

INDIVIDUAL CASE STORY | SKILLS SYSTEM

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES IMPROVE EMPLOYABILITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE AKLILU

Urban unemployment is a critical challenge facing the government and urban communities in Ethiopia. It is characterised by low levels of labour productivity, industrial production, and inadequate jobs for youth and women. The highest prevalence of unemployment is in Addis Ababa City Administration at 23%, which is above the national average of 19.4%.¹

Among the factors fuelling the high rate of urban unemployment are rural-to-urban migration, skills mismatch, and poor entrepreneurial mindset of youth. Youth not only need the technical skillsets acquired through TVETs, but they also need guidance and counselling and proper industrial attachments to help increase employability.

Aklilu Shegaw is an example of a young migrant who needed a combination of skills and guidance and counselling to enter the workforce.



Aklilu was born as the third son to his parents in a small town called Gohatsion in the Oromia region, about 100km north of Addis Ababa. Aklilu attended his pre-college studies in Gohatsion and took the college entrance examination in 2008. Unfortunately, he did not pass and was unable to realise his dream of enrolling in university. He migrated to Addis Ababa to look for better job and training opportunities. While searching for training opportunities on published notices around his area of residence, he came across LG KOICA Hope TVET College, which offered free technical skills training to Aklilu.

Taking the opportunity, Aklilu started training in Hardware Networking Services. While he was happy to be studying, he did not have clear aspirations about self-growth and career development until LIWAY implemented an intervention in partnership with Aha Psychological Services PLC to provide guidance and career counselling services. Through the TVET's Career Development Centre, employability-related skills gaps are assessed using a digital job readiness assessment tool. Based on the identified gaps, relevant training on employability/soft skills is provided. Based on Aklilu's identified gaps, he was provided with soft skills training on goal setting, workplace communication, self-leadership, decision-making, and accountability.

¹ 2022 2nd Round Urban Unemployment Survey Addis Ababa Statistical Bulletin 595

The demand-driven soft skills service built Aklilu’s confidence to succeed and increased his competitiveness in the job market. He passed the TVET exit exam (COC) and easily found a job as a support engineer at Moti Engineering company with a salary of 4,000 ETB per month. He has proven himself to be an ethical, disciplined, and industrious employee and was quickly promoted to Junior Engineer with a salary of 5,350 ETB per month at the age of 25.

Aklilu now aspires to reach new and bigger goals. He is studying to complete a BSc in Computer Science and aspires to be self-employed in the technology sector. He appreciates the benefits he received from the guidance and counselling and soft skills training and would like to see others like him benefit from the same opportunity. He commented:

“ Soft skills training enabled me to see the world of work in a different way, as more than just short-term earning. I believe the soft skills training, counselling, and guidance should be scaled up in the TVET system to shape the training, careers, and lives of more youth. ”