

terre des hommes



stops child exploitation

Stories of Impact

2022

ETHIOPIA





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About Terre des Hommes Netherlands

Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TdH NL) is an international non-governmental organisation with a mission to protect children by preventing and stopping child exploitation, and by empowering children to make their voices count. Our vision is that children can flourish in a world free of all forms of exploitation.

Our vision and mission are inspired and guided by international human rights instruments and standards, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Council of Europe's Lanzarote Convention, the International Labour Organisation Conventions and aligned with achievement of the SDGs, in particular Goals 5, 8 and 16.

Terre des Hommes Netherlands fights against the exploitation of children in four regions: Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East. In Africa, Terre des Hommes Netherlands works in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Madagascar. Our work is focused on preventing child exploitation in all its forms. As such we work with communities, government, private sector, civil society organisations and children themselves, at the centre, to address systemic and structural drivers that expose children to exploitation. We build the capacity of communities

and local structures to effectively prevent, detect, report and respond to child exploitation; we purpose to address systemic and structural drivers of child exploitation. We also collaborate with other actors to influence strengthening of the legal and policy environment for better promotion and protection of children rights.

Over the years, Terre des Hommes Netherlands has been able to document various impactful stories of the support we have provided children through the projects and programmes that have positively impacted their lives. A few selected stories are detailed in this storybook. Since 2015, Terre des Hommes Netherlands in Ethiopia has supported local organisations and networks in the implementation of projects (both development and humanitarian) which prevent child exploitation, provide assistance to exploited children and children experiencing conflict, and influence relevant policies and practices at local and national level. Our work in Ethiopia is supported by Dutch MOFA, Dioraphte and Trekpaart foundation, IRC/BHA, and Dutch Relief Alliance.



We strive to do no harm and act in the best interests of children. To protect their privacy all identifying personal information (including names, locations and images of children) in this storybook have been changed.

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Terre des Hommes Netherlands is sincerely grateful for the valuable contribution of its donors, all partners (including the respective partner organisations mentioned in the stories), children, communities and other stakeholders in supporting children and providing assistance in developing the impactful stories depicted in the storybook.



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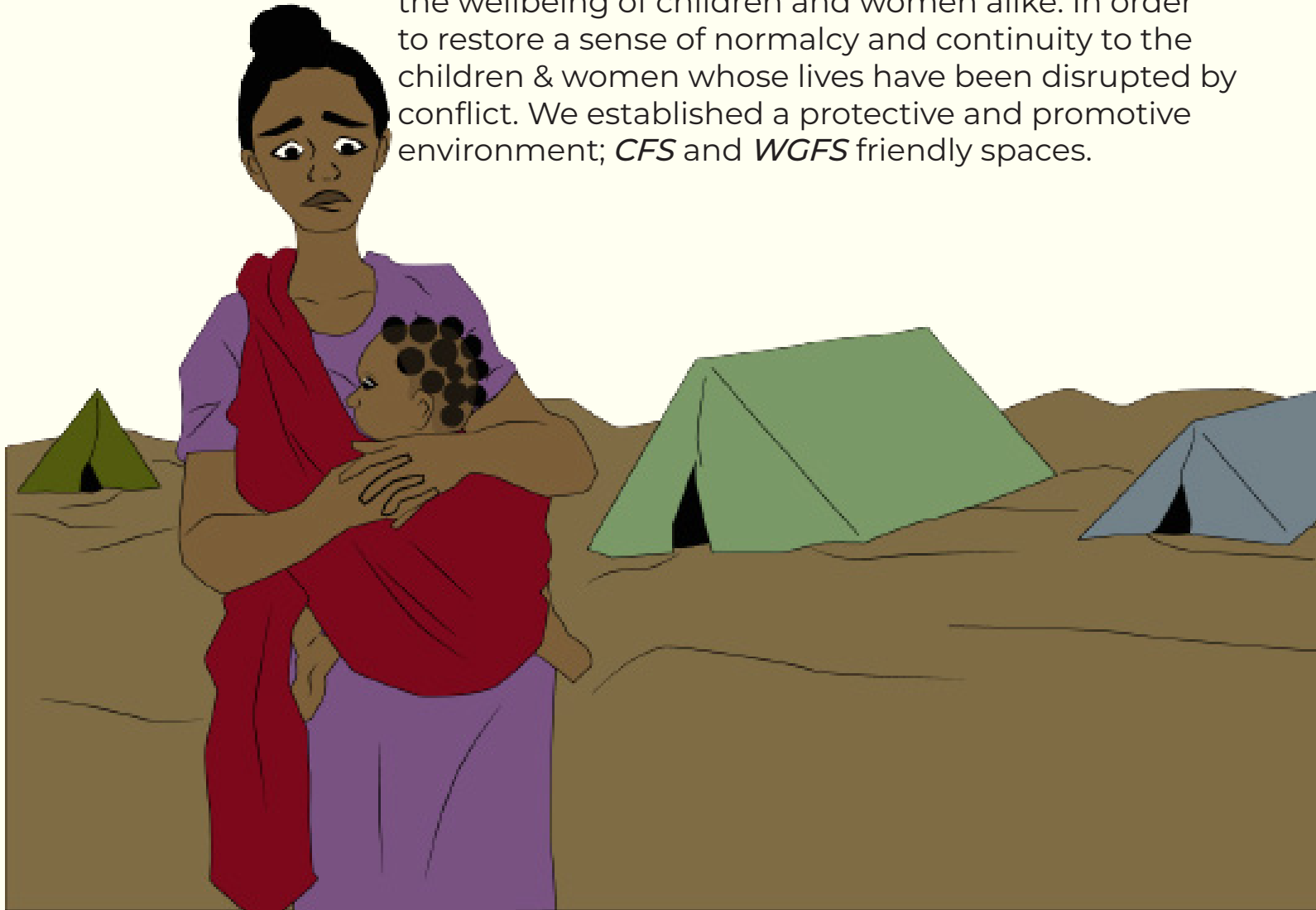
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Safe spaces for internally displaced women and children

The recent conflict in Ethiopia posed a major threat to the wellbeing of children and women alike. In order to restore a sense of normalcy and continuity to the children & women whose lives have been disrupted by conflict. We established a protective and promotive environment; *CFS* and *WGFS* friendly spaces.



Child Friendly Spaces

Child friendly centres/spaces (CFS) were established in Shewa Robit, Ethiopia with the aim of preventing internally displaced children from further protection risks through creating meaningful routine daily activities to reduce their daily stresses and prolonged distress resulting from the disaster of war and conflict. The spaces have helped children develop their self confidence, build meaningful and positive social relationships, improve on their positive coping skills, manage daily stressors and build/strengthen their resilience. Children are also protected from abuse and exploitation as they are supervised on a daily basis by professionals.

The constructed one semi-permanent *CFS* structure equipped with play and recreational items is occupied by children aging from 3-5 years (pre-school), 6-8 years (early school) and adolescents (9-17 years). In the centre, they learn literacy and numeracy skills, engage in sports and recreational activities including dancing, storytelling, volleyball, domino, drawing, drama making, and also receive emotional support from social workers and training on hygiene and sanitation.

To date, more than 5,015 children have accessed the centre and benefited from the structure's activities. A total of 254 children (138 male and 116 female) are using the *CFS* for education, play and recreation activities on a daily basis.

Terre des Hommes Netherlands helps the children, affected by conflict, to improve their psychosocial well-being through engaging them in structured activities that reduce their daily stressors and in turn improve their emotional well-being.

Ever since the child friendly spaces were set up, there has been significant positive change in children. They are happier and actively participate in different constructive activities. They have regained their sense of confidence in their self-efficacy through learning activities. The children are well protected in the structure and can attest to a sense of normalcy in their lives.



Women and Girl Friendly Spaces (WGFS)

In Ataye IDP site, a safe space/centre for women and girls has also been established. They can go to feel safer, access information and support, participate in activities, build their networks and strengthen relationships with peers. Additionally, they have access to a wide range of information and support from their peers, have access to discrete clinical care (especially for GBV survivors) and sexual and reproductive health services.

Every week, the girls and women jointly meet up at the center. They hold open discussions and share views and experiences on GBV prevention and mitigation responses, harmful traditional practices, how to ensure confidentiality, how to support GBV survivors including referral mechanisms, positive parenting skills, and how to resolve conflict. They also take part in the coffee ceremony and share their skills and knowledge with each other such as spinning cotton, crocheting, and making coffee mattes.

“Now we have a place to come together to discuss our issues and help each other. Our mental well being has improved significantly and we are empowered. Thank you *TdH NL* for helping us restore our lives,” one of the women shared.

Through these friendly spaces, children are able to play, learn and socialise and express themselves as they rebuild their lives whereas girls and young women are able to socialise, re-build their social networks, acquire and focus on enhancing relevant skills, learn about reporting & referral of cases, and access multi sectoral GBV response services & information. The intervention in Ethiopia has brought about a positive impact among children, adolescent girls and women at risk. We are slowly helping them restore their lives after severely being affected by the conflict.

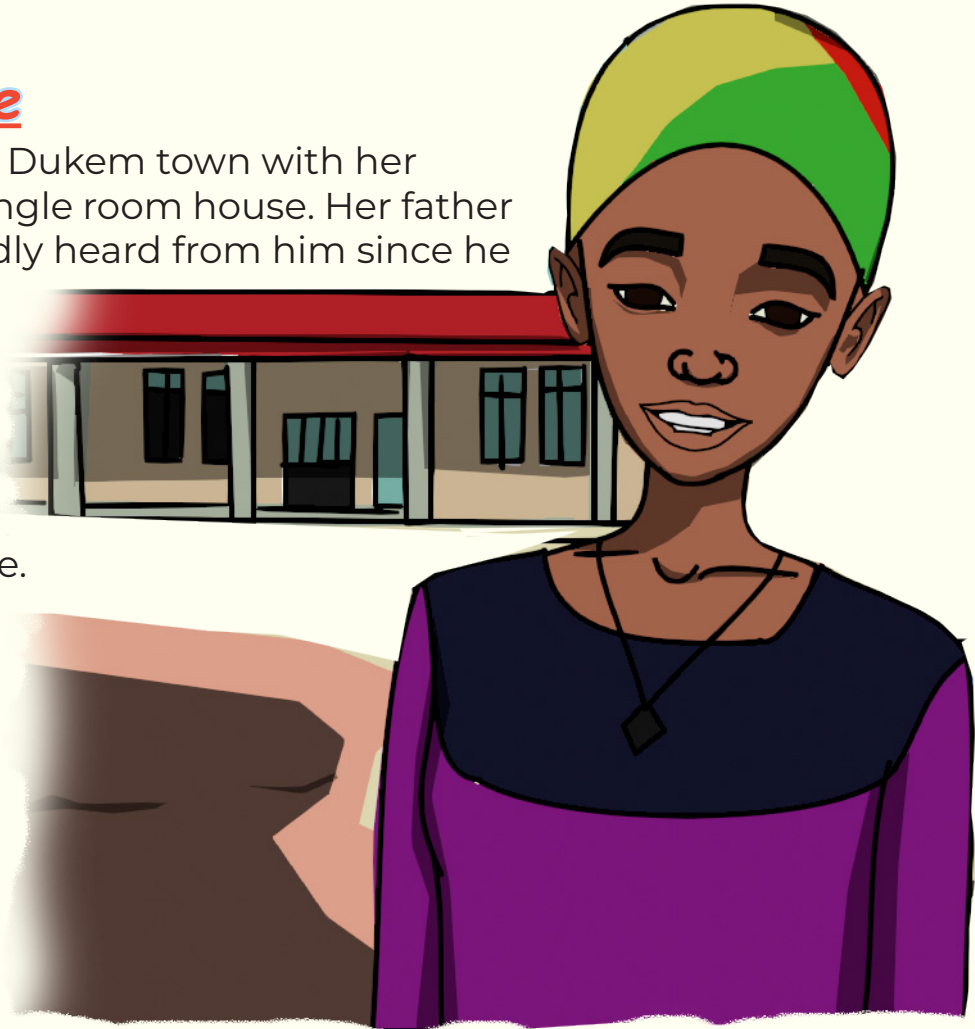


2 Hayimanot Finds Her Voice

Hayimanot's parents separated when she was ten years old. After their separation, her mother became the sole provider for the family. She earned up to 6 Euros per month from washing and cooking meals for other people. They managed to have one or two meals a day (most of it was not balanced), from the little money she made. Hayimanot's high school education was interrupted from time to time, since she had to help her mother with work. She is currently attending school although sometimes she misses school to help her mother.

A Life of Silence

Hayimanot, 18 years, lived in Dukem town with her mother and sister in a tiny single room house. Her father lived outside town. They hardly heard from him since he cut communication with them. Even though Hayimanot's mother worked hard to provide for them, lack of access to water and sanitary materials was a daily struggle. In their community, it is very rare for girls to freely express themselves. Also, girls and women lack the freedom to explore their full potential and achieve their dreams.



She Leads Enrollment

For a long time, Hayimanot's voice didn't matter until she joined the *She Leads* programme. In July 2021, she was identified through the *Women and Children Affairs Office* and the Kabele Administration. She was selected during the identification process of girls and young women, both from and out of school. Hayimanot attended different trainings including par law (equality laws), how to use the internet to gain knowledge about gender based violence (GBV), how to speak in public, how to use social media platforms

properly and advocate through them and so much more. Through practice, she was able to build her confidence and she can now boldly express her ideas and perspectives.

Learning Exchange Enrollment

The *She Leads* Programme offered her a safe space where she found her voice. “I have realised that I can speak out for myself, say no if the community denies me my rights and neglects me. I am a girl who can lead and change my life, that of other girls and young women in my community and the country at large,” she said. Towards the end of October 2022, through the *She Leads* programme, Hayimanot got an opportunity to share her experience with like-minded girls and young women (GYW) group in the area. During the experience, the girls’ efforts helped her learn that economic independence and access to resources is a gateway to gender parity.

Her Aspirations

After the knowledge sharing visit, Hayimanot shared with her colleagues the lessons she had learnt. At home, she started preparing and selling sandwiches with her colleague. The business earned them about one euro per day. Feeling happy and empowered, she said, “I and the GYW with me have a dream to be successful women entrepreneurs to equalise the balance that is dominated by our counterparts.” Hayimanot wants to become a judge in the future.



3 Anguache's Tale: Surviving Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is a widely debated topic today. It violates children's fundamental rights to dignity and bodily integrity. For children like Anguache, corporal punishment was something that she had to deal with in her everyday life. As a result, she was forced to ultimately make one risky decision: to run away from home.



Severe Corporal Punishment

Anguache comes from rural Ethiopia where she lives with her extended family. Her father is the breadwinner, who earns from agriculture and livestock breeding. For Anguache, life became hard after her mother died. At 10 years old, she began facing the wrath of her father who used severe corporal punishment as a way of instilling discipline. Other than this, she was also burdened with heavy chores for a girl who was barely a teenager. Eventually, she dropped out of school. Together with other girls from her rural home, she fled in search of a better life to a town in northwestern Ethiopia.

Leaving Home

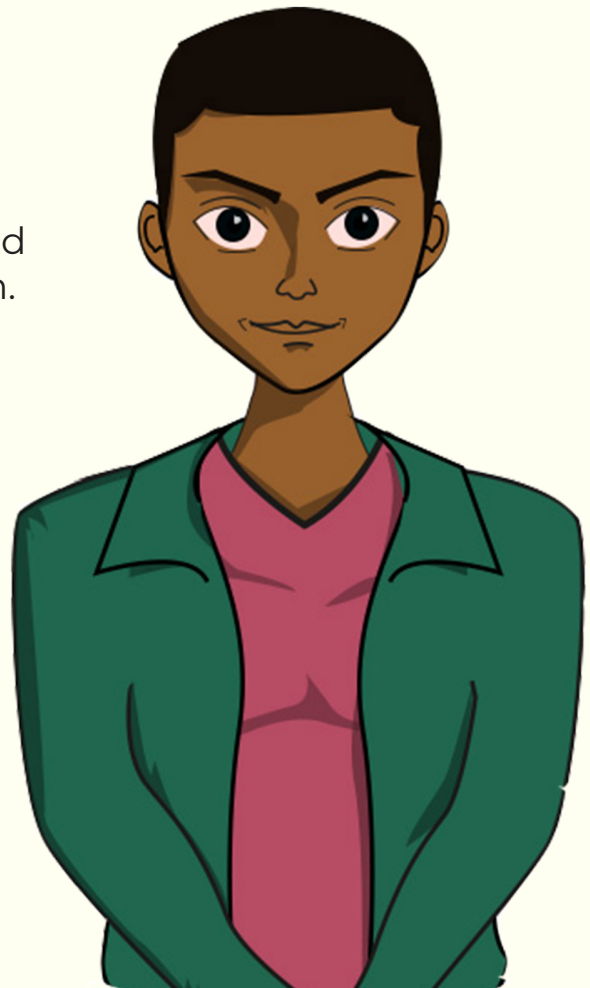
Anguache left home and got a job working as a domestic worker in a brothel. For two weeks, she would be forced to work for up to 10 hours with no pay. At the brothel, men began to sexually harass her. “What I have witnessed in the brothel was very horrible.” One day, a customer visited the brothel and saw what was happening. The customer reported the case to a social worker attached to *Mahibere Hiwot for Social Development*, an organisation working together with *Terre des Hommes Netherlands* to implement the *Paths to Safer Childhood* (Phase II) project.

Receiving Support

Anguache received counselling and was taken to a temporary shelter for further assistance. At the shelter, she received medical, psychosocial and legal aid. Before being reunited with her family, Anguache’s father was also supported with positive child disciplining techniques to employ when his children commit offences. He was also educated on the negative effects of corporal punishment which have the power to make children vulnerable to all kinds of hazards including unsafe migration and trafficking.

Reunified

Anguache was reunified with her family and no longer has any thoughts of re-migration. “The assistance provided has saved my life and changed my father’s life for the better. I want to be a legal officer as I want to support girls who experience abuse and harassment,” she said.



4 Halima's Safe Return

15-year-old Halima comes from the rural Amhara region in Ethiopia. Her mother is the sole income provider who supports the family through agriculture and livestock rearing. Halima was tasked with cleaning the house, herding, milking the cattle, fetching water from remote distances which put her safety at risk, as well as other duties that were imposed on her. The workload became too much that Halima was forced to drop out of school in January 2021. Feeling frustrated, exhausted and alone, Halima ran away from home four months later.

Fleeing

Halima fled to Metema, a town in Northwestern Ethiopia to escape the heavy chores that were borne on her. She roamed the streets in search of a job as a domestic worker for about two weeks, only for her to experience the worst. A trafficker put her to work in a café that is located in Gallabat, a marketplace in Sudan that borders Ethiopia. The workload was not any lighter. For 10 hours a day, Halima cleaned, took out waste materials and performed other duties with little to no pay.



Helping Hand

Halima decided to seek help from the Ethiopian immigration workers. They placed her in a temporary shelter as she waited to be reunified with her family. She was not only given accommodation, but also psychosocial support and counselling. Her trafficking case was also reported to the police and investigations are ongoing. Luckily, after successful family tracing, Halima was re-integrated back home.

Addressing Root Factors

Halima's mother was informed about the risk of heavy chores on children and how it subsequently can lead to their trafficking. Through the help of partners like Mahibere Hiwot for Social Development, Halima's mother has changed the way she distributes chores among her children. Halima and her siblings assist with chores that coincide with their ages and capacity. Halima is now in school and enthusiastic about her future. "I want to be a psychologist as I want to counsel girls who need strong support and guidance," she said.



5 My Rights, My Life: Hirut's Story

Hirut lives with her siblings and both parents. Her father works as a farmer on animal husbandry and crop production and has been able to provide basic needs for his family and educate his three children. Hirut was happy with her life, she was fed, taken care of, helped with household chores, attended school, and was part of a child rights club. Everything was going on well until she received some disheartening news.



Risk of Early Child Marriage

The family farming business was improving each year and the income was getting higher. While speaking to some of his relatives in a family gathering, Hirut's father was advised that it was time for him to marry off his two young daughters as part of their tradition. The relatives arranged for two men to visit the family. They asked for Hirut's and her sister's hand in marriage. Hirut's father decided that it was time to talk to them about the marriage proposals.

After explaining the situation to them, they were shocked and were completely against it. All they wanted to do was to be heard and to continue with their education up to college level.

Seeking Help

Briefly after learning about the proposals, Hirut and her elder sister went to school and decided to inform their school director and the *She Leads* project facilitator about what had transpired. They both wanted help so that they can continue to live their lives as children. The project facilitator strongly advised Hirut and her elder sister on their rights and that they should not be married at such an early age. The facilitator, accompanied by the community police officer, went to their parent's house to find out more about what was happening. They had intense discussions with them about the rights of children, the Ethiopian law and the family code, criminal law and the value of education on the life of a child. Additionally, they sensitised them on the impact of early marriage and its negative outcomes on the family.


Her parents listened attentively and started to reconsider their decision to marry off the girls. After further discussions, they decided that it was best for both daughters to continue going to school. The marriage plans were cancelled and the girls were happy.


Back to Normal

Hirut is glad to continue her education and take part in the Child rights clubs. "I am very happy that my parents are encouraging me to attend school and study effectively," she said. She was also offered support in guidance and counselling. Her plan is to be a medical doctor and give health services to women in particular and people in general.




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