

CHILD LABOUR : ETHIOPIA

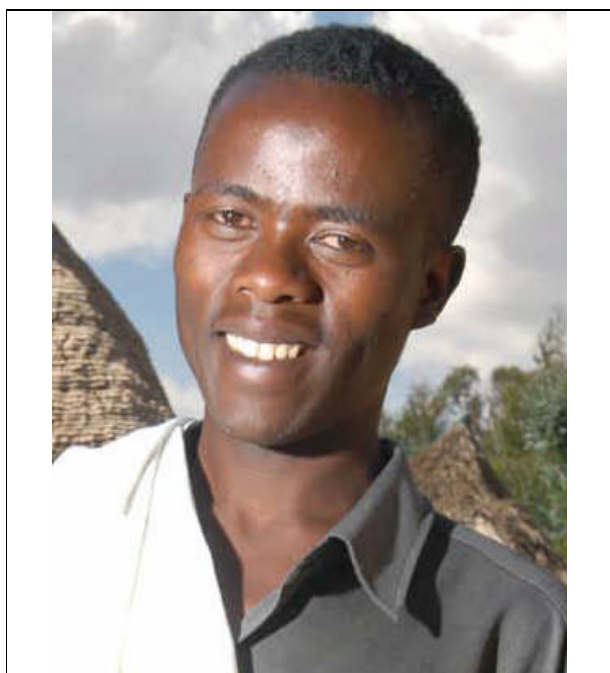
Case study: Almayo, 22, Ethiopia

When Almayo was 10, he and his older brother Wandamu thought they were embarking on an exciting adventure when they ran away from home. From their village in rural Ethiopia, the boys travelled 12 hours by bus to the capital, Addis Ababa. Their plan was to work in the weaving industry and return home with lots of money to surprise their parents.

Little did they know that they would be trapped in child labour, weaving clothes for the next seven years, slaving away for no money and no hope. The boys were forced to work from six in the morning until six in the evening. They were allowed a two-hour break, then they had to work again, until midnight. This continued for 16 hours a day, seven days a week, week after week, year after year.

The brothers had to endure terrible working conditions. They were beaten for any mistake they made, the place was cold and crowded, and they slept on the floor with other workers.

When Almayo and Wandamu heard news from their village that their father was seriously ill, the boys finally found their courage to escape.



Almayo, at age 22, is back in school doing Grade 3.

Now, years of living in fear and abuse are behind them. The brothers have been back home for five years. Almayo, at age 22, is back in school doing Grade Three. "I'm happy and excited," he said. "I started my education." World Vision contributes to Almayo's school fees while he works at a part-time job to earn some income for his family.

Child labour

There are about 250 million children in the world's poorest countries involved in active labour. One in three or 80 million children are no older than 10. They could be sewing clothes, stitching footballs, working in mines or weaving carpets. Girls are often kept as domestic help – cooking, cleaning, washing and collecting water.

Most of them have no choice because their families are too poor, they are orphans or have been abandoned. These children need money to survive.

These children are not just doing household chores or a bit of work to earn some pocket money. Like Almayo, these children are denied their right to education and are forced to work in harsh conditions that damage their health and development.

For you to do

- Write three diary entries for Almayo – one planning to leave home; another working in Addis Ababa; and finally, one back home in his village.