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Oromo Self Reliance Association

Annual Report

Reporting Period August 2003 – July 2004

I. Introduction

As the law of the land demands, OSRA conducts its general assembly meeting annually. Year 2002/03 general assembly meeting aimed at reviewing the activities, approving annual plan and audit report was held on October 18, 2003. The time to conduct the general assembly meeting that deliberates on similar issues for the year 2003/04, those slightly delayed, has come. This report, therefore, is all about the activities accomplished during the bridging period (August to December 2003) and the first two quarters of year 2004.

II. Activities and Achievements of the Year

1. *Activities of Board of Directors*

The board of directors of OSRA has conducted 5 meetings within the reporting period (i.e. 10/09/03, 17/09/03, 18/02/04, 18/03/04, and 31/03/04).

The board discussed all the progresses in activities, the demand increment from year to year on OSRA's activities, the financial utilization and the problem of shortage of budget to match the increased demand as well.

Apart from these, the board has discussed and decided the following two major issues in the reporting period:

- After repeated discussions and examination of the advantages and the disadvantages, the board has approved the opening of OSRA Belgium for fund raising.
- Considering the increase in the activities of the organization, the financial status and living situation, the board approved a new salary scale for its employees. It is

believed that the new salary scale will help OSRA to attract capable employees and retain the existing ones.

2. Administrative Aspect

OSRA had limited staff with lower qualifications to accomplish its development activities. Therefore, in agreement with our donor agency and the board of directors, OSRA has employed four staff members with qualification from diploma to second-degree level. As the quality of its project implementation is improving and need for replication and expansion is increasing, OSRA still requires more staffs that are qualified.

3. Program Activities

In its 2003 meeting, the general assembly of OSRA has approved the annual activity report of year 2002/03, Audit report of 2002 and operational plan for 2003/04. Accordingly, the approved documents were sent to the concerned government line departments. The plan of the year 2003/04 was supposed to be implemented from August 1, 2003 to July 31, 2004 as per the promise of WSM, the only major donor of OSRA.

However, WSM was unable to release the promised budget until January 2004. Therefore, the time from August 2003 to December 2003 was assumed to be the bridging period under which WSM only covered the basic salary of the staff, minor communication costs and stationery materials. Hence, the major part of what will be reported here under is the activities accomplished from January 2004-June 2004 (the first two quarters of the year 2004).

3.1. Cereal Bank (CB)

Promotion of Cereal Bank Associations is meant to organize and mobilize communities having the same concern around this grassroots association. This institution is believed to create an alternative market outlet to safe-guard the farming communities from improper market exploitation and serve the members in supplying seed and/or food grain during emergency period, hence ensures food security. It also creates a forum where members discuss their own problems and other social issues.

Besides, profit generated in the process of purchase and sale of agricultural produces enables members to accumulate capital and hence creates a base for self initiative development. Towards the realization of the aforementioned objectives, the organization accomplished the following activities in existing three and two new CBs during the reporting period.

3.1.1. Grain Purchase by Existing CBs

There are three existing CBs (Bakkalcha in Aqaqi, Sadeq in Bacho and Borofa in Ada'a Barga) involved in purchase and sell of different agricultural produces. Accordingly, 3000 quintals of different types of grain (Teff, Whear, Barley and pulses) was planned to be purchased and the achievement was 3,213.91 quintals (107% of the plan). The detail is indicated in table 1.

Table1. Grain purchase activities of the year by CBs

No.	Name of CBs	Grain purchase activities				Total cost
		Planned (birr)	Planned (qt)	Achieved (qt)	%	
1	Bakalcha	378,115.00	1,609	1,548.80		354,016.50
2	Borofa	60,422.10	447	568.83	127	75,350.95
3	S/Dh/Guda	207,662.18	944	1,096.28	116	233,859.80
G. Total		646,199.28	3,000	3,213.91		663,227.25

Qt.= Quintal

3.1.2. Establishment of New CBs

In the newly approved project, Food Security and Water Development, there was an annual plan of establishing two new CBs in Aqaqi district. As this component entails the collaborative effort of relevant stakeholders, awareness creation and linkages establishment was the primary activity to be handled. However, during this linkage establishment some challenges, which delayed our activities, were encountered. The misunderstanding by Cooperative Promotion Office on organizing CB Associations, which actually appraised and signed the tripartite agreement of the same project, was among the challenges. This misunderstanding, to our understanding, emanated firstly from policy gap which forbids the implementation of the same association in the territorial demarcation of the already existing cooperatives and secondly from the frequent turnover of officials at district level. This incurred us a cost of over three months to come to consensus.

Finally, after frequent meetings and three community conference forums, it was managed to organize 134 community members in two Gandas, Dawaro Tina 73 and

Caffe Tumma 61, into two Cereal Bank Associations (CBAs) called Gudisa and Gada, respectively.

3.1.3. Members mobilization

As compared to capital allocated and size of warehouse constructed, member size of the existing CBAs was lower and gender sensitivity was also a crucial point but overlooked. Realizing these as a gap, sensitization and mobilization of new members was conducted. As a result, existing CBAs member size was raised to reasonable size and women's participation was also improved. In the newly established CBAs, these issues were given special attention and detail is given below.

Table 2. Member size of CBAs

No.	List of CBAs	Member size (before the reporting period)			Member size (in the reporting period)			Remark
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
1	S/Dh/Guda	45	5	50	81	20	101	Existing CBAs
2	Bakalcha	113	-	113	116	9	125	
3	Borofa	39	2	41	41	7	48	
4	Gada	-	-	-	53	22	75	New CBAs
5	Gudisa	-	-	-	56	17	73	
Total		197	7	204	347	75	422	

3.1.4. Developing Sense of Ownership

Development activities become reliable if remains sustainable and sustainability can be achieved if the owners of the sector develop sense of ownership. To bring such feelings among members of new as well as existing CBAs, the following efforts had been made in the reporting year.

Saving account

Presence of saving account for CBAs enables members to deposit their respective cash income generated from grain sale, registration fee collected and members' annual contribution. All CBAs are made to have their own saving account at Wasasa Micro Finance Institution. The amount generated as own capital by existing CBAs until this reporting period, which was in the account of OSRA, and the amount collected as registration fee of the newly established CBAs is deposited in their respective account. The account is fully managed and controlled by the representatives of the CB members. Question of doubt like "as far as the generate surplus is in OSRA's account, how can we say that it is our money?" was raised by existing CB members. After the money is transferred to their account, their

suspicion is fully avoided and this was confirmed from their words “know we can say it is our money”. This is really an indicator for existence of developing sense of ownership.

Membership ID card

Members of the CBAs were requesting for the provision of CB membership identification card. Currently printing of the ID is on process and they agreed to cover the cost required. As per members’ decision, a member will be entitled to get an ID card provided he/ she has full filled what is expected of him/ her as a member. It was observed that provision of ID card would give them proud and confidence on their CB.

Members’ contribution and registration fee

In addition to the income generated from grain sell, members should look for different ways of adding to their income. Besides the registration fee paid during registration for membership, an effort was made to convince CB members to pull members’ annual contribution. As a result, all CB members were convinced and decided to collect annual contribution either in cash or kind. Accordingly, the contribution per member was 20.00, 10.00 birr and 50kg wheat in Bakalcha, S/Dh/Guda and Borofa CBs, respectively. In terms of cash, contribution of Borofa is about 76.00 birr/member. From this, we have learnt that contribution in kind can bring significant change to their capital formation and would further strengthen member sense of belongingness towards their CBs.

Bylaw and internal directives

During their establishment, there was bylaw developed by the existing CBAs. Frequent discussions and trainings conducted raised the awareness of the members and made them to recognize that their previous bylaw misses points that are crucial for their association. Based on the decision of their General assembly, all existing CBs revised their respective CB bylaw and also developed new internal directives, which was not there before. The newly established CBs developed their respective CB bylaw and internal directives accordingly. As the bylaw and internal directive of

a given CB is fully developed by the members, with out any external imposition, it has positive repercussion on enforcing the provision thereon.

3.1.5. Managerial and Technical Capacity Building

Training

Future life of CBAs can be secured not only through cash capital formation but also by improving managerial and technical capacity of the members and this is achieved mainly through training. Having this in mind, our CB members were trained on cooperative principles, operational modalities, contents and sustainability of the Grain Bank. Twenty one CB executive committee members were trained on store management, market assessment and use of different vouchers and formats.

Vouchers and Formats

OSRA believes that building sustainability of a project largely depends on the extent to which local communities demonstrate strong sense of ownership through exercising meaningful participation throughout the whole project implementation processes. Towards the realization of this end, OSRA in effect has tried its level best to ensure that target community makes conscious participation and involvement aimed at influencing major decisions that directly affect the life of its members. With regard to this, an attempt made through developing different formats, which of course are within the reach of the community, is nowadays developed into publishing of formal vouchers. Cash payment voucher, Revenue invoice, Store receipt, and Store issue vouchers are printed. After acquainting cereal bank executive committee to the vouchers, currently they are demonstrating strong competence in using the vouchers as anticipated. Preparation of different vouchers and formats is observed practically maximizing the degree of accountability and transparency between OSRA and CBA's and CB executive committee and the General assembly.

3.1.6. Allocation of Seed Money

Seed money (money required for grain purchase) allocation is one of the important point that should get attention. From our past experience, we have learnt that allocation of huge seed money for a given CB creates difficulty of managing it on

the one hand and reduced service provision efficiency, as one CB can accommodate only a limited number of members, as compared to size of the budget.

By understanding this, therefore, realities of our project areas were assessed and manageable size was determined for future implementation. Accordingly, based on the type of crop produced, maximum 120,000.00 and minimum 70,000.00 birr are decided to be allocated for CBs to be established in the future. Concerning the existing CBs, reasonable amount will be withdrawn annually, which will be used in replication of new CBs.

3.1.7. Warehouse Construction

Organizing the community around an arena of common concern, Cereal Bank Association, involves purchasing and storing during harvest period. To this effect, construction of warehouses to store reserve grain for lean period has been implemented on the grant bases. However, in due discourse of program implementation, we happen to learn that as compared to the member size and the seed money injected to the CBA, the warehouse size was big (8mx16m). Nevertheless, by critically reflecting on the issue through involving different stakeholders, a consensus was reached to minimize the size. Major crops grown in the area, the ceiling seed capital to be injected and other feasibility aspects were the parameters used in determining the size. The size of the warehouse is minimized to 6mx10m and the warehouses for which the bid is awarded for contractors will be implemented accordingly.

3.1.8. Consolidation of CBs

Communities in Akaki, Ada'a Barga and Bacho districts have benefited from the cereal bank promotion program of the former Oda Nabe Integrated Rural Development Project, which was financed by the same donor, WSM. Legalization of the CBA's was explicitly stated on the same project. For although it was stated, some of the preliminary elements required for legalization as per the requirement of Oromia Cooperative Promotion Office; like office construction and voucher publication were overlooked. However, currently we are designing different strategies (by minimizing the former seed capital to reasonable amount and soliciting other fund sources) to implement the overlooked elements for

consolidation of the existing CBs and it will be implemented as anticipated in the coming reporting period.

3.2. Environmental Protection

Nursery establishment

Under this component of the new project, Food security and Water Development project, it was initially planned to establish one nursery during this reporting period. But after the approval of budget we came to know that an existing nursery owned by Akaki district Natural Resource Desk is operating under its capacity. As a strategy to mobilize resource the office was approached and we were allowed to use this nursery to raise different seedlings. On the other hand, with the budget supposed to establish the nursery, establishment of group nurseries at community level is envisaged.

Raising and Planting of Different Seedlings

To conserve the environment and supply wood for construction and fuel purposes, OSRA planned to raise 200,000 seedlings during the reporting period and 145,426 (72.7% of the plan) seedlings were raised. Of the total amount raised, 144,184 seedlings were distributed and planted. Most of the seedlings distributed (94 %) were planted as homestead and woodlots while the balance was planted on communal lands. Unlike the previous years, this year effort has been made to include fruit tree seedlings and 428 *Persia americana* and 348 Caricaceae seedlings were raised and distributed.

Different institutions including CBA's and youth associations were also involved in seedling plantations and these two institutions were given 8,700 seedlings of *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* on free basis and planted the seedlings on communal lands. Most of the seedlings were distributed on payment bases according to the price list of the district rural land administration and natural resources desk. From the sale these seedlings an amount of 17,016.25 birr was collected, which is believed to contribute to the increment of the survival rate, as incurring cost to obtain seedlings is believed to enhance to better management. To further improve the survival rate of the seedlings planted, eight hundred eighty two people from the

operation areas, of which 145 are women, were trained on seedling planting and management. In general, the distribution of fruit and tree seedlings has benefited 1398 community members. Detail is given in the following table:

Table 3 Different tree seedlings raised and distributed

No.	Species	Unit	Annual plan	Achievement		Distribution type			Income generated from sell		
				Number Raised	%	Sold	Free	Left over	Total	Rate per seedling	Total income (birr)
1	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	No.	96,600	72,300	75	63,451	8,700		72,151.00	0.10	6,345.10
2	<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	“	15,000	15,200	101	15,163			15,163.00	0.10	1,516.30
3	<i>Cupres lustanica</i>	“	12,000	7,125	59	2,830		4,295	7,125.00	0.25	707.50
4	<i>Dovyalis caffra</i>	“	35,000	26,500	76	26,449			26,449.00	0.20	5,289.80
5	<i>Rhammus prinoides</i>	“	12,000	11,000	92	10,495			10,495.00	0.25	2,623.75
6	<i>Persia americana</i>	“	1,500	428	29	428			428.00	0.50	214.00
7	<i>Caricaceae</i>	“	500	348	70	348			348.00	0.50	174.00
8	<i>Shinus mole</i>	“	2,400	2,400	100	1,458		942	2,400.00	0.10	145.80
9	<i>Acacia saligna</i>	“	10,000	7,125	71		7,125		7,125.00	-	-
10	<i>Lucinia leucocephala</i>	“	15,000	3,000	20		2,500		2,500.00	-	-
Total			200,000	145,426	73	120,622	18,325	5,237	144,184.00	-	17,016.25

3.3. Production of Horticultural Crops

Beneficiaries

The implementation of this component emanates from the understanding that promotion of vegetable production would minimize the extent of vitamin deficiency diseases. Owing to the prevailing gender inequalities, women and children seem to be affected primarily as compared to the men. To redress the problem, OSRA organized 42 women in Galle Koticha and Oda Nabe Gandas into six horticultural groups.

Training

Thirty-four women from these horticultural groups were trained on use of vegetables, land preparation, and method of planting which ranges from theoretical to practical demonstration.

Distribution of Seeds and Tools

After the training 8.5 kilograms of beetroot, carrot, Swiss chard, tomato and cabbage were distributed to the groups. In addition, twenty-four stubble hoes, ten digging hoes (3 forks), and seven two-sides digging hoes and eleven rakes were also purchased and distributed to the women horticultural groups.

3.4. Water Supply and Sanitation

Deep well

Akaki district is facing shortage of potable water supply for domestic consumption and for livestock. This underlying reality substantiated the implementation of two deep wells planned to be drilled in Koftu and Dawaro in the year 2004 and 2006. Up on the request of district Rural Development Office and after OSRA has confirmed the serious problems of Abusera community the first well planned to be drilled at Koftu was shifted to Abusera. Hydro Construction conducted the drilling in Abu Sera. The drilling work was commenced using Air-Rotary/DTH drilling method up to the final depth of 220 meter. During conducting the pump test, it was found out that the discharge rate of the well is 7.3Lt/second and the water is hot. The water test analysis conducted in the laboratory resulted into the limit of 3.55mg/liter fluorine content while the World Health Organization and Environmental Hygiene Committee standard values are 1.4 to 2.4 and 1 to 2 respectively. However, based on the laboratory result the contractor, Hydro Construction and Engineering Co.Ltd, has reported that the value is tolerable.

After the well is drilled, construction of the necessary structures was suspended for some months because of budget deficit. As the drilling and installation of casing has consumed 64.3% of the total budget. The problem was presented to the board and as per the strategies set on the meeting effort is being exerted to solve the problem and to put the well to service

Shallow well

The district of Bacho is known for lack of water during the dry season. In this district there are only three perennial streams (Mamo, Tegi and Gengi) to serve 19 Rural Kebele Administrations. These streams very much reduce in quantity during dry seasons and are found in very deep gorge to carry out water for the women or for the cattle to drink.

The need assessment OSRA conducted in the district had also revealed that shortage of potable water supply is the top priority problem of the district's population. In effort made to alleviate the problem 4 wells were drilled in 2002 with

fund obtained from different sources. One of these sources was Watercan Canada and an extension budget obtained from this source enabled drilling of one additional shallow well at Wasarbi Kora Wabo during this reporting period.

One of the major components of the previous project financed by WaterCan Canada, publication of IEC materials, was suspended as the budget allocated was minimal as compared to the printing cost. However, it was effected during this reporting period with some supplementary budget from the extension budget. The scheme has benefited additional 240 community members and sanitation structures planned with the scheme were planned to be constructed in the coming months.

Training

Training activities required to improve sustainability of the water schemes constructed in the year 2002 were conducted during this reporting period. Accordingly, 376 community members, 30 committee members and 12 technicians were given one to two days long training and sanitation and personal hygiene, water management and scheme maintenance were the major topics covered.

Spring development

From 2002 annual report it is to be recalled that OSRA had planned to develop six springs to solve the potable water supply shortage of the Ada'a Barga Community. Of these six springs planned to be developed at Telecho Kebele Administration five were completed and one was passed to this reporting period because of the then inaccessibility problem. This spring was developed during this reporting period and additional 245 community members were benefited from this scheme financed by Rotary Club of Addis Ababa - West.

Moreover, similar project proposal was submitted to Europe Third World (ETW) during this reporting period and with the fund obtained from this source (79,250.00 birr) it was planned to develop five springs Dhaku Kito Ganda Administration. However, the strong conviction both from OSRA and the beneficiary community enabled the realization of two additional springs (40% over achievement). As a result, 363 households (about 1815 people) could get potable water supply service.

Training

To ensure sustainability, 49 committee members of which 14 were women (7 for each) and 14 community masons (two for each) were trained on management of the schemes and on sanitation and hygiene aspects. Furthermore, at the presence of the beneficiary community and Ganda administration, preparation of scheme management system was conducted by highly capitalizing on the contextual realities of the beneficiaries.

3.5. Family Planning

The ever-rising population size of the community amidst meager income, low expertise and skills, limited means of livelihood, and others is deteriorating the human, natural and physical assets of the community.

In order to combat the problems that severely affect women and children and prepare the conducive environment for sustainable development, addressing the issue through family planning is of paramount importance. To this effect, building on the assets and values of the community rather than adapting initiatives that are beyond the reach of the community deserves special attention.

During this reporting period, community sensitization works were conducted on CBA meetings, on horticultural groups training and during seedling distribution. Besides, six traditional birth attendants (TBA's) from six Gandas were trained for seven days in collaboration with district health office. Four out of the ten planned were unable to attend the training on their own personal problem and the achievement of this training is sixty percent. To make the multiplying effect of the knowledge they imparted during the training, the trainees promised to share with the community particularly women on *Idir*, coffee ceremony and official meetings arranged for other purposes.

To follow up the role the trainees play with this respect in the community, reporting formats and acquainting them with the nearby health services and Ganda administrations is also made. Another activity under the component, distribution of contraceptives, planned for the reporting period was not implemented for discussion

held with district health office revealed that it is better to give trainings instead of contraceptive distribution for the latter has sustainability problem. Hence, using the activity's resource for training is envisaged and this training will be conducted in the coming few months.

3.6. HIV/AIDS

The world is experiencing the greater humanitarian crisis with the advent of HIV/AIDS. Since then, many people across the world are infected with the deadly virus. The pandemic has far greater implication on sustainable human development. It was with this understanding that OSRA incorporated the issue as one component in its project. To implement the home-based care, many visits were made to discuss the issue with district health desk and the HIV/AIDS secretariat. However, for victims of the disease afraid to expose themselves the home based care (financial support) was not implemented. After repeated effort screening of the needy is now underway and after screening those identified as a needy will be given a monthly financial support of 108 birr/person. Though IEC materials was planned to be printed during this reporting period it was not printed because of price escalation as compared to the budget allocated.

3.7. Partnership Promotion

As part of partnership promotion work OSRA has established partnership with Cereal Bank Promotion Platform (CBPP), a platform initiated to support NGOs that implement Cereal Bank programs. This office has adequate experience on CB promotion and is established to support other NGOs through provision of trainings on methods and techniques required to promote Cereal Banks effectively. It is also supposed to provide marketing, accounting and audit services for the CB networks promoted by the NGOs.

Besides, in an effort made to enhance partnership with different other stakeholders a brochure explaining the organization's mission, vision and key areas of focus was printed during this reporting period and relevant partners were given a copy.

3.8. Resource Mobilization

The major donor of OSRA is WSM and to expand the organization's area of operation and program components, looking for different alternative sources deserves special attention. It is now agreed that the absence of on shelf project documents on major program components was one of the factors contributed to the problem. Hence, initiative to alleviate the problem to the extent possible has already been taken and a need assessment and project document preparation on major program components is under way.

III. Financial and Physical Plan for the Year 2005

IV. New Agenda for Board Meeting

1. Oromiffa name for OSRA
2. Appointment of Auditor/extension
3. Approval of 2005 activities and budget
4. Coincidence of financial and physical year (adjusting to January – December).