment for learning. These qualities inside them served as a driving force or a power to work hard, create a new opportunity or effectively use the existing opportunities and resources. As a result they have overcame challenges and problems in their life as well as succeeded in their educational and socioeconomic endeavors.

The following case stories of the successful informants could be an evidence and best show that having positive values could help children to escape risks and achieve their life goals. They responded to questions such as what are sources of their strength, how they have overcome problems, how and why they interacted with people, do they have goals, how they achieved their goals, what do they do when they face imminent problems and the like.

Case 10. Honey Mintesinot, who grew up with his poor mother, expressed his positive values as follows:

> .... A problem and failure teaches me a solution. You do not need to give up. At one point I had nothing in my pocket even for a cup of tea since I had no market for my products, (house furniture). I always think that if I loose today I may gain tomorrow. This was the engine inside me that helped me to work hard. Since I want to be an investor....I had short term and long term plans. I hope I would be... I don't fear risks. If you fear risks, always it becomes obstacle for your action. I tried every opportunity. I remember my childhood poverty. I do not want to see that misery again... I interact with all (people) according to their needs... with olds, children and youth as to their wish. People like me and my services.... This in turn created market for my products and services.... Thanks God you can see that I am becoming successful...

Thus, Honey's story shows us that his good personality attracted market for his services and facilitated his development. His achievement motivation and determination to achieve his goals also boosted his entrepreneurial and industrious sprits to have what he wishes in the future. All of his stories indicate that he has interesting sense of purpose and committed to achieve his goals. Therefore, it is clear from his story that one of the major sources of his success is the above positive values. Now everybody knows that Honey is a young investor in Arbaminch town.

Case11. Ayele Bolla, who was a migrant street boy, noted his positive life principles as follows:

> ... I decided to have better life and knowledge when I left my home village for Arbaminch. I need to save my life from bad things (crimes, substance addiction, and unsafe sex) as my father advised me. I need to live as equal as other successful people. I am healthy. I know I could be more successful. I never wanted to be despised and undermined by people because of my poverty. I had a vision to be a great person. Because of this I have struggled a lot. I have won all challenges when I was on the streets because of my determination and my friends' assistance. Now I respect people and people respect me. Thus, I lead peaceful life with others. Your life is in your hand. You can lead it to good or bad direction.... I choose good direction. Now I have all I wished: the house, the shop, the land...

Ayele's story indicates that he has been committed and determined to change his life as well as to be successful. He has also clear life principles and objectives to achieve his goals. His story also shows us his optimism and bright future. Hence he resisted all challenges and at the end he realized his goals.

### 4.4.3. Industriousness and Saving

The successful children and youth are industrious and have good work ethics. They appreciated and implemented the values of work ethics. Through working hard they solved their socio economic problems by getting financial and material resources. Through working hard and involving in various kinds of income generating activities they further developed their social and

profit making skills. Since they are industrious and some of them are more successful economically, they are valued, respected and honored by their friends and the community at large. The researcher also observed that some of them were punctual, cooperative and productive in their work places. Thus, their hard working abilities helped them to be successful in their education or expanded their enterprises and capitals. Since they were busy they distanced themselves from substance addictions.

Some informants have become aware and implemented the values of saving. They considered saving as a core element in capital formation. Subsequently they have expanded their enterprises and in fact some of them have become investors. They have not only saved their incomes but also invested in other businesses. They led their life according to their life plans as well as abstained themselves from unnecessary extravagant activities, occasions and friends. In fact they have valued saving as their future social security. In this case most of them used "Equb' (traditional saving institution) as a driving force to work hard and keep their promise to save. Equb forced/motivated them to get money and save it for the next Equb.

The following two cases show the importance of hard working and saving in child resilience to adversities and the consequent socioeconomic achievements.

Case 12.Gudisa Godo, who was an orphan and a street boy, reported his work ethics and saving abilities as follows:

> ... If I don't work, I would be poor and despised by people. God can help me if and only if I work hard. I never choose or despise a job. To create job it does not need great capital. It needs initiative. I worked as street vendor, shoe shine, daily laborer etc. These all provided me business and social interaction skills. Now I have capital and cash. I have no time for evil things, chat or Shisha. I have not only worked hard but also saved what I have earned. I always stay away from extravagant occasions and friends. To me the gap between rich and poor is created not because the poor have not worked but because they have not saved. So work is the guarantee for my existence and saving is the security for my old age. I also like Equb as it increases social interaction for experience sharing and provide capital during difficulty...

We can see in the narration of Gudisa his persistence and motivations to improve his life. Since he has highly valued and practiced hard working and saving he overcame his problems and accumulated his capitals.

Case 13. Ashenafi Asnake, an orphan, expressed his hard working abilities in the following way.

> ..... Since childhood I have engaged in different types of income generating activities. I was shoeshine, *Woyala* (assistant taxi driver), tutoring children in their home, deacon in orthodox Christian church and etc. Many people encouraged and helped me when they saw me struggling to survive. I am also clever in my education. My hard working efforts created me an opportunity to introduce myself for many great people. In our school I also coordinated anti HIV/AIDS club and I was also member of Red Cross Association. In one occasion I was introduced to the president of Arbaminch University. He again introduced me to Red Cross Association head and Youth Project Coordination of the Mecane Yesus Church as I was helpless poor. Now these NGOs are helping me financially. They also provided me in the central town shoeshine place and room in collaboration with the Town's Administration. Now I am very happy I have no problem. I am also saving some amount of money in Banks. I know that I would be more successful in the future. I scored good results in 10th grade national exams and joined the Arbaminch Preparatory School. I am also elected as chairman of the student council in our school. I mediate student problems with the school, attend school meetings and maintain the plasma...Since I am active, teachers, students and school management respect and support me. These all activities provided me not only financial sources but also social interaction and income creation skills....

Ashenafi's story clearly indicates that his hard working abilities and industrious sprites not only solved his immediate financial problems for his basic needs but also lied a base for his future educational, social and business success. This is because he practically trained himself about business skills and social interactions as he has involved in various kinds of income generating activities and started enjoy its fruits early.

### 4.5. Analytical Summary

The 30 children and young adults' competence was the outcome of their internal strengths and external support and encouragements. They enjoyed different types of protective factors. Some of them enjoyed proper socializations: their family members provided them firm and consistent advice and guidance about life skills and moral values with love and affection in actions and interactions. Those informants were taken to work places and religious centers by their family members where they learned hardworking and morality. This helped them to develop dependable behavior and good work ethics. They were encouraged to do things independently and orally blessed after task accomplishment which in turn heightened their self- esteem and autonomy. Consequently they developed their coping abilities with adversities. In addition, they took early responsibility through participating in income generating activities and problem solving discussions in the family where they learned saving, profit making and social skills. They also realized that they are capable and valuable to improve their own and their families' life. However, the majority of successful

informants were attached to positive and productive peers and role model individuals in the community. Their positive and productive friends provided them appropriate information for life direction and resources in critical moments so as to create income, achieve in their education, sustain their job or recover from substance addictions. Role model individuals also encouraged them to search their own talents and exploit the surrounding opportunities. They learned creativity and problem solving skills from positive role models, who are around them.

On the other hand, the other groups of successful informants enjoyed material, financial and technical supports in critical moments (e.g. when they lost parents, failed in national exams, starting small trade and were new comers to the town) from kin groups, NGOs and the government. Consequently, they restarted their education, expanded their enterprise or trade and finally became successful. It also helped them to increase their self-confidence and optimism as they felt that they were not helpless and have some control over challenges around them.

The successful children and young adults have individual strengths and qualities. They have planned critically and resourcefully. They asked and consulted appropriate individuals and institutions when they needed help. These qualities helped them to create and exploit opportunities effectively. Many of them had good personalities and enjoyed acceptance among their friends and employers. Their good personalities, dependable behaviors, and industrious spirits assisted them to sustain their job, get market for their products and generate material and financial supports from productive friends and government bodies. They also equipped themselves with positive values such as achievement motivation, persistence, and commitment for learning and optimism. These in turn served them as an engine to work hard and achieve their goals and reject negative peer pressures. In addition, they valued work and saving highly. Those informants were industrious and saved what they earned by leading their life through planning and staying away from extravagant situations. Their hard working abilities created them capital, knowledge, skills and social acceptance as well as distanced them from antisocial activities (e.g. substance abuse and crime). Hence, they have not only avoided exploitative and abusive situations or recovered from abuses/exploitations but also finally became successful (socially, economically and academically).Their socioeconomic achievements are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

This chapter focuses on the indicators of success achieved by the 30 children and young adults who have overcome their early life challenges and tragedies. The major achievements are manifested in their current economic and social positions. The economic success of informants may be explained in terms of the amount of accumulated capitals (cash and kind) at their disposal, and source and amount of income they earn. The social achievements are expressed through their academic attainment, social positions and responsibilities in communities and the current status of living standards. At the end summary of the 15 informants' risks, protective factors and achievements are provided.

However, though all the 30 informants have escaped poverty and become self-reliant, their achievement levels vary depending on their age, sex, academic levels and intensities of risks they encountered. Thus, some of them have become more successful economically to the extent of becoming investors [8] with having capitals in millions of Birr. Others managed to earn university/college diplomas and degrees, and practically implemented their knowledge and skills to solve their socio economic problems. Some of them are still in schools, and are performing quite well. Those who are below 17 years of age are mainly self-reliant after overcoming challenges in their early life. Many have already recovered from traumas of abuses or challenging situations they encountered. They are hopeful in terms of thriving in life in future.

## 5.1. Indicators of Economic Achievements

### 5.1.1. Amount and Sources of Income

This section is about types of job and amount of monthly income that informants earn. Even though the amount and sources of income vary from an individual to another, almost all of them have become self-sufficient by creating their respective sustainable livelihood strategies. Many of them have a monthly income of more than 1000 Birr. As indicated in table 3 below, some of them became investors with the capital of more than 500,000 Birr and earn a monthly income of more than 5000 Birr. Beyond improving the living conditions of their families, some created job opportunities for others.

[8] Investors meant those youngsters who possessed more than 500,000 Birr capital and having various kinds of enterprises and workers under them. It is the researcher's contextual definition

*Table 3: Monthly income of 30 informants*

| No | Type of Job | No of informants | % | Monthly income in Birr | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 700-2000 | | 2000 and above | |
| | | | | No of informants | % | No of informants | % |
| 1 | Government workers | 5 | 13.3 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 6.7 |
| 2 | Merchants with more than 40,000 Birr capital | 8 | 26.7 | 3 | 10 | 5 | 16.7 |
| 3 | Investors with more than 500,000 Birr capital | 8 | 26.7 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 26.7 |
| 4 | Technical experts | 3 | 10 | 1 | 3.3 | 2 | 6.7 |
| 5 | Waitress ,small trade, photo service & etc. | 6 | 20 | 5 | 16.7 | 1 | 3.3 |
| | **Total** | **30** | **100** | **12** | **40** | **18** | **60** |

The above table shows that the majority of informants become civil servants (as diploma and degree holders), merchants with the capital of more than 40,000 Birr, investors with the capital of more than 500,000 Birr and technical experts working for private organizations or own workshops as carpenters, builders and the like. In this regard Yapo, a chief technician in Tilahun garage, and Abeje, who is a builder in a construction company earn more than Birr 2000 per month. The 6 informants in row 5 of the above table are getting income from being engaged in various kinds of part time jobs and other income generating activities such as small trade, renting their own bicycles through street boys, mobile photographers, waiters/waitress, etc. Some (e.g. Abebe and Cherinet,) of them have also special talents in arts such as dramas and, writing poems and literary works for clubs in their schools, churches, and in the community. Hence, they are getting money from NGOs and schools for their contributions mainly in anti- HIV/AIDS clubs. For some orphans the schools have also facilitated trainings for part time jobs such as being waitresses/ waiters and clubs coordination in collaboration with the Red Cross Association and other NGOs. For instance, Semegn, Abebe, Mantegbosh, Ashenafi, and Temesgen were trained about peer educations, HIV/AIDS prevention techniques, and business planning through the facilitation of Arbaminch Preparatory School and Chamo High school supported by NGOs (UNICEF, IRISH AID, Red Cross Associations and Mecane Yesus Church) .The training programs were instrumental in terms of creating jobs, increasing efficiency, etc.

On the other hand, some orphans and destitute children became self-reliant by creating their own income sources though they are in primary or high schools. In this regard Tewodros Millashe, who is 16 years old, reported the source of income and his creativities as follows:

*... Since we were poor I have been shoeshine and bicycle renter. My mother supported me to start Equb. I collected 800 Birr form Equb. With the money I bought my own bicycle. With the bicycle I distributed chat for shops in shecha. When I am in school my younger brother rents it. I also entered another Equb and bought additional bicycle. Now I have two bicycles and qiyoske (small shop). I also helped my mother to renew our house.... If I fail in education I will be merchant and rich person...*

The 30 informants' economic achievements can be compared with the living conditions and income levels of the majority of people in Arbaminch town as well as the minimum wage level that is 320 Birr monthly salary, in the country. As it is indicated in table 2 the majority of informants have monthly income more than 2000 Birr whereas more than 50% of the population in the town earns monthly income of less than 450 Birr. In addition, 14% of the population is unemployed and 11% engaged in casual works with monthly income of Birr 100-300 (ROSA, 2007). Moreover, in Arbaminch, quite a large number of the population engaged in low income generating activities such as petty trade and daily labor with monthly income less than 200 Birr (ROSA,2007). Hence, the majority of the population is living in deep poverty without fulfilling basic needs. Some of the informants' former friends (e.g. shoeshine, street vendors, daily laborers, etc) have monthly income less than 300 Birr.

### 5.1.2. Capitals Accumulated

This section focuses on the economic resources they have accumulated in kind and cashes in savings. It also focuses on the informants' economic assistance to their families and others. Many of them have accumulated various kinds of economic resources and enterprises in kind: clothing shops and small supermarkets with more than 40,000 Birr capital, construction and furniture workshops with the capital of more than 20,000 Birr, and service providing economic resources such as Isuzu and Minibus cars, cafeterias, and modern living and renting houses with the capital of more than 500,000 Birr. In addition, as we can see in the table below majority of them has also deposited more than 100,000 Birr capital in savings. The large amount of capitals is accumulated mainly by those licensed merchants and investors. They have also savings in saving/credit associations which constitutes 20,000 to 100,000 Birr. Those investors have more than 500,000 Birr in savings which they use to run their business activities.

Thus, for the sake of clarity those 30 informants are categorized in the following table based on the type and amount of capitals (in cash and kind) they possessed. But there is no clear boundary for categorization since those merchants and investors have various kinds of overlapping economic

enterprises. Indeed some of government employees have owned their shops (see Tegegn and Daniel, in the annex of informants' profile).

***Table 4: The 30 informants' capitals (in cash and Kind)***

| No | Enterprise and other economic resources | Property& estimated value in cash per head | No of informants | % | Cash in savings | No of informants | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Small supermarkets and clothing shops | 40,000 birr and above | 7 | 23 | 1 million and above | 3 | 10 |
| 2 | Construction and furniture shops | 20,000 and above | 5 | 16.67 | 500,000- 1 million | 5 | 16.67 |
| 3 | Service providing resources (cars, cafeterias, houses, photo studio) etc | 500,000 and above | 8 | 26.67 | 100,000-500,000 | 9 | 30 |
| 4 | Income generating and house materials (bicycles, photo cameras, house furniture ,etc ) | 7,000 and above | 10 | 33 | 50,000-100,000 | 8 | 26.67 |
| | | | | | 5,000-50,000 | 5 | 16.67 |

As indicated in table 4 each of the eight informants in the fourth row on the left side owned one or two of the service providing resources such as cars, cafeterias, renting houses, etc which can constitute more than 500,000 Birr capital. Each of the 3 informants on the right side of the table above has also more than 1 million Birr cash in savings to run business. The majority have also their own economic resources such as small supermarkets, clothing shops and furniture workshops with the capital of more than 40,000 Birr and above.

Informants expressed their accumulations in kind and cash directly and indirectly during in-depth interview after strong rapport was built between the researcher and informants. Economic accumulations in kind were estimated through systematic observations of informants' living and renting houses, furniture, business enterprises(e.g. shops, cafeterias, cars, photo studios, etc).Informants also reported their savings in cash while expressing about their business activities and how or which saving institutions they were using.

Informants' economic achievements are also manifested in their economic roles in their family. Many of them have improved their families' economic status. They have started to support their relatives and siblings financially and materially. They are paying tuition fee for their younger brothers and sisters, reconstructed their mother's or father's houses, and some of them have bought lands, oxen and mules for their family in rural areas. For instance, Kasahun financially supported his two younger brothers while they were studying at private colleges. Now they got diplomas and are employed in government offices. He also constructed 5 rooms for renting

purpose on his father's land for his mother. His mother is now earning 400 Birr monthly from these houses. Thus, his family is no more dependent on him. He has also more than 300,000 Birr capitals in cash and in kind. Therefore, one can easily imagine the economic success of Kassahun, who was street vendor some years ago (see for his profile in the annex).

Kassahun, near the 5 rental rooms he built for his mother

In addition, those four investors (Kastro, Paris, Tamiru and Ayele) who were formerly migrant street boys, now not only started to lead high standard of living in their own villas but also improved the living conditions of their families and brothers in the countryside by purchasing land, oxen, horses and other resources. In this case Paris reported about his success and economic assistance to his family as follows

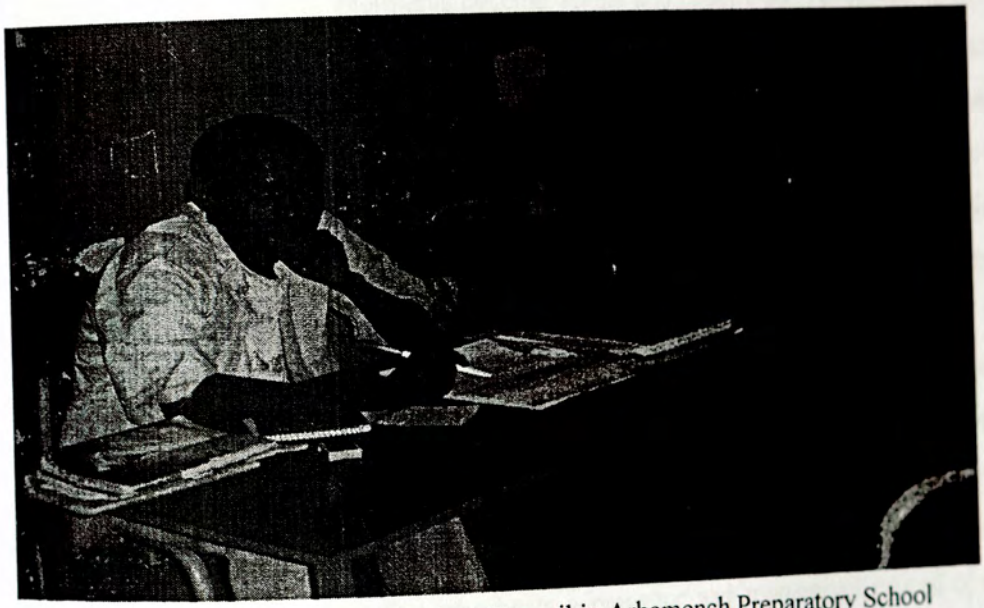
> *...I bought land, horse, and cattle for my father to be blessed. I like his blessing. I feel secured when I am blessed with him. I still send money for him for blessing. Now my father is a well known rich person in the village (Silte Worabe). You can see I have my own house. I have also more than 15 workers in my three Cafeterias. I have opened shops with more than 60,000 Birr capital for my brothers around the market in Shecha...*

Similarly, those 8 investors who were mentioned in the fourth row of table 3 not only have dramatically improved their own and their families' life but also created jobs for more than 100 individuals in their organizations and enterprises. For instance, Honey alone has employed more than 35 workers under his organizations (in his hotel, Isuzu car, farm land and workshops).

## 5.2. Indicators of Social Achievements

### 5.2.1. Social Positions and Responsibilities

Many of the 30 successful individuals are socially accepted in their respective communities. That is, they are respected and honored among their friends, colleagues, neighbors, fellow religious followers and employers. Hence, they are selected and have become leaders and coordinators of various kinds of clubs, associations, and in kebele administrations in different times in their life after they became self-reliant. But the majority still has various kinds of social positions and responsibilities during the fieldwork. They have taken different kinds of responsibilities in their schools, churches, Equbs, income generating and volunteer associations and sub town administrations. The following table reveals their status and responsibilities in their respective social environments.



Ashenafi Asenake Chariman of Student Council in Arbamench Preparatory School

*Table 5: Various kinds of responsibilities the 30 informants were/are assigned*

| No | Types of responsibilities assigned | No of informants | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Judges and chairpersons for Equbs | 7 | 23 |
| 2 | Leaders and coordinator of students councils and clubs in schools | 6 | 20 |
| 3 | Chairman of MSEs associations | 4 | 13.3 |
| 4 | Heads of justice and security and youth affairs coordinators in kebele administrations | 5 | 16.7 |
| 5 | Team leaders in government and private organizations | 3 | 10 |
| 6 | Religious affairs coordinators in orthodox and protestant churches | 5 | 16.7 |
| | **Total** | **30** | **100** |

As to the above table, some informants become judges and chairpersons of Equbs up to 100,000 Birr. For instance, Honey is the chairman of 120,000 Birr Equb in his hotel and Konso is the judge of 50,000 Birr Equb. It is a great social acceptance for Konso since he had been a perpetrator of crime, despised by his friends. Some of them are elected as youth affairs coordinators and security and justice controllers in their kebeles. These responsibilities indicate that they are disciplined and positive role models for other youth in the town. In this case for Tegegn who was previously criminal fisher in Lake Chamo, becoming justice and security controller in the town is an indicator of greater positive behavioral transformation. Similarly, the rest informants including students have been team leaders, chairpersons and coordinators of volunteer and income generating associations. Some of them are also preachers, priests and youth program coordinators in orthodox and protestant Christian churches. In this regard the case of Tamiru is worth mentioning. He was criminal and gambler. But now he is a preacher and member of council of elders in Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Church .Tamiru comparatively reported his socio economic achievements as follows:

> *... I thank God... My life is totally changed. When I was urban gang, people were afraid of me. They suspected me. My hair style was terrifying. I was gambler and drunkard. I was just like today's 'Adegegna Bozene' (terrifying idle youth who is ready for criminal acts or threatens peace and security in a town). But Jesus changed my life. Now I am changing others' lives by preaching the Bible. I am also member of council of elders in our church. I am HIV project coordinator. I have all I wished.... The house, the shop, the money, the job and the degree...*

### 5.2.2. Academic Performance and Achievements

Almost all of the 30 informants are very enthusiastic for learning and many of them achieved well in various kinds of educational institutions. Half of the informants earned diplomas and degrees. Some of them are still upgrading their academic positions through distance educations in Alpha University College and evening programs in Arbaminch University. As it is indicated in their profile many of them were forced to dropout schools and some of them failed in school leaving national examinations. However, after they became self-reliant they restarted their formal educations in regular, distance, and evening programs. Consequently many of them become diploma holders.

The educational achievements indicate their industriousness and dedications for seeking noble ideas and skills for their further success. In fact, many of them have solved their socio economic problems through their knowledge and skills obtained from the recognized colleges, universities and personal readings. For instance, some informants who have construction and furniture workshops and professional workers in garages and constructions are diploma graduates in woodworks and auto mechanics from Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational College (see profiles of Belay, Honey, Wondimagen and Adane).

Some of them are earning more than 2000 Birr monthly. In this case the two known young investors in Shecha sub town, Honey and Belay have started business activities through the production of house and office furniture in their own workshops. They have practically implemented their skills in wood and metal works that they had obtained through formal trainings in the said College.

On the other hand, some of the 30 successful children and youngsters are still students. But they are performing and achieving well. Some have already joined Arbaminch Preparatory School by scoring good results in the 10$^{th}$ grade School Leavening National Exams. The high school students are also performing well. They usually stand 1$^{st}$ to 3$^{rd}$ ranks in classes. Some are merchants but attending evening classes in high schools and still they are smart as they are rank students. The following table shows the overall academic levels and achievements of the 30 informants.

*Table 6: Academic levels, performances and certificates of the 30 informants*

| No | Academic levels and type of certificates | No of informants | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1st degree holders | 3 | 10 |
| 2 | Diploma holders | 9 | 30 |
| 3 | Preparatory students | 8 | 26.7 |
| 4 | Construction/ trainings/ certificates and driving license holders | 6 | 20 |
| 5 | High school students | 4 | 13.3 |
| | **Total** | **30** | **100%** |

Some of them have got 3rd grade driving licenses and various kinds of certificates for their trainings of business planning and constructions.

### 5.2.3. Status of Living Standards

Many of the 30 children and young adults have started to lead comfortable lives. No one is a street boy or suffers from shortage of basic needs as to their early life. Almost all of the 30 informants are living in cemented and quality rooms which are full-fledged with all modern house furniture. They have quality food and clothing. Many of them have built their own living villas in their own or on their families' land in the town. For instance Kasahun, Kastro, Paris, Ayele, Tamiru, and Wondimagegn were formerly street boys and shoeshine. Poverty had deprived them basic needs such as food and clothing. But now they have built their own living villas in the town with the capital of more than 100,000 Birr cash. Their friends are no more street boys and shoeshine or criminals. But they spend times with investors, religious leaders and other great individuals. In this regard Kasahun Admassu comparatively reported his present and past living standards as follows:

> *... When I was street vendor I was dirty and my clothing was torn. Nobody wanted to see me. I was also ashamed of it. We were living in old and dirty mud house. Now you can see that I have built five rooms which are cemented and high quality for me and my mother. I have all modern electronic materials: The television, the CD taps the sofa .... You can see I bought the latest mobile phone by 3000 Birr. I thank God. I eat whatever food I like and wear a quality clothing ... I have great friends like Honey and Yalew (hotel owners). We eat and drink together during Equb days. The kebele administration also assigned me as security controller...*

Kasahun's narration clearly indicates that he is enjoying high standard of living. His own cemented living rooms, the latest mobile phone, the modern house furniture, the quality of food and clothing he is enjoying and his rich friends show us that he is leading comfortable middle class living

standards.[9]Thus, for some one who had been suffering from impacts of absolute poverty such a living condition is one of the concrete indicators of socio economic achievement.

The other investors and merchants similarly leading quality life in their own newly built villas as Kasahun. One can also easily see the current high standard of living that Kastro Kassa, the former migrant street boy and shoeshine in the photo below.

Kastro in his modern living villa

[10]Middle class living standard is relative concept. The comparison line is the informants background and the middle class Ethiopia society

Table 7: Summary of the 15 Informants' Risks, Protective Factors and Achievements

| No | subjects | Background | Risks | Protective Factors | Achievements |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Honey Mintesinot | - Was born and grew up in Arbaminch town<br>- Self-helping since childhood | - Growing up in deep poverty<br>- Half orphan<br>- School failure<br>- unemployment | - Mother's advice, encouragement<br>- Government support (technical, material, financial)<br>- Vocational skills<br>- Goal orientation, persistence, hard working ,saving | - Investor (above 1million Birr capital) - Diploma holder,<br>- *Equb* chairman<br>- High standard of living |
| 2 | Belay Mekonnen | - Was born and grew up in urban areas<br>- Spent much of early life through small trade | - Poverty<br>- School failure<br>- Unemployment<br>- Negative peer pressure | -Taking early responsibility<br>-Consistent advice and guidance<br>-Positive peer attachment<br>-Government support (technical, material, financial)<br>-Saving, hard working, life goals, persistence | -Investor (above 2million Birr capital)<br>-Diploma holder<br>-3rd grade driving license<br>-High living standard |
| 3 | Wondemagegn G/Tsadique | -Was born and grew up in Arbaminch town<br>-Self-helping since childhood | -Half orphan<br>-Growing up in absolute poverty<br>-School failure<br>-unemployment | -Taking early responsibility<br>-Positive peer and role model attachment<br>-Government support<br>-Hard working, saving, persistence, achievement motivation | -Investor (above 500,000 Birr capital)<br>-Diploma holder<br>-Chairman, MSEs association |
| 4 | Paris Jemal | -Migrant from rural area (Silte-Worabe)<br>-Grew up with poor family, but highly value Islamic laws | -Poverty<br>-School drop out<br>-Migration, shortage of basic needs<br>- Labor abuse & exploitation | -Family advice of life skills &moral values<br>-Positive peer and role model<br>-Problem solving, social skills, saving, hard working abilities<br>-Persistence, life goals<br>-Government support (financial, material) | -Investor (above 500,000 Birr capital)<br>-High standard of living<br>-Improved parents economic life |
| 5 | Kassahun Admasu | -Was born and grew up in Arbaminch town<br>-Self-helping since childhood | -Deep poverty<br>-Shortage of basic needs<br>-School drop out | -Early responsibility<br>-Role models<br>-Optimism, persistence, achievement motivation<br>-Saving and hard working<br>-Problem solving skills<br>government support (material) | -300,000 Birr capital<br>-Improved families' life<br>-Security controller in *kebele* administration |
| 6 | Ayele Bolla | -Migrant from rural areas<br>-Grew up in a large and poor family | -Denied education<br>-Migration<br>- streetism<br>-Labor exploitation<br>-Shortage of basic needs | -Family advice, guidance (life skills, moral values)<br>-Positive peer attachment<br>-Vision, saving hard working<br>-Social and problem solving skills | -Investor (above 500,000 Birr capital)<br>-*Equb* chairman |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | Kastro Kassa | -Migrant from rural areas<br>-Grew up in a large and poor family | -Migration<br>-Shortage of basic needs<br>-School failure<br>-unemployment | -Religious teachings (moral values and ethics)<br>-Persistence, life goals<br>-Saving, hard working<br>-Peer and kin support (material, technical)<br>-Problem solving and social skills | -Investor (above 500,00 Birr capital<br>-Improved family's economic life<br>-Diploma holder<br>-High standard of living |
| 8 | Tamiru Demissie | -Migrant from rural areas<br>-Half orphan | -Migration, mobility<br>-Labor abuse, exploitation<br>-Perpetrators of anti-social acts | -Religious teachings<br>-Teachers, neighbors, friends advice, guidance<br>-Role models<br>-Life goals, persistence | -Investor (above 500,000 Birr capital)<br>-Diploma holder<br>-preacher |
| 9 | Konso Girma | -Grew up in urban areas<br>-Family experienced displacement, migration, mobility | -Perpetrators of anti-social acts<br>-School drop out<br>-Unemployment<br>-imprison | -Positive peers and role model attachment<br>-Technical skills<br>-Commitment for learning<br>- Achievement motivation, persistence | -Investor (above 500,000 Birr capital)<br>-Diploma holder<br>-*Equb* coordinator<br>-Producer of small machineries |
| 10 | Kinde Endale | - Grew up in urban areas<br>- Family experienced migration and mobility | - Poverty<br>- School failure<br>- Substance abuse<br>-Unemployment | - Family advice, guidance, encouragements (life skills, moral values)<br>- Religious teachings<br>- Role models, readings, saving, achievement motivation | - 90,000 Birr capital<br>- Diploma holder |
| 11 | Abebe Boricha | - Migrant from rural area<br>- Orphan<br>- Self-helping since childhood | - Abuse, neglect exploitation<br>-School drop out<br>-Shortage of basic needs<br>-streetism | - Positive peer and role model attachment<br>-NGOs and friends support (material, moral, technical)<br>- Optimism, persistence, vision, saving, hard working | -Self-reliant<br>-Built own house<br>-Earn above 1000 Birr Monthly<br>-Life skill trainer<br>-Secretary of student council |
| 12 | Haymanot Tsegaye | - Orphan<br>- Grew up in rural areas<br>- Self-helping since childhood | -Severe stress related to loss of parents<br>-Shortage of basic needs | -Teachers, kin groups, NGOs , friends' idea, material, financial support and encouragement<br>- Problem solving (critical planning) and social skills<br>- Persistence, achievement motivation<br>- Religious teachings | - Recovered from trauma<br>- Self-reliant<br>- Joined preparatory school<br>- Earn above 1000 Birr monthly |
| 13 | Abeje Assefa | ▪ Migrant from rural area<br>- Family disorganized early<br>- Self-helping since childhood | - Stress related to family divorce<br>- Shortage of basic needs<br>- Migration<br>- School dropout<br>- streetism | - Religious teaching<br>- Technical skills, fast learning<br>- Positive peer attachment<br>- Optimism, persistence, achievement motivation<br>- Hard working, saving | -60,000 Birr capital<br>-3000 Birr monthly income<br>-Technical expert (builder) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | Daniel Beyene | -Was born and grew up in urban areas<br>- Disorganized families | - Perpetrators of anti-social acts<br>- School failure<br>- unemployment | - Positive role model<br>- Vision<br>- Commitment for learning<br>- Brothers guidance, encouragement | - Degree holder<br>- High standard of living<br>-Above 2000 birr monthly<br>-200,000 Birr capital |
| 15 | Ashenafi Asnake | -Was born and grew up in urban areas<br>-Orphan | -Orphan<br>-Streetism<br>- shortage of basic needs | -Religious teachings<br>-Teachers, NGOs support<br>-Hard working, problem solving, social skills<br>-Persistence , optimism | -Self-reliant<br>-Joined preparatory school<br>-Chairman of the student council<br>-Earn more than 1000 birr monthly |

As it is indicated in the above table the majority (8) of the 15 successful informants grew up in deep poverty and suffered from shortage of basic needs .Five of them also failed in school leaving national exams and became jobless before they started their own business activities. However, having clear life goals, persistence, saving and hard working abilities appeared as the major and common protective factors that helped them to escape those challenges in their early life. In addition, financial, technical and idea supports from kin groups, positive peers, NGOs, and other organizations in important moments of informants' life further enhanced their resilience capabilities. But, these external supports mainly used by those orphans, migrants and perpetrators of anti-social activities so as to extract themselves from the risk situations.

# CHAPTER SIX

# COCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1. Conclusion

The findings of this study show that there are many risks that children and youth in Arbminch town encountered. A large number of children and youngsters faced challenging situations in their family, school and community environments.

Risk factors in the family made a large number of children vulnerable to various adversities. Poverty appeared to be the major challenge that weakened the economic power of many families to satisfy children's developmental needs. Some families were disintegrating due to divorce, parental alcoholism, loss of parents, etc. In many cases families are not properly socializing their children. This is because either they were rendered powerless or they were unaware of the positive child and youth development. Hence, they are abusing and exploiting their children. In fact a large number of children are growing up with drug (e.g. chat and shsisha) addicted families. Many families are not teaching children life skills and positive moral values. That is why some children were easily induced by negative peer pressures to substance abuse. Many families are not working with other socio cultural and welfare institutions (e.g. churches, NGOs and schools) for their children's intellectual and moral development. Therefore, it was such unfavorable situations and neglects that forced some children to leave homes for the streets and the consequent abuses.

Many government schools and their educational systems seem to be not effective so as to facilitate children's successful development. The teaching learning environment is not safe and comfortable. Some of the government schools are not functioning well. Some of its problems found within the school system. Others are in the community (e.g. students' substance addiction). And the rest are national. But generally schools have administrative, financial and technical problems. Moreover, they are not working closely and effectively with families and other welfare organizations to financially empower itself so as to fulfill teaching learning facilities. The number of role model and supportive teachers is decreasing. But these complicated causes and effects of the low qualities of education need another study.

On the other hand, the community environment is not conducive for positive child and youth development. Risks in the community are interrelated. One risk factor is leading to another risks and vulnerabilities. For instance, poverty and unemployment combined with absence of productive

youth and child recreational centers are pushing many children and youngsters to drug abuses and in some cases criminal acts. Some of the risk factors in the community are local (e.g. chat) and others are national (poverty). The rest risks are global (e.g. drug trafficking and illegal movies). Many of children became victims of the unhealthy social transformations due to global influences and ineffective local and national systems. Locally, in many cases, elderly, teachers and religious leaders are not guiding or advising children about life skills and positive values. In fact many people became negative role models by inducing children for crimes and substance abuse mainly by consuming shisha and chat. Besides, the justice and security systems in the town seem not effective to bring sustainable peace and security. Moreover, nationally there are no appropriate policies and directions for positive child development. Thus, the above risks are threatening the moral and intellectual developments of many children in the town.

However, within these risk situations some children and young adults overcame their early life adversities and finally became successful. The informants' competence and socio-economic achievements are the results of their individual qualities and external supports and encouragements. The resilience capabilities are the cumulative effects of children's internal strengths and external developmental inputs from families, peers, some teachers, religious leaders, neighbors, government and welfare organizations concerned with positive child and youth developments.

Even though there were socio economic problems in their family, some family members properly socialized their children through actions and interactions. Those families were aware of and concerned with their children's successful development. Consequently, children developed life skills and dependable behaviors early. Many of them found positive peers and role models in the community from whom they learned life alternatives so as to cope with challenges or recover from stressful situations. Some have also obtained moral education in religious institutions. This was due to the support of their families or positive friends. There were financial, technical, material and idea supports from kin groups, NGOs, government organizations and teachers at the moment they were helpless or powerless. It was the proper functioning of these systems and institutions which empowered children's capacity to cope with challenges. These supports became effective as it reached children in critical moments of their life. Thus, they were be able to recover from traumas resulted from adverse situation and expanded their small economic enterprises. Hence, children in difficult socioeconomic conditions need external supports and encouragements at the moment they need help to have sense of security and motivations to achieve life goals. Moreover, it was their

individual qualities such as hard working, saving, resourceful planning and problem solving skills that helped them to use external supports and exploit surrounding resources and opportunities effectively. Therefore, in addition to individual strengths and qualities familial and social environment characteristics could increase the development of resilience capacities in children who are growing up in adversities. It is through consistent provisions of caring or supportive relations, positive and high expectations and opportunities for productive life experiences so that their internal resilience abilities are enhanced. Children in difficulties need supports and encouragements from families, neighbors, positive peers, religious leaders, welfare organizations and government bodies so as to overcome challenges. Children's competence and the final success (economic and educational attainments) are the outcome of internal strengths and the proper functioning of some of the concerned individuals, socio-cultural and administrative systems and institutions around.

## 6.2 Recommendations

**Family Level**

1. Family members and care givers should build confidence and autonomy through caring and supportive relations and providing consistent messages of positive and high expectations. They should encourage children to be autonomous through praise, blessing, love, compassion and helping them to do things independently. They could teach children life skills, moral values through actions and interactions. Parents should spend time with children in order to pass verbal and social attainments. They could also tell children interesting success stories and the importance of moral values as well as dependable behavior. They should consistently tell children that they are capable and valuable. Children, if it is possible, should be taken to work places and religious centers for experiences of life skills and moral education. In the work places family members should show their strength and determination for achievement through actions and interactions. They also need to teach children problem solving and social skills in every occasion of actions and interactions. Thus, consistent guidance, advice and encouragement could help children to develop good personalities as well as having visions, persistence and social skills. In consequence they could cope with or overcome life time challenges.
2. Families and guardians need to encourage children to involve in solving family problems. It could be involving in problem solving discussions or income generating activities while

taking into account children' capacity. If children take fair responsibilities from their early age they could learn life skills, cooperation, mutual understanding and develop communication skills. They could also get chance to learn ways of income creation and profit making. They could begin to search resources and opportunities around them early. They should also be taught about the importance of hard working and saving practically and verbally.

3. Families and care givers should reduce risk impact or exposure to risk in children. They need to advise and guide children in peer choices and social skills. They should be role models for children distancing themselves from substances. They need to follow up children's school performance. They should encourage and guide children's education starting childhood. Families could show constructive use of leisure while they themselves properly using leisure either through reading for knowledge, resorting to religious centers or sports activities. They could also share life experiences and interesting stories. They should assist children to appreciate and follow role model individuals through visiting new areas and organizations or by providing information about how people around become successful.

**Community Level**

4. Elders, religious leaders, neighbors and people in the community should support and encourage children in difficult conditions. They should provide information how to avoid problems or where to go for help. They also need to encourage through praise or offering small money in the form of tips mainly for those who are struggling to survive (e.g. street vendors, shoe shiners, waiters and etc). These could encourage them to work hard. They need to tell these children that one day they could be successful. In this regard, religious leaders could teach children additional life skills in combination with moral educations. They could teach children the importance of hard working and having vision in life as well as persistence to achieve their goals (e.g. for Christians success and persistence stories in the bible could be referred).Here welfare organizations and government bodies which are concerned with positive child and youth development can work with religious leaders so as to teach children the above life skills.
5. Schools should facilitate child resilience in all stages of teaching learning processes. They could help vulnerable children such as orphans or those coming from destitute families, drug exposed and violent communities by closely working with welfare and government organizations. They can provide basic needs, part time jobs, life skill trainings in

collaboration with welfare organizations and design classroom strategies that emphasize positive peer interactions. In collaboration with concerned NGOs schools can facilitate strategies of life skills such as industriousness, good personalities through anti-HIV/AIDS clubs. Teachers should also serve as role models with their personalities and academic abilities. They should also encourage students to participate in class discussions so as to increase children's self-esteem. Teachers need to advise students with problem behaviors through compassion, love and respect. They should tell and assist helpless children life alternatives or where to go for help. Schools can develop proposals to raise fund from NGOs to improve teaching learning process and run clubs effectively. Consequently, children can identify their especial talents and achieve academic goals or improve school performance. In this case schools should work with children's families. They need to have phone or other addresses of students' families. They could discuss and find alternatives mainly for students with problem behaviors.

**NGOs and Government Organizations**

6. Government bodies, NGOs and other welfare organizations concerned with vulnerable children and positive child and youth development should provide technical, material and financial supports in critical moments. These supports could be effective if it is provided in a very important moments in their life (e.g. after school failure, when they are staring small trade, when they lost their biological parents, struggling for basic needs and etc). The above agencies could provide counseling, skill training (constructions, wood work and etc), part time jobs, land and loans, trainings or information about ways of exploiting the surrounding opportunities. Employment creation alone is also not enough. Children's interest and abilities should be taken into account. Counseling, vocational trainings and preparing children and youth psychologically for work is necessary. These could increase their motivations and achievements. The above type of supports could also increase optimism and confidence in children as they feel that they are not helpless or powerless.
7. In addition, government bodies and welfare organizations should provide socially and culturally friendly youth and child recreation centers. Libraries, sports centers, theatres, volunteer activities where children and youth can both entertain and get chance for meaningful participations. In this regard local media can play a great role. It could provide talk shows, dramas, and success stories by offering large coverage for children and youth

programs. From media (mainly electronic media) children and youth could learn creativity, moral values and life skills while entertaining.

8. Moreover, all concerned bodies of positive child and youth development should follow holistic and an integrated approach. Government and welfare organizations, families, religious centers and schools should work together. They should complement each other. For instance, youth problems such as unemployment, substance addictions, and delinquencies start with children in ineffective primary schools, problematic families and drugs and crime prevalent communities. Ineffective schools and destitute families need to be encouraged through financial support. Religious leaders' and families' awareness about positive child developments are necessary. welfare organizations and government bodies concerned with positive child and youth developments should facilitate peer educations of life skills such as creativity, solving problems, industriousness, saving and wise use of leisure.

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# Annex 1.

## The profile of 30 Children and young Adults

### 1. Honey Mintesinot

Honey was born in 1982 and grew up with his poor mother in Arbaminch town. His father died before his knowledge. He was the eldest in his family of 5 siblings. He grew up in poverty while traveling on bare foot, participating in petty trade to get income for his schooling. His mother's, meager income from being janitor in government office could not support Honey's school expense. Usually she borrowed money for Honey. Honey realized that even if he succeeded in ESLCE (Ethiopian School Leaving National Examinations) and joined university, his mother could not cover his educational expenses. He decided that his mother should not suffer again. From 10th grade he joined Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational School and graduated with diploma in General Mechanics. Then he opened a wood workshop with 500 Birr capital contributed from his neighbors and his mother's Equb money (300 Birr) to prepare him for the university. But he failed in ESLCE and turned his face to trade and expansion of his workshop.

Until he enjoyed material, technical and financial support from the government through youth development program he suffered a lot. He had no market for his products. But he never gave up. He began to expand his workshop together with his productive friends (Belay and Kefayalew). Three of them were graduates with diploma from Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational School. Since they have different skills in metal and wood works they became successful. Their quality products got high demand. Honey's mother also usually visited Honey's workshop and encouraged him to work hard. From the very beginning he had a great vision to overcome poverty and become rich person. He worked day and night, and he saved what he earned. Though some of his friends were addicted with chat and alcohol he has no addiction. Still now he never undermines work. He was a broker, a merchant, a technician, and a farmer. He had tried every opportunity. Still he is restless for further achievements. He mobilizes his workers working with them even in the kitchen.

Now Honey is a well known young investor in Shecha sub town with the capital of more than 2 million Birr and has more than 35 workers under him. He has an Isusu car, a modern farm land, a hotel, a Dstv station, and a modern office and house furniture workshop. He has also Advanced Diploma in General Mechanics. In addition, he is Chairman of Equb.

## 2. Belay Mekonen

Belay was born in Goffa in 1983. But his father died when he was small kid and his mother married another husband. He usually traveled from Shecha to sikella (5 kms) to his school on foot. His mother was lovely and usually advised and showed Belay about trade and saving. She opened a small shop for him where he learned trade and skill of profit making. He had no time for addiction since he spent much of his after school time in his shop. Many of his friends including his elder brother were chat addicted and lempen. It was a fashion during his time to watch violent movies and act accordingly. But Belay's hobby was reading and maintenance. His family also controlled him not to chew chat or watch violent movies. At the beginning he had vision to join university. But when he failed in grade 8 national examinations he changed his mind to succeed in some mechanical works motivated by his friends' technical skills in Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational school.

Later on, encouraged by his best friend, he joined Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational School after grade 10 and graduated with diploma in woodwork. When he, later, failed in ESLCE he opened a small wood workshop. He was attached to very productive and hardworking friends (Kefayalew and Honey) they merged their capital and opened house and office furniture workshop together. Sine their products were high quality they enjoyed great demand. They accumulated great capital. After realizing their persistence the government also provided them technical, material and financial support through youth development and employment creation programs. They got urban land and Kebele house for their workshop and to sell their products. The Town Administration also provided them trainings in business planning and facilitated ways of obtaining loans from Omo Micro Finance Institution. The office also helped them to win bids in government organizations.

Starting from childhood he wished to have better things: better cars, better house. He never gave up when he failed. Since he had great vision he had effectively used the government support. For instance, he was heavily injured with log machine. His fingers were cutoff but he continued. He tried many opportunities. He became successful in wood and metal work. He has great value for saving and work. He had approached his customers very warmly and friendly. He enjoyed great demand for his office and house furniture. Finally, he became successful. He got investment license and began to run the workshop independently. He spent

much of his time in his workshop with his workers mobilizing and encouraging them to work hard.

Now Belay is a well known, young investor in Arbaminch Town. He has more than 2 million Birr capital and 10 workers. He has modern furniture workshop, a cafeteria, an Isusu car, a stationary and his own modern living residence. He also gets prepared to establish a food complex factory in Arbaminch town in near future.

### 3. Wondimagen Gebretsadiqe

Wondimagegn, 27 years old boy, was born and grew up in Arbaminch with his poor mother who was janitor in Arbaminch Hospital. He lost his father when he was an infant and grew up in deep poverty and suffered from shortage of basic needs. He self-helped starting from childhood through petty trade, street vendor, renting bicycle and daily laborer. After grade 8 he became assistant carpenter. There, his interest in constructions engraved in his mind. He decided from childhood to escape poverty through working hard. He realized that he has no one to depend. His friends were also hard workers and self-helped during school age. Though his mother was poor, she advised and encouraged Wondimagen to work hard and escape poverty. She regularly followed up and fairly punished when Wondimagen committed mistakes. She never allowed him to stay longer outside at night.

When he filed in ESLCE, with his little money and mother's support, he joined Awassa Teacher's, Education College in extension programs and obtained diploma in mathematics. Then he became joiner school teacher for 2 years. But teaching was not his interest and he could not succeed in it. After that he joined Arbaminch Mecane Yesus vocational College and obtained diploma in wood work. Since he has interest in construction he opened wood workshop. Side by side he became fish merchant. He began to save what he was earning. His vision was to become investor. The Town Administration organized him and his friends in youth package program for the expansion of MSEs. He obtained loans, land and technical trainings from government. Then with his friends they expanded the enterprise. Since he was hard worker he was elected as chairman of their association.

Now he begins to run the workshop independently. He has his own Minibus car, and Cafeteria small supermarket. He becomes investor with capital of more than 500,000 Birr.

## 4. Paris Jemal

Paris, 22 years old boy, came to Arbaminch to improve his life from Silte, Worabe following his uncle when he was 14 years old. But things were not comfortable in Arbaminch at the beginning. He served as a waiter in his uncle's cafeteria without salary, clothing, and schooling for a year. Then he quarreled with his uncle and went out to the streets and became Shoeshine. But later through the help of his friend Paris was employed in Soma Resturant as a Cooke with 40 Birr salary.

Until he became effective waiter to serve foreign tourist and enjoy loyalty among the owners of the restaurant, Paris lived and worked in the Kitchen for four years. He was torched, verbally humiliated and was physically exploited. After many times tests, the owners of restaurant realized that Paris was dependable. Though his father was poor, he taught Paris life skills and ways of getting loyalty among employers. Paris was also advised about the importance of good religious and moral values. Then Paris became dependable cashier and controller of other waiters in the restaurant. Paris adapted English and began to serve foreign tourists. He began to collect more than 200 Birr tip daily by serving foreign tourists. He saved more than 15,000 Birr while he was in the restaurant. Then he left the restaurant and began to run his own business.

After he studied the market situation he opened small supermarket around the market in "Shecha. He got land and loan through the facilitation of the Town Administration and youth development programs. Then he brought his migrant brothers from Nazareth. After that, Paris went to Konso to search business activities such as serving tourists and opened a shop of traditional products for tourists. There he collected about 25,000 Birr with his brother. But when he felt insecure in Konso as some merchants quarreled with him he came back to Arbaminch. After that he studied the demand and opened cafeteria. Finally, he went back to Silte and married in traditional way. He is now running his 3 cafeterias and 2 shops in collaboration with his brothers and wife. Now Paris is an investor with the capital of more than 500,000 Birr. He has 15 workers in his shops and cafeterias. He has his own modern living villa.

## 5. Kasahun Admassu

Kasahun, 22 years old boy, was born and grew up in Arbaminch. He was the eldest of his 5 brothers and began to support his poor mother who depended on selling 'Tella' and 'Hareqe'

(local alcoholic drinks) since childhood. He suffered from the impacts of absolute poverty. He became street vendor and Shoeshine. In the mean time he left his home and migrated to Addis Ababa with his friend to improve his life. It was then he convinced himself to work hard and win poverty when he saw visually impaired and old people lottery vendors in Addis Ababa. After that he came back to Arbaminch and began running small trade. He became restless to change his life. His mother was hard worker and usually told and encouraged Kasahun to work hard. His mother usually consulted Kasahun to solve any problem in the family. Then he felt more responsibility.

After that Kashaun dropped out his education in grade eight and started small trade. With his mother he opened Qiyoske (small shop) in his quarter (Awrogodana Sefer), little far from the center of the town, with the capital of 400 Birr. In his small shop he learned trade, social communication and ways of profit making. With his small trade he had been economically supporting himself and his family. When his mother became old the whole family became dependent on him. But he never gave up. He tried every opportunity. He studied the demand in his quarter. He supplied variety of services: Table tennis, movie center, bakery and etc. He has also special talent in woodworks and maintenance that he started manipulating from childhood when he saw the only electric system in the High way Company whose office was near his home. Through try and error he developed the skill of welding techniques. Then he got land and loan through Kebele administration and bought welding machine. Now he is a merchant, carpenter and broker. His greatest values in his life were work and saving. He used Equb to save as it forced him to work hard to get money weekly. He also paid for the education of his two brothers in private colleges and now they got job. He built 5 renting rooms for his mother. Thus he becomes free to further expand his business. His vision was to become known investor and to build 5 star hotels in the town.

Now Kasahun is merchant, broker, and carpenter with the capital of more than 300,000 Birr. He is also elected as justice and security controller in his Kebele. He is a well known merchant in Awragodana Sefer (quarter), on the out let of Jinka in Shecha sub town. He also coordinated his friends to work together. He changed some of his lempen friends by encouraging and supporting them to start trade or create work. Now Kasahun is a role model for other youth in his quarter.

## 6. Ayele Bolla

Ayele, 24 years old, was migrant street boy from Bonke (rural village in Gamo highland). He left his home when he was denied educational opportunity at the age of 13 years. He had been Shoeshine, daily laborer, and street vendor. He lived on the street for a year. He suffered from hunger many times. Then, after he adapted urban culture through the support of his friends from Bonke, Ayele was employed with 50 Birr salary as cleaner and cooker in Chamo Hotel. There he lived and worked in the Kitchen for a year. It was there he decided to be successful as the owner of Chamo Hotel, Yalew Tadesse, who was waiter in Ababya hotel before he started his own business.

After that Ayele left the hotel and began trade with fish encouraged by his friends. He supplied fish for many hotels. He collected 600 Birr and sent it to his lovely mother who usually encouraged and advised him to work hard and save his life from HIV/AIDS. His mother bought a caw for Ayele. His caws given birth many calves and after some years Ayele became many cattle owner. Ayele had saved all the money he collected on his mother's hand. His family also bought him a productive farmland in the village. Ayele's parents employed laborers and began to produce crops on his land. Later on when he collected enough capital he started goat trade with his friend. They had supplied goats from rural areas to Nazareth and other merchants exported it to Middle East. Within 7 months they collected 18,000 Birr. But later Ayele's friend became alcoholic and chat addicted. Then Ayele separated from his friend and began to run the business independently. Ayele had great vision to be a well known rich person and enjoy social respect. Usually he thinks his father's advice. When Ayele was leavening his home in Bonke his father entered him an oath not to touch some one's property and make sex before legal marriage. It is 'Gome' (misfortune) in Gamo culture. Ayele used his fathers' advices as life principles. If Ayele break the oath, he may die, Ayele thought. Ayele never addicted with drags and saved his life while some of his migrant friends infected with HIV/AIDS. Ayele practically implemented all advices of his father.

After collecting enough money Ayele bought a small urban land with only Kitchen on it from an old woman. He opened a small shop. He expended it and then he built his own living house.

Now Ayele becomes investor with the capital of more than 600,000 Birr. He has large productive farmland and grinding mill in his rural village. In the town he has small supermarket. He is also chairman of 60,000 Birr Equb.

## 7. Kastro Kassa

Kastro, 26 year old boy, was the middle son to the family of 10 siblings. He migrated from rural village in Walayta due to poverty when he was 16 years of age following his uncle. His goal was to work hard and succeed after migration. He thought that if he was in his birth place he could not work hard (e.g. became Shoeshine). People may despise him. But until he became self-reliant his uncle neglected Kastro. Kastro had no one to depend for his basic needs. He traveled on bare foot to schools. Kastro realized that only through working hard that he could improve his life.

Then Kastro went out to the streets and became Shoeshine after he learned the technique and obtained shoe making materials from his friend. He became productive shoeshine. People encouraged him by giving tip money when they saw his determination and persistence. In the mean time after realizing his persistence his uncle gave him photo camera and showed the technique. After that Kastro became mobile photographer in his school. After school he also worked as shoeshine. Later when he failed in ESLCE he continued being street vendor and mobile photographer. He never gave up. He began to struggle with poverty.

His uncle again offered him his own Kebele house and small land after realizing that Kastro was hard worker and had great vision to be successful. With his saved money Kastro opened small shop and modern photo center on the land with 10,000 Birr capital. Since the place was on the side of main street Kastro enjoyed high demand for his service. He still worked as mobile photographer mainly in occasions. His life principles were work hard, saving and become rich. He stayed away from extravagant friends and occasions. But he was sociable and interactive. People liked him. In one moment his friend introduced him to gash Mahamed, a known rich person and owner of photo Nice in Sikella sub town. After they became best friends Gash Mahamad offered Kastro latest photo cameras and introduced Kastro to other rich persons in Addis Ababa. Then Kastro modernized his photo studio through the support of his friends in Addis Ababa.

Now Kastro becomes investor with the capital of more than 500,000 Birr. He has modern photo center, urban land and buildings for rent. He also brought his brothers from Walayta and paying for their education in private colleges. His brothers are working in Kastro's photo studio in their part times. He built his own modern living resident. Kastro is also youth coordinator in Sunday school in his church (Orthodox Christians). He also obtained diploma in accounting from Alpha University College through distance education.

## 8. Tamiru Demissie

Tamiru, 29 years old, was born and grew up in deep poverty in Chehcha (Dorze). His biological father died when Tamiru was small kid and his mother married another husband. When he was 9 he was trafficked by his own uncle to Sidama where he became child weaver for three years. When he faded up with the exploitations being weaver servant he went out to streets in Yirgalem town and became daily laborer. It was there he was addicted by chat and cigarette. He dropped out education and became hopeless. But at some point he asked himself that when he could have a better life and continue his education. He discussed all his problems with his best friends. When he was a child his vision was to become a teacher. Then he came back to Dorze .But his poor mother had nothing to support him and his father's land was taken by his brothers. After that he migrated back to Arbaminch.

In Arbaminch he became urban gang. His day to day activities were chewing cha, watching violent movies and practicing gambling. But as he had still great vision to succeed in education he continued his education while renting table tennis after schools. However, when he was in grade 10 he attacked a student and when the student was severely injured, Tamiru was fired from the school for 2 years. Then he became extremely sad. He also attempted many times to commit suicide. After that he became drunkard. When he was taken to police people suggested that if he became protestant Christian he could recover from his personality disorders.

After that, a teacher, in Tamiru's neighbor and friend preached Tamiru and converted him to a protestant Christian. The teacher also provided counseling services for Tamiru. He advised and encouraged Tamiru that God could improve his life if he stops taking drugs and turn his face to God. The teacher also helped him to restart education. After that Tamiru joined his school again and completed 12th grade but when he failed in ESLCE, he started small trade .After that, when he lost his trade, he turned his face to religious life. He studied the bible with

his best friend and became preacher in Mecane Yesus Church. Then the Mecane Yesus Church employed Tamiru as preacher with 100 Birr salary and sent him to Woyto, on the way to Jinka. But he suffered a lot from malaria and shortage of medical treatments and food in Woyto desert. After four years service he was transferred back to the head office in Arbaminch.

Then he became HIV/AIDS prevention project coordinator in his church. He also found his girl friend who was singer in his church. His salary increased when he got diploma in theology. Side by side he also started trade. He opened hair making beauty center for his girl friend. Again in collaboration with his girlfriend he opened clothing shop with the capital of 20,000 Birr. Finally, he became successful in trade. He married his girl friend. They worked day and night and became rich. He gave birth to two children.

Now Tamiru is an investor with the capital of more than 500, 000 Birr. He also got his degree in management from Alpha University College. He is preacher and member of Council of Elders in his church. He has 3 modern houses for renting and living. He has also shops and beauty centers in Shecha sub town with more than 100,000 Birr capital.

## 9. Konso (Basazinew) Girma

Konso, 27 years old, was born in Konso but grew up with his displaced migrant families in Arbaminch. His family went back to poverty after their land was taken by Dergue government. Until grade 10 he had no personality problems. From grade 10 he joined Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational School. It was in this school his life went bad direction.

He became friend of drug addicted criminal students. In addition, Konso was not interested with the training in the school. Starting from childhood Konso had developed his special talents in maintenance. Then, when the education system became below his standard he was less interested and became drug addicted mainly due to the inducement of his friends. Usually they chewed chat, drunk alcohol and stolen properties from the school. One day he was caught with his friends while they were selling machinery from school to a garage owner. After that, Konso was thrown to jail for a year. When he was released his friends were fired from the school. Then Konso became lempen for a year. Then after, his family sent him to Addis Ababa for education. In Addis Ababa, for two years, he learned in vocational school. It was there he changed his mind through effective technical trainings of agriculture. He thought that agriculture is best business that one can succeed easily in Arbaminch. He came back to

Arbaminch and started small scale farming around Lake Chamo on his one hectare land. He became hard worker. But he faced shortage of capital to expand his farm land.

Then he came back to the town to collect money to expand his farmland. One day fortunately he went to visit his friend's (yapo) family since Yapo went to battle field. There Konso found Yapo's brother Kunchare who later became Konso's best friend.

Kunchare introduced Konso to his best and productive friends (Honey, Belay, and Solomon) who were young investors in the town. Gradually Konso became their friend. When Konso changed his behavior and began to work hard Kunchare's friends provided job in their company for Konso. His employer Solomon Belay offered Konso a land for workshop. There Konso began to produce small machineries. Konso has special talents in maintenance. In Solomon's coffee processing company Konso got a chance to introduce his machines to hotel owners who were Solomon's customers. His employment in Solomon's campany was the turning point for Konso. He gradually developed his skills in machine production through reading, try and error. Then he was able to produce Juice and Onion crusher machines

Now Konso become investor with more than 500,000 Birr capital. He produced more than 45 machines (coffee grinder, juice and onion crusher etc) he sold each machine 5000-6000 Birr. He also became diploma holder in Auto mechanics and Minibus owner. He has also mobile workshop for his machinery production instruments with more than 60,000 Birr capital. In addition he is chairman of Equb.

## 10. Kinde Endale

Kinde, 22 years old boy, was the 2nd son to 10 children, born and grew up in Arbaminch with poor family who were transferred from Chencha. His parents were depended on his father's pension salary of 130 Birr and his mother supplemented the household economy by selling 'tella' (local alcoholic drink). Kinde grew up while selling sugarcane and practicing petty trade. Though his father was poor, he usually advised Kinde and his brothers about life skills, values of morality from bible (stories of Moses and Joseph in Bible). Kinde's elder brother was also hard worker and his positive role model.

Kinde failed in ESLCE and became hopeless. He was also chat addicted, induced by his drug addicted friends. But Kinde's brother usually advised and encouraged Kinde to work hard, and

improve his life. Then Kinde became fish merchant and supplied fish to Soma Restaurant and Chamo Hotel. Through the encouragement of his descent friends he again started to attend Sunday School for religious and moral educations in Orthodox Christian Church. Kinde stopped chat and alcohol. Then his brother sent for Kinde 6,000 Birr from USA. Kinde again obtained loan of 4000 Birr through youth development and employment creation programs from Omo Microfinance Institution. After that with 12,000 Birr capital he opened small supermarket. He expanded the shop by saving his income and involving in other trades. He also supplied chat from Gidole and distributed it for other merchants. He began to read books, nobles and success stories in his shop.

Now the shop has more than 60,000 Birr capitals. He is diploma holder and merchant with the capital of more than 90,000 Birr.

## 11. Abebe Boricha

Abebe , boy of 17,lost his only mother when he was 5 years old. Until he was 12 he lived with his brother in Bonke (rural Woreda in Gamo Goffa Zone). However, he was severely exploited, physically abused (torched, beaten and denied educational opportunities by his brother's wife). Then, he left home, went out to the streets and joined his uncle who was beggar. Abebe became beggar for 1 year in Bonke together with his uncle.

After that Abebe migrated to Arbaminch. In Arbaminch he found students from Bonke. He consulted all his problems to his friends. Then they took him to Shara (a village near Arbaminch University) and Abebe was employed as a guard of banana farm land for a farmer. But the farmer's sons usually terrified Abebe while they were stealing the banana. After that Abebe left the job and again was employed as house servant for a woman in Limat (the nearby rural village). Abebe's intension was education as his friends, but the women exploited Abebe's labor without salary and education for a year. Then Abebe went out to the street and became assistant shoeshine for a friend from his village for a year. When later his friend gave shoe making materials for Abebe and went for fishing Abebe became best shoeshine.

He saved his income in small Equb from shoeshine and started his education. But shoeshine became unproductive since many migrant children became shoeshine. After that Abebe began to supply 'Chefeqa (a wood for house construction) from Arbaminch Reserve Forest with other migrant friends. Then he collected some 9,000 Birr through 'Chefeqa' trade. With the money Abebe bought small land on the Suburb of the town. He built small living hut. Then he bought

latest photograph camera and became mobile photographer. He still continued his education. In the mean time Abebe went back to Bonke, and obtained his father's half hectare fertile farm land from his brother and sold it. With the money he built his own house with corrugated iron sheet. After he became self-reliant he also became cleaver in his educations and was elected as secretariat of student council in Chamo High School. He was also life skill trainer for students. The Red Cross Association and Irish AID (NGOs) were also supporting Abebe as he is orphan through the facilitation of the school. The above NGOs trained Abebe about life skills, HIV AIDS prevention techniques and family planning in Nazareth. Now Abebe is a trainer for children and youth in his school, Church and Kebele anti HIV/Aids clubs. Abebe is grade 10 student. He is not only clever student but also equipped himself with bright future. He is earning more than 1000 Birr monthly through his part time job and mobile photograph service. For his contribution in HIV/ AIDS prevention clubs the Red Cross Association awarded Abebe a computer.

## 12. Hymanot Tsegaye

Haymanot ,18 years old, was orphan migrant girl in Demeka , South Omo. She lost her migrant families in South Omo when she was small kid. Until grade six she was living with her sister, a wife of a teacher. But late again she lost her sister. Then Haymanot and her only brother became helpless. She began to help herself by small trade, selling spices and salt on small market in Demeka. But Hymanot was very active and smart in education. Her teachers usually appreciated and encouraged Haymanot to work hard. She usually got 1st to 2nd rank. Her sister's husband who was a teacher also encouraged Haymanot by offering award when Haymanot got ranks in classes. But after she lost her only sister and the sister's husband things became very difficult for Haymanot.

After that Haymanot consulted her problems to her teacher that she was on the verge of dropping out education. Then after, her teacher brought Haymanot to the nearby NGO, the Catholic Church Charity Organization. Her teachers also introduced Haymanot to the "Ferenj" (white men) that she was helpless orphan. Then the Catholic Church and white men began to help Haymanot financially and materially. After grade 8 she came to Arbaminch and was offered a living room in the compound of the Catholic Church Head Office.

Through her own effort she got good friends (foreign tourists) in Catholic Church. They are sending money and materials for Haymanot. Haymanot scored 3.00 in 10th grade School

Leaving National Examination and joined Arbaminch Preparatory School. She is also anti HIV/Aids club coordinator in the school and youth coordinator and singer in Sunday school in orthodox Christian church. Her vision is to become health officer. She is also earning more than 1000 Birr from Catholic Church monthly. She also supplemented her income by working in the cafeteria in her school. She is leading descent, hopeful and comfortable life with her brother in her own room in the compound of Catholic Church.

## 13. Ashenafi Asnake

Ashanafi, 17 years old boy, was orphan vulnerable who lost his father when he was 5 years old. His father, who was a solider during the Dergue regime, went to the battle field from Konso and married Ashenaf's mother in Eriteria. After the downfall of the Derge regime they came to arbaminch and Ashenafi's father became laborer in Arbaminch Textile Factory. Ashenafi was also born in Arbaminch. But, after her husband's death Ashenafi's mother became house maid in Arbaminch. Later on she became nun and joined church. After that Ashanafi was given to a priest. He became deacon when the priest died. Ashenafi went out to the streets and became Shoeshine, street vendor and Woyala (assistant Taxi driver). However, Ashenafi never dropped out his education. After grade 8 he became clever student. Through the support of the Red Cross Association and Mecane Yesus Church Ashenafi got shoe making materials and urban land in the center of Sikella sub town. Ashenafi also became preacher in Orthodox Christian Church. He began to earn from all the part time jobs more than 700 Birr monthly.

Finally, Ashafi scored 2.9 in 10th grade school leaving national exams and joined Arbaminch Preparatory School. He became chairman of student council in the school. He obtained various kinds of trainings through the facilitation of the Red Cross Association and the school (e.g. life skills and maintenance of plasma)

Now he is grade 12 student and the management member of the school. All teachers, students and school administrators like and appreciate Ashenafi. From various kinds of income generating activities and his part time job he earns more than 1000 Birr monthly. He also well prepared himself financially and academically for the university. He is happy and hopeful.

## 14. Abeje Assefa

Abeje, boy of 24, was born in Kamba (rural Woreda in Gamogoffa zone). His parents divorced when Abeje was 5 years old. At the beginning Abeje's father was rich and owner of a hotel in kemba . Later on he lost all his resources after he became drunkard. Then Abeje's father divorced and married another wife. As his mother died later Abeje grew up, with his 5 brothers, in the hands of a stepmother who severely exploited Abeje's labor. She also denied Abeje educational opportunity. Abeje's father was also negligent to support Abeje's education.

At the end Abeje and his brothers left their home and migrated to urban areas. Abeje came to Arbaminch with his father's sister for education when he was 16 years old. But Abeje's aunt could not support Abeje's education expense. He suffered from shortage of basic needs to the extent of starvation. Then Abeje dropped out his education from grade 9 and became street vendor and Shoeshine. Later he became assistant carpenter and builder. From childhood he liked constructions and he has special talent in maintenance. Since he had fast learning capacity Abeje became excellent carpenter and builder. But until he developed all these skills he had suffered a lot. But he had vision to become contractor. When he felt insecure he visited Orthodox Christian Church and prayed. Then he felt security and comfort. He was so patient and hopeful. He never gave up when face challenges. He learned moral values and persistence from the Bible in his church. It was his friend Kedir who encouraged and helped Abeje to learn building. Kider was assistant carpenter and later became builder before Abeje.

Now Abeje is professional builder and contractor. He earns more than 4000 Birr monthly. He has a shop with more than 50,000 Birr capital.

## 15. Dainel Beyene

Daniel was born in 1983 and grew up in Arbaminch. His parents divorced when he and his brothers were kids. Daniel's mother was 'Tej' (local wine) seller in Arbaminch. His mother lost her 'Taje' trade and became poor. Daniel also joined lempen friends and became drug addicted after grade 8. He used to chewe chat, smoke cigarette, drink alcohol and involve in group fight. During his time it was a fashion to watch violent movies, act accordingly and initiate group fight among adolescents. The purpose was to be called as "Arada Yeketema lij" (a civilized city boy) whose indicator was watching violent movies, discussing about it and acting accordingly and wearing a fashion gens. Daniel and his friends were involved in robbery

cases and stealing properties from their families and from organizations to satisfy their addiction needs.

Later on Dainel failed in ESLCE and became assistant welder in his brother's wood workshop. Through his brother's advice and encouragement he got 3rd grade driving license. Then he was employed as driver in Arbaminch University. Even though Daniel was addicted, he had the vision starting from childhood to have living villa and a car. This vision was engraved in his heart when his mother brought Daniel to Addis Ababa when he was 9 years old. When he saw female drivers and skyrocketing buildings in Addis Ababa Daniel began to manipulate how to own these things.

But the turning point in Daniel's life was his employment in Arbaminch University. He found descent and productive girl friend that forced and advised Daniel to stop chat and cigarette. Daniel also became friend of university lecturers who were younger than Daniel. But they have master's degrees. After that through his friends encouragement and support Daniel became diploma and degree holder in civil engineering through evening programs from Arbaminch University. He changed his job title in the university and began to get best salary. He married his girl friend and gave birth to one child. With his wife he opened modern clothing shop with more than 80,000 Birr capital.

Now Daniel is degree holder, shop and modern living residence owner and earns monthly salary more than 2000 Birr. But still some of his older lempen friends are thieves, drug addicted and jobless.

### 16. Kuchi Kabu (her name changed)

Kuchi, 22 years old, was born in Sawla town. But later on her further (government worker) was transferred to Beto (Maale). But her mother was left behind and became Tej seller. But again, leaving Kuichi and her four younger sisters in Beto, her father was transferred to Zalala Woreda in Gamogoffa Zone. Kuchi took care of her younger sisters. Her teachers and urban lempens sexually harassed her. Her own teachers also humiliated in front of her classmates. These all affected her education. Later she failed in school leaving national exams. Then her father sent her to Arbaminch for computer training. After her computer diploma she again became unemployed. She also became sick of gastric. In the meantime her parents were

divorced. Her lovely mother quarreled with Kuchi while Kuchi sided with her father. But Kuchi coped with all challenges.

While life became dark in Arbaminch for Kuchi, fortunately she became a friend of Kimi Tilahun, who was descent and wise, while participating in religious programs in Orthodox Christian Church. Kuchi and Kimi became best friends. Kimi was a secretary in private organization. Then through Kim's assistance Kuchi got job in the same organization. Kuchi shared all her worries to Kimi. Kimi encouraged and advised Kuchi not to worry and things would be alright. They started living together. Later on they got job in Arbaminch University. Through Kimi's assistance Kuchi gradually recovered from all of the traumas. At the end Kimi went to Middle East and Kuchi got diploma in Information Technology from Arbaminch Vocational and Technical College. Then she became permanent worker with best salary in Arbaminch University. She is earning more than 1500 Birr monthly from her salary and part time jobs.

## 17. Tegegn Getachew

Tegegn, 24 years old boy, was grown up in absolute poverty. His father was depended on pension salary 150 Birr and his mother supplemented the household economy through preparing and selling 'Areqe' (local alcoholic drink). But from his 6 brothers Tegegn was very clever in education. However, he dropped out education from grade 9 and became fisher for a year induced by his friends in the neighbor. Then Tegegn became urban gang and fisher addicted with chats and used to fight in the hotels. He did all other gang fishers did. But later on his mother who loves Tegegn very much went to the Lake Chamo and brought Tegegn to home. His mother encouraged and phushed Tegegn to restart his education.

Tegegn restarted his education. He studied hard and scored 2.8 in ESLCE and joined Awassa Teachers Education College from which Tegegn obtained his diploma in Mathematics. He became teacher for two years. Now Tegegn got his first degree in mathematics. He also becomes member of the management in Shecha sub town Administration. He earns monthly salary 2000 Birr and has small supermarket with the capital of more than 25,000 Birr. He is also controller of security and justice in the town.

## 18 Yapo Yada

Yapo, 28 years old, was the eldest son in his family of 8 siblings. He grew up in absolute poverty while helping his family's meager income. His mother was selling '*Tella*'. He became street vendor and later 'woyala' (assistant taxi driver). After that he bought bicycle and supported himself and his family by renting bicycle. One day a Federal police man who rented his bicycle broke it. Then Yapo was disappointed, dropped out education from grade 8 and went to battle field. In the battle field he became hopeless and drug addicted (smoke cigarette, chew chat and became drunkard)

When he returned after 3 years from battle field he had no job. Then he became urban gang. Usually criminals used him to attack people. He was gambler and drug addicted. At some point he was accused of a robbery case and thrown to jail for three years. While he was in prison he was trained in wood and metal works. He also changed his mind to work hard through advises of his brother Kunchare and other old prisoners. Then he was released from prison and opened wood workshop with 10,000 Birr capital. He obtained the capital from his brother (Kunchare) and loan from Omo Microfinance institutions through employment Creation programs for youth in the town.

Now he is working in private garage and earns more than 2000 Birr monthly. He has also his own workshop for furniture production after he paid the entire loan. He is also helping his poor parents with his brother, Kunchare. Now totally he has monthly income more than 3000 Birr.

## 19 Mesfin Bogale

Mesfin, boy of 17, was orphan who grew up with his uncle in Arbaminch. When he faced shortage of basic needs, he dropped out education from grade six and became fisher in Lake Chamo. He became chat and alcohol addicted early when he was fisher. He was also physically exploited by gang fishers until he became matured to defend himself.

Later on through his positive friends' material and financial support as well as advice he recovered from his addiction and restarted his education. He also became member of Sunday school in Orthodox Christian church from which he obtained moral educations. Gradually he won all of his addiction. Now he is fish merchant earn more than 15000 Birr monthly and also clever student of grade 9 through evening programs. He is striving to join university.

## 20. Muluken Amare

Muluken, 18 years old, faced stressful situations after her parents divorced when she was in grade seven. Her mother got married another husband who was laborer in Arbaminch Textile Factory. Her step father used to get drunk and insulted Muluken. She spent with her mother sleepless night. After she had faded up with her step father's neglect and insult she went to her biological father who was living in Koira (nearby rural village). But her father also married another wife. Again Muluken faced the same neglect and insult by her step mother. Her own biological father also neglected Muluken and sided with Muluken's step mother. He never helped Muluken for basic needs. Then Muluken came back to Arbaminch and began to live with her friends in rented room.

Muluken was very clever academically. Her teachers liked and appreciated her. Then Muluken consulted all her problems to her uncle who is a teacher in Kulfo primary School. After that her uncle rented a room for Muluken and through the coordination of her uncle other relatives began to support Muluen financially. At the end she scored 2.8 in 10th grade school leaving national examinations and joined Arbaminch Preparatory School.

Now she is grade 12 student. She also earns more than 600 Birr monthly working in the cafeteria in the school and becoming house to house tutor. She is also has been anti HIV AIDS club coordinator in high school.

## 21. Adane Gurashaye

Adane, boy of 29, was born in Konso but later his family migrated to Arbaminch after they were displaced due to a development program. Adane's father later became a lorry driver and took Adane to Assab when he was transformed to Asab. But Adane's father died in Assab. Adane become helpless. He dropped out his education. Later he came back to his family in Arbaminch. But his family was in absolute poverty. Adane went out to the street and became daily laborer. Then he became fisher. His poor mother usually encouraged Adane to work hard and not to give-up. Before his death Adane's father also showed strengths, determinations, and wining sprits in every occasions. Adane had vision to overcome poverty one day. Adane became farmer around Lake Chamo. But half of his land was taken by African Lakes (an organization displaced many farmers to protect Nchsar National park). But Adane never gave up.

In the mean time Adane completed his education and also obtained his diploma in Auto mechanics from Arbaminch Mecane Yesus Vocational College. Now he has his own farmland, furniture workshop, and he is also chairman of a youth association for income generation. He has the capital more than 100,000 Birr.

## 22. Cherient Enyew

Charinet, 17 years old boy, was re-settler is Boreda (rural Woreda in Gamogoffa Zone) after his family was displaced from Gondar. When he was 10 years old he lost his only mother in Boreda. Then he became helpless as he had no relative in Boreda. His sisters were also get married in rural village and never supported him. After that he consulted his problems to his biology teacher (Hailu Demissie). Hailu helped him to be employed as a housemaid for a teacher. Through his teachers' support and encouragement he completed his primary education in Boreda. He came to Arbmanich for his high school education. But he faced shortage of finance for his living and school expense. After that with his friend he became daily laborer. His vision was to join university. He studied hard. He also supported himself through tutoring other students. Again he became assistant builder. He also became religion program coordinator in his protestant Church. It was there he learned good moral values. Through his school he enjoyed financial support from Red Cross Association and the Town Administration as he was helpless orphan. He had also special talents in literary works, and acting in dramas. Thus, he has income from these activities by performing it in anti HIV/AIDS clubs.

Now he becomes self-reliant. He has rented a living room full of modern furniture. He also earns from his part time job more than 700 Birr monthly. He is student of grade 12 preparatory school as he succeeded in 10th grade national examinations.

## 23. Twodros Milashe

Twodros, 16 years old boy, grew up with his poor mother who was fuel wood carrier and house maid. He became shoeshine when his mother could not support him for his schooling. His two younger brothers also usually sold bread to support their mother in 'Gulit' (small daily market in the town). Twodros's mother was hard worker and hopeful. She usually encouraged Twodros to study hard so as to get a job after education to help his family. She also advised him and his brothers about moral values. Twodros's vision was to become police after he completed education. He saved his small income from shoeshine and daily labor in 'Equb'. He got 800 Birr Equb and bought a bicycle. His younger brother rented his bicycle when Twodros was in

school. He saved money and bought additional bicycle. With his bicycle Twodros distributed chat for chat shops in shecha. He was known among many of chat shop owners in shecha. Twdros also supported his mother's meager income and they renewed their house. He has also 5000 Birr Equb. He is also clever student in grade eight. He opened 'Qiyosk' (small shop) near their home. He is self-reliant and hopeful.

## 24. Gudisa Godo

Gudisa, 22 years old boy, was migrant boy from Ambo (East Shoa). It was his mother who was a cashier in a bar brought him to Arbaminch. When Gudisa was 12 years old he lost his only mother who was working in Wubete Hotel as a cashier in Arbaminch. Then he went out to the street and became shoeshine. He also became street vendor. Through helping himself he completed his education but he failed in school leaving national examinations. Then with his best friends he went to Kaba (a place near Lake Chamo where the youth collect stone for construction). He began to sell stone for constructions. He collected some money and come back to the town. After that through the support of Kebele administration he obtained small land on the side of Main Street on the way to Bekele Molla Hotel in Shecha Sub town. With 20,000 Birr capital he opened small consumers shop when he obtained loan from Omo Microfinance Institution through the facilitation of Town Administration. Now Gudissa has a shop with the capital more than 60,000 Birr. He also obtained urban land from the municipality and diploma in management through distance education.

## 25. Mehiret Abaynhe

Mehiret, an orphan aged 17, was born and grew up in absolute poverty in Arbamich. Her father, who was migrant daily laborer from Konso died when she was an infant. Her mother brought up Mehiret and her other three sisters by selling 'injera', a flat and soft traditional pancake produced from cereals, and being house maid. They were living in Kebele house. But mehiret's mother advised her good moral values and brought her to churches for additional moral educatins. Mehiret helped her mother by selling and baking injera. But she was also clever in her education. Her teachers and friends liked her as she was descent and clever. Her vision was join university and become medical doctor .She also participated in anti HIV/AIDS clubs in her school. Now she is grade 10 student. Through the support of her friend she got a part time job (being waitress) in Tourist Hotel. She has more than 800 Birr monthly from her salary and tip. She has also her own living room full of modern furniture.

## 26. Semegn Tesfaye

Simegn, girl of 17, was the eldest daughter in the family of 7sibilings. Her parents were extremely poor. They were migrants from Goffa. Her father was laborer in Arbaminch Textile Factory. Her mother prepares coffee and tea for workers in the factory in traditional way. But their monthly income was less than 500 Birr but her father was lovely and encouraged her to become clever in education. He also usually advised Semegn life skills. Since childhood she was selling 'kolo' (rosted grain) on the street to get money for her school expenses. Later Semegn became house maid for a rich person in the neighbor. When Semegn became dependable and hard worker the rich man liked her and began to support in her schooling. Semegn was also tutoring the children of her employer. Then the man provided living room for Semegn and fulfilled all necessary things for her living. Semegn then scored 2.5 in 10th grade school leaving national examinationss and joined Arbaminch Preparatory School. The man now considers Semegn as her own daughter. Semegn is also now elected as trainer for peer education in the school. She obtained training about HIV/AIDs prevention programs, and family planning through the facilitation of zone HIV secretariat and Red Cross Association. She has income from these part-time jobs. She is also financially and materially ready to join university.

## 27. Tsige Feyissa

Tsige ,girl of 23, was migrant house maid from Gumaide. Tsige left her home when she quarreled with her own mother who neglected Tsige. Her mother, a merchant, denied Tsige educational opportunity. Tsige dropped out her education in grde 8 and migrated to Arbaminch. Through the help of her friends from Gumaide she became a house maid for a woman who was Tej house owner. Tsige was physically exploited, torched and denied educational opportunity, by her employer. Then after 2 years of services she left the job and became waiter in Central Cafeteria in Sikella. She continued her education through evening program. But she failed in 12th grade school leaving national examinations. She again improved her result after she took the national exam again. Then she started her college education in Information Technology in Arbaminch Technical and vocational College through extension programs while working in day times in the cafeteria. In the mean time her brother who was driver in Catholic Church Charity organization came to Arbaminch. He encouraged Tsige to continue education and rented a best leaving room for Tsige.

Now Tsige obtained her diploma and is employed in NGO with 1200 Birr salary as a secretary and cashier. She is ready to start her degree program in Arbaminch University.

## 28. Mantegbosh Ayalew

Mategbosh, girl of 17, was an orphan, lost her parents due to HIV/AIDS when she was six years old. She had six brothers and sister. It was her elder sister supported Mantegbosh and her sisters and brothers by engaging in "*Shuruba Sira*", (hair making). Then through the Kebele Administration, UNICEF with AIDS orphans aid programs supported her brothers and sisters. On their parents land UNICEF built 5 rooms for renting. Mantegbash was street vendor. Later on when her elder sister get married she opened small local cafeteria in their home where she sold bread and tea, through the support of UNICEF and OSA.

She began to help her other brothers and sisters. Together with her other elder sister she assisted for tuition fees for her elder brother and sister. Now with their diploma they got job as teachers. Until they became self-reliant they suffered from starvation. But now Mantegbosh has more than 900 Birr incomes monthly from the local cafeteria and coffee house. She also joined preparatory, school after she scored 2.6 in 10th grade school leaving national examination.

## 29. Temesgen Wolde

Temesgen, 19 years old, was orphan who lost his parents when he was 9. Until he was 12, he lived with his half brother who was farmer in Araka (Wolayta). But Temesgen suffered from shortage of basic needs in the hands of his brother's wife. An NGO supported Temesgen as an orphan but his brother took the money and built his own house. Then Temesgen left his home and migrated to Nazareth where he became house maid for federal police men. When his employers were transferred to Arbaminch, Temesgen also migrated to Arbaminch. However, when his employers (police men) left Arbaminch Temsegen became helpless. He became shoeshine and street vendor. Later he became assistant builder in a construction Company by the help of his friends. After that he restarted his education. Temesgen never gave up when he faced challenging situations. He learned strength from his father, who was a guard of school who usually never accepted failure.

Now Temesgen has his own small shop .He also joined Arbaminch preparatory school after scoring 2.45 in 10th grade school leaving national exams. He got financial support from Red

Cross Association and the Town Administration Orphan Support program. It was through this support and his friends and teachers facilitation he got small land on the side of the main street down to Arbaminch Preparatory School where he opened his small shop with the capital of 20000 Birr. He is also getting income by writing poems and compositions for clubs in his school and in his protestant church.

## 30. Aster Terefe

Aster, 24 years old, grew up in Wolayta with her mother who was a small cafeteria owner. But her mother lost the trade and became poor. Then Aster dropped out her education from grade 9 and became waitress in a grocery .There she also got a boyfriend who was Isuzu car driver. Later on when Aster became pregnant her boyfriend suspected Aster that she might become pregnant from some one else. Then she quarreled with her boyfriend and got aborted. After that she migrated to Arbaminch and became commercial sex worker in Wubete Hotel. But Aster usually had vision that one day she could run her own business. She saved her money for four years. Then, through the support and encouragements of her positive friends, she opened clothing shop with 70,000 Birr capital of cash in Sikella sub town. Now she is a well known merchant and leading descent life in Sikella sub town.

## DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name Tekalign Ayalew

Sign_____

Date_____

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as University advisor.

Name Gebre Yntiso (PH.D)

Signature _____

Date_____