



PROJECT HARAR HEBIST'S STORY

Hebist was born with cleft lip and palate and came to Selam General Hospital when she was 11 months old with her mother. She had previously come to Selam Hospital but could not receive treatment because she was unwell with a cough at the time. She recently returned to the hospital where she received surgery for her cleft lip. Hebist will return again at a later date to have her cleft palate corrected.

Hebist's mother explained, "No one in our family has had this condition before—it only appeared with Hebist. I tried to find treatment for her, but the health professionals advised me to wait until she was over six months old. When Hebist was seven months old, we came back, but she couldn't be treated because of her cough, so we had to return home."



Hebist's mother, shared her experience: "When she was born with this condition, we were shocked, worried, and confused. People asked us what kind of sin we had committed. Some even said this was a punishment for doing something wrong. This made us feel ashamed and we hid Hebist at home.

We went to the local health centre to ask how we could get treatment for her condition, but we didn't have enough money. Then we heard about Project Harar, an organisation that helps people with cleft lip and palate. After learning about them, we followed up and arranged for Hebist's treatment.

Now that we are at Selam Hospital, Hebist has received good treatment, and I am so proud. The negative comments from society had deeply hurt us. We avoided going to church, community gatherings, and even socialising with others. But now, we feel free from all that judgment. We can participate in social life again, go to church, and attend community gatherings.

I want to thank Project Harar for their service and support. I will tell others about this organisation so they can also get help if they need it. I hope Hebist will grow up healthy, play with her friends, and go to school."

