

Oromo Self Reliance Association (OSRA)

Year 2005 Annual Report

Finfinnee

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I. Introduction

As the law of the land demands, OSRA conducts its general assembly meeting annually. The general assembly meeting is aimed at review and approval of the previous year's activities, audit report and next year's plan of action. This report is therefore, all about the activities accomplished in the last year (January to December 2005).

II. Activities and Achievements of the Year

1. Program Activities

In its annual meeting, the general assembly of OSRA approves preceding year's annual activity report, audit report and operational plan of succeeding year. The approved document will be sent to the Ministry of Justice as per the annual requirement. Hence, program activities reported hereunder are those accomplished from January 1st to December 31st 2005.

1.1. Cereal Bank (CB)

Promotion of Cereal Bank Associations is meant the organization and mobilization of 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 lean period, hence ensures food security as well as social capital. It also creates a forum where members discuss on their common social and economic issues.

Besides, profit generated in the process of purchase and sales 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 following activities were accomplished under this program component.

A. Grain Purchase by Existing CBs

There are five existing CBAs (Bakkalcha, Gada and Guddisa in Aqaqi, Sadeq in Bacho and Borofa in Ada'a Barga) involved in grain purchase during the year under consideration. Accordingly, 2,826 quintals of different types of grain (Teff, Wheat, Barley and pulses) was planned to be purchased by these CBs and the achievement was 2,867.13 quintals (101.46% of the plan). Detail is indicated in table 1.

Table 1. Grain Purchase Activities by existing CBs for the year, 2005.

No.	CB			Annual Plan		Achievement		Income generated in the year		Year established
	Name	Location	Donor	Physical (qt)	Financial	Physical (qt)	Financial	Profit from grain sale	Members' contribution (qt)	
1	Bakalcha	Aqaqi	WSM	830	262,000.00	567	151,607.00	16,351.60	18	1999
2	Borofa	Ada'a Barga	WSM	363	75,000.00	536	75,578.14	18,529.47	11	2000
3	Sadeq	Bacho	WSM	613	212,000.00	872	207,146.70	28,528.30	21	2001
4	Gada	Aqaqi	WSM	510	120,000.00	516	92,194.30	10,196.20	5	2004
5	Gudisa	Aqaqi	WSM	510	120,000.00	376	69,313.50	10,411.30	3	2004
Total				2826	789,000.00	2867	595,839.64	84,016.87	58	

B. Establishment of New CBs

In the reporting year, expansion of Cereal Bank Associations (CBAs) showed progressive change. This change was not only in the number of established CBAs but also in the type of CBs. It was in the last year that, two exclusive women CBs were established with the financial support from OXFAM AMERICA. Mobilization, registration and training of the women CBs at Ada'aa Barga district have been finalized and to make the CBs efficient, frequent training was given to the members in collaboration with the concerned government office. Provision of construction sites and available local materials and legalization of the site for the CBAs were fully done by the members. Only the warehouses and offices constructions and other CBs activities were postponed to the next year (2006) because of the onset of the rainy season. In addition to this, other CBAs were also established in the same district with the financial support from French embassy. One additional CBA was also established in Bacho district with the financial support from CCFD.

In general, establishment of five additional new CBs were completed in Ada'a Barga and Bacho districts and this has raised the number of CBAs established by OSRA to ten. A total of 389 members were organized into these five CBAs and each of them has developed their own respective bylaws and internal directives.

Table 2. Established new CBs during the year.

No.	CBs			Member size			Year established
	Name	Location	Donor	M	F	Total	
1	Warabo	Ada'a Barga	French Embassy	52	8	60	2005
2	Hunde Gudina	"	French Embassy	75	2	77	2005
3	Guddina Alle Qore	Bacho	CCFD	60	-	60	2005
4	Qubse	A/Barga	OXFAM		96	96	2005
5	Gudatu	A/Barga	OXFAM		100	100	2005
Total				187	206	393	

C. Members Mobilization and Other Efforts

As it can be seen from the above table about 389 community members in two districts were organized into five cereal bank associations. Based on the experience of the previous years, attention was given to the gender issue to mobilize and realize the participation of women. In addition to the women exclusive CBAs established during the year, concerted effort has been

made to improve the participation of women in other CBAs as well. However, the interest shown by women to participate in the CBAs is higher in women exclusive CBAs than the one observed in other CBAs

➤ ***Developing Sense of Ownership***

Development projects could contribute to better livelihood only if the development activities are sustainable. One of the criteria for sustainability is sense of ownership and this can be realized if the members understand that all the process is to their benefit. To bring such feelings among CB members, the following efforts were made in the reporting year.

➤ ***Saving account***

Presence of saving account for CBAs enables members to deposit their respective income generated from grain sale, registration fee collected and members' annual contribution. Like the existing CBAs, the newly established ones ought to have their respective saving account. Efforts were made to open their account in the nearby area. But due to lack of institutes, which can give such services for the newly established CBAs at Ada'aa Barga, effort is underway to open these accounts at WASASA head office.

➤ ***Membership ID card***

Members of the CBAs were frequently requesting for the provision of CB membership identification card. Except the members of the new CBs, all members of the pervious CBs have their respective ID cards. As per members' decision, a member will be entitled to get an ID card if he/she full filled what is expected from him/ her as a member. It was observed that provision of ID card gave them confidence in their CBA.

➤ ***Members' contribution and registration fee***

In addition to the income generated from grain sell, members should look for different ways of building up their capital. Besides the registration fee paid during registration for membership, an effort was made to convince CB members to collect members' annual contribution in consideration of the capacity of every member. As a result, all CB members were convinced and decided to contribute annually either in cash or kind to their CBs.

Accordingly, every member of the five new CBAs has contributed 10 biir as a registration fee and about 58 Qt. of different grains was contributed as members' contribution by the existing (those involved in grain purchase during the year 2005) five cereal bank associations.

➤ ***Bylaw and internal directives***

After thorough discussions and trainings, like the former CBs, the newly established CBs have developed their respective bylaw and internal directives.

D. Managerial and Technical Capacity Building

➤ Training

Sustainability 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. Accordingly, frequent training was given for the members of the new CBs on cooperative principles, operational modalities, contents and sustainability of the Grain Bank. Repeated meeting and brainstorming was made with the former CBAs as well. Besides members' training, CB executive committee members were trained on store management, market assessment and financial management.

➤ 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. To this end, OSRA has tried its level best to ensure the use of different vouchers, Cash payment voucher, Revenue invoice, Store receipt, and Store issue vouchers in all the CBAs. Utilization of these vouchers maximizes the degree of accountability and transparency between OSRA, the CBA's, CB executive committee members and the General assembly.

E. Allocation of Seed Money and Purchase plan

Seed money (money required for grain purchase) was allocated both from the revolving fund OSRA has allocated for each CBA and from the capital generated by CBAs themselves. The amount of revolving fund annually allocated to every CBA is determined based on the purchase plan and the budget each CBA has from its own source. Managerial capacity of the CBAs and type of crop grown are also important factors considered during the allocation. Accordingly, of birr 789,000.00 (refers to five CBAs) planned for grain purchase during the year birr 170,000.00 (21.5%) is planned from CBAs own source.

F. Warehouse Construction

Cereal Bank Association involves purchasing and storing of grains during harvest period as well serving as an entry point for other developmental activities. To this effect, construction

of three new warehouses in Ada'a Barga and Bacho was completed and construction materials are under delivery for two Women CBAs.

G. Consolidation of CBs

As it was explicitly stated on the same project, former CBs in Akaki, Ada'a Barga and Bacho districts, financed by WSM, have to be legalized. However, some preliminary requirements for legalization, like office construction and furnishing, publication and utilization of different vouchers have to be fulfilled. Though these requirements are fulfilled as consolidation phase, no CBA is legalized so far. Before the legalization process, level of their technical and managerial capacity as well as their present status for legalization has to be assessed. Towards the realization of these, an agreement has been made with Facilitating Farmers Access to Remunerative Market (FFARM Plc), which will lay fertile ground to ensure sustainability of the CBAs.

2. Environmental Protection

Raising and Planting of Different Seedlings

To conserve the environment, it was planned to raise 137,500 seedlings during the reporting period. 120,000 (87.27% of the plan) seedlings were raised. Of the total amount raised, 108,417 seedlings were distributed and planted. All of the seedlings distributed were planted individually at homestead and woodlots plantations. Raised and distributed seedlings included different trees, fruit trees like *Persia americana* and Caricaceae, and others based on the demand of the community.

The seedlings were sold and distributed as per the price list of the district's natural resources office. However, some fruit and leguminous trees were distributed freely for teaching and demonstration purposes. 11,000.00 birr was collected from sale of the seedlings, which will be utilized for same purpose. To further improve the management of the seedlings, training was given for 74 beneficiaries. Detail of the seedling raised is given in table 3.

Table 3 Different tree seedlings raised and distributed

No.	Species	Unit	Annual plan	Achievement	
				Seedlings raised	%
1	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	No.	34000	38000	112
2	<i>Eucalyptus globules</i>	"	12000	10000	83
3	<i>Fruit tree seed</i>	"	10000	12446	124
4	<i>Dovyalis caffra</i>	"	15000	14000	93
5	<i>Rhamnus prinoides</i>	"	30000	22080	74

6	<i>Sasbanya</i>	“	-	4480	-
7	<i>Jacaranda</i>	“	-	1674	-
8	<i>Shinus mole</i>	“	1500	3560	237
9	<i>Acacia saligna</i>	“	10000	7760	78
10	<i>Lucinia leucocephala</i>	“	5000	3000	60
11	<i>Gravelia</i>	“	-	3000	-
12	<i>Coffee</i>	“	20000	-	-
Total			137,500	120,000	

3. Production of Horticultural Crops

3.1. Beneficiaries

The implementation of this component emanates from the understanding that promotion of vegetable production would minimize the extent of vitamin deficiency diseases and serve as income generations as well. The children seem to be affected primarily with the food deficiency. To redress the problem, 50 women were organized into eight horticulture-producing groups.

3.2. Training

From among the organized horticulture groups, 45 women were trained on production, management and use of vegetables both theoretically and practically. In addition, 3 development agents from the government office and 20 men participated on the demonstration of food preparation from vegetables.

3.3. Distribution of Seeds and Tools

After the training, 10 kg of seeds of different horticultural crops (beetroot, carrot, Swiss chard, tomato and cabbage) as well as 50 stubble hoes, 50 digging hoes and 40 rakes were purchased and distributed among the groups.

4. Water Supply and Sanitation

4.1. Deep well

Akaki district is facing shortage of potable water supply for domestic consumption and livestock. This underlying reality substantiated the implementation of drilling of two deep wells in the year 2004 and 2006. Though drilling of the first well was completed in the year 2004, construction of the necessary structures was suspended because of budget deficit created due to the increased depth beyond what was initially estimated. The issue was presented to Oromiya Water Resource Bureau and the Bureau has provided a generator and submersible pump for the well. This enabled the organization to complete the construction of

remaining structures and finally the scheme was put to service after its official inauguration in the presence of donors, government officials, members, board and staffs of OSRA, beneficiary community and other invited guests.

4.2. Shallow well

The need assessment made so far in Bacho district revealed that shortage of potable water is the top priority of the population. As per the planned activity, 7 shallow wells were drilled, inaugurated and put to service in different Kebele Administrations (KAs) of Bacho district. These different water projects were supported by different donors namely, Oxfam America, Water-Can Canada, Europe Third World (ETW), SIDA/CRDA and CCFD. At the end of the reporting year, these projects raised the total number of shallow wells OSRA drilled in the district to 12, which has the potential to serve 1,200 HHs or 6,000 community members. Along with every water well, there are important sanitation structures constructed. Accordingly, 7 washing basins, 7 showers (each with two rooms) and 23 private pit latrines were constructed.

Different training's were also given, for water and sanitation committee members, technicians and water users, on different topics to improve sustainability of the water schemes, personal hygiene and environmental sanitation of the beneficiary community.

Table 4. Activities on potable water supply for the year.

No.	The project			Well type	quantity	Beneficiary HHs	Remark
	Name	Location	Donor				
1	FSWSP	Aqaqi	WSM	Deep	1	3500	
2	S/Liban Water supply	Bacho	Oxfam America	Shallow	3	300	
3	Becho Environmental protection and water supply	"	CRDA/SIDA	"	1	100	
4	Sede water supply	"	ETW	"	1	100	
5	Becho CB and water supply	"	CCFD	"	1		
6	Sinbiro Chirecha ex.2	"	WAT-CAN	"	1	100	
Total					8	4100	

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. To combat these problems, trainings were given for different community groups in different forums like on community sensitization meeting for CB establishment, on horticultural groups training and during distribution of tree seedlings. Besides, 8 (80% of the plan) traditional birth attendants (TBA's) from Aqaqi district were trained for five

consecutive days. For the follow up of the trainees, simple reporting format was prepared and distributed so that they can report regularly to their nearby health institutions.

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. With this understanding, visits and discussions were made with the health office and HIV/AIDS secretariat, on the how of the implementation of the home-based care. For victims of the pandemic usually do not want to expose themselves the process took long time. However, after repeated effort, 7 (70% of the plan for support) HIV positive people were screened and received monthly financial support of birr 108.00/patient.

Besides this, with the financial support obtained for Oromia HIV/AIDS secretariat, intensive training was given for 10 consecutive days for 50 demobilized Soldiers leaving among the community. The trainees were selected from seven zones of Oromiya National Regional State and the training was given at Naqamte, capital of E/Wallaga zone.

7. Partnership Promotion

As part of partnership promotion work OSRA has established partnership with the then Cereal Bank Promotion Platform (CBPP), a platform initiated to support NGOs implementing Cereal Bank Promotion programs. The platform has been established with the objective to support other NGOs through provision of trainings on methods and techniques required to promote Cereal Banks effectively and efficiently. It is also supposed to provide marketing, accounting and audit services for the CB networks promoted by the NGOs. The platform has also served to share experiences and best practices among NGOs implementing CB program.

8. Problems Encountered and Lessons Learned

8.1. Problems Encountered

In the course of implementation of different projects the following problems were encountered during the reporting period

- ❖ *Despite the concerted effort made to improve the participation of women in cereal bank associations the number remained very small as compared to their male counterparts. Every opportunity is used to bring the importance of cereal bank associations to the attention of women*

- ❖ *Unjustified resistance from Regional Cooperative Bureau on establishment of cereal bank associations. Repeated discussion was held with experts and bureau head, but it is still a problem*
- ❖ *Budget shortage faced has constrained the timely completion of Abusera Water well. The problem was solved with a material support from Oromia Water Resource Bureau*
- ❖ *An effort made to support HIV victims faced a problem due to unwillingness of the victims to expose themselves due to stigma and discrimination. Less than the number planned to be supported were supported because of the problem*

8.2 Lessons Learned

During implementation of the projects we were able to learn that:-

- ❖ *The rural community can play a significant role in project implementation and management and hence can be part of a solution to their own problem if properly mobilized and convinced that the whole process is to their advantage.*
- ❖ *Participation of relevant stakeholders is very important for smooth and effective implementation of the projects.*