

Building Better Lives for Children

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Enhancing Faith Leaders' Engagement on Maternal and Child Health

World Vision Ethiopia (WVE) launched a book entitled "Practicing Faith" in collaboration with USAID and faith leaders in Ethiopia, on February 5, 2015 at Hilton Hotel. The book focuses on improving maternal and child health, showcasing four stories from rural Ethiopia highlighting best practices, models and achievements made in maternal and child health by jointly engaging with religious leaders and the community. In her opening speech, WVE National Director, Margaret Schuler said, "Ethiopia is a complex country, rich in cultural, ethnic and religious communities. And this book celebrates that diversity and captures a shared vision of a better world for girls and women." She added, "The models and best practices will serve a variety of different partners and stakeholders working in the sector." On the occasion, Dr. Zufan Abera, Advisor to State Minister of Health, appreciated World Vision's contribution in maternal, newborn and child health. U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia, H.E. Patricia M. Haslach for her part said, "Governments can't do this by themselves, neither businesses, nor are faith-based or non-governmental organizations. But, together, we can make astonishing progress." The book was compiled by Kelley Lynch, a consultant.



Members of Inter-Religious Council at the Book Launch

On March 19, a follow-up roundtable meeting was held in collaboration with USAID and Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia, with the purpose of setting common objectives and action steps as to how to fully integrate the engagement of faith leaders into maternal, newborn and child health work across the country.

In his opening remarks, H.E Dr. Kebede Worku, State Minister of Ministry of Health, said that the role of religious leaders and institutions in addressing maternal and child health issues is tremendous." H.E Patricia M. Haslach, on her part emphasized the significance of the meeting to take the next step toward strategic engagement of faith leaders and their respective communities in this important effort to have a sustainable impact on maternal and child health and nutrition in the country.

Assuring WVE's continuous effort to strengthen religious leaders' engagement for child wellbeing, Margaret Schuler, said, "We believe this meeting will be an opportunity for high level faith leaders, government officials, faith-based organizations, donors, NGO partners, UN agencies and other key stakeholders to come together to create a common faith based initiative to reduce maternal and child deaths in Ethiopia."

Going forward, WVE is committed to work together to reach a common goal of achieving MDG 5: Improving the health of mothers.



Community members and religious leaders

MoU Signing With Office of First Lady

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between WVE and Office of FDRE the First Lady at the National Palace on February 23, 2015 which covers a period of five years. The MoU signed emanates from two collaborating initiatives from WVE and Office of the First Lady named; “Youth Capacity and Local Economy Development” and “Connecting 1500 Women and Young Girls to the Export Market” respectively. The two offices held a series of meetings and discussions prior to the signing to clearly indicate the linkages between the two initiatives. The FDRE First Lady, H.E Roman Tesfaye expressed her willingness and commitment to work with WVE in areas where the two initiatives link up in reducing unemployment and creating market connection for vulnerable youth and women. Delegates from WVE, Worknesh Mekonnen, Deputy National Director, on her part appreciated the open doors to work with the Office of the First Lady on areas of common interest and expressed WVE’s commitment to work towards reaching the objectives of the programme.



H.E Roman Tesfaye, FDRE First Lady (left),
Worknesh Mekonnen, WVE Deputy National Director

First Round Verified Emission Reduction Payment Transferred



From left, Berta Bala, Carbon Cooperatives Head; H.E Mr. Kebede Yimam, State Minister of Ministry of Environment; Abera Tura, Wolaita Zone Deputy Administrator; and Luis Pereira, WVE Operations Director

The first round Verified Emission Reduction Payment transferred to five legally organized and certified forest cooperatives of Soddo Community Managed Forestry and Agroforestry (CMFA) Project in the presence of H.E Kebede Yimam, State Minister of Ministry of Environment and Forest, REDD+, Regional and Zonal officials, on February 12, 2015. Started in 2006 Soddo, CMFA project covers some 503 hectares of degraded land and aims to sequester about 189,027t CO₂ in 35 years crediting period. It has signed an Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement for 50,000t CO₂ with Forest Finance, a German based company and now received the first round payment nearly 872,754.00 ETB (USD 41,559.75) for 6157t CO₂ emission through WVE. During the event H.E Kebede Yimam said, “We learnt a lot from this project and the government will work hard to scale up its best practices.” On the same day, the project inaugurated

the ecotourism site established in collaboration with the cooperatives intended to increase the flow of visitors to the project area and as a means of creating an additional income for the cooperatives. The Soddo CMFA Project is WVE’s second project in the nation to earn carbon credits next to Humbo. It was learnt that in the next five years, the carbon revenue from the Soddo CMFA Project will be utilized to address problem priorities of target communities, such as building bridges, school rehabilitation, purchase of grinding mills and other food security interventions.

Water Supply Project Inauguration

WVE’s Shewa Area Program (AP) inaugurated a 6.8 million ETB (USD 323,809.52), motorized and gravity based Woldo Telfam Water Supply Project, on 23rd of January 2015. The inauguration was held in the presence of Smith’s Family and Friends (private donors), Margaret Schuler, WVE National Director, Woreda representatives, beneficiary community members and other guests at Woldo Telfam Kebele, Wonchi Woreda. The surface works include pipeline extension of 22.69 KMs having 18 water points, 16 public water points—two of them for schools. Currently, 7,795 people (4,677 children) are benefitting from the water supply and it is understood that the water supply has the capacity to serve up to 11,000 members of the community for next 15 years. The benefiting community expressed their happiness over the water, sanitation and hygiene interventions and presented cultural gifts to the donors.

Intensive Sanitation and Hygiene Works Bring Encouraging Impacts Among community

WVE has made significant impact through Community Led Total Sanitation and Hygiene (CLTSH) activities in Wonchi Woreda. Aroji is one of the targeted villages in the Woreda, where households had no latrines. Following efforts made by the AP through CLTSH initiative, almost all households (69 out of 79) constructed standardized household level latrines with hand washing facilities. This village is also exemplary in its commitment and collaborative culture in environmental sanitation and hygiene. Every household has contributed cash for the construction of a communal latrine in the village and the established CLTSH committee is further teaching and mobilizing the community to take part in sanitation and hygiene activities. As a result, many more villages like Aroji are currently emerging in other areas.



Early Childhood Center Inauguration at Chencha

An Early Childhood Care and Education center (ECCE) worth 780,080 ETB (USD 37,146.70) was inaugurated at Chencha Woreda on February 18, 2015 in the presence of children, parents, government office representatives, board members and volunteers. The former WVE camp was reconstructed in a child friendly way for the purpose of pre-school children. The center has classrooms, washing and toilet facility, dining and resting rooms, playing grounds, and a garden. Currently, the center has enrolled 110 children and started working with volunteers such as administrative board, inclusion supervisor, room leaders, and three paid child care teachers. "The inauguration of the center has responded to our need to educate our children in a better facility," said one of the benefitting community members.



Recognitions

WVE's Shashamane AP won West Arsi Zone GOs-NGOs Forum "Best Performing Organization" award for its successful program implementation of FY'14 in the area. At a meeting held on February 16, 2015 in Shashamane town, members of the West Arsi Zone GOs-NGOs presented their FY'14 major achievements and best practices to further strengthen and leverage efforts of local development partners' interventions in the area. As a result, West Arsi Zone Administration officially acknowledged WVE's accountability and resource utilization while implementing its programs at all levels.

In related news, the East Wollega Zone Education Bureau awarded a trophy to WVE Wollega Cluster Program Office for its outstanding contribution in quality education in a sustainable manner. The recognition was made during the Annual Education conference of the Oromiya Region, held in Nekemt town on March 7, 2015.

Speaking on the occasion, Daniel Negese, Head of East Wollega Zone Education Bureau said, "WVE Wollega Cluster Program Office has made a significant contribution in the provision of quality education, particularly in reading skills of children." The Head appreciated Siburu Sire AP for mobilizing youth volunteers, students, parents, and government sectors to create awareness and ownership on strategies of improving the reading skills of students, especially those who are at primary level.

Parliamentarians Appreciate WVE's Effective Performance

A team of 22 members, including standing committees chairs of Social, Agriculture and Environment Affairs of House of People Representative, Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA) Country Director and his team as well as media people paid a visit to award winning World Vision, Humbo Farmers Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) Project on January 31, 2015. The visit was initiated and organized by CCRDA to introducing some of the major intervention area of CCRDA member NGOs, how they are contributing to the fight against poverty and ensuring sustainable development, and creating meaningful cooperation and partnership with the parliament. CCRDA selected Humbo FMNR Project as one of best successful projects able to give a good insight for the intended purpose.

Similarly, a team of three researchers, one from Finland and two from Hawassa University, Wondo Genet College of Forestry paid experience sharing visit to Humbo FMNR Project on January 26, 2015. Appreciating the hard work of World Vision, one of the team members Dr. John Laxen, Senior Environmental Economist said, "The visit was significant for our future study as the project clearly proved its benefits and co-benefits." The team leader Dr. Mesele also gave his words to do other researches especially on the biophysical



aspects of the project together with World Vision in the future. A team of 47 members from WVE Digeluna Tijo AP, Woreda government offices, Kebele Administration leaders, model farmers and local community members also paid experience sharing visit to Humbo and Soddo FMNR projects from December 31, 2014 to January 01, 2015.

Yet again, a team of 100 representatives from Reduced Emission from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) Secretariat, different government institutions and community based forest management cooperatives paid experience sharing visit to Humbo FMNR project on March 4, 2015. The main objective of the visit was to learn from WVE carbon project initiatives best practices and to launch REDD+ Coordination Unit in SNNPR."



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