

Women's Empowerment Income Generating Project Update

Did you know that in 2019 our funding empowered 75 women through small business creation? Isn't that amazing? It happened because of generous donors like you. What is even more amazing is the diversity of interest and skill. Women are practicing animal husbandry, promoting fashion, selling sweet treats, making injera (local bread), selling coffee, and making local cultural drinks. We think the best part is all businesses are 100% involved in their local economy. Plus, the women are saving money through a local non-profit called VisionFund.



Almaz is a mom with an entrepreneurial spirit. She is making popsicles and other sweet treats to sell outside of local schools. Life has been rough since losing her husband, but her strong

spirit and determination coupled with this amazing “hand-up” opportunity has given her hope for the future!

As an extrovert Asrat loves being around people. Therefore, she is making a local cultural drink and serving it four days a week in her new cafe. In just two months she is so busy she has hired two other women part-time to help. Isn't that amazing?



We first met Elflesh in 2018. Through tears she told us about the hardships she had faced since losing her husband. In 2020, her face was glowing as she expressed her deep gratitude at the

opportunity to have a portable clothing boutique. The best part is she loves fashion, and she is putting her passion to work.

When Bereket made her business plan, she factored in three things: her interest, her skills, and market demand. In Ethiopia a staple to their diet is a unique flatbread called injera. Injera is made from a fine grain called teff that grows only in Ethiopia. Since every household and restaurant needs injera on a daily basis, it is a product in high demand. As an expert injera maker, Bereket knew an injera-making business could change her life. **All she needed was the capital to get started.**



Bereket was one of the **fifty women in the city of Hawassa** who were part of the income-generating project we funded last year. The women were divided into groups of five. They **were given business training, financial training, and the capital to start a small business.** The initial plan was to have each group of five work on the same business. However, the women collectively decided to do individual businesses yet meet frequently in their prospective groups to encourage and support each other. Working separately allowed them to pursue their passions.

Bereket used the capital to purchase the supplies and set up an injera-making shop in her yard. When we visited Bereket she informed us **she already had two clients** which were local restaurants. She makes fresh injera each morning, and the remainder of her day is spent working on securing more clients.

For women like Bereket, getting a bank account is challenging; therefore, as part of the program Bereket is allowed to save her money through Visionfund Microfinance which is an NGO (non-profit) in Ethiopia. Establishing a savings account is strongly encouraged through the financial training the women receive. **We definitely plan to visit Bereket on our future trips to Ethiopia. It will be exciting to see her progress.**

**We invite you to join us in 2020
and help empower more women in need!**