Financial and Social Impact

- 105 small business microloans established
- 78 business startups and the expansion of an additional 27 businesses
- 250 prospective and established business owners receiving training and technical assistance process: 80% from ethnic minority groups, 51% are refugees, 2% are asylees, 10% are other immigrants, 89% are previously low-income individuals, and 46% are previously extremely low-income individuals
- 105 loans disbursed to small businesses that needed capital but lacked access to financing from other sources

Success Story: Abyssinia Ethiopian Cuisine, Buffalo, New York

Zelalem Gemmeda fled Ethiopia when the government killed her father, mother and brother. During five years in a refugee camp in Yemen, she and her husband operated a restaurant and dreamed of giving their children what her father had wanted for her: an education.

Zelalem was accepted into a U.N. resettlement program and came to Buffalo in 2004. She opened Abyssinia Ethiopian Cuisine, a restaurant in the West Side Bazaar, the incubator operated by WEDI. Her success as a small business owner has helped her achieve her dream: her son is studying at Princeton University and her daughter is at Mercyhurst University. And she is contributing to the Buffalo economy.