

INDIVIDUAL CASE STORY | SKILLS SYSTEM

STREET YOUTH ESTABLISH A SUCCESSFUL ENTERPRISE THROUGH A PROGRAMME INCLUDING VOCATIONAL AND SOFT SKILLS TRAINING

Abel and his five business colleagues were street youth who established a successful small enterprise named Abel, Beruk, and Friends Plastic, Carton, and Paper Recycle PLC. They had been selected from the streets of Addis Ababa across different locations by Woreda Government Officials of Yeka Sub-City and Opportunities Industrialisation Centre Ethiopia (OICE) to participate in a rehabilitation programme. Based on a needs assessment conducted by OICE, it was found that Abel and his colleagues wished to change their street life and have a secure and decent working environment but needed support to do so. OICE, in its rehabilitation centre, provided them with basic needs, life skills, psychological counselling, and, through LIWAY intervention, three months of vocational and soft skills training. OICE also provided 20,000 ETB of start-up capital in addition to capacity building training and equipment to help them start their business.



The training and start-up capital provided by OICE helped Abel and his friends establish their small enterprise, which focuses on recycling plastic, cartons, and paper. They collect waste from households and businesses in their sub-city and get paid by the Woreda administration office when they deliver the composed waste in cubic meters. They also earn income by collecting and selling plastic, cartons, metal, and paper directly to recycling companies such as DA Packaging PLC and Genet Hawaz Recycling PLC.

Each member of the business currently earns 3,000 ETB (50 USD) per month and they are each depositing a share of their profits into a common account to maximise their working capital. They also need working space for their business. They are currently working from a temporary working space but recognise they need a legal working space to be able to expand as they wish. Together, they have already saved 70,000 ETB to invest into their business.



In addition to the changes in their livelihoods, group members have also seen changes in their personal behaviours and social interactions following the life skills, employability, and entrepreneurship training they received. In particular, their attitude to work ethics, time management, and communication have changed significantly, which enables them to better manage their business and address any issues that arise.

Abel, Beruk, and Friends provides an example of hope and possibility for other street youth. They have not only successfully started and run their small business, but they also hope to one day establish their own plastic processing company and create jobs for more youth.

BERUK'S STORY



Beruk is a 21-year-old youth and Vice Head of the PLC. He was born with 5 brothers and 3 sisters at Lalebella, North Wolo Zone Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia. Beruk completed up to grade 10 but was unable to progress further with his education due to economic constraints in his family. He therefore migrated to Addis Ababa to look for job opportunities as a daily labourer to support himself and his family. However, life in the city was challenging, and for three years he lived with youth and children on the streets around Megenagna bus station where he developed bad habits such as smoking and drinking alcohol. When OICE selected youth from the street for its rehabilitation programme, Beruk got a chance to get support and change his life. He now earns income in his group's small business, is able to sustain himself, and has plans for future business growth with the group.