

Center for the Victims of Torture

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://www.cvt.org/what-we-do/survivor-stories/gebriales-story>

Campaign and Advocacy

One minute Gebriale was working in his office. The next moment, he was in prison.

Gebriale* had been living with his family in Eritrea, enjoying a satisfying job and a happy life with his loved ones. One day while he was at work, two men showed up and asked him to come with them in their car. He thought he was being transferred to another worksite. However, as they drove along, the men suddenly pulled out guns and told him to be quiet. They put a blindfold on him. This car ride ended with Gebriale being taken to prison.

Gebriale was in the prison for seven years. He survived horrific torture. In all those years of torment, he was never informed of the reason he was imprisoned.

Finally, Gebriale was released, and he fled Eritrea. He arrived in the refugee camps in Ethiopia, and after some time there, his memories of the prison and torture were too much. He knew he needed help. He went to CVT.

Gebriale joined the group counseling session. When he showed up for the first time, he looked like he was over 60 years old: white hair, white beard, wrinkled skin. The group was shocked to learn that in reality, he was only 35.

Gebriale completed the counseling cycle, working closely with the counselors and connecting with the other members of the group. By the time he finished the group work, he was sleeping better and had reduced the intrusive thoughts and memories of torture. He was able to begin taking steps to rebuild his life.

**Name and some details have been changed for safety and to protect confidentiality.*

Photo credit: Dreamstime.

CVTs work with Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia is funded by a grant from the U.S. State Departments Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

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We **advocate** for the protection & care of torture survivors and an end to torture.

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