



World Vision



**LIVES CHANGED
COMMUNITIES TRANSFORMED**

YAYA GULELE, ETHIOPIA

YAYA GULELE AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Yaya Gulele,
Ethiopia

67,305

Impact Population

18,007

No. of Families

13,302

Women

19,894

Girls

20,107

Boys

14,002

Men

Project Start: October 2007

Project End: September 2026

BACKGROUND

Yaya Gulele is located in the North Shewa Zone of Oromia Regional State, about 114 km from Addis Ababa. Most families relied entirely on subsistence agriculture and livestock farming using traditional, rain-fed methods. However, degraded soils, limited access to quality seeds, and poor agricultural practices led to low yields and food insecurity.

Limited access to proper sanitation at home and in schools led to a heavy burden of waterborne diseases in families. A lack of awareness of proper practices in healthcare and nutrition also contributed to child malnutrition and frequent illness among children. This impacted school attendance and resulted in children dropping out of school permanently, contributing to the incidence of child labour for boys and early marriage for girls.

Inadequate and poorly equipped classrooms further discouraged learning and school attendance, perpetuating the cycle of poverty for the next generation. These overlapping challenges placed children at the greatest risk and highlighted the need for a long-term, holistic, child-focused development approach.



Children supported with scholastic materials.

FROM NEED TO HOPE

What began as communities facing deep challenges in health, education, and livelihoods has grown into a story of hope and resilience.

Through strong partnerships with local governments and community groups, World Vision helped train health workers, equip teachers, and strengthen community structures such as child well-being committees and savings groups. Health posts and schools were not only built but handed over to local authorities, while parents and caregivers adopted positive practices that support children's well-being. Savings groups have also enabled families to start small businesses building more stable incomes.

By embedding these efforts within local systems and strengthening community ownership, communities are now equipped to sustain and grow this progress independently, ensuring lasting improvements for future generations.





EDUCATION

KEY CHALLENGES

In 2007, fundamental primary education was very limited with only 54% of gross enrolment. The lack of basic essential facilities led to a high teacher to student ratio and overcrowded classrooms with both ratios at 1:66 at the beginning of the programme. Schools had no latrines or water supply. This led to dropout of students, contributing to child labour among boys and early marriage among girls. Poor quality of education resulted in students repeating grades and children as old as 16 years old still attending primary school education.

13,800 students benefitted from the construction of 9 standard classroom blocks in 6 schools, a new primary school, and a preschool block.

5,700 students in each academic year had better hygiene with the construction of 22 school latrines, including 14 with gender-separated toilets, leading to improved attendance for adolescent girls.

5,430 children benefitted from 94 village reading camps and the distribution of 32,461 storybooks to strengthen their literacy.


22 primary schools had new school supplies including desks, blackboards, reference books, teachers' tables and chairs, materials for community-managed reading and early childhood development.

7,638 vulnerable children were provided with schooling supplies to enable them to catch up in their education.


OUR IMPACT

6,400 children have benefitted from better access to early childhood education.


World Vision implemented Unlock Literacy to improve teaching methods for reading and other education improvement programmes to elevate the quality of education in the community. With the construction of new school blocks and the provision of teacher training programmes co-facilitated by the local education bureau, enrolment and pass rates have improved.



50:1
Student to classroom ratio



96.84%
Grade 8 completion rate



65.7%
Children who can read with comprehension



Pre-school graduates celebrating an important milestone at one of the 11 established early childhood education centres.



Primary school children have a more hygienic and conducive environment for learning.

IMPACT STORY: MEDHANIT'S JOURNEY TO CONFIDENCE THROUGH DIGNIFIED EDUCATION



Medhanit (centre in white shirt) is now more confident to pursue her dream to be a doctor.

Today, 16-year-old Medhanit stands confidently in her Grade 10 classroom at Fital High School, a testament to how access to education, alongside child protection efforts, can transform lives in the Yaya Gulele Area Development Programme.

Many years ago, Medhanit's parents relied on small-scale farming to support the family. Her community had no school, and her family struggled to afford basic school supplies.

"I remember watching my older brothers walk long distances to attend school in a neighbouring village," she recalls. "My parents were always worried about our safety, especially for us, girls, on those long one hour walks to reach school."

That began to change in 2012 when World Vision, together with the local government and community members, constructed additional classrooms at Fital High School, significantly reducing the distance children had to travel to access education. Further progress came in 2018, when World Vision built gender-segregated latrines equipped with menstrual hygiene management facilities, along with new handwashing stations.

"Before these improvements were made, we faced many challenges," says Medhanit. "There were no gender-segregated latrines for girls and boys, and it was especially difficult for us during our menstrual periods. Many girls would stay home during those days and miss important lessons."

Thanks to these facilities and ongoing child protection awareness sessions, the school has become a safe, inclusive, and girl-friendly learning environment. "Now we can attend classes regularly without interruption, and our performance has improved," Medhanit shares, her smile radiating confidence.

With renewed hope for the future, Medhanit dreams of becoming a medical doctor, a goal that once seemed far beyond her reach.



I want to serve my community as a health professional and help children grow up healthy and strong.

— Medhanit, 16 years old



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

KEY CHALLENGES

Only 27% of the population had access to potable water, while about 4.3% of households had access to basic sanitation facilities, contributing to a high burden of waterborne diseases before the start of World Vision's work in 2007. Children used to walk for two-hours round trip to fetch water for household use. 23.3% of children under the age of 5 suffered from diarrhoea.

OUR IMPACT

22,500 people benefitted from better access to clean water.

World Vision established and trained WASH committees to manage clean water systems, promote hygiene, and sustain behavioural change to eliminate open defecation. Access to improved clean water source significantly rose to 76% and households using sanitary latrines rose to 75.5%. Today, 73.8% of households can access clean water within a 30-minute round trip, reducing the burden of long water journeys.

29,547 children in 22 schools now have access to proper sanitation and handwashing facilities.



15 education facilities (83.3%)
now have a basic water source.



12 education facilities (66.7%)
now have basic handwashing
and sanitation facilities.

IMPACT STORY: WORKI'S PATH TO HOPE BEGAN WITH CLEAN WATER



The water pump near Worki's home frees up her time for learning.

At 12 years old, Worki is experiencing a new life defined by better health and more time for learning. Before World Vision's intervention, Worki's family relied on a distant, unprotected river for their daily water needs. "I spent most of my time fetching water from muddy rivers and ponds shared with animals," she recalls. "The water was dirty and made us sick. I often had stomach pain and diarrhoea. I missed classes several times and was always tired."

For years, girls like Worki walked long distances, more than two hours every day, to fetch water. "My sisters and I would walk hours each day carrying heavy jerry cans. By the time we came home, we were too exhausted to study or enjoy any other activities," she explains.

That changed when World Vision, in collaboration with the local government and Water Bureau, constructed a new water system in her community. A solar-powered pump was installed on an existing shallow well, providing a steady supply of clean water close to home.



Now, clean water is near our homes. We no longer drink dirty water or walk long distances. Today, life is different. I feel healthy and have time to study and play with my friends. Sharing muddy water with animals is history!

— Worki, 12 years old

With water points close by, children like Worki attend school regularly, perform better academically, and stay healthier throughout the year. Through clean water access, her community is building a sustainable future where girls have the freedom to learn, dream, and grow.



Mothers are equipped to care for their newborn.



HEALTH AND NUTRITION

KEY CHALLENGES

In 2007, healthcare coverage reached only about 35% of the population, with limited access to essential medicines, equipment, and qualified health workers. Respiratory infections, diarrhoea, and malaria were widespread, while many mothers lacked knowledge of appropriate infant and child feeding practices. Skilled birth attendance stood at just 36%. Only 24% of children received essential newborn care, and 45.3% of children under five were affected by stunting due to malnutrition.

OUR IMPACT

World Vision partnered with the district health office to construct and equip health posts and train health workers. Immunisation awareness campaigns were introduced to improve vaccination coverage, while maternal and child health services were strengthened to promote better feeding practices. These efforts have contributed to improved access to healthcare, reduced malnutrition, and a decline in preventable diseases among children.



Before, mothers delivered at home and were exposed to different health complications due to lack of awareness. Now, we give birth at the health institution safely with skilled health workers. This is my second child and I am receiving postnatal care here at Fital Health Centre.

— Mother of two in delivery room



88.6% of deliveries are now in health facilities, with skilled birth delivery attendants.



57.1% of newborns also receive essential healthcare to enable them to develop well.



CHILD PROTECTION

KEY CHALLENGES

Child labour was widely accepted in the Yaya Gulele community in 2007. Culturally accepted harmful traditional practices, in particular child marriage, were also very common as one of the negative coping mechanisms to poverty. Birth registration was almost non-existent, hindering children's access to essential vaccinations and basic education. There were very limited child protection mechanisms within the community.

OUR IMPACT

World Vision raised awareness on child rights and protection to prevent and reduce child marriage and child labour. Child-focused structures including child well-being committees and community-based advocacy mechanisms were established to give children a voice and to monitor their well-being. Positive parenting workshops were held to improve the children's home environment and development.



42% of children were registered with birth certificates.



78.1% of children reported positive and peaceful relationships with their parents and faith leaders.



86.2% of 12–18 year old youths reported that their views are sought and incorporated into local decision-making for their well-being.



I did not have a birth certificate before. I'm happy for getting this because I can confidently get the services that I need. Moreover, I feel secure and recognized.

— Kidist, 18 years old

IMPACT STORY: BETTER NUTRITION, BETTER HEALTH



Fanosi with her mother and siblings in the home garden.

Like many families in her community, Fanosi's household once struggled with poor dietary diversity and limited nutrition awareness. "Before World Vision came to our village, we mostly ate injera and shiro," Fanosi recalls. "We rarely had vegetables or fruits in our meals. I often felt weak and got sick frequently."

World Vision introduced nutrition education programmes and home gardening initiatives in her community. Through these efforts, Fanosi's parents participated in training on balanced diets and child health. They also received improved vegetable seeds and gardening tools. They took part in practical demonstrations under the Positive Deviance Hearth (PD Hearth), a community-based nutrition approach, which rehabilitated malnourished children and strengthened family knowledge in proper feeding practices.

Fanosi's family soon established a home garden where they grow carrots, cabbage, and tomatoes. They also learnt about safe food preparation and storage to preserve nutrients and prevent illness.



Thank you World Vision, for introducing us to diverse foods and teaching us how to prepare meals properly. Now our meals have different vegetables, and I feel healthier and stronger.

— Fanosi, 12 years old

Fanosi who is 12 years old and in Grade 4 rarely falls ill now. She has more energy to play and study, and her teachers have noticed her improved focus in class. "I can concentrate better, and I'm doing well in school," she shares proudly. "I want to continue to study hard and become a teacher when I grow up."

Through World Vision's nutrition education and home gardening programme, families like Fanosi's are cultivating better health, resilience, and hope.



LIVELIHOOD

KEY CHALLENGES

In 2007, only 18% of households in Yaya Gulele reported having sufficient food throughout the year. Low agricultural productivity caused by degraded soils and a lack of improved seeds led to poor harvest. Crop diseases and insufficient veterinary services for livestock further compounded food insecurity and constrained livelihood opportunities. 45.3% of children under five were thus stunted due to malnutrition.

OUR IMPACT

World Vision provided agricultural and livestock support, developed irrigation systems, and equipped families to set up home gardens to improve child nutrition at home. The Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration model was implemented to restore degraded land and improve natural resource management for better agricultural output. Savings groups were also established, becoming a powerful and enduring driver of household and community resilience. These groups now serve as platforms for social support with some linked to microfinance institutions, enabling families to invest in children's education, manage climate-related shocks and grow sustainable livelihoods.



3,047 people benefitted from the provision of improved cattle breeds, heifer, and veterinary services.

8,000 people were supported through 418 savings groups, enabling households to save, have credit access, and invest in small businesses including poultry, irrigation, honey and dairy processing.

135,550 improved fruits and vegetable seedlings were planted to boost food security.



71.3%

Households have sufficient dietary diversity



59%

Households have two or more sources of income



Thanks to World Vision, we are now planting different types of vegetables on our farmland. We received improved seeds for leafy vegetables and beetroot, and we are growing them successfully. Now, I am able to feed my children a balanced diet, and they are healthy and strong.

— Birhane, 35 years old

IMPACT STORY: BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH SAVINGS



Siyum (front third from left) with the Savings for Transformation Group members.

“

My family is now more resilient than ever. Even during hard times, we have savings to rely on. I can plan for my children's future with confidence.

— Siyum, 35 years old

35-year-old Siyum, a father of three, is charting a new path towards financial stability and hope through World Vision's Savings for Transformation (S4T) model.

Before joining the savings group, Siyum's livelihood depended entirely on rain-fed farming, a risky venture in an area often affected by erratic rainfall. "When the crops failed, I had no savings to fall back on," he recalls. "I struggled to meet basic needs and couldn't consistently support my children's education or healthcare expenses."

In 2018, World Vision established a Savings for Transformation group in his community. Through the group's training sessions, Siyum gained financial literacy, learnt the discipline of structured savings, and became part of a supportive community network. "I am so glad to be part of the savings group organised by World Vision," Siyum says proudly. "I can now diversify my income, engage in small businesses, and provide well for my three children."

At the end of his first savings cycle, Siyum received a savings share-out of 12,000 Ethiopian Birr (approximately 98 SGD) including his savings and earned dividends. He added a small amount from his own pocket and invested in shoat fattening and resale. The profits from those sales enabled him to reinvest and expand the business, creating a steady stream of income alongside his farming activities.

Beyond financial benefits, the group has fostered a spirit of solidarity. "When one of the members faces challenges, we come together to help," Siyum explains. "That support has strengthened our entire community."

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THIS TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY.

BECAUSE OF YOU, HOPE LIVES ON
AND YOUR LOVE CAN CONTINUE TO REACH EVEN MORE CHILDREN.



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