

Field Visit Report done to the CCRDA/Sida Program Supported PIP
Project Sites Located in Hossana, Meki, Debre Birhan, Shewa Robit,
Bati, Mekele, Shire, Humera and Dembecha Town Areas
(November 11-21, 2010)

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1. Introduction

A field visit was made to the CCRDA/Sida program supported project sites located in SNPPR, Oromia, Amhara and Tigray Regional States on the 11th of November, 2010 and from the 15th to the 21st of November, 2010 for the projects located in SNNPR and Ormia, Amhara and Tigray Regional States, respectively. The visited projects belong to the following project implementing partners (PIPs):

1. *Participatory Poverty Reduction Organization (PPRO)*,
2. *Oromo Self Help Organization (OSHO)*,
3. *ADHENO-Integrated Rural Development Association (ADHENO-IRAD)*,
4. *Hibreteseb Akef Limat Dirigit (HALD)*,
5. *Organization for Rehabilitation and Development of Amhara (ORDA)*,
6. *Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC)*,
7. *Relief Society of Tigray (REST) and*
8. *Ethiopian Red Cross Society-Tigray Branch (ERCS-TB)*
9. *Anti Malaria Association (AMA)*

The projects were visited by Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, Executive Director of the Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA), in the presence of the CCRDA/Sida Program Coordinator, the CCRDA communication officer (only in the case of PPRO's project) and the respective project staffs and beneficiaries.

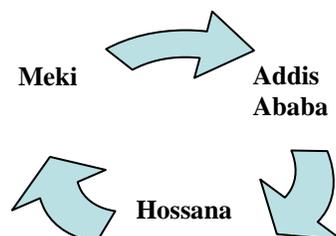
2. Objectives

- To visualize the *implementation performance* of PIP projects from the stand point of the observed achieved results
- To realize the level of *knowledge and skill transfer* which might have contributed for attitudinal changes with the beneficiaries and the local government officials
- To know the *challenges and measures taken* related to each project context
- To *learn lessons* which could be used in future planning of similar projects
- To discuss ways in which solidarity and networking will be strengthened with ASCOT and other partners

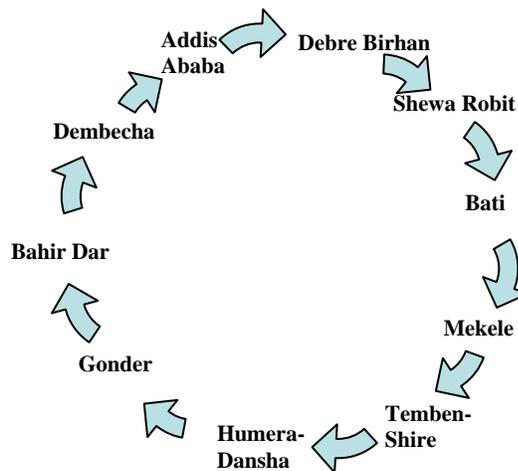
3. Strategies

The main strategies used to visit the different PIP project sites include the followings:

- Participating in a *Farmers' Field Day Event* as a first round field visit and perceive project performance based on the activities of individual model farmers. This has enabled to look into the impression of the people took part in the event and also to have a short observation into OSHO's project established *Youth Friendly Centre* in Meki Town during the return trip on the same day. The route of the field visit has been as shown in the flow diagram below.



- Getting office level prior briefing of the project to be visited related to its general performance compared to the approved physical and budget plan.
- Undertaking field observations to sampled representative project activity areas in the presence of the representatives of the beneficiary community groups and project staffs. This has enabled to get own realization about the project performance as cross checked with the impression of the beneficiaries.
- Giving time, on the spot, to discuss with the beneficiary representatives and the local government officials who have involved in the project implementation.
- Undertaking second round field visit as indicated in the flow diagram below. It has enabled to apprehend individual project performances and also to compare each others approach related to the specific local situation.



The above being the main strategies, the detail field visit report by Regional State and the specific project is as presented in the following main and sub-titles:

4. SNNPR Regional State

4.1 Visit Made to PPRO's Project Site

The *Farmers' Fielded Day Event* which has been organized by the project “*Changing Urban Trash to Rural Cash*” - run through Participatory Poverty Reduction Organization (PPRO) was attended by Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, Executive Director of the CCRDA, on the 11th of November, 2010 together with the CCRDA/Sida program Coordinator and the CCRDA communication officer. Similarly, the Hadiya Zone and the Lemo Woreda Administrators were present from the local level together with other government officials and the beneficiary community groups. Based on this, the fields of best performed beneficiary farmers who reside within two Peasant Associations have been visited. These include different rain and small scale irrigation based horticultural and field crop productions using organic fertilizer, construction of soil and water conservation structures as combined with biological conservation measures such as planting of different grasses and multipurpose tree seedlings on the constructed soil bunds and backyard and farm boundary areas, respectively. During the field visit, explanations and discussions were made concerning the *why and how* questions raised by the visiting guests. The explanation was made by the visited beneficiary farmers themselves being supplemented

by the head and experts of the Lemo Woreda Agriculture and the project office staffs. This has proofed the partnership working relationship of the project.

At the end of the filed visit, 44 best performed beneficiary farmers of the year; who ranked 1-3 based on the locally developed competition criteria, have been awarded different farm tools. It is known that out of the awarded best performers 9 of them were women farmers who are household heads. Hereafter, Dr. Meshesha, the lemo and the Hadiya Zone Administrators made a speech in which they congratulated and encouraged the local farmers to further scale up/out the already achieved results through strengthening their effort.



Field Visit in Progress



Dr. Meshesha Awarding Best Performing Farmers

4.1.1 Conclusion and Recommendation

The attended *Farmers' Field Day Event* was very educative as most of the visited development activities have been found promising to bring fast development with the targeted areas. To this end, it has been possible to observe the changes brought in the lives of the beneficiary community groups assuring the level of knowledge and skill transfer; this is the base to empower the poor community groups in a sustainable manner.

Therefore, it is recommendable to scale up/out the already achieved results through intensifying experience sharing between and among the local and out of the local area farmers. Such effort needs the involvement of the concerned government office so as to make ease the dissemination of results.

5. Oromia Regional State

5.1 Visit Made to OSHO's Project Site

On the return trip from Hossana Town to Addis Ababa, the team led by the Executive Director of the CCRDA has visited the project run through OSHO at Meki Town late in the afternoon on the 11th of November, 2010. The visit was done in the presence of the CCRDA/Sida program coordinator, the CCRDA communication officer, the project staffs and the representatives of the beneficiary youth groups. The main visited site was the multi-purpose *Youth Friendly Centre (YFC)* located within Meki Town. The team was briefed by the project staffs on the performance of the youth centre giving the special emphasis on the Library, Cafeteria, DSTV Film Program Show services and other educaments of the centre. Briefing has also included the general progress so far made to achieve the third time project extension period plan.

Hereafter, the team has visited the project office, the Café house, the DSTV Show Room, the Library and the youth centre compound as a whole. Finally, Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, Executive Director of

the CCRDA, has given guidance on the importance of strengthening the library documentation in a manner that would enable to control the *Library Books* and assure sustainability of the service. He also added that it would be very important to start *Library Membership Registration* with a pre-hand defined monthly, bi-annual and annual reasonable fee. In addition, he gave guidance on the importance of giving attention to strengthening and promoting the so far achieved successes of the project aiming at reaching more number of beneficiaries within the localities.

5.1.1 Conclusion and Recommendation

The multi-purpose services of the *YFC* has been appreciated for it is serving to satisfy the diversified need of the local youths in a manner that enabled to teach *Life Systems* to the local youths through using different educaments. In addition, OSHO's project has been appreciated for it has practically supplemented the effort of the local government in preventing and controlling of HIV/AIDS and in creating youth entertainment centre; which is serving as a knowledge centre having put the problems of the local youths at the centre of its development approach.

Therefore, it has been recommended to continue working jointly with the local government structures and other development partners to further strengthen and promote the achievements of the project.

6. Amhara Regional State

6.1 Visit Made to ADHENO IRDA's Project Site

The "*Tree Gudifecha*" project which is run through ADHENO IRDA has been visited by a team composed of the CCRDA Executive Director and the CCRDA/Sida Program Coordinator in the presence of the project staffs and the representatives of the beneficiary community groups on the 15th of November, 2010 morning time. The location of the project is in a place called Goshe Bado area 35km southwest of the Debre Birhan Town, Amhara National Regional State, North Shoa Zone.



Topographic View of the ADHENO IRDA's Project Area

On its arrival at the ADHENO IRDA's Project Office in Debre Birhan Town, the team has been briefed by the project staffs focusing on the general performance of the project components and the status so far reached towards addressing the set objectives of the project.



The Project Staffs Briefing the Project Components and the Achieved Success

Hereafter, the team has traveled to visit the project site together with the project staffs. The visited development activities of the project include nursery site, well rehabilitated enclosure areas, run-off water harvesting structures and integrated small scale irrigation development practices at individual household level, mini-woodlots of *Eucalyptus globulus* developed by individual farmers on unproductive farm areas and beekeeping development practices going on through individual farmers. In the mean time, the team contacted and discussed with the individual beneficiary farmers focusing on the advantage they have got out of the project.



Dr, Meshesha Shewarega, Executive Director of the CCRDA, Discussing with different Beneficiary Farmers

The farmers eagerly and confidently explained that they have been introduced with different development practices to which they have not been acquainted with before. These include the techniques of tree seedling planting and nurturing, run-off water harvesting and using for small scale irrigation practices, beekeeping and harvesting of honey processes, different fruit tree and vegetable production, woodlot planting and its management practices, area enclosure for rehabilitating degraded lands and the like. The contacted beneficiary farmers and visited of their development activities have also mentioned that they have generated enough income out of the sale of different produces developed through the support of the *Tree Gudifecha* approach. As a result, they have mentioned that they have built their knowledge and skill base in a manner that they will continue expanding and intensifying the development practices which they have already tested of their viabilities.

6.1.1 Challenges Raised

The staffs of the project has raised the existence of budget limitation as a challenge for it couldn't enable them to expand the project results to other similarly affected nearby areas despite the request from the local farmers and government offices is getting higher and higher from time-to-time. Related to this, the team suggested and advised the project staffs to look for alternative ways in which the donor base is diversified in a manner that enable to address the problem in a wider area coverage.

6.1.2 Conclusion and Recommendation

The different development activities which have been implemented during the past periods by the ADHENO IRDA's project have given fruits to the targeted area beneficiaries in a manner that the beneficiaries have built their livelihoods assets. As observed during the field visit, most of the beneficiaries have developed the confidence to say-out their achieved household level economic strength. As a consequence, they have already started envisioning a bright future in which they would be prosperous through their enhanced efforts of diversification and intensification of the existing and other promising activities.

Finally, the team has given advice and guidance to the project staffs on the importance of closely working with the local level concerned government offices for the further enhancement and replication of the project results. In addition, the team suggested the importance of having baseline survey so as to measure the progress so far made because of the project intervention.

6.2 Visit Made to HALD's Project Site

The project called "*Community Based HIV/AIDS Prevention & Awareness Raising*" which is implemented through HALD in Shewa-Robit Town and the surrounding areas has been visited by the team composed of the CCRDA Executive Director and the CCRDA/Sida Program Coordinator in the presence of project staffs and representatives of the beneficiary community groups on the 15th of November, 2010 afternoon.

The project staffs together with the representatives of the beneficiary community groups briefed the team on the to-date project performance giving the special focus to the plan Vs achievement of the third time project extension period. The staffs have mentioned that the achievements so far made in all component areas of the project were encouraging for they have brought changes in the lives of the targeted area beneficiary community groups. The components of the project include awareness creation towards HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control, Care and Support Services (include Home Based Volunteer Care Providers (HBVCPs), Promotion of Income Generating Activities to PLHIV), provision of Counseling and Testing Services through promoted mobile VCT approaches having collaboration with the local level government health centre staffs. The outreach budget for the Mobile VCT service has been allocated from the project office and it has enabled to reach-out the far places of the project targeted areas. To this end, it has been mentioned that 170 PLHIV, 100 OVC and other 80 poor children benefitted from IGA and school materials & living cost support while 6400 people have been provided with VCT service, as mentioned.



Dr. Meshesha Shwarega, Executive Director of the CCRDA, Being Briefed at the Project Office Level

The team has also visited the development activities of some beneficiaries located in Shwarobit Town. As a result, among the others, one of the road side mini-shops has been visited; which is run by one of the woman having HIV in her blood. The woman had been bedridden at one time but because of the project care and support services, she has been made to recover and be engaged in small shopping business through the provision of start-up capital. The woman has mentioned that she is getting an average total sale of Birr 200/week. She is happy with the performance of her business and she is envisaging the expansion of her business so as to generate more income out of her shopping business.



Dr. Meshesha Discussing with the Woman Engaged in Road Side Mini-Shop Business

In addition, the team has visited the offices of NEP⁺ which is working closely with the HALD's project within Shewarobit Town. The head of the office mentioned that his office has been closely working with the project in identifying beneficiaries and monitoring the performance of the project beneficiaries. To this end, he mentioned, most of the beneficiaries were enabled to support themselves and their families being engaged in alternative livelihoods income generating activities. Based on this, the team encouraged NEP⁺ to continue working closely with other stakeholders so as to maximize the synergetic effect towards prevention and control of HIV/AIDS within the local areas.



The CCRDA Director discussing with the head and staffs of NEP⁺

6.2.1 Challenges Raised

Limitation of budget has been raised as a challenge for addressing more number of PLHIV beneficiaries in IGA areas. This is because of the number of PLHIV within the project targeted areas are very high. On the other hand, it has been mentioned that the division of the Woreda Administration into Town and Rural area Administrations has created a challenge for accepting a project budget worked-out for the whole Woreda level i.e. they have required the project budget to be done separately for each of them.

As regards to the budget limitation challenge, the team suggested that the project office should look for other alternative ways in which the donor base will be diversified to address the mentioned budget limitation. On the other hand, the challenge raised related to the requirement of separate project budget for Town and Rural area Administrations, suggestion was made that the budget can be working-out by Town and Rural area budget components of the same whole project budget.

6.2.2 Conclusion and Recommendation

The implementation performance of the project run through HALD is encouraging as realized from the photograph based briefing of the project office staffs, representative of the beneficiary PLHIV and the NEP⁺ office explanations. In addition, the observation made to one of the randomly selected IGA beneficiary shop has also shown that the project has done well in enabling beneficiaries to build their own asset in a sustainable manner. This is because of the project has given weight to *knowledge and skill transfer* in its partnership based project implementation strategies

Therefore, the team has encouraged the project staffs to continue the existing effort in a strengthened manner. In addition, advice was given to scale up/out the already achieved results within the localities of the project targeted areas having worked closely with government and other organizations that have similar engagements. Similarly, advice was given on the importance of working-out a baseline survey which would enable to measure the changes brought because of the project intervention.

6.3 Visit Made to ORDA's Project Site

The Bati Woreda sub-project site of the project “*HIV/AIDS Prevention and Mitigation in Sekota, Lay Gayint & Bati Woredas*” has been visited by the team composed of the CCRDA Executive Director and the CCRDA/Sida program coordinator in Bati Town on the 16th of November, 2010 morning time. The location of the project is in Bati Town and the surrounding rural areas and it is run by ORDA which is one of the project implementing partners of the CCRDA/Sida program.

The ORDA Heads (Ato Wuletaw H/Mariam and Ato Dejene Miniliku), in Bahir Dar Town, briefed the team on the ORDA's general engagement areas and to date achievements being supported of the photograph exhibition. *Especially, the Heads of the ORDA witnessed that the approach of the CCRDA/Sida supported project has brought difference with the beneficiary community and because of this it has been preferred within ORDA to be used even for implementing projects supported through other donors.* On the other hand, the project staffs, in Bati Town, briefed the team on the Bati Woreda project performance during the team is visiting the VCT centre constructed within the Compound of the Bati Town Health Centre with the financial support of the project. It has been mentioned that the intervention components of the project include Community Capacity Enhancement (CCE), Provision of Care and Support Services and Creating Access to VCT Services. They said the achievements registered so far have been very encouraging for most of the project targeted area communities have developed awareness towards HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control in a way that rejoiced the people who have been affected by and infected with HIV within the targeted areas. As to the project staffs, the indicators for this include, among the others, the followings:

- Stigma and discrimination have been highly reduced within the project targeted areas.
- CCE sessions are going on regularly in each of the *Gote* covering the refreshment cost from own contribution.
- PLHIV and OVC are being helped by communities in terms of labor, material and financial support in rural and urban areas.
- Civil servants in all government offices of the Woreda are voluntarily contributing 2% of their salary on monthly basis so as to be used for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control efforts of the Woreda.

- The number of people looking for VCT services is increasing from time-to-time. As an example, the VCT results of the recent three years for the Bati Town have been presented to the team as specified in the table below.

Year	VCT Test Results						Grand Total Tested
	Negative			Positive			
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	
2009	2,673	4,539	7,212	123	83	206	7,418
2008	2,561	2,865	5,426	128	83	211	5,637
2007	2,257	2,601	4,858	131	94	225	5,083
Total	7,491	10,005	17,496	382	260	642	18,138

Based on this, the team has discussed and appreciated the general performance from the stand point of the observation made on the laid-down follow-up and documentation system; which is found to be very organized and educative. Especially, the team has admired the commitment of the VCT Center counselor and the way the counseled and tested people are followed-up to make sure that all have passed through the necessary procedures as per the VCT manual.



ORDA's Project Constructed VCT Centre



Dr. Meshesha Being Briefed on the Project and VCT Centre Performance

Hereafter, the team has tried to visit some of the IGA area beneficiary shops within Bati Town despite they were found shut-down because of all the community members were on celebrating the *Ed Holiday*. However, it has been possible to see that the shops have been labeled with the name “*CRDA/Sida-ORDA Supported Business Centre*” and this has shown the team the level of transparency the project has in implementing each donor’s budget. As mentioned, the centers provide multi-purpose services which include photocopy and tele-centre services in addition to running other small businesses. The business centers are owned and managed by the PLHIV who have organized themselves into group of ten members each.

6.3.1 Challenges Raised

The raised challenge is that the observed rate of attitudinal change with the people reside in Bati Town is lower compared to the people reside in rural areas. This is because of the people supposed to be educated are reluctant and negligent to accept and put into practice what has been taught through the project effort. Concerning this, the team advised the project staffs to maintain their patience and look for different alternative ways in which the residents of the Bati Town especially the educated ones would be attracted and convinced of the message.

6.3.2 Conclusion and Recommendation

The performance of ORDA’s sub-project located in Bati Woreda is very encouraging and educative as its implementation and follow up mechanism is found to be tight and well organized. As mentioned, this has helped the project to bring attitudinal change with the targeted area community in urban and rural areas despite the urban area attitudinal change is lower compared to the rural areas. This has been further explained to be because of the less cooperation and attention given to the project education efforts by the residents of the Bati Town, especially by the educated groups. In addition, the team has observed personal commitment and creative effort with the Bati Town VCT centre counselor as she has developed her own mechanism to assist and follow-up the people who have been willingly coming to get VCT services. On the other hand, the team has appreciated the labeling of the IGA centers by the financing agency as this is one of the mechanisms in which transparency is enhanced and duplication of effort is avoided showing the commitment of the implementer to the terms of the agreement conditions.

Based on this, the team encouraged the project office and recommended to strengthen and scale up the results so far registered in a manner that they will be replicated to other areas through enhancing synergetic efforts of the local level stakeholders and other development partakers. Herewith, the team suggested the importance of working-out baseline survey of the project for it would enable to clearly measure the difference brought because of the project intervention.

6.4 Visit Made to AMA’s Project Site

Youth Friendly Centre (YFC) of the project “Mobile Film Show and Community Dialogue on HIV/AIDS “ which is run through AMA has been visited in Dembecha Town by the team composed of Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, CCRDA Executive Director and Mesfin Mengistu, CCRDA/Sida Program Coordinator on the 21st of November, 2010 afternoon. The visit was made to the YFC only because of the team has been in hurry to travel back to Addis Ababa. The project staffs explained the team that the centre was established to create access to different educaments for the local youths. To this end, the team observed that the YFC has been equipped with Café, Indoor/Outdoor Games, DSTV Film Show Programs, Shower Rooms and Library services. In addition, it was explained that the YFC has been conducting a weekly based educational sessions on different topic areas through organizing the local youths into groups. As mentioned, this has enabled the centre to enhance the awareness of the local youths on different issue areas with a special attention given to HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Practices other than it has helped to develop the talents of the interested individual youths through participating them in Music, Literature, Drama, Environment, HIVAIDS and Sport Clubs.



Internal & External View of the Library Building under Construction

Dr. Meshesha Discussing and Visiting Different Parts of AMA’s YFC

Finally, the team discussed delay of the library construction effort and suggested that it should be completed soon in order to provide enhanced library service to the local youths particularly to the students; as the previously existing library room has been very small to accommodate a number of

service seekers at a time. This will enable the *YFC* to supplement the local area school libraries, which have been having problems to fully satisfy their respective students related to library space and reference books. In addition, it has been mentioned that the role the *YFC* will play in sharing and disseminating knowledge among and between the local youths will be higher for the centre is expected to serve as information hub.

6.4.1 Challenges Raised

The main challenge mentioned was price escalation for some of the building materials approved to construct the *YFC*. However, to minimize the effect, the project has been constructing the centre by itself getting the technical help from the local concerned government offices and the volunteers of the Anti-Malaria Association instead of getting it done through a contractor, as mentioned. To this end, the team has appreciated the effort done despite the after-wards inclusion of support column from the library floor to the ceiling tie beam has delayed the construction. This has happened, as mentioned, because of it has been left-out during the design phase with assumption of reducing the cost.

6.4.2 Conclusion and Recommendation

As observed, the *YFC* of the project run through AMA is well equipped with necessary types of entertainment services which include Café, Indoor/Outdoor Games, DSTV Film Show, Shower Rooms and Library services. In addition, the centre has been enhancing the awareness level of the local youths on different issue areas. By doing this, it has developed the talents of the interested individual youths through involving them in different club activities of their interest areas. The expansion of the library structure has also been appreciated as it would enable the *YFC* to provide enhanced and efficient library service to the local youths in a way that would supplement the libraries of the local level schools and serve as a knowledge centre for the local youths.

To this end, the team suggested that the library construction should be completed soon so as to deliver services using the recently provided reference books and other library materials obtained as additional support of the CCRDA/Sida program. Similarly, suggestion was made that it would be necessary to scale-up/out the so far achieved results of the project to other areas through enhancing close working relationships with the concerned government offices and other concerned bodies at the local level. Herewith, the team has suggested the importance of working-out a baseline survey of the project for it would enable to measure changes brought because of the project intervention within the local areas.

7. Tigray Regional State

7.1 Visit Made to EOC-DICAC's Project Site

EOC-DICAC's project called "*Debre Abay Community Micro-Irrigation and Water Supply Project*" has been visited by Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, Executive Director of the CCRDA, and Mesfin Mengistu, CCRDA/Sida Program Coordinator on the 17th and 18th of November, 2010. The team has been briefed, at office level, by the Tigray Region EOC-DICAC Branch Office Head. As explained, the project approach is integrated for it takes together the promotion of the followings within the same project targeted areas, as the case may be:

- Micro-irrigation development through weir and irrigation canal construction,

- Spring development scheme for the purpose of drinking water supply and micro irrigation practices,
- Improved fruit tree and vegetable production, and
- Soil and water conservation measures in a way that these interventions have become a cross-cut to all intervention types within the targeted project areas.

In addition, the success of the project has been mentioned to be very encouraging as it has changed the lives of the targeted area communities and the attitudes of the regional level policy makers. As an example, the changes registered in Debre Abay, Cheli Esret and Chelekot Micro-Irrigation development areas have been cited. These development sites have become models in assuring increased and sustained development performance for the targeted area poor. *As explained, the regional government has decided and put into practice the further promotion of micro-irrigation development in Cheli Esret localities through digging seven bore holes.*



Ato Zemichael Briefing Dr. Meshesha

After office briefing, the team went out to visit the Chelekot Micro-Irrigation Project which is located 18kms southeast of the Mekele Town and which has been completed in 2009 during the 2nd time project extension period. The construction of the Chelekot Micro-Irrigation Project includes 33 meter wide take-off (weir) and 435 meter main canal of which 35 meter is a river crossing structure. As observed, the irrigation scheme is being used by the targeted area farmers. The command area is 25 hectare and as mentioned it can be extended to 35 hectare.



Dr. Meshesha Visiting the Parts of the Chelekot Micro-Irrigation Project Scheme

In the mean time, the contacted beneficiary farmers have mentioned that the project has done them good things for it has alleviated them from tedious year-after-year maintenance of the inefficient traditional earthen canal on one hand; and on the other for it has enabled them to enhance efficiency in using the scarce irrigation water in a manner that enabled them to crop two-to-three times in a year.



Discussion with the Beneficiary Farmer and Observation of the Micro-irrigation Practices

Similarly, the team has visited the Cheh Spring Development Scheme which is located 65kms southwest of the Mekele Town in an area called Kolla Temben on the 18th of November, 2010. *The locality is said to be the Birth Place of Alula Aba Nega who is well known in Ethiopian History for being famous General of the Atse Johannes II.* As mentioned, the purpose of the spring development is to be used for micro-irrigation and drinking water supply for human and animals. This is because of the spring is the only source of water within the locality. The micro-irrigation development activities include fruit trees, vegetables and other useful plants which are supposed to be used by the local people. As to the discussion made with the priests of the local Monastery and the local government representative, the developed spring water will serve to produce more crops through micro-irrigation other than it will be used as a drinking water for human and animals reside in the local area. In addition, it has been mentioned that beekeeping will be the other development activity that will be developed because of the developed spring water will enable plants to grow in the area; which in turn will enable bees to browse on flowers.



Finally, the visiting team has appreciated the effort done in identifying and developing the spring water source for the purpose of addressing the development needs of the targeted area communities in such a remote and difficult geographical area. This has indicated the team the existence of genuine commitment with the project staffs in particular and the Branch EOC-DICAC Office in general to identify and address the critical needs of the communities in the region. From this point of view, the team mentioned that a lot has been learnt in a manner that will enable to share the observed experience to other partners engaged in a similar intervention areas.

7.1.1 Challenges Raised

As mentioned, the challenge is that the project office is getting a number of requests from different community groups and the lower level government structures to undertake micro-irrigation development interventions. Based on this, there are a number of off-the shelf type project proposals for which the study and design has been worked-out by the Branch Office. However, because of budget limitation, most of them are not yet implemented while the demand is increasing from time-to-time, as the staffs explained it. To this end, the team suggested the need to diversify the donor base through disseminating the so far achieved good results of the project as a means of showing the capacity to implement quality projects.

7.1.2 Conclusion and Recommendation

It has been possible to realize that the achievements of the project run through EOC-DICAC is very encouraging for the already built micro-irrigation and spring development structures have benefitted the targeted area community groups in a manner that has changed the attitude of the community and the local government. The livelihoods improvement gained with the beneficiary groups is highly appreciated and it has become one of the model areas for learning good practices. Above all, the way the problem is identified and the solution is implemented being in collaboration with the beneficiaries and the local government structures is highly educative as it has brought a significant synergetic effect in bringing sustainable development within the local areas.

Therefore, the visiting team has recommended keeping up the mechanisms of closely working with the local government and the community groups in a manner that will enable to scale up/out the already achieved results of the project to other similar areas. In addition, the team has suggested that it would be important to have a baseline of the project as it would enable to measure the changes brought because of the project intervention.

7.2 Visit Made to REST's Project Site

A field visit was made by the CCRDA Executive Director and the CCRDA/Sida program Coordinator to REST project called "*Integrated Community Based Adolescent Focused HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control*" on the 19th of November, 2010 morning time. The project has been implemented in Shire Town and its surrounding rural areas through the financial support of the CCRDA/Sida program since the year 2005. Briefing was given to the team by Ato Mekonin, REST Deputy Director, in Mekele Town and the project staffs, in Shire Town. *REST's Deputy Director has mentioned that the implementation performance of the project supported through CCRDA/Sida program has been encouraging; and the work relationship has also been very smooth and fruitful.* Further, he underlined that the recent establishment of a *Youth Friendly Centre (YFC)*, which at present its construction is being completed in Shire Town, has been found very important as it will enable the targeted area youths to get access to different educaments within their reach. Dr. Meshesha also mentioned that CCRDA would like to continue working with REST as the to-date project results have been very fruitful in addressing the problems of the local area.



Ato, Mekonin, Deputy Director of REST, Briefing Dr. Meshesha

On the other hand, the project staffs, in Shire Town, briefed the team that the components of the project include Community Awareness towards HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Practices, Care & Support and VCT services. *To this end, they said, the awareness level of the community has been enhanced with the special focus given to the targeted area adolescents. This has brought attitudinal change with the local community in such a manner that stigma and discrimination have been reduced; while community's assistance towards HIV affected and infected people have been increased.* In addition, they have mentioned that the composition of the project supported IGA business include Male and Female Hair Salon, Small Shopping, Petty Trading, Fattening Ruminants, Beekeeping,

Vegetable and Fruit Production. As a result, 220 rural youths have been enabled to be organized and engaged in different agriculture based IGAs, 140 PLHIV got assistance and 70 OVC benefitted from goat and sheep rearing. This has enabled most of the beneficiaries to improve their livelihoods to the extent that some PLHIV have opened bigger Hotel, as explained. The staffs also mentioned that the construction of the *Youth Friendly Centre* has been completed and equipped with all the necessary materials in such a way that it will start its operation soon. In the mean time, the team has advised that it is important to proactively think of the way the *YFC* would be managed in a manner that it would not get failure of meeting the establishment objectives.



REST's Project Office Head Briefing Dr. Meshesha

Then, the team has decided to visit the *YFC* and one of the representative beneficiaries engaged in vegetable and fruit production in Shire Town area only because of time limitation. To this end, observation was made to the *YFC* which its construction has been completed and equipped with necessary materials in a manner that would enable to start its operation in the near future. *This time, the local youth association and the Shire Town Sport & Youth Office representatives mentioned that the YFC would have paramount importance in addressing the problems of the local youths as it would fulfill different educamnets such as In-Door & Out-Door Games, Café House services combined with other educational entertainments. They added that the services of the YFC will complement the Information Technology (IT) centre established some years a go for the local youths through the support of other donor agency because of the YFC is constructed within the compound of the IT centre.* The team has also raised and discussed some concerns related to the way the centre will be managed by the local youths so as to foster the sustainable services of the *YFC* for the present and the up-coming generation within the local areas. As mentioned, this will be realized through the ownership and management of the local Youth Association having the technical support from Shire Town Sport & Youth Office staffs.



Front, Side and Rear View of the Constructed YFC



Dr. Meshesha Discussing with the Local Youth Representatives

In addition, the team has also visited one of the representatives of the vegetable and fruit tree production farms of individual youth beneficiaries engaged in agriculture based IGA; which is located near Shire Town. As observed in the field, the beneficiary has mastered the way vegetables and fruit trees are produced. This has indicated the team that the knowledge and skill has been well transferred and adopted in a way that it will be developed and sustained within the targeted areas.



Discussion and Observation made on the Beneficiary Farm

The beneficiary has also mentioned that she is getting some appreciated income every week from the sale of her vegetable products. This has further encouraged her to extend her farm through digging one additional hand dug well for the purpose of irrigating the field, as she explained. On the other hand, it has been observed that a number of the surrounding area households have replicated the development practices simply observing at her experience. Based on this, the team appreciated the practice and encouraged the project office staffs to look for ways in which the practice will be further scaled up to other areas having studied the base line data.

7.2.1 Challenges Raised

The mentioned challenge is that the project has budget limitation to address the problem of the local communities related to HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control practices. Further mentioned, this is because of the area is resided by a number of Military men and migrated people as a consequence of the war against Eritrea. To this end, the team suggested to look for ways in which the donor base would be diversified in a way that would enable to address the problem of the local areas.

7.2.2 Conclusion and Recommendation

The implementation performance of the project run through REST is very encouraging as the visited activities of the project were very educative in terms of addressing the identified problems through building the livelihoods assets of the beneficiaries as well as in bringing attitudinal changes with the same. As explained, the partnership approach of the project has helped a lot in implementing the project plans. This is because of the project physical and budget plans were worked-out in consultation with the concerned partakers at the local level. The best example for this is the establishment of the youth centre at Shire Town; for which prior consultations of the local level Youth Association and the Woreda Sport and Youth Office has been obtained. This has enabled the project to construct the *YFC* with full involvement of the beneficiary youth groups. Similarly, the performance of the *IGA* area activities is also very encouraging as the beneficiaries have *already acquired the knowledge and skill which would play a paramount role in sustaining the project results within the targeted areas.*

Therefore, the team has recommended the further scaling-up of the achieved results; the aim being to benefit additional beneficiaries within or out of the already targeted geographical areas. On the other hand, the team has stressfully suggested that it would be very important to proactively put in place the necessary guidelines that would enable to effectively meet the establishment objectives of the *YFC*. In addition, suggestion was made that it would be important to workout the project baseline so that it would enable to measure the changes brought because of the project intervention.

7.3 Visit Made to ERCS-TB's Project Site

The project called “*Mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS with Resettlement Program*” which has been implemented through ERCS-TB in Kafta Humera and Danasha Woredas of Tigray Regional State with

the financial support of the CCRDA/Sida program has been visited by the CCRDA Executive Director and the CCRDA/Sida program coordinator on the 20th of November, 2010. The visit was made in the presence of the project staffs, the beneficiary community representatives, Community Health Agents (CHAs), Community Home Based Care Providers (CHBCPs), the local Health Centre and School Office representatives.

The team has been briefed on the general performance of the project and the to-date relationship with the CCRDA/Sida program by the head of the ERCS-TB, in Mekele Town. *As he explained, the relationship with the CCRDA/Sida program has been very smooth and supportive. He also said that his project implementation performance has been very fruitful in meeting the set objectives.* However, he further mentioned that there is still a serious HIV/AIDS problem among the deportees of Eritrea in Adigrat areas. To this end, he raised the need for further assistance to address the problem within the mentioned areas. Dr. Meshesha, on his part, mentioned that he is happy with the existing smooth relationship and encouraging type of project implementation performance. To this end, he mentioned that it would be important to strengthen the existing cooperation towards further addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS within the region the special focus being given to the HIV/AIDS hotspot areas.



Dr, Meshesha being briefed by the Head of the ERCS-TB

On the other hand, the project officer, in Humera Town, has briefed the team that the project components include awareness creation, care & support and mobile VCT service. As he mentioned, the awareness creation activity was done through CHBCPs in 27 resettlement areas with a special focus on the farms of the investors where the number of seasonal laborers become higher during pick periods. *To this end, last year, the number of people reached through HIV/AIDS awareness creation education has been 146,000 while this year it is 405,000. It is said; this is because of the number of seasonal laborers reaches more than half a million in the targeted areas during pick agricultural periods; however it may vary from season-to-season and year-to-year. As a result, the cumulative number of people who got VCT service has reached 6000, as mentioned.*



The Project Officer Briefing Dr. Meshesha

In addition, the project officer has mentioned that 65 PLHIV have been benefited from different IGA areas; which include making and selling shelters made of long grasses, leasing in and cultivating farm lands, rearing and fattening of sheep, road side trading and the like. *As mentioned, all of the beneficiaries have become lucrative as judged from the day-to-day changes seen on their livelihoods assets as well as on their social and economic interaction.* In connection with this, he has also

mentioned that there were twenty OVC whose school fees, clothing, food and other costs covered through the project. At present, the mentioned OVC are attending their education in stabilized manner like the other children live with their parents in the local areas.

Hereafter, the team has visited the IGA performance of one of the representative PLHIV beneficiaries within Humera Town. *The visited beneficiary has mentioned that he has improvements in his livelihoods assets because of the project made him engaged in sheep rearing and fattening IGA area. He compared his present life with the years that he has not been in contact with the project. He explained that he has built valuable household livelihoods assets being married with a PLHIV woman. He also added that he has got one child whom he is bringing up in a comfortable manner through teaching in a better kindergarten within the local area. Based on this, the team has appreciated the so far achievements and encouraged him to strengthen them so as to further diversify and intensify the livelihoods assets in a sustainable manner.*



Dr. Meshesha and his Team Visiting the IGA Performance of the Representative PLHIV Beneficiary

In addition, the team has visited the Resettlement Village called Turkana which is located at about 72kms southeast of the Humera Town. Here the team has contacted with the project CHBCPs, CHAs and the representative of the local school in which it has discussed the project performance related to their localities. The contacted people mentioned that the project performance has been very successful for it has helped a lot to enhance the awareness of the local community on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control practices. As it has been said, this has enabled the local communities and the seasonal laborers to be benefitted of the mobile VCT service. The sensitization and the awareness creation activities were done jointly being together with the government recruited health and school personnel and also with the cooperation of the local investors, as mentioned. Finally, the team has appreciated the coordinated effort so far done to prevent and control HIV/AIDS within the local situation. Especially, the team has highly appreciated the understanding and the commitment of the CHBCPs as they have been the ones who greatly attributed for the changes registered within the local area which otherwise impossible. The team has taken this committed effort as a lesson to be shared to others.



The team being briefed on the project performance of Turkana Resettlement Village area

7.3.1 Challenges Raised

One of the challenges raised was related to the high number of seasonal laborers which have become very difficult to undertake follow up activities related to HIV/AIDS awareness creation as well as

providing mobile VCT services. This is, as mentioned, because of the duration of the laborers to stay in the local area is very short. On the other hand, the CHBCPs have mentioned as a challenge that they have not been made to improve their knowledge and skill through training or sharing the experiences of others within or out side of the local areas.

Related to the first raised challenge, the team suggested that it would be very important to devise ways which would enable to provide HIV/AIDS awareness creation and VCT services to the seasonal laborers in a manner that fit to the mobility nature of the seasonal laborers; having closer collaboration with the local investors. On the other hand, the challenge mentioned related to sharing of experiences by CHBCPs was seen as a viable point and suggested its consideration through the project office for it would have a paramount effect towards achieving quality results.

7.3.2 Conclusion and Recommendation

The implementation performance of the project run through ERCS-TB found to be very encouraging for it has reached the people located in very remote areas especially where the number of seasonal laborers gets higher during pick agricultural periods. This is because of the project has targeted 27 resettlement Villages in Kafta Humrera and Dansha Woredas in which a number of agricultural investors run their business. As explained, the project sensitization and awareness creation strategies towards HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control practices have been successful for the project has empowered the local community to regularly undertake community conversation meetings by their own. Worth mentioning in this regard is the joint work of the local stakeholders and the commitment of the CHBCPs who have done a lot to sensitize and aware the seasonal laborers during pick agricultural periods in addition to the people reside in their respective resettlement areas. This has helped them to increase the number of people who voluntarily come for VCT service, as mentioned.

On the other hand, the effort done to enhance the livelihoods of PLHIV and OVC of the targeted areas has been helpful as realized from the visit made to one of the representative beneficiary households. The team observed a rejoiced sprit with the beneficiary in terms of appreciating the present and envisioning the future personal and own family development situation indicating that there is attitudinal change towards sustaining oneself irrespective of being PLHIV.

Based on this, the team has appreciated the effort done so far by the project run through ERCS-TB and suggested ideas to strengthen and scale up the already achieved results within the already targeted areas.

8. Strengthening Solidarity and Networking

Dr. Meshesha Shewarega held meeting with the heads of *Association of Civil Society Organization of Tigray (ACSOT)* in Mekele Town on the 19th of November, 2010 morning time. The purpose of the meeting has been to discuss on the ways in which CCRDA and ACSOT work together in a manner that duplication of effort would be avoided as the two parties work for common objective areas within the same region. The purpose has also been to reach consensus on the issue that one would not work towards casting shadow upon the image of the other in the course of discharging responsibilities. In this regard, consensus was reached to sign memorandum of understanding in which the rights and obligations as well as duties and responsibilities of each party would be clearly specified.

Related to this, Dr. Meshesha has contacted Ato Moges Tariku, North Region Coordination officer of the CCRDA at his Office in Bahir Dar Town and briefed him that consensus has been reached to sign

memorandum of understanding between ACSOT and the CCRDA concerning the way the two parties would work together in a manner that one would not work to cast shadow upon the other as well as duplication of effort would be avoided. Based on this, he gave him instruction to proceed with the work planned to be done in Tigray region especially related to establishing GO-NGO forum in consultation with the ACSOT office.