

OROMO SELF RELIANCE ASSOCIATION (OSRA)

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## **SUMMARY**

Oromo Self Reliance Association (OSRA) is a local non governmental organization engaged in various development activities in Oromia regional state with the mission to help poor and marginalized people to help themselves and thereby improve food security situation of the people in its operational areas.

In 2009, activities that have direct contributions to the betterment of the livelihoods of the target communities were carried out in five districts in Oromia region. The activities include creating water supply and sanitation services for over 3000 rural communities; provision of clean water and sanitation facilities for about 3,009 students, teachers and school communities in three public schools; provision of capacity building and backstopping services for 24 farmers marketing organization. Moreover, environmental protection, activities related to women empowerment, piloting social accountability, community training was also activities implemented in the target intervention areas.

In the reporting period, four community based shallow wells were developed and about 1,680 people have access to safe and clean water supply sources. Besides, communal sanitation facilities such as washing basins and shower rooms were built in nine different villages and have been serving over 2000 community members in the intervention areas. In addition to the facilities, capacity building and awareness raising training and sensitization were delivered for water and sanitation committees, community technicians, hygiene and sanitation education communicators, and the community at large.

Three target schools in Becho district were provided with clean water sources, gender sensitive latrines, urinals, and hand washing facilities. Furthermore, students, teachers, parents, health and environmental club members were provided with training on various topics related to improved hygiene and sanitation. As a result, the awareness and practice on hygiene and sanitation have been improved in both the schools and the target community.

In an effort to strengthen the capacity of farmers marketing organization or cereal banks, a number of activities have been performed and results achieved in the reporting period. Construction of offices, facilitation of trainings and sensitization for members and various committees, experience exchange among different FMOs, facilitation of legalization process of FMOs, value chain analysis, and facilitation of linkages of FMOs with various stakeholders were some of the major activities implemented.

With the objective of contributing to environmental protection, over 100,000 various indigenous tree seedlings were raised and distributed to the target groups along with sensitization and training. Performance monitoring and impact evaluation workshops, interface meetings and reflection workshop were some of the main activities implemented in relation to women empowerment.

Moreover, various training and sensitization programmes on issues such as environmental protection, waster supply, hygiene and sanitation, vegetable production, family planning, and HIV/AIDS were organized during the reporting period. As a result of this intervention, the target beneficiaries have gained knowledge and improved awareness.

## Introduction

Oromo Self Reliance Association (OSRA) is a local non governmental organization engaged in various development activities in Oromia regional state with the mission to help poor and marginalized people to help themselves and thereby improve food security situation of the people in its operational areas. Since its establishment, OSRA has been implementing different integrated rural development projects. The main program focuses of the organization are cereal bank promotion, potable water supply and sanitation, environmental protection, women empowerment. It has also been implementing projects that support horticulture crop development at farmers' backyards; zero grazing and improved heifer promotion, enhancement of community based basic service protection.

Currently, OSRA is undertaking development interventions in five districts in Oromiya region, namely Akaki, Ada'a Bargaa, Bacho, Ilu and Tole. During the reporting period OSRA planned and implemented activities under different projects. It has implemented activities planned under eight projects targeting various beneficiaries.

This report briefly presents activities planned and results achieved, challenges faced and lessons learned during the reporting period (year 2009).

## 2. Planed Activities

A number of activities have been planned during the reporting period. With regard to promotion of FMOs, building the capacity of the FMOs in terms of training, networking and experience exchange were among the major activities planned in the reporting period.

Under water supply and sanitation, it was planned to develop four shallow wells, which can serve about 280 households, in four villages of Ilu district. Further more, ten washing basins and ten shower blocks with two rooms were planned to be constructed in different villages of Ilu and Tole districts. In addition to community based water supply and sanitation, OSRA has embarked on the second phase of clean water for schools project in the reporting period. The major planned activities of the project includes, developing three shallow wells for three schools, construction of four blocks of latrines with urinals, water points and hand washing facilities. Training the school and surrounding communities on hygiene and sanitation was also one of the activities planned for the year.

Environmental protection has also been one of the components of the project in Akaki area. In the year 2009, it was planned to raise and distribute over 120,000 different types of tree seedlings that will contribute to environmental protection.

Conducting institutionalization workshops; participatory impact monitoring and evaluation; strengthening the capacity of woreda women's affairs offices; conducting interface between women's right defense committees at kebeles and woreda level; organize reflection and experience exchange programs for implementing NGOs and

documentation of best practices, were the major activities planned in the first quarter of the year 2009. Administering community score card and interface meeting between service providers and service users were among the major activities planned in piloting social accountability project in the planning period.

Furthermore, different trainings and sensitization on topics relevant to all projects components such as hygiene and sanitation, environmental health and sanitation, health and nutrition; business management, family planning and HIV/AIDS were planned in the year 2009.

### **3. Activities Implemented and Output Achieved**

#### **3.1. Water Supply and Sanitation**

Lack of potable water is one of the major problems in the project areas. Like in most rural areas of the country in general, people in the proposed project area have very poor access to clean water supply coupled with poor habits of hygiene and sanitation practices. The target communities have been using water from unprotected hand dug wells and rivers as their principal water sources. OSRA has been making its level best to improve accessibility of potable water for the target communities.

The general objective of water supply and sanitation activities is to contribute to improved health condition of the target community through provision of potable water, hygiene and sanitation education thereby to contribute towards better living situation. In case of clean water for schools, the objective is to create a healthy and safe learning environment for children and school communities.

##### **3.1.1. Community Based water supply and sanitation**

Community based water supply and sanitation activities have three main components: provision of water supply sources, sanitation facilities, and hygiene and sanitation education.

Accordingly, four community managed water wells were developed in four selected villages, namely; *Bantu Goda, Sillo Besi, Kuncho Chanco and Kotiche Chanco* of Ilu district in the reporting period. The depth of the wells is 60 meters having a discharge rate of 4l/s to 7l/s. The water wells were provisionally handed over to the target beneficiaries in the presence of key stakeholders and district administration. The target beneficiaries have now started utilizing water from these sources.

OSRA has been integrating sanitation with the water supply through promotion of communal washing basins and shower rooms. This would help to improve the sanitation

situation of the target communities. Accordingly, 9 washing basins and 9 shower rooms with two rooms were constructed in 9 villages of Ilu and Tole districts.

The other activities implemented in community water supply and sanitation were community sensitization on hygiene and sanitation; establishment and training of water and sanitation (WATSAN) committees, training community technicians and hygiene and sanitation education communicators.

In the reporting period, water and sanitation (WATSAN) committees consisting of seven members (of which two are women) were set up for each water supply and sanitation scheme. The committees are responsible for the day-to-day management of water supply system and sanitation structures constructed in their respective villages. Furthermore, the committee collects users' fee from the community to be used for their schemes maintenance. The committee is also responsible to mobilize the community, manage and administer fee collected from the users. This money is deposited in the bank account opened by the name of the water users. This is believed to contribute to the sustainability of the project.

Moreover, 88 WATSAN committee members drawn from 11 waster schemes Ilu, Tole and Akaki districts have been trained on operation and management, hygiene and sanitation. 97 hygiene and sanitation communicators selected from each village were also trained in the reporting periods. The training mainly focused on water management, personal hygiene, food and water hygiene and environmental sanitation. Under environmental sanitation special attention was given to the importance of pit latrine and its management.

Besides providing training, experience sharing program was organized for WATSAN committee members of the two water points in Akaki district. The visit was targeting the experiences on overall water use and sales (how, when, who, how much/day in terms of money), water management, operation and maintenance; financial management including cash management and internal control system, relationship between WATSAN committees and the user communities, and accountability of the committees. As a result of the experience exchange and training programs, the WATSAN committees at both schemes have been improving the way they manage the water supply facilities, keeping records, and financial management.

Provision of practical training for technicians drawn from each village was another activity accomplished in the reporting period. Consequently, 19 individuals received training on operation and maintenance of the hand pumps. The trainees are expected to undertake minor maintenance of the hand pumps and replace some of the spare parts whenever necessary. The training was delivered in collaboration with experts from zone water office.

In addition to sensitizations undertaken at each village, about 300 user community members drawn from the 9 villages have been trained on relevant hygiene and sanitation issues. Some of the key hygiene and sanitation messages delivered to the communities

include personal hygiene; safe disposal of human excreta; environmental hygiene; water and food hygiene.



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### 3.1.2. Clean water and sanitation for schools

With the overall objective of creating health and favorable learning and teaching environment, OSRA in collaboration with Watercan Canada has been implementing clean water supply and sanitation for schools project. In the reporting period, three selected public schools in three rural kebeles of Becho district were provided with clean water, sanitation facilities, and hygiene and sanitation training. The selected schools namely; SinbiroChirecha, Keta Insilale, and Sodo- Liben had no access to water sources and didn't have child and gender friendly sanitation facilities. This has negatively affected the teaching and learning environment.

One shallow well was developed at appropriate place within the compound of each school and fitted with elevated water tank where students can drink water. The depth of the wells ranges from 60 -65 meters with a discharge rate of, on average, about 2 liters per second.



**Photo: wellhead and distribution point with 11 facets at Keta Insilale**



In addition to water supply, four blocks of VIP latrine blocks have been constructed. In Sinbiro Chirecha School, two blocks of latrine with six stances each were constructed for boys and girls students. Furthermore, urinals for boys and hand washing stands for both boys and girls were constructed along with the latrines. Similarly, one block of dry latrine with eight stances for boys and another block with eight stances and urinals have been constructed in Keta Insilale and Sodo Liben schools, respectively. Moreover, another one block of latrine with four stances has been completed in Sodo Liben School.



**Photo: separate latrine blocks for girls and boys with hand washing facility**

Moreover, school based WATSAN committee consisting of seven members from the principals, teachers, parent teachers association (PTA) or school board, and students were established in each school prior to implementation of the physical activities. More specifically, the committee comprises of 2 members from PTA, 2 from teachers, 2 from students, and 1 school principal and the committee has been chaired by the school principals. Discussions have further been made with the PTA, WATSAN committees, school administration and communities on the roles and responsibilities of the PTA, the WATSAN, parents, teachers and students in implementation and monitoring of the project activities; operation and maintenance of the facilities, and implementation plan of the project. The school administration, PTA and WATSAN have unanimously agreed that operation and maintenance expenses will be covered by the schools either from its annual budget or contribution from families.

Training and sensitization activities on hygiene and sanitation were another activities accomplished in the target schools. Specifically, watsan committees, students, teachers, parents, and environmental and health club members were participated in these sensitizations and training. In general, 4917 students, 31 teachers, 340 community members, and 310 health club members drawn from the three schools were involved.

The training topics include water management and the roles of WATSAN committee members; operation and maintenance of the facilities and the role of each stakeholder including students, teachers, PTA, WATSAN, the community, and hygiene and sanitation.

Moreover, 12 technicians selected from the three schools received training on operation and maintenance of hand pumps.

**Insert photo**

### **Summary of water supply and sanitation facilities developed**

SN	Name of school	Description of facilities developed	Number of beneficiaries		
			M	F	T
1	Sinbiro Chirecha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One water well with elevated wellhead developed</li> <li>Distribution point with 11 child friendly facets</li> <li>Two blocks of VIP latrines with 6 stances each one for girls and the other for boys.</li> <li>Urinals for boys</li> <li>Two hand washing stands with 4 facets near the latrines</li> </ul>	686	562	1248
2	Keta Insilale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One water well with elevated wellhead developed</li> <li>Distribution point with 11 child friendly facets</li> <li>one block of VIP latrine with 8 stances for girls</li> <li>Two hand washing stands with 4 facets near the old and new latrine blocks</li> </ul>	427	434	861
3	Sodo Liben	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One water well with elevated wellhead developed</li> <li>Distribution point with 11 child friendly facets</li> <li>one block of VIP latrine with 8 stances for boys with urinals on two sides</li> <li>One additional block of dry latrines with 4 stances for girls</li> <li>Two hand washing stands with 4 facets near the two latrine blocks</li> </ul>	498	402	900
	Total		1,611	1,398	3,009

### **3.2. Farmers Marketing Organizations/Cereal Bank Associations**

Since 1999, OSRA has been promoting cereal bank associations (CBAs) and farmers marketing organizations (FMOs) with objective of contributing to food security through ensuring availability of grain at village level, raising incomes of smallholder farmers and access to market opportunities. In its effort exerted so far, OSRA has been successful in organizing and strengthening 24 farmers' organizations with 1,821 farmers (29% women) in four districts and 24 rural kebeles.

Of the 24 CBAs/FMOs, 18 of them have been involving in the value chain program being under implementation by the consortium of five NGOs, in which OSRA is one. These

FMOs/CBAs have created market opportunities for both members and non member farmers and ensured access to fair market prices for their produces at local market. FMOs have also played an important role in reducing the marketing costs and shortening long market chains. They have also been served as a forum where members discuss on their socio economic problems.

In this sub section, specific activities implemented and results achieved in the reporting period is discussed.

### **3.2.1. Construction**

In the reporting period, offices blocks with two rooms were constructed for five farmers' organizations. Of these FMOs, two are found in Becho, one in Ilu, and the other two are found in Adaberga districts. Furthermore, these offices were also furnished with essential office furniture and equipments such as chairs, tables, benches, shelves and cash safes.

The members of respective CBs participated in the construction activities through providing locally available construction materials such as wood and labor. Particularly, the contribution of members of the cereal banks in Adaberga is worth mentioning. Of the five offices constructed, three of them were financially supported with ICCO, while the remaining two offices constructed in Adaberga were implemented with financial support from French embassy.

### **3.2.2. Training and experience exchange**

In the reporting period, different skill trainings through various mechanisms such as exposure visits, on job skill enhancement and in house training have been provided member farmers and executive committees to enhance organizational capacities of FMOs.

In 2009, 1,821 members of 24 FMOs were sensitized on various relevant issues such as basic principles of cooperatives, Diversification of FMO activities, Networking, how to build working capital, etc. Moreover, 267 committee members (executive committee, sells and purchase committees, and control committees) were provided with training on the following topics: concepts of value chain, business management skills, business plan development, store management and quality control, record keeping and financial management, networking & partnership formation. These trainings were provided in collaboration with private service providers and experts from districts cooperative promotion offices.

In addition to trainings, different experience exchange programs were organized for FMO leaders so that FMOs can share their best practices, experiences, challenges, and lessons from one another. The experience exchange visits were held among FMOs organized by OSRA in different networks (which we call internal) and with FMOs and cooperatives organized by other NGOs and the government (we call this external). In general, 133

committee members drawn from 24 FMOs in the four districts were involved in the experience exchange programs organized at different times in the year.

### **3.2.3. Facilitation of Legalization process of FMOs**

Out of the 24 farmers marketing organizations or cereal bank associations, only three FMOs operating in Akaki district were registered as autonomous marketing cooperatives by cooperative promotion office till end of 2008. Thus, one of the activities planned in the year was facilitation of legalization of the remaining FMOs.

Accordingly, OSRA has facilitated registration of the FMOs. Consequently, 17 FMOs (7 in Becho, 5 in Ilu, and 5 in Ade'aberga districts) have got their legal status as marketing cooperatives by the respective cooperative promotion offices in Becho, Ilu, and Adaberga districts. Activities implemented in relation to legalization of the FMOs include:

- Sensitize/orient members of the FMOs on the need to have legal status, the requirement and procedures for legalization, the cooperative proclamation etc.
- Assist FMOs to revise their existing bylaws as per the proclamation of cooperative
- Assist the FMOs in developing their business plan
- Publish the necessary vouchers and fulfilled all the necessary documents

### **3.2.4. Value chain mapping, clustering and linkage facilitation**

A participatory value chain analysis and market assessment was undertaken in the year. FMOs, with OSRA's facilitation, were able to identify key potential teff buyers and processors in the local markets and the central market (Addis Ababa). However, due to fluctuation of prices, FMOs couldn't benefit yet from such linkages.

As far as linkage is concerned, OSRA has arranged panel discussion forums whereby representatives of FMOs and guests invited from financial institutions, Agriculture and rural development offices, cooperative promotion offices, union, traders, district administrations and other relevant stakeholders for FMOs in Becho-Ilu and Ada'a Berga networks.

### **3.2.5. Facilitation of FMO day's events**

The objective of such event is to motivate FMOs and members to deliberate issues pertinent to their respective FMOs. It was also aimed at creating forum where members discuss on the past achievement and future direction, the challenges faced and lessons drawn. Accordingly, the events were facilitated for 13 FMOs out of 18 planned for the year. On the occasions, FMOs invited their members, nonmembers, community elders, representative of cooperative promotion offices and discussed on relevant issues that will help strengthen their organizational capacity. As a result of these events, non members have started to register as members of the FMOs and the members to be committed for their FMOs.

### **3.2.6. Piloting Seed Multiplication on Farmers Plot**

Piloting improved seed multiplication on farmers' plots of land was one of the activities planned to be accomplished in 2009. Prior to implementation of this activity, discussions have been conducted and consensus was reached with agriculture and rural development offices (ARDO) of Becho, Ilu and Akaki districts on how the activity can be implemented, the roles of ARDO, OSRA, FMOs and the farmers.

Then, training sessions were organized for development agents and supervisors in the three districts where the FMOs have been operating. In total, 24 development agents (10 Becho, 10 Ilu, and 4 Akaki) were provided orientation on seed multiplication, agronomic practices, selection of model farmers, who are members of the target FMOs. The ARDOs and development agents were given responsibility to lead the selection of the farmers that fulfill the agreed upon criteria along with the FMOs and field staff of OSRA, closely follow up the status and provide technical support to the farmers.

Accordingly, distributed 12.5 quintals of improved teff variety known as 'Kuncho' purchased from Debrezeit and 30.5 quintals of DAP fertilizer for 15 FMOs. Consequently, about 42 hectare of land was covered by an improved seed of teff. In total 72 farmers who are members of 15 FMOs have benefited from this activity.

Moreover, 53 farmers and 23 DAs<sup>1</sup> received practical training on seed multiplication and post harvest crop management. Furthermore, OSRA has held discussion with Oromia Seed Enterprise and facilitated field observation by experts.

### **3.2.7. FMO's Trading Activities**

In the reporting period, 24 FMOs in Becho, Illu, Adaberga and Akaki districts involved in grain purchase activities. In total, these FMOs purchased about 3,132.75 quintals of different types of grains that costs birr 2,148,053.34. Of the total quantity of grains purchased, 51.4% were purchased from members of the FMOs, while the rest was purchased from non member farmers in the localities. With regard to selling activities, only 14 FMOs were involved in one way or the other. Most FMOs couldn't sell their stock due to lower prices of grains. In general, FMOs managed to sell only 20% of their stock. Even then, some FMOs have sold to their members on credit basis.

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<sup>1</sup> 10 development agents each from Becho and Ilu, and 3 DAs from Akaki have involved in the training. Moreover, 22 farmers from Becho, 18 from Ilu, and 13 from Akaki were trained along with the DAs.

### **3.3. Environmental Protection**

Regarding environmental protection, various activities have been undertaken during the reporting period. With the objective of contributing to environmental protection, over 115,000 different multipurpose and indigenous tree seedlings were raised on the central nursery site established at Dukem. Following the recommendations made in the external evaluation, OSRA quitted rising of eucalyptus tree seedlings on its nursery site unlike the previous years.

Prior to the distribution of the raised seedlings sensitization training was found to be indispensable. Thus training of farmers in the target kebeles was undertaken in collaboration with Akaki district's Agriculture and Rural Development Office.

The topics addressed on the trainings include the following topics:

- On the general concept of environment & environmental health
- The need for soil conservation
- Types & method of soil conservation
- Responsibilities of the generation in general and that the farmers in particular in the arena of environmental protection
- The necessity for planting indigenous trees

Finally, the seedlings were distributed to about 1701 farmers in nine kebeles; two farmers training centers; schools, a church; youth clubs in Dukem town, and farmers marketing organizations in Akaki district.

Moreover, materials such as sand, forest soil, and compost and polytine tube required for raising seedling for next year have been purchased and damped on the nursery site. Daily laborers have now working on the nursery site.

### **3.4. Support Vegetable Production**

During the reporting period, 100 women, living in six kebeles was organized into six groups based on the proximity of their residences to one another. Thereafter, training programs were organized at four centers and 93 women drawn from the six intervention kebeles were trained on the following topics:

- Land preparation method
- Sowing method
- Advantages & improvement of vegetable production
- Harvesting/maturity season or maturity stage
- Follow-up and management

The trainings were offered in collaboration with Agriculture and Rural Development Office (ARDO) and facilitated by experts from the district ARDO, development agents based at each of the intervention kebele and OSRA staff. Besides skill training, the target

beneficiaries were provided with 20 kgs of five types of vegetable seeds and hand tools in the year.

Furthermore, with the aim of diversifying their diet at household level, the target women beneficiaries were trained and demonstrated on the techniques of food preparation from various vegetable crops. 100 women drawn from six kebeles attended the practical demonstration of food preparation. The sessions were facilitated by home economics experts from Akaki district agriculture and rural development office and OSRA staff.

### **3.4. Women Empowerment**

Women empowerment has been implemented for two years (2007 – 2008) by the consortium of five NGOs including OSRA. However, it was agreed to extend the project activities for three months, Jan- March, 2009. Thus, this section presents activities implemented during the first quarter of the year.

One of the activities implemented during this period was facilitation of performance evaluation and impact follow up workshops in Ilu district, where OSRA implemented the project during the first year. The aim of the workshops were to identify the changes in attitudinal and new forms of behavioral patterns introduced in to the communities following the adoption of new set of laws and social rules; and also to assess factors that affected the implementation process and the solution used to mitigate those factors. Furthermore, efforts were made to examine how far the committees established by the project have been discharging their duties and responsibilities.

The workshop participants comprise of kebele chair persons, managers, kebele social courts, community elders, development agents, health extension agents, women associations, teachers/school club representatives/. Accordingly, a total of 170 participants (of which 41 were women) attended the workshops held at the four sub localities/centers. Participants from each kebele formed a focus group and assessed the results and outcomes in their respective kebele. Then, all participants brought together and reflected on the major changes observed in their communities.

The Interface meeting was another activities implemented in relation to women empowerment. The workshop was conducted at Teji town, the capital of Ilu district. A total of 135 participants drawn from 18 kebeles and district sector offices attended the workshop. On the workshop, a presentation was made on the project implementation; and the findings of the participatory evaluation conducted at each sub locality.

Consequently, despite encouraging outcomes as a result of the intervention /the project, the participants identified the following issues as that need further strengthening:

- Even though under age marriage and marriage without consent is significantly reducing, sometimes it is undertaken in a way that the parents are convincing their daughter to accept the request, pretending as if it is based on her consent.

- Although girls know their rights, some times they accept the proposal from their parents for the fear of being cursed and so that they say the marriages is based on their consent and their age is up to the required for marriage.
- In some cases, some elders are found to be deviant from the customary laws, which imply a lot need to be done in order to make the changes sustainable.
- Though FGM has been decreasing, in some cases, mothers still couldn't get out of old thinking towards FGM in that they are practicing it against their daughter in hidden ways.

The third activity implemented in relation to women empowerment was reflection meetings with implementing partners. The meeting was organized for two days at Mojo town to assess strengths and weaknesses related to implementation, outcomes achieved, and share experiences and learning points for future networking and partnership.

Finally, the all the project activities have been completed as planned and terminal reports was submitted to HUNDEE, the leading organization, in March 2009.

### **3.5. Enhancement of Protection of Basic Services (PBS)**

One of the major activities undertaken in this year was organizing experience sharing visits between the two selected elementary school. This has helped the target schools to share their experiences, plans and progresses made after the interface meetings, and their future plans.

In an effort to institutionalize social accountability approach, OSRA has facilitated establishment of social accountability council at the target schools during the reporting period.

The other major activity under taken was reflection workshop among staffs of implementing organizations (OSRA, FCE and IMPACT). It was found out that there have been changes as a result of the interface meeting and the accompanying plans. Specifically, as it was reported by the directors of the two selected primary schools, a number of changes have been observed in the schools as a result of the intervention. These include: increased community participation in the activities of the schools; increased level of awareness on the roles of service providers and users; some schools have started to fulfill teaching materials, desks, library, etc.

The project has been successfully completed and the terminal report was submitted to FCE, the coordinating organization, in March 2009.

### **3.6. Other activities**

In this sub section various cross cutting activities that mainly focus on raising awareness of the target communities implemented in the year are discussed. One of such activities was sensitization of the communities on environmental health and sanitation. In an effort to contribute to safe and healthy environment, different orientations and sensitization of



the communities were conducted in the target kebeles of Akaki district. Furthermore, 220 farmers drawn from eight kebeles received in-house training on environmental health and sanitation.

Family planning and HIV/AIDS has been cross cutting issues mainstreamed in our activities during the reporting period. The plan was to sensitize the communities living the target kebeles and school communities about family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention and control. Accordingly, 112 community members drawn from four kebeles, and 144 students received the orientation. This activity was implemented in collaboration with experts from district health office, women's affairs, and HIV secretariat. Besides, a volunteer living with HIV has also participated and delivered key messages for students and the communities.

Training of traditional birth attendants (TBA) was another activities accomplished in the year. During the year, 23 women selected from eight kebeles received practical training for three days. The training mainly focused on safe delivery and precautionary measures that should be taken while rendering delivery services. The training was held at the district health office and provided by experts and health extension agents in collaboration with OSRA.

A part from awareness raising sensitization and trainings, it was also planned to assist nine people living with HIV/AIDS and 40 orphan students living in Dukem town. This is one of the activities being implemented in the project financed by WSM. Following the external evaluation of the project, a new strategy towards reinforcing the capacities of HIV positive persons supported by the project was discussed. More specifically, the target beneficiaries have been organized into informal self help group, assisted to develop bylaws and open bank account at WASASA MFI. However, each member of the group will engage in income generating activities they are familiar with individually. After having thorough discussion with the beneficiaries and district HIV secretariat, OSRA has assisted the group members through providing working capital.

During the reporting period, 17 students who are orphans had received materials such as exercise books, pens, bags and school registration fees. Moreover, IEC materials were developed and used in the community sensitization and various trainings.

#### **4. Outcomes/Impacts Achieved**

The ultimate purpose of all activities implemented and efforts exerted in the year is to contribute to better living situation of the target beneficiaries. In this respect, changes have been observed in terms of outcomes on the target communities though it takes time to see impacts of some of the activities within one year. In this sub section, outcomes on beneficiaries are briefly presented.

As a result of intervention in water supply and sanitation activities, a number of community members have accessed safe water supply sources, and sanitation facilities, and hygiene and sanitation education. The majority used to walk long distance to collect water from rivers. Moreover, it has been common for many households to use unsafe water from unprotected hand dug wells prior to OSRA's intervention. Now, the availability of water near their homes has changed the situation. The water users are also started to practice for personal hygiene washing their cloths and having bath, which results in reduced diseases related to unhygienic practice. The communities have now aware of the consequences of open field defecation and relevance of hand washing at critical times. Thus, it is evident that the knowledge, attitude and practice on hygiene and environmental sanitation have been improving helping to reduce people's vulnerability to related diseases. A part from its health impact, the interventions have been contributing in relieving women and children from hardship of collecting water from distant areas.

The capacity building intervention such as training of watsan, technicians, and the community at large has resulted in improved community management of the water supply and sanitation facilities, record keeping and financial management. The beneficiary communities have put in place users fee collection and started to deposit some amount that will be used for maintenance and operation of the facilities when need arises.

The FMOs have resulted in both economic and social impact in the target areas. The existence of FMOs at village level has created an alternative market outlet for the member and non-member farmers. As a result, the farmers have been enjoying fair weighing scale and prices for their produce nearby their villages. This has contributed to improved saving and income at household level. They have also created a forum where members discuss and take decisions, start organizing and take initiatives. It also contributed to strengthen the social links among themselves. Some of the major outcomes on beneficiaries include:

- Improved sense of ownership and better awareness on marketing and value chain has been created
- Improved capacity of the FMOs on leadership, business management and planning, documentation, financial management, marketing and negotiation
- Linkages created among FMOs and other stakeholders enabled them share information and experiences

As a result of training and sensitization on issues such as environmental protection, vegetable production and nutrition, family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention and

control has resulted in better knowledge and awareness. The beneficiaries are able to explain the link of the aforementioned issues with the livelihood of the communities.

Piloting social accountability approaches to service provision in selected schools has resulted in improved knowledge on social accountability, increased community participation in schools and improved teaching materials in the schools.

Participatory performance monitoring and impact evaluation of the intervention in women empowerment indicated that awareness about respect and protection of women's right has improved significantly. Besides, harmful traditional practices female genital mutilation, abduction, rape, etc , and early marriage has been reduced in the intervention areas.

## **5. Challenges and Lessons Learned**

### **5.1. Challenges**

Facilitation of legalization of the FMOs couldn't be speeded up as initially expected. Convincing the respective district cooperative offices to cooperate and assess the status of FMOs was not easy initially. In fact, the cooperation of the offices varies from place to place. Almost all initially resisted to recognize the FMOs as marketing cooperatives as opposed to multipurpose cooperative established by the respective offices. However, through repeated discussions, and facilitation of experience exchange for cooperative officials, we managed to register 17 FMOs as marketing cooperatives during the year.

The other challenge that negatively influenced activities related to the promotion of FMOs was fluctuation of market prices for agricultural produces. This has affected grain transaction of the FMOs. Most FMOs couldn't sell their stock because the prevailing price was lower than purchase price. As a result, the working capital of the FMOs has been tied. Despite efforts to link them with buyers at central market, FMOs couldn't succeed in selling the grains because of price.

Organizing various meetings with beneficiaries due to frequent social engagement of the target groups was another challenge that delayed implementation of some activities. The other challenge faced in the reporting year is the escalating price of construction materials, fuel and costs of drilling companies.

### **5.2. Lessons learned**

During the course of implementation of different projects in the reporting period, we have learned that bringing the intended impacts in terms of behavioral changes takes time and requires concerted efforts of all stakeholders.

Another lesson drawn is that planning and situation analysis prior to implementation need to be given adequate time. Furthermore, involvement of all relevant stakeholders including government line offices and the target community right from the inception of the interventions make a difference in effective implementation and ensure sustainability. Convergence of various organizations having common objective through arrangement of consortium has helped experience exchange and learning among members and resulted in encouraging outcomes. Being a member of the consortium of NGOs promoting FMOs, OSRA has benefited from the synergy and sharing with the staffs of sister organizations.

## **6. Conclusion**

In the year 2009, different projects that have contributed to the betterment of the livelihood of the target rural communities have been implemented and results achieved.

The major components include: community based water supply and sanitation; clean water supply and sanitation for schools; promotion of cereal bank and/or farmers marketing organizations; environmental protection; women empowerment; social accountability, and training on various relevant topics. With regard to water supply and sanitation, four shallow wells were drilled in four villages of our intervention areas in Illu district and about 280 households have accessed potable water. These shallow wells were accompanied with washing basins and shower rooms. Moreover, sanitation facilities such as five communal washing basins and shower rooms were completed in five villages where the water wells were completed in 2008.

In the reporting period, three selected public schools in Becho district were provided with water supply, gender and child sensitive latrines and hand washing facilities, and hygiene and sanitation education.

Efforts have been exerted to strengthen the organizational capacities of farmers organization established in previous years. In the reporting year, more emphasis had been given to value chain analysis, linking FMOs with buyers, providing tailor made training on business management, grain stock management and financial management. Facilitating registration of FMOs as autonomous marketing cooperatives was also one of the activities implemented. In this respect, 17 FMOs have been registered by cooperative promotion offices in west and s/west shewa zones.

A number of workshops have been conducted in Ilu district with the aim of assessing and monitoring the impacts brought by women empowerment intervention. Interface meetings with various stakeholders at district level and women's right defense committees established at kebele level was another activities implemented in the district.

It was found out that remarkable changes have been observed in respective intervention kebeles though there are still set backs that needs to be given attention for future.

Regarding social accountability, activities such as following up implementation of plans after the interface meeting between service providers and users, experience exchange between the target providers and users, and among the implementing partners were the major activities implemented during the first quarter of 2009. The project has been completed and terminal report was submitted to the donor in March 2009.

Various training and sensitization programmes on issues such as environmental protection, waster supply, hygiene and sanitation, vegetable production, family planning, and HIV/AIDS were organized during the reporting period. As a result of this intervention, the target beneficiaries have gained knowledge and improved awareness.

To sum up, OSRA in collaboration with its partners has exerted efforts to meet its mission in addressing the most felt needs of the community. Though there a lot out there that demands our support and accompany, given the available resources and capacity OSRA has achieved remarkable results in term of changing the situation of the people it has been working for in the reporting period.