



# Youth Cohort Study

## The case of the Youth Potential Activity

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Evaluation Team:

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# Design of the study

- Mixed Methods Approach: panel survey, KII and FGDs
- Panel design, followed one cohort of participants from four regions over a period of 12 months (April 2017-April 2018)
- Assessed at three points: baseline, midline and endline
  - Monthly data on employment, income and expenditure (financial diary) from a small purposive subsample (approx. 20/region)
- Data collected on:
  - Income and employment status of participants; health outcomes; work readiness skills of participants; knowledge of/access to employment/entrepreneurial resources; literacy and numeracy



# A year post-enrollment

- At endline participants report:
  - Greater readiness for work
  - Greater knowledge of resources available
  - Use of skills learned
  - More youth (male and female) are employed
  - The majority of youth are self-employed – with some gender differences
  - Increases in income
  - More savings
  - Reduced stress leading to a general feeling of well-being
  - No change in literacy or numeracy skills

# Training from Youth Potential

- Both young men and young women received the same basic training Work Ready Now (WRN!) or WR Plus
- All had developed a Personal Development Plan
- All received follow-up coaching, provided in mixed group setting
- Some also received follow-up training (to WRN!) including hard skills training and mentoring
- Follow-up varied by region and woreda.



# Training, coaching and mentoring

- Training changed attitudes
  - More positive outlook, greater respect for work. improved work ethic, setting goals and working with a plan, increased confidence and belief in own ability to succeed in the workplace, calm approach to life, they had a voice in the decisions about their future
- Coaching helped provide
  - Solutions to problems, a sense of community through regular meetings, accountability to someone on employment and savings, support with loan applications (where microfinance available)
  - The coach-participant ratio for mentoring was too high to be effective
- Mentoring and Work Based Learning
  - Exposure to better practices – farming or trading



# Use of work readiness skills – male and female

- The beneficiaries reported using the skills to:
- Start their business, working on farms - some said we could not have started without Potential
  - Develop a business plan that guides next steps and for use with loan applications
  - Manage their business, keep accounts and track inputs and outputs
  - Generate income by selling farming products



# Use of work readiness skills

- Improve their social interactions with family and peers
- Work in groups to become more productive (Afar)
- Identify and use the resources available to them
- Maintain savings and invest in their businesses
- Develop a positive attitude – “learned not to be hopeless but to be effective”



# Knowledge & awareness of employment resources

- WRN! Training and development of a Personal Development Plan – helps choose the direction forward
- Community mapping exercise helps provide knowledge of resources in the community and possible business ideas
- Increased knowledge of and resources for
  - wage employment
  - self-employment
- The choice of avenues to search for employment were limited for women





# Wage-employment

- Increased information on job opportunities and linkages to government resources
  - Knowledge of government programs targeting youth
  - Knowledge of employment database
  - Linkages to officials from various bureaus
- Also greater awareness of private resources and encouragement to use them
  - Seeking assistance of friends and relatives
  - Registering with private employment agencies
  - Attending job fairs
  - Advertisements on the radio, internet, newspapers

# Self-employment

- Knowledge of requirements and resources available for starting self-employment
  - Land, working space, equipment, etc.; Financing, Permits and licenses, New skills
- Increased knowledge and awareness of and linkages to government resources
  - new policies, programs targeting youth (loans, training, access to land and sheds/work spaces)
- Also greater awareness of private resources and encouragement/support to use them
- No/few opportunities for internships

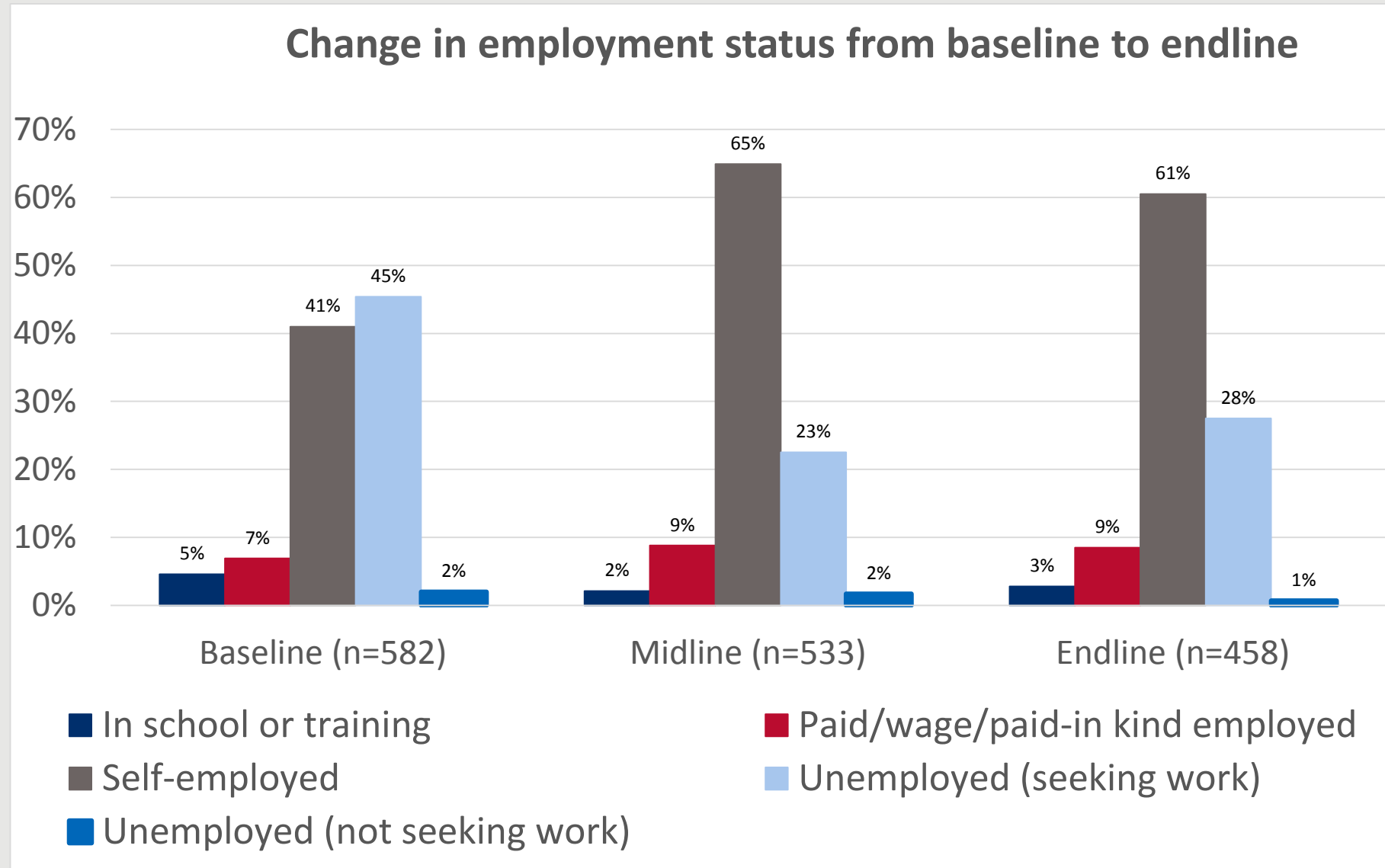


# Employment & entrepreneurial resources

In addition to enhanced knowledge of resources, Youth Potential has also helped participants obtain resources. Some examples:

- Land for farming and grazing allocated to participants by the Kebele in Afar
- In-kind contributions of laundry machines, copiers and printers for starting up small businesses obtained through linkages with community development agencies
- Placements of Youth Potential beneficiaries as teachers, administrative assistants within government agencies through linkages to government agencies

# Employment status

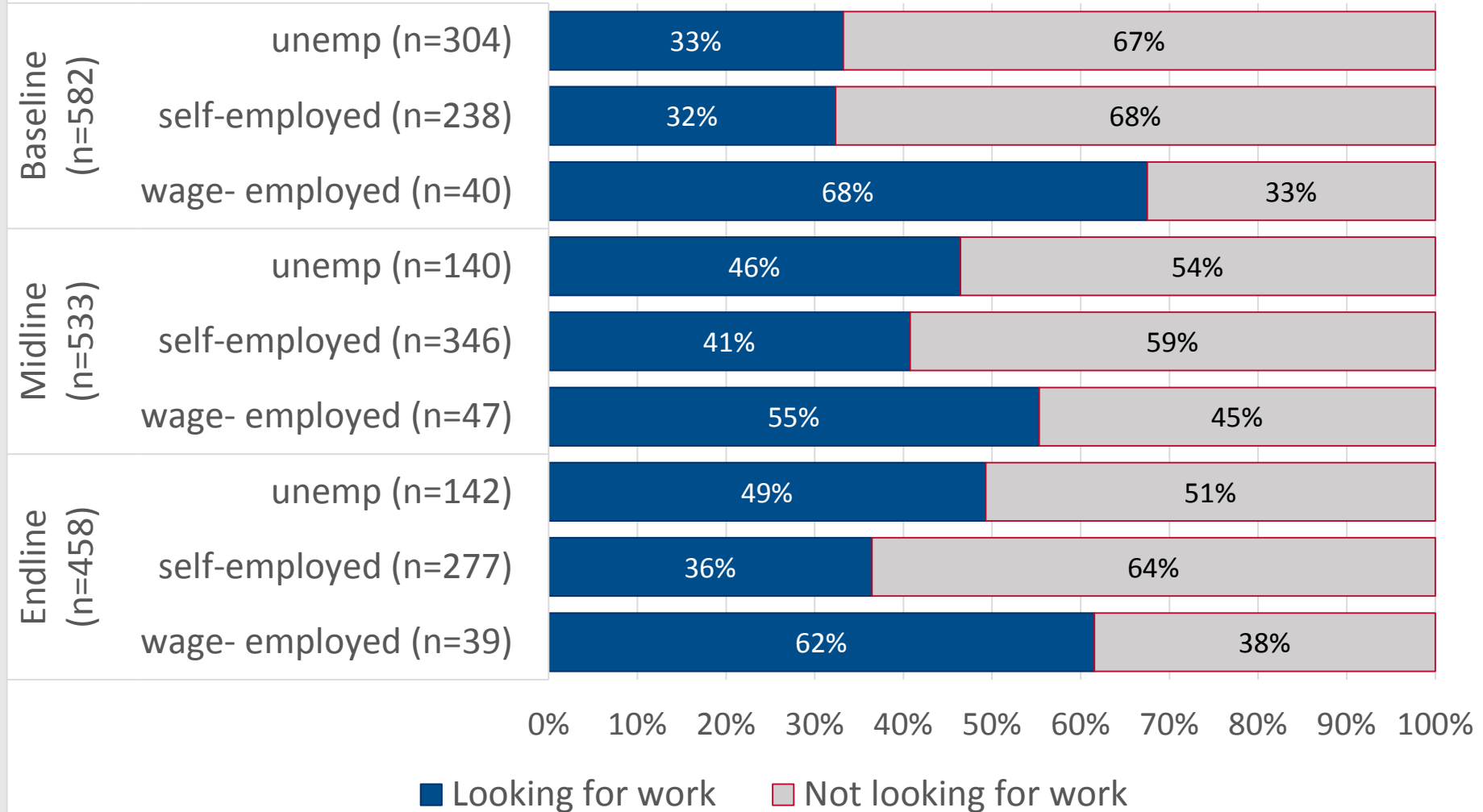


# Employment over time

	<b>Constant employment</b>	<b>Employed post training</b>	<b>Insecure employment</b>	<b>Chronic unemployed</b>	<b>Total</b>
	(Employed at BL, ML and EL)	(Unemployed at BL, employed at ML and EL)	(Unemployed at BL, employed at either ML or EL)	(Unemployed at BL, ML and EL)	
	n=176	n=95	n=122	n=65	n=458
Female (n=197)	29%	19%	31%	21%	100%
Male (n=261)	46%	22%	23%	9%	100%
Total (n=458)	38%	21%	27%	14%	100%

# Search for new employment

Percentage of self-employed, wage-employed and unemployed looking for work



# Changes in income level

	<b>Baseline to Midline (n=533)</b>	<b>Midline to Endline (n=458)</b>	<b>Baseline to Endline (n=458)</b>
<b>Increased</b>	61%	55%	71%
<b>Decreased</b>	13%	12%	13%
<b>Stayed the same</b>	26%	33%	12%
<b>Increased at midline, fell at endline</b>			4%



# Changes in savings

- Number of youth reporting they had savings changed modestly, but the amount of savings went up significantly from baseline to endline
  - 77% of those employed were saving at endline
  - Amount of savings up from 1200 Birr to 3000 Birr (median value)
  - Largest gains reported in Tigray and least in Afar
- Focus group participants attributed the increase in savings (individual & group) to
  - Better earnings and attention to what they were spending on
  - Encouragement to save more through coaching
  - Participation in the YESG program
- Participants also reported investing their savings to expand their businesses and self-employment activities





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Conclusions

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

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# Conclusions

- The Youth Potential Activity had a significant effect on the employment status of participants
- The change in attitudes and work ethic resulting from participation in the training was very positive
- Participants have more self-confidence in their own abilities and knowledge of resources
- The soft skills training is likely to lead to a sustainable change in employment status
- The coaching has been the single most important factor in increased engagement of youth in self-employment suggesting the need for ongoing support for youth
- Most youth, especially women, engaged in self-employment, agriculture and livestock rearing
- The sectors of work for male and female participants were driven by cultural norms



# Lessons learned

- The most effective components of Youth Potential:
  - Basic training (WRN!, WRN+) that emphasizes the value and advantages of self-employment and helps build self confidence and a stronger work ethic in the participants
  - Coaching – that provides a support system for the youth that extends beyond the original training and holds them accountable
- Not so effective have been:
  - Personal Development Plans (PDP) – often not viable, not used as coaching tool
  - Mentoring by community members not well utilized – needs to be accompanied by education on the value of local mentoring
- There is need for greater engagement of parents/guardians and communities to ensure their support for participants post-training
  - Creating networks with other agencies for in-kind contribution

# Lessons learned– cont'd

- Need for greater engagement with the regional governments to modify policies – favorable political climate and strong regional partners can better navigate the system
  - Youth in regions with more flexible requirements for loans are doing better
- For improved participation of women in the workforce, training must be reinforced by community support
- Need for greater collaboration with government agencies and private sector to ensure youth are matched with available and unfilled opportunities for wage employment
- TVET staff trained on the soft skills curriculum are beginning to incorporate it into their teaching – well received by students and employers as it improves the quality of TVET graduates
  - Government/TVET office intervention needed for inclusion of this program into TVET curriculum

# Recommendations for Youth Potential

1. Strengthen coaching and mentoring and improve coach to student ratios
2. Increase the involvement of parents and guardians to ensure post- training support for participants
3. Diversify access to new market opportunities, especially for females
4. Help beneficiaries, especially females, obtain financing
5. Strengthen job placement services
6. Strengthen linkages with government programs and donor-funded initiatives that promote employment
7. Continue evaluation of Youth Potential to adapt the Activity as necessary

# Recommendations for future activities

1. Consider a dedicated fund for implementers to use as a revolving loan or start-up financing for all participants of the Activity, with special consideration for female participants
2. Hard-skills training should be provided to a larger proportion of participants with some kind of a “give-back-to-the-community” provision to prevent migration of youth
3. Facilitate MOUs between the government and private sector that incentivize the private sector to offer practical training to the participants and to hire locally
4. Require a gender aware approach to job creation and youth training
5. Enhance the capacity of the government to support creation of job opportunities at the local level through systems strengthening and by providing exposure to regional and international best practices
6. Liaise with other donors (DFID, MasterCard Foundation) who are also working in this space

# Questions

- Each table work together for 5 minutes to review your questions for the presenters
- Select 1 question to ask per table (and 1-3 back up questions).
- We will take questions 3 at a time for the presenters
- If your question has been asked – please ask a back up question