ROAD TO ROBIT

Glimmer shines a light on a forgotten village
The people of Robit were cut off from a world of opportunity and services.

Without a road into Robit, the closest town was inaccessible for months at a time—putting trade, a good education and jobs out of reach.

Contaminated water and preventable diseases created a life of daily struggle, especially for women and girls.

Robit’s schools were unsafe, and education stopped at the eighth grade.

Like many girls in Robit, Yorda gathered drinking water for her family from a muddy river. Shared with farm animals, the contaminated water perpetuated disease.

After a fire destroyed Robit’s health clinic, the sick had to be carried on stretchers for hours to the nearest town for medical care. The long journey risked lives and increased suffering.
A Difficult Journey

“Everybody in Robit knows the suffering on the road when you are carried in labor. It is a journey no woman should have to take.”

When Karsi suffered complications during labor, her midwife feared her life was in danger. Her neighbors struggled to carry her to the nearest health center, a five hour walk away. Over halfway through the trip, Karsi could go no further. She delivered the baby on the side of the road and wrapped him in her midwife’s shawl. Thankful that they both survived, she named her son “Godoanaw,” meaning “street.”

In Robit, a lack of basic medical care forced women to deliver in unsafe conditions that put both the mother and child at risk.
The people of Robit were committed to working with Glimmer to create a brighter future for their children and community. Glimmer’s vision for Robit started with supporting four core needs that build resilience and foster growth.

**CLEAN WATER**

For girls in Robit, the daily search for water took time away from school. Waterborne diseases impacted health and well-being. Glimmer’s water program brought access to 13,000 gallons of clean, safe water to Robit.

*Now*  
Daily life is transformed for girls who are healthy and attending school.

**EDUCATION**

The schools in Robit were failing and education stopped at eighth grade. Brand new schools and trained teachers changed the face of education in Robit. Glimmer created the opportunity for every child to go to school and prepare for college.

*Now*  
This generation of Robit children can break the cycle of poverty.

**HEALTH CARE**

The strongly-held cultural tradition of home births and lack of basic medical care compromised the health of thousands of women and children in Robit. Glimmer’s new health center established modern surgical and preventive care within steps of home.

*Now*  
Babies in Robit are born with a healthy start.

**INCOME GROWTH**

Isolated from resources to start a business, the options for growth in Robit were limited, especially for women. Glimmer’s micro-loan program, with a 100%, on-time repayment rate, invested more than $686,000 into the community.

*Now*  
Small loans for women entrepreneurs continue to spur wealth and innovation.
Robit Is Empowered
Building on Glimmer’s work, the people of Robit set new water and education initiatives in motion. A community-funded project brought running water into many homes in Robit, and the local primary school was recognized for academic excellence in the region.

Robit Is Connected
The change in Robit brought a new road, a bus route and electricity into the town, connecting the people to jobs and opportunity. At the bustling, growing marketplace in Robit, traders can now find teff, livestock and handmade goods. The village buzzes with the exchange of new ideas and services.

Robit Is Food Secure
Support for farmers has improved harvests and food production for Robit. The agricultural potential here attracted the attention of the World Bank, which is investing in irrigation and large-scale food processing plants in the area. The increase in production and jobs has boosted food security in Robit and surrounding towns.
Hizbalem Muche is one of 800 Robit women who received loans from Glimmer. With a small cash investment, her successful business ventures are part of a thriving, stable village economy supported by women leaders.

Hizbalem is well known in Robit. Her grain business keeps her in contact with Robit farmers and traders from nearby towns. She owns a popular guest house. She is a mother of four thriving children and a leading entrepreneur in the community.

Just five years ago, she struggled to get by. In a culture where women are often in the lowest paying jobs, Hizbalem’s options in isolated Robit were limited. She dreamed of a good education for her children, but she faced hard choices. Some days there was not enough food to feed her family. Yet, Hizbalem sent her oldest children to board overnight in a nearby town so they could finish their education. Her sacrifices only strengthened her resolve to create a better life for her children.

A small loan set Hizbalem on a new path. Today, life is incredibly different. Her thriving businesses give her a stable income. Clean water and health care in Robit provide a network of services that relieve the burden of disease. Her youngest daughter now attends a good school in Robit. As both a successful entrepreneur and a mother, she is creating a cycle of prosperity.

Hizbalem is changing the idea of what it means to be a woman in Robit—setting a new course for herself, her children and her community.
Hope for the Future

With the new Robit High School, students like Danoachew can stay in their village and continue their education. Going to college to become a doctor may be an ambitious goal in rural Ethiopia, but Danoachew has the drive. He ranked third in his class of 64 students and plans to be first in his class this year.

“I do not want a girlfriend,” he proclaims, “I want to be a doctor!”

Danoachew is part of a generation of students who can break the cycle of poverty. A high school education opens up new opportunities. Computer labs, books and talented teachers connect Robit children to the world.
Robit Village is part of the groundswell of growth taking place across Ethiopia today. With notable increases in life expectancy, improvements in education and a decline in child deaths since we started our work in 2000, Ethiopia’s progress is remarkable. By encouraging health, stability and connection in our villages, we create a ripple effect of greater resilience.

Healthy communities are the cornerstone of a thriving nation.

Learn more about our work across Ethiopia at glimmer.org.
BEFORE IT WAS DARK AND NOW IT IS LIGHT.

- Yalew Makete, Robit Village Chief