

## Success Story – Becoming a Leader

Graduates from EIWR's master degree program in Water and Health have had great success in their professional endeavours. Some have gone back to their home universities and become lecturers and researchers and others have found jobs at organizations such as the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy, and the Leather Industry Development Institute. Here is a profile of one EIWR graduate who explains how EIWR's graduate program helped her achieve her professional goals.

Tsega Menhasebo G/Hiwet is a graduate from EIWR's Water and Health program with an emphasis in Water and Public Health. Currently, she is working in a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization called Children Burn Care Foundation as the Program Coordinator where her responsibility is to develop a burn prevention program that will work within the cultural context of Ethiopia. She will develop educational materials to spread awareness and to advocate for safety measures that will hopefully reduce the burn incidents in our country.



*Ms Tsega Menhasebo, Water and Health students' representative delivering a keynote remark at the graduation reception*

Tsega said that during her educational journey at EIWR, there were challenges which became opportunities for building and applying leadership skills. She remembers a remarkable comment made by Dr. Mekonnen Gebremichael who told her and her fellow students that the aim of the program was not only to teach the students and give them their respective Master or Doctoral degrees but to bring out their leadership skills and help them to become the next leaders in their respective fields. For Tsega this meant tackling each challenge in cooperation with fellow students, teachers, and the staff. The faculty at EIWR taught her to look beyond the challenges she faces at work and to work harder to achieve her desired goal - no matter what.

During her graduate program, Tsega became the representative of the master's students and had to deal with a variety of student issues. She said that this additional task helped her to develop her communication skills, since she had to resolve issues between teachers and students, students and staff, and among the students themselves.

*“ I had to learn a great deal of patience and tolerance while in this position, engaging students, giving them tasks, coordinating activities, and organizing ideas to present to the administration in a coherent way. I organized the students for different occasions, activities and tasks, advocating and introducing our program to different organizations and completing other important tasks as a representative of the class. All these activities helped me to develop my leadership skills and to work as a program coordinator in my current job.”*

Tsega further noted that the program at EIWR helped her to improve her research skills. She said “the main thing that got me interested in my current job was that it involved research. If I am asked what one thing I learned and valued most from my experience at EIWR, it would be learning about research; new findings, unravelling existing facts and working for the good of the public. I now conduct research in my new job to learn and produce a prevention program that is suitable to the context of Ethiopia.”

Finally, she adds “as EIWR intended, I have become a leader in my project and I hope to do more for my country because of what I have learned and attained.”