

The Skills Lab Improved Students' Competence of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)



Yenenesh practicing in a skills lab, Woliso Polytechnique college

Yenenesh Abebe, 22, has hope to solve the problem of access to safe drinking water by her rural community she was born and raised. She is a student of water supply and sanitation training programme at Woliso Polytechnic college. She believes the biggest challenge in rural woredas around Woliso is to get adequate and safe water. Yenenesh speaks, "women and girls travel long distances every day to fetch water risking their well-being on their way. In some areas they even drink dirty water from rivers and ponds mainly due to lack of access to potable

water and sometimes due to lack of awareness". Yenenesh has demonstrated the required water, sanitation and hygiene skill competencies effectively and passed the national assessment for her Level I training program. She says: "I passed the competency assessment because I adequately practiced the skills well in the skills laboratory."

Ato Zewge Kebede, college dean, Woliso Polytechnic College, says "With technical and skills lab materials support from Growth through Nutrition activity, we renovated our skills lab for water cadres. Now both our students and teachers get a chance to put hands on practice. All students in our level I program successfully passed the national competency assessment and having this experience, we are motivated to commit additional resource to strengthen our skills teaching in water technology program." Ato Zewge added that the improved skills lab also enhanced teachers' commitment to teach water skills and students interest to join and learn water technology training program. He added, "without the skills lab and a given absence of appropriate cooperative training sites at nearby organizations, Yenenesh and her classmates would not have become competent and successfully pass the national exam. Yenenesh speaks with a smile on her face: "Besides promoting proper WASH practices, I am confident enough to provide water quality analysis service for my community if the necessary materials are made available, which then I live my dream."



Ato Zewge kebede, Dean, Woliso PTC

Feed the Future Ethiopia's, Growth through Nutrition activity is a USAID's flagship multi-sector nutrition and WASH project focusing on first 1000 days plus to improve nutritional status of women and children. The project has been supporting the college in strengthening its curriculum for key water, sanitation and hygiene competencies, building the capacity of teachers through technical and pedagogical skills trainings and technical support in addition to education quality improvement and creating an enabling environment.