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Food Security through Increased Incomes, Assets and Protection from Grain Price Rises (FS-IAP) Project

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Final Evaluation Report

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ACRONYMS

ADO	Agricultural development Office
BKG	Bee Keeping Group
CAHWs	Community Animal Health Workers
CARE	Cooperative for Aid and Relief in Emergencies
CBTs	Community Based Trainers
CF	Community Facilitators
CII	Community Infrastructure Investment
DA	Development Agent
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FA	FARM-Africa
FF	Food Facility
FFI	Food Facility Initiative
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FL	Financial Literacy
FS-IAP	Food Security through Increased Income, Assets and Protection from Grain Price Rises
GBs	Grain Banks
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
HABP	Household Asset Building Programme
HHs	Households
IGA	Income Generating Activities
KII	Key Informant Interview
MC	Management Committee
MIS	Management Information System
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
RWEP	Rural Women Empowerment Programme
TOT	Training of Trainers
VSLA	Village Saving and Lending Association
WAG	Women Asset Group
WWCYAO	Woreda Women's Children's and Youth Affair Office

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report summarizes the findings of the evaluation exercise of the FS-LAP project as done in five sample Woredas. The standard evaluation criteria for the assessment such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability are critically addressed to look into the achievements and limitations. The overall objective of this evaluation is to assess project performance, paying particularly attention to the impact of the project against its objectives. It is also to identify key lessons and to propose practical recommendations for follow-up and future similar actions.

During the last 24.5 months (Dec 2009 to Dec 2011), the FS-LAP project has attained its targets and even exceeded the targets for some activities. A total of 1724 Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLAs) with a membership of 30317 people (on average 81% women) are organized, 224 Women Asset Groups (WAGs) with a total membership of 8,261 women are formed and received 16,173 sheep/goats, 31 Beekeeping Groups (BKGs) with 1004 members formed and 22 community managed Grain Banks (GBs) with total membership of 4,109 are established. FS-LAP project undertook various capacity building trainings targeting the beneficiaries, service providers at community level such as Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs), Community Based VSLA Trainers (CBTs), government staff and community groups

Results of the assessment revealed that the target HHs have benefited a lot from project interventions like VSLAs, WAGs, BKGs and GBs, which enabled HHs to develop a saving culture, access to loan services to engage in businesses and increase incomes, create assets (e.g. Shoats/goats). HHs were able to access food from grain banks during the consumption shortfalls.

Generally, therefore, the evaluation team is of the opinion that the interventions are effective in addressing the food insecurity constraints of the target communities. The project sustainability has been confirmed almost all the initiated and completed activities are community based and the community had participated in cash and labor contributions during their implementations and has created sense of ownership. The necessary community committees have been created and put in place and committee managerial capacities are built through training and practicing. Activities like VSLAs are self-motivated, and have the potential to be self-sustaining. Project activities are cost effective compared to other donor or government funded projects due to the fact that most activities are done and managed by community participation. Community management and supervision contributes to cost effectiveness of the project.

The main lessons learnt from the project include: Identification of beneficiaries through a house-to-house wealth ranking which avoided inconveniences among the beneficiaries. Use of untapped community capacity with less cost, the VSLAs as options for financial services for the poor from the savings of meager income is something to be scaled up at national level. Asset transferring mechanisms are well designed and are on cost sharing basis with the beneficiaries. Full participation of concerned government staff; training and use of community members; use of livestock insurance system and generating social funds are among the exemplary initiatives of the project. Organizing of landless youth on degraded land to keep bees and to rehabilitate degraded land is a noble idea brought by the project that deserves scaling up at any cost.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

In December 2008, the European Parliament and the Council have adopted a regulation for the Food Facility financing instrument to support supplementary measures that address rapidly the negative effects of the volatile food prices situation in developing countries. An overall plan for the implementation of the Food Facility has been adopted by the European Commission on 30th March 2009. On the basis of the indicative criteria: exceptional crisis situations, appropriateness for Food Facility measures, etc., 50 developing countries including Ethiopia have been identified to receive assistance from the total € 1 billion global allocation.

CARE Austria received the Food Facility grant to implement the “**Food Security through Increased Income, Assets and Protection from grain price Rises (FS-IAP)**” project in Ethiopia. While CARE Austria is a contract holder, CARE Ethiopia in partnership with FARM-Africa (FA) implemented the project in 13 Woredas in Oromia and SNNPR Regions.

The project target group includes 29,000 food insecure government PSNP and other vulnerable households (70 percent being women). The implementation Woredas are Chiro, Gemechis, Meiso, Habro, Oda Bultum, Tullo, and Doba (West Hararghe Zone); Grawa and Kurfachelle (East Hararghe zone) of Oromia Region and West Badawacho (Hadiya Zone), Hadero Tunto (Kambata Tambaro Zone), Sankura Woreda (Silte Zone) and Halaba Special Woreda of SNNPR. The final beneficiaries of the project are estimated to be about 174,000 people including men, women, and children.

The project was implemented for the last 24.5 months (from 17 Dec 2009 to 31 Dec 2011). Similar to Baseline Survey and Mid Term Review conducted previously, this Final Evaluation is commissioned by the lead implementing organization, CARE Ethiopia, Generation Integrated Development Consultants (GIDC), provide the service before the official closing of the project.

1.2 OVERALL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to sustained decrease in levels of food insecurity in PSNP and other vulnerable households (HHs) in 9 target woredas in Oromia and 4 in the SNNPRS.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

It is believed that the results of the project would ultimately improve the food security situation of target households. It was anticipated that, at the end of the project period, the following targets results will be achieved:

- Increased income and/or assets of 75 percent of targeted households (over 15,000 being women) during the project timeframe.
- Increased social support for about 80 percent of the women (targeted by the project) through membership of project groups/ networks.
- Improvement in Coping Strategies Index (CSI) of targeted households

1.3 EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

In order to achieve this, the FS-IAP project identified three major expected result areas including:

Expected Result-1: 24,400 PSNP and other vulnerable HHs in 13 target Woredas will have increased their household income; this will be achieved through establishment and strengthening of 1254 Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs), which may consists mainly women beneficiaries;

Expected Result-2: 8430 PSNP and other vulnerable HHs in the targeted Woredas will have increased productive assets **through formation** and provision of support to 368 Livelihood Asset Groups. These asset groups (all women) will receive Shoats or beekeeping packages (for men and women mixed asset groups).

Expected Result-3: Around 3,300 HHs will have benefited from community-managed mechanisms to mitigate against soaring grain prices. This result will be achieved through establishment of 22 community managed Grain Banks (GB) to enable communities to get access to grain at a lower (than market) price and trade grain whenever there is surplus produce.

1.4 BUDGET

CARE Austria signed project agreement with the European Union (EU) to implement the project through CARE Ethiopia and worked with FARM Africa as an implementing partner. Both CARE Ethiopia and FA signed an agreement with Oromia and SNNP Regional Governments to implement the project in the 13 targeted Woredas.

Out of the total project budget £2,515,516 the EU contributed 90 percent (£2,263,965) while CARE Ethiopia, CARE-Austria and FARM Africa contributed matching funds of 2.4 percent, 2.3 percent and 5.3 percent of the total budget respectively.

Figure 2- 1: Location of the FS-IAP project

2 PURPOSES, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGIES OF THE FINAL EVALUATION

2.1 PURPOSES AND SCOPE OF THE FINAL EVALUATION

As stipulated in the TOR, the overall objective of the final evaluation is to make an overall independent assessment of the project performance, paying particularly attention to the impact of the project actions against its objectives. It is also to identify key lessons and to propose practical recommendations for follow-up and future similar actions.

Specifically, the final evaluation will have the following specific objectives:

Review the Relevance of the project and its approaches in the context of the development need and potential of the intervention areas;

Verify the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the results achieved and trace the changes observed in the lives of the target beneficiaries, as a result;

Critically examine the continuing validity of the assumptions on which the project's likely Impact was based

Analyze Sustainability of the project initiatives from the point of view of local stakeholders including target beneficiaries' participation, institutional arrangements, compatibility of project objectives and target community need, etc

Assess level of the intended synergies/integration/complementarities as well as the coordination of the project interventions with other on-going similar FS initiatives including the PSNP implemented in the respective project intervention woredas by both the government and other actors.

Draw lessons and give respective recommendations having strategic significance for improvement in future similar actions.

In order to achieve these objectives, the evaluation study verified, analyzed and assessed in detail the issues and questions referring to the five evaluation criteria as endorsed by the OECD-DAC (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact), and to the EC-specific evaluation criteria (value and coherence). It is also required to verify, analyze and assess the integration, complementarities and impact of cross cutting issue within the project interventions. The consultant is required to use his/her professional judgment and experience to review all relevant factors including the realization of the recommendations forwarded by the midterm evaluation, and to bring these to the attention of the management of the implementing NGOs and the Delegation of the European Union to Ethiopia.

2.2 METHODOLOGIES APPLIED FOR THE FINAL EVALUATION

2.2.1 *General*

This final evaluation of FS-IAP project was conducted in 5 of the 13 project woredas: Girawa, Gemechis and Meieso of Oromia and in Halaba and W/Badwacho Woredas of SNNPR in consultation with relevant stakeholders at Zonal, woreda and community levels.

In each of the project woredas, while taking characteristics of the kebeles and representation of project activities into account, the team in consultation with the Project staff and woreda sector offices has selected the research Woredas using a combination of different statistical methods. Accordingly three kebeles in each sample Woredas (12 of the 111 project Kebeles) were selected for the study.

Final evaluation of FS-IAP project is conducted by two teams that consists one lead and one assistant consultants working simultaneously in both project regions. This composition of the team is believed to capture different perspectives of the beneficiary communities, implementing partners and stakeholders. Moreover, the study has involved government officials, concerned sector offices' experts and project staffs as well as other directly or indirectly affected or benefited bodies of the Woredas to make the Final Evaluation

transparent and participatory. Furthermore, as much as possible, the evaluation has tried to see proxy indicators for impacts of the project on life and livelihoods of the community and its effects on some major crosscutting issues like gender, environment and HIV/AIDS.

The evaluation is conducted by using a multi data collection processes involving both qualitative and quantitative methods at field and office levels. Prior to field trip the team has visited the lead NGO office to gather secondary information related to the project. The following methodologies of data collection and analysis were thoroughly applied.

2.2.2 *Desk study*

Desk study involved thorough review of pertinent documents availed by the client. The main project related documents and reports that were reviewed by the team to establish the necessary background for Evaluation are Project Proposal or Grant Application, Baseline Survey and Mid-Term Review reports, quarter and annual reports and Terminal reports prepared by project Field Offices of CARE Ethiopia and FARM Africa. In addition, recorded data/information in relation to achievements by different components of the project so far collected by client offices are consulted as secondary source of information. This information from expert observations and beneficiary assessment has enabled the team to make, among others, comparisons of: (a) the results obtained in the terminal evaluation with midterm review/evaluation and baseline survey reports; and (b) values for result framework indicators at end of the project with the baseline and end target values.

Figures and targets set in the project proposal are used as a starting point to compare levels of project achievements; the baseline survey and midterm evaluation reports were used to compare impacts of the project towards meeting its main and specific objectives over its lifetime of 24.5 months.

2.2.3 *Quantitative Data collection*

Household Survey

Household Interviews were used to collect specific information on direct influences/impacts of the project on improvement of the life and livelihoods of the beneficiary households. A questionnaire that includes main socioeconomic characteristics of the community based on interventions and activities as well as implementation strategies depicted in the project proposal and general evaluation points, was prepared in English language by the consultant and commented by project staffs at CARE Ethiopia country office before finalization and duplication.

The consultant in collaboration with the implementing partners' field staff, stakeholders and leaders of beneficiaries primarily stratified the beneficiary population in to a cluster of woredas, kebeles, interventions, type of family head (female/male), sex, age and areal distribution etc. This was done randomly by selecting from the book list of the clusters with the main purpose of covering all interventions and geographical locations and sampling statistically responsive both in quantity and quality outputs. The interventions include VSLAs, Livelihood asset transfer or Women Asset Groups (including both Shoats transfer and Beekeeping Groups) and Grain Bank Groups and all are well represented in the sample HHs selected.

Accordingly a total of 311 households in five Woredas were sampled and individually interviewed by experienced trained enumerators. In each Kebele 19 to 40 HHs were selected from the lists of project beneficiaries. Beneficiaries on different interventions were sampled using stratified, purposive and random sampling method. (See table 2-1).

Table 2-1: Distribution of sample HHs by regions and woredas

Regional Distribution			Woreda Distribution		
Regions	HH No.	%	Woredas	HH No.	%
SNNPRS	100	32.2	Halaba	50	16.1
			W/Badwecho	50	16.1
ONRS	211	67.8	Grawa	71	22.8
			Gemachis	80	25.7
			Meiso	60	19.3
Total	311	100	Total	311	100

According to the statistical analyses conducted, about 68% of the respondents are from three Woredas of Oromia region while the remaining 32% are from two Woredas of the SNNPR. The distribution of the sample HHs over the kebles, range from 16.1% to 25.7% based on types of interventions implemented and total population of the beneficiary HHs. Accordingly the average sample size of the HH survey is known to be 4.34 (%) of the total beneficiaries of each selected Kebele, which is statistically significant to assess the total population. Furthermore the survey has revealed that about 73% of the respondents are female and more than 15% of the HHs are female headed as well as more than 85% are married women, showing that the gender issue has been well addressed during the assessment. As to the age distribution and family size of the respondents, more than 90% of them are between 21 and 50 years old with calculated average family size of 6.8 persons.

Tables 2-2, 2-3, 2-4 and 2-5 summarize the distribution of the sample beneficiaries interviewed by Regions, Woredas, Kebeles, Sex and Age, Marital status in the family and total family sizes.

Table 2-2: Total HHs and sample HHs selected by kebele

Kebeles	Total No. of Beneficiary HHs					No. of Sample HHs	Sample Size (%)
	VSLA	WAG	BKG	GB	Total		
M/Gortacho	534	320	0	144	998	25	2.5
T/Arsho	975	350	0	0	1325	25	1.9
Koto	726	308	0	0	1034	25	2.42
Gerbo	422	240	0	150	812	25	3.1
Burqa Jeneta	246	60	20	0	326	23	7.06
Jiru Gemechu	246	42	53	0	341	23	6.74
Lafto Ela-Tatessa	246	90	32	344	712	25	3.51
Kokoriftu	255	40	0	0	295	20	6.78
Sire Kalo	158	0	21	150	329	40	12.16
Ela Oda	203	40	0	0	243	20	8.23
Chachole	356	160	0	150	666	30	4.50
Sodoma	331	160	0	0	491	30	6.11
Total					7172	311	4.34

Table 2-3: Distribution of respondents by sex

Sex	No. of HHs	%	HHs Headed by	No. of HHs	%
Male	85	27.3	Male	264	84.9
Female	226	72.7	Female	47	15.1
Total	311	100	Total	311	100

Table 2-4: Age distribution of the sample households

Age groups (years)	No. of HHs	Percent
11 to 20	13	4.2
21 to 30	113	36.3
31 to 40	123	39.5
41 to 50	45	14.5
51 to 60	14	4.5
61 to 70	3	1
Total	311	100
Male Members	983	50.4
Female Members	969	49.6
Total Members	1952	100
Average Family Size	6.8	

Table 2-5: Marriage and status in the family

Marriage status	No. of HHs	Percent
Married	264	84.9
Single	11	3.5
Divorced	6	1.9
Widow	29	9.3
Other	1	0.3
Total	311	100
Status in the Family		
Husband	87	28
Wife	207	66.6

Son	11	3.5
Daughter	3	1
Other	3	1
Total	311	100

The HH survey was conducted by 10 experienced enumerators and one supervisor. One day orientation and one day field test and practice were given at both sites on survey techniques and how to fill the questionnaires to ensure responsibility and accountability and dealing with beneficiaries. In addition to this, the project office staffs and Lead Community Facilitators were facilitating the survey. In addition to supervising and assisting the survey group, the Evaluation Team members were simultaneously engaged in FGD, Field observation, spot checking's and secondary data collection.

The HH questionnaire is attached in Annex 4

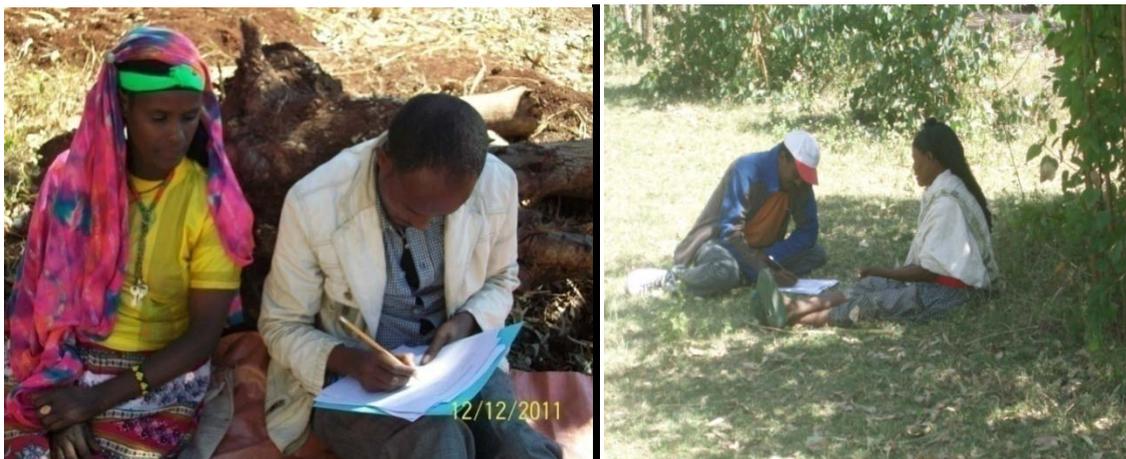


Figure 2- 2: Household Interview

2.2.4 *Qualitative Data Collection*

Community Focus Group Discussions

To further verify the information collected by HH interview, different community group discussions were conducted in 12 sample Kebeles of the five Woredas in different days, simultaneously while the household interviews were conducted in the same Kebele.

The FGDs were conducted with different community groups organized by the project on four interventions namely: Village Saving and Lending Associations (VSLA), Women Asset Groups (WAG), Grain Bank (GB) and Beekeeping Groups (BKG). The communities FGDs are conducted for men and women groups separately in all kebeles.

The participants were randomly selected from the target groups considering the different socioeconomic and demographic variables, and in particular included, the community representatives such as Women's, Youth and Farmer's Association officials, community elders and religion leaders.

The group members participated in discussion on the topics related to different activities implemented by the project, including fairness of distribution and beneficiary selections, impacts on improving the life and

livelihoods of the community and. As a result all their comments and opinions were used as appropriate in this final evaluation report.

In each Kebele from 23 up to 102 community members have participated on both sex groups 671 community members have participated in FGDs as shown in Table 2-6 below. Checklist of focus group discussions is attached in Annex 5.

Table 2-6: Community group discussion participants by Kebele, gender and interventions

Kebele	Participants by gender			Interventions
	Male	Female	Total	
M/Gohacho	30	22	52	VSLA, WAG, GB
T/Arsho	16	27	43	VSLA, WAG
Koto	19	33	52	VSLA, WAG
Gerbo	36	21	57	VSLA, WAG, GB
Burqa Jeneta	14	41	55	VSLA, WAG, BKG
Jiru Gemechu	12	11	23	VSLA, WAG, BKG
Lafto Ela-Tatessa	28	44	72	VSLA, WAG, BKG
Kokoriftu	0	51	51	VSLA & WAG
Sire Kalo	32	70	102	GB, VSLA, BKG
Ela Oda	0	59	59	VSLA & WAG
Chachole	9	25	34	VSLA, WAG, GB
Sodoma	30	41	71	VSLA & WAG
Total	226	445	671	



Figure 2- 3: Participants of the community group discussions

Key Informants Interviews (KII)

A total of 53 key-informants who have the best, closest and most direct knowledge about the project were interviewed. The key-informants were sourced at different levels as follows

At Kebele level/community: Kebele chair persons, Cooperative Chairpersons, Community Leaders, and Development Agents were consulted.

At beneficiaries level, elders, religious and clan leaders were consulted,

(See Annex 7 for list of key persons met);

Consultation of stakeholders

In the course of the assignment, the team held series of consultations with relevant officers from pertinent stakeholders, including the Client's offices and other relevant stakeholders at all levels.

In Addis Ababa consultations were made with implementing partners Care and Farm Africa

At Woreda level: representatives from Administration, Food Security and Disaster Prevention Office, Cooperative Development Desk, Women's, Children and Youth Affairs, Agricultural offices and Small and Microenterprise offices were consulted

The consultations have provided the necessary background information that helped to contextualize the subjects under review, to prepare of data collection instruments and be well informed on activities and result of the project.

Evaluation Team Field observations

The team has made observations on the different operational activities and assets created as the result of the project intervention in the target *woredas* and/or kebeles. This includes:

- Visiting of VSLA groups
- Visiting of newly constructed GB stores;
- Visiting of beehives on the site;
- Visiting of Women Asset Group members with their goats on rearing;
- Visiting of recovered degraded lands by BKGs;
- Visiting of forage development plots

Case studies

Different case stories supported with output photographs were compiled from random observation and included in this evaluation under their respective intervention areas from different Woredas. They will be used as good practices from which lessons could be drawn.

2.2.5 Data Compilation, Analysis and Report Preparation

The data were primarily checked for quality and consistency by the statistician. Then the 311 Household questionnaires were encoded using two experienced data encoders. The statistician designed the data entry application using Census and Survey Processing System (CSPRO) software program. Computer edit program was also prepared using this software which also helped us to complete the work within a short period of time. All tables (results of the survey) are produced using the same software.

Moreover, the data set was transferred to SPSS software and further analysis was made for checking. Use of tabulated frequencies with some universe and new variables was made.

Besides, the information obtained from various sources was triangulated from different perspectives by generating information on similar issues from different sources and by using different tools. Then, a 'Content analysis' method was used to analyse the information'. This method involves transforming information and responses obtained from individuals groups and reports into different categories depending on the nature of people's responses and opinions, it also helps to classify main ideas systematically and contextual information into similar categories so that the evaluators were able to make inference on the status of the project.

Similarly, critical analysis was made by reviewing the technical soundness and relevance of the project activities at field level. It also critically analyzed how the project was designed and implemented, assessed the changes brought by the project, strength and weaknesses as well as lessons learned for improving future implementation of similar projects.

3 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PROJECT BY COMPONENT

3.1 VILLAGE SAVING AND LENDING ASSOCIATION (VSLAS)



Village Saving and Lending Associations (VSLAs) are one of the interventions implemented by the project. In two years of project life it was

anticipated that 24,400 PSNP and other vulnerable HHs (17,000 women) in 13 target Woredas would have increased their household income. To attain this objective, it was further planned to establish and strengthen 1254 VSLAs mainly consisting women beneficiaries as members.

The project was started by making some process works such as translation of manuals into local languages, training of staff on VSLA methodology and provision of TOTs on VSLA group formations for project and government staff.

According to the secondary data collected from project offices and visited sample Woredas, up to four VSLAs are organized in each target Kebele. In almost all areas the achieved number of established VSLAs are found to be above the planned target. Totally 1724 VSLAs with 30,317 members (on average 81% are women) are organized by the project. The accomplishment was 135% and 141.5% of the plan respectively. On average from 15 up to 20 members are organized in one VSLA (See Table 3.1 below for the detail). This is confirmed from the HH interview conducted. Out of the total sampled 311 HHs 292 or about 96% of them have responded that they are organized in VSLA groups (see Table 3-1).

The project has provided them a portable cash box with two padlocks, a registration book and plastic bowls with different colours¹ and sizes to each group as a kit. In addition FA has given each VSLA member a printed "pass book" on which their savings are recorded individually where CARE provided them with an exercise book. According to the HH survey, about 98% of the respondents stated that they have received the necessary in-kind and technical supports as well as about 82% of them got business skill training of three to six days by the project. However only 50% of the respondent HHs have participated on cross visits for experience sharing. Each of the VSLA groups has elected a management committee from members, who are responsible to lead their respective groups. The committee members serve on voluntarily without any payment.

All VSLA members are trained on principles of saving and loans, business skills, financial literacy and leadership for three to six days by the project. They have adopted their internal bylaws and it is the prime obligation of every member to respect the bylaw.

The amount of saving they collect from each member varies from Br 2.50 up to Br 10 every fortnight depending on the strength of the VSLA as well as financial capacity of the members. In addition to saving they have a social fund collection practice from Br 0.50 to Br 1.00 per week, which is used to help a member who falls into some unforeseen problems such as sickness or death of family members or similar calamities. Unlike loans for businesses or IGAs, money given from the social fund is not repaid. The HH survey result also showed; more than 97% have increased their saving now. More than 59% of them stated that they are able to save from Br 51 up to Br 400 in a year.

Based on the VSLA manual and methodology, each group has a graduation time, which is one year to finish all the trainings and tested for having strong commitments. At time of graduation, members share out part of (up to 70%) their savings and then restart another saving cycle.

According to the FGD, any member has the right to borrow up to three folds of his/her saving by describing the type of IGA chosen to work. The repayment time and interest rate are pre-determined. The interest rate is 10% per month as well as provision of two members as personal guarantees. As it is the unique feature of VSLAs, the members know each-other very well and there would not be any misinformation or embezzlement to misuse the borrowed money. According to the HH survey almost all of them have borrowed money from their VSLAs and the majority of them (78.2%) have used to start or expand their businesses in petty trade. Similarly, when there was no such community based organisation, most of them (78.4%) remember borrowing money from local lenders at higher and also variable interest rate together with exploitation of labour.

¹ The Bowl colors are used to designate different collection of money such as: Blue for saving, Green for social fund, Rose for interest paid on loans and Red penalty. Similarly their sizes are different to express their roles where the Blue Bowl is the largest to indicate that saving the base for all and the Red Bowl is the smallest to discourage penalty.

Different trainings given to VSLA members have capacitated and enabled them to improve their saving and financial management skill which encouraged them to participate in different business activities. In general, once VSLAs are established and members are trained, members commit themselves to continue in the scheme to save, benefit from loans and engage into income generating activities (IGA) of their choice. Accordingly all of the members took 2 to 3 round loans for various businesses like trading of Chat (mainly in Hararghe), butter, fruits and vegetables, food items, goat/sheep fattening and others. Moreover, as they have expressed on FGDs and HH interviews; 59.2% said that; being organized in VSLA women are highly empowered since they have their own asset on which they can decide. They access loans whenever they are in need. As a result, many of the VSLA members have indicated that their life is changing and able to see a glimmer of hope (see Table 3-1 for no of VSLA Organized in intervention woredas).

Table 3-1: VSLA groups organized and their members by sex and gender

Name of the Woreda	Groups organized	Number of Members			
		Male	Female	F % of T	Total
Grawa	221	573	3122	84.49	3695
Kurfa Chale	230	431	3488	89	3919
Gemachis	132	504	1725	77.39	2229
Chiro	155	458	2371	83.81	2829
Doba	300	810	4590	85	5400
Mieso	80	184	1059	85.2	1243
Oda Bultum	83	103	1128	91.63	1231
Habro	90	228	1213	84.18	1441
Tulo	107	114	1525	93.04	1639
Sub Total Oromia	1398	3405	20221	86.0	23626
Halaba	83	107	1249	63.79	1958
W/Badwecho	80	284	1268	81.7	1552
Sankura	82	473	1292	73.2	1765
Hadaro	81	259	1157	81.71	1416
Sub Total SNNP	326	1123	4966	74.22	6691
Total	1724	4528	25187	80	30317

Table 3-2: Responses of HH Survey on VSLAs

S/N	Responded Statements	Respondent %
	Organized in VSLA groups	96
	Received in-kind and training support	98
	Received business skill training for 3 to 6 days	82
	Participated on cross visit	50
	Increased saving	97
	Saved from Br 51 to Br 400 in a year	59
	Borrowed from their VSLA	83
	Used the borrowed money to start their petty trade	78
	Previously lending from local lenders at high interest	78

	VSLA helped them very much	59
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Please see Annex 8 for more.

Case Story No. 1**My VSLA has saved me from chronic Fistula disease**

My name is Bedria Abdulah Kabiru; Residence of Burka Janeta Kebele, Grawa Woreda;

I am 35 years old, Female, Divorced, I don't have a Child of my own;

I am a member of both the VSLA and WAG groups organized by the CARE project in my Kebele.

My VSLA has saved my life when I was sick and went to Harar Hospital for treatment and then they have referred me to Fistula Hospital in Addis Ababa. First I borrowed Birr 200 to go to Harar and then I called back to my group to send me more money to go to Addis Ababa by which they sent me additional Birr 400. By using this money I went to Fistula Hospital in Addis Ababa and received the proper treatment for more than a month and returned back home after getting my full health. As soon as I came back I started butter trading and paid back the entire loan to my VSLA with only 10 percent interest charge.

Then I continued with butter trading and got more profit which is about Birr 800 and built a good house (Grass roof) that I didn't have before. I am also supporting my brother's son who is currently studying in Jimma University.

From my WAG I received three female goats for rearing and each gave one offspring. I am handling them to transfer to my mirror member very soon. Now I am using their manure for my garden and I hope I will use their milk after I transfer their offspring.

In general I can say that the project had come to rescue me from dangerous health problem called Fistula and put me equal to my neighbors. Now I am healthy and can do whatever I want for my survival. Besides to this I have my own house and goats which are good assets that have changed my life radically. Now I don't have worries of food insecurity and poverty even if the government stops distributing food. Finally I suggest the project to continue and cover others members of the kebele.

3.2 TRANSFER OF LIVELIHOOD ASSETS

The planned project target was to support 8430 PSNP and other vulnerable HHs to increase their income through having productive assets.

3.2.1 Women Asset Groups (Livestock Rearing)

The project has targeted the poorest of poor households among PSNP beneficiaries and /or other vulnerable HHs with particular attention given to female headed HHs and poor Women, to be organized into Women Asset Groups (WAG). The WAGs are provided with Shoats (sheep/ goats).

As to the accomplishment of the planned target, 224 groups with 8,261 members (all are women) are established and received 16,413 heads of shoats in the project life (see the details in Table 3-2 below).

During the focus group discussions with WAG members, discussants applauded that in CARE implemented Woredas of Grawa and Gemechis they received three female goats, while in all FA implemented Woredas the beneficiaries have revealed that they received two female goats/sheep and one buck (male goat) for a group for reproduction. This has been confirmed by project field staffs (CARE and FA) and key informants/government partners. The WAG approach follows provision of Shoats as in-kind loan that will be repaid by transferring offspring to the next target beneficiary called Mirror beneficiary that is already associated with the primary beneficiary. According to the HH survey out of 282 total sample HHs, 120 respondents (about 43%) are included in WAGs and received two (32%) or three (20%) Shoats from the project.

In addition to the provision of shoats to WAGs, the project has installed an innovative mechanism of insurance when animals were lost beyond the control of the owners. Each WAG member has contributed from Br 20 to Br 30 for each Shoaat received and the money is kept under the custody of the management committees to be used for the purchase of shoats in replacement of the dead animals. The beneficiaries have stated on FGDs that this mechanism has helped them very much and they have used the insurance fund to replace for those who lost their Shoats due to diseases or if attacks by wild animals like hyena.

To capacitate the beneficiaries on shoats rearing, intensive technical trainings, as confirmed from HH survey by more than 93% of the respondents, were given to them on feeding, housing, health care and herding for four to seven days. In addition seeds of five different modern forage crops were distributed to be grown and be used for the feeding of the animals.

The project has trained one Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) that are selected from the community for each group. A total of 180 CAHWs have received intensive theoretical and field practice trainings for 21 days, including seven days of refresher training. On successful completion of the training each CAHW has received full veterinary kit that includes equipment for castration, spray and drug insertion and some treatment drugs for internal parasites and de-worming as well as bandages for treatment of wounds and broken limbs.

The participants of the FGDs have confirmed that there are some of their group members who have been trained as CAHWs to serve as animal health providers in the villages/groups. They highly appreciate the efforts of the project to make a sustainable access to veterinary services and at their localities through training their fellow group members.

During the field visit the evaluation team has observed some CAHWs who are professionally providing veterinary services like spraying against external parasites and confirmed their happiness in getting the training and able to serve their community.

According to the information from Animal Health experts from Grawa and Gemachis Woredas, the project trained CAHWs and the government staff participated on recruitment and training as well as close supervision of their day-to-day services including replenishing of drugs and other consumable medical materials. Similarly about 77% of the HH survey respondents have expressed their satisfaction with the services of CAHWs in their villages.

Some of the first level beneficiary WAG members (more than 34% of the interviewed HHs) are already able to transfer off springs to the second level mirror beneficiaries and started using goat milk for their children. As a result since they have paid back their loans, about 72% of the respondents have stated that they have two to three heads of shoats now their own asset indicating that one of the project's targets, creating assets for the PSNP beneficiaries and other vulnerable HHs, is showing a fruitful result. The beneficiaries themselves also expressed this by stating that "the food and income gaps of our family have improved as well as our social status in the community has increased and we have developed confidence and encouraged to engage in different alternative business activities since we received the shoats from the project. They further explained that, they are happy to transfer the offspring to the waiting mirror beneficiaries as agreed in "bylaws." In line with this, 73.3% of the interviewed HHs responded the project has helped them much to reduce their chronic food insecurity problem.

In the WAG system, the transferring of off-springs (in kind animal repayment) to the next mirror beneficiaries, training and provision of kits to CAHWs, and establishment of livestock insurance system are considered as innovative and best lessons that should be scaled up at national level. These activities are useful to reach many of food insecure HHs with less financial support and help them to be self-sufficient in a short time. Furthermore, the provision of shoats reflects the fact that these animals are commonly reared in the

target areas and are generally the responsibility of women. Small farm sizes in the project area make it difficult to manage cattle or grow sufficient staple crops to feed the HH, hence, goats and sheep provide an alternative source of meat, milk and income.

Case story 2: Thanks to Farm Africa Support



Lega Bekalo is a member of Women Asset Group residing in Huleteгна Koto kebele of West Badowacho wereda of the Hadiya Zone. She is 53 years old, married and has three children. The WAG was established in August, 2010. She explained that, at the beginning of the project received two goats and the first two kids are transferred to W/ro Ayelech Sorito. She remained with three goats including the mother goats. West Badowach project office gave her forage seeds which used for feeding animals. In 2011 the number of her goats increased to five. She proudly told that, her goats are healthy because she takes care of them by applying the

knowledge obtained from Farm Africa, trainings on animal production and forage management. W/ro Lega Bekalo told that she is not a beneficiary of the productive safety net program because during the target identification of PSNP she had numbers of animals and could not be included in the program, after a while the animals are died and the family lost all productive assets which could be used for home consumption during the 2010/11 drought period. She said that; during such difficult time Farm Africa came to her village and saved from miserable life. “I would like to thanks Farm Africa staff and all stakeholders for their support”.

Table 3-3: WAGs organized and their members by woreda

Name of the Woreda	# of Groups organized	Number of Members	Number Shoats Distributed	Number of CAHWs Trained	Remarks
Grawa	34	720	1071	15	
Kurfa Chale	17	617	1244	14	
Gemachis	15	300	900	6	
Chiro	15	300	900	10	
Doba	25	857	1724	15	
Mieso	16	640	1280	16	Additionally 75 Bucks are distributed in 4 Woredas.
Oda Bultum	16	640	1280	16	
Habro	16	640	1280	16	

Tulo	16	640	1280	16	
Halaba	12	1028	1936	12	
W/Badwecho	12	434	868	12	
SAnkura	20	716	1432	20	
Hadaro Tunto	12	729	1458	12	
Total	224	8261	16413	180	

Table 3-4: Responses of HH Survey on WAG

S/N	Responded Statements	Respondent %
	Organized in VSLA groups	43
	Received 2 to 3 shoats per head	52
	Transferred offspring to mirror beneficiaries	34
	Now have 2-3 Shoats of their own asset	72
	Satisfied with services given by CAHWs	77
	WAG helped them much	73

Please see Annex 8 for more.

3.2.2 Beekeeping Groups



Traditional Beekeeping is common in many places and to some extent used as a means to increase household income and asset. In other areas while there are some conducive conditions for Honey production, little attention is given and most of the communities in food insecure Woredas are not considering this sector as economically useful. As a result FS-IAP project has identified promotion of Beekeeping as an asset transfer mechanism to the PSNP beneficiaries and other vulnerable HHs. Beekeeping intervention, as a means of increasing HH income, is implemented only in five CARE Woredas of Chiro, Gemechis, Doba,

Kurfachelle and Grawa, in Oromia region. This was due to previous experience of CARE through implementation of the project known as HIBRET in East and West Hararghe Zones. It is a part of scaling up of the best practices gained from that project to these woredas.

The project has organized landless people in Beekeeping groups (BKGs) and gave them intensive technical training on the subject and equipped with the necessary materials. The project supported the BKGs with modern box beehives and inputs for construction transitional beehives, and protective cloths each and honey extracting equipment one for each group. In addition to this one member from each group is trained on Bee Queen rearing and multiplication of the Bee Colony and making of transitional Beehives which were some of the crucial challenges during the implementation of the intervention.

As overall achievement, 31 Beekeeping groups are established with 1,616 members (8% are women), a total of 550 modern and transitional beehives with accessories and 493 bee colonies were distributed to the beekeeping groups. Beneficiaries also received 610 kg bee forage seeds and seedlings. The beneficiary group members pay 10% (which is around Br 80 per hive) of the price of the beehives as contribution on receiving. This has twofold effects, on one hand the beneficiaries will give due care to use the beehives and creates a sense of ownership in them. On the other hand, this money will be collected and used to purchase other new modern beehives that will be given to waiting beneficiaries, so that it is possible to reach more community

members. According to the HH survey, only 15 respondents (6.6%)² are included in Beekeeping groups. Almost all of them have stated that they have received technical training, modern beehives and accessories. Besides more than 78% of them have one to three modern beehives now and started honey production which they are selling to private traders and consumers. The beneficiaries are also trained on transitional beehive construction which is much less expensive and can be easily be made from local materials and can be replicated.

The project utilized the accumulated experience of honey value chain experience of CARE Ethiopia and conducted additional Honey Value Chain analysis to update the previous study. Based on the result of the study the project tried to link and aware the producers to different market outlets.

Furthermore, to improve market for the product (Honey) two multi-stakeholder forums are organized by the project in both East and West Hararghe Zones. These forums have brought together producers, traders and service providers in value chain to create favourable environment to produce, market and use available facilities. It is intended to facilitate linkages between beekeepers and livestock asset groups. The forums created opportunities to share experiences, and to support and complement efforts among livestock agency, beekeeping experts, woreda administrations, private honey traders and processors, and beekeeping groups.

The special feature of this intervention is that it has focused on landless HHs within the beneficiaries of PSNP and other vulnerable segments of the community. As a result, they are given two to four hectares of degraded lands in their Kebeles and organized in BKG. Then the groups have enclosed the areas for the growth of different flowering vegetations for the Bees. There is a twofold advantage; degraded lands are on the process of recovering and also serving the intended purposes. In the long run this will establish sustainable natural and socioeconomic environment.

Both field level observation and FGD participants revealed that target beekeepers now have adequate knowledge and skills to managed honey production and marketing.

In Efabas BKG, Grawa Woreda the FGD discussants said that they are producing honey and generating income and as a result their livelihood has improved. Moreover, the natural resource which was already degraded is now conserved through enclosures of the vegetations in a sense that they grow plenty of bee forage. It could be cited as one of the best ways of natural resource management system to rehabilitate degraded lands while keeping bees.

The group discussants have appreciated the technical trainings given to the group in general and that of the Queen rearing and transitional beehives production in particular for they are really life changing, but they have the reservations because the queen rearing training was not given to all members. However, still about 73.3% of the HHs included in BKGs agreed that the intervention has helped them to increase their income and reduce the food insecurity problem. During the discussion with the producers no cases of market/demand problem raised implying that at current level of production market problem might not be an issue. But as experience and supply increase over time; marketing issue/problem of price and demand as well as packaging materials may arise and thus needs due attention.

Table 3-5: BKGs organized and their members by sex and woreda

² Their number is small because they are taken from only two sample Woredas (Grawa & Gemachis), while for other interventions all five Woredas are considered.

Name of the Woreda	# of Groups organized	Number of Members			# of Beehives Distributed
		Men	women	Total	
Grawa	15	265	0	265	250
Kurfa Chale	10	173	16	188	183
Gemachis	8	117	33	150	150
Chiro	8	136	14	150	150
Doba	14	230	21	251	244
Total	55	921	84	1004	978

3.3 GRAIN BANKS (GBS)

Establishment of Grain Banks (GBs) envisages multiple benefits to the food insecure communities. First it will enable them to save part of their grains during the time of harvesting so that they could not be exposed to sell at cheap prices at the time. Second, they can buy or borrow grains from their GBs when it is scarce in the market and prices are high, as a result they will be saved from paying more. Thirdly, they can share the



profits of the GB as a dividend according to their shares and contributions; that is a means of increasing HH income. Accordingly, around 3,300 HHs were expected to benefit from community-managed mechanisms to mitigate soaring grain prices. This was intended to improve the livelihoods of the beneficiaries through establishment of 22 community managed Grain Banks. Although there were some delays in completing of the constructions, the project has established 22 GBs consisting of 4,109 members (about 25% above the plan), where female members account for 49 % of all

members (see Table 3.4 below). Two grain banks are constructed in each of the selected 11 Woredas. Out of the 13 project Woredas only Kurfa Chale and Doba Woredas are not covered with this intervention under FS-IAP. The process of establishing GB included a number of activities in a participatory way that involved government line offices and communities. All the GB stores are well constructed by concrete walls and floors as well as corrugated iron sheet roofing. The stores have the capacity to store up to 1000 quintals each. In addition to the store there is small office of two-by-three metre area constructed at the side to be used by committee members. The FS-IAP has also supported them with other related materials like ground Balance, sacks, office furniture and registration books.

The beneficiary communities have participated through in-kind contribution of labour (clearing and digging) and collecting locally available materials (water, pole and stones). It is an obligatory to pay a registration fee of Br 10 up to Br 30 to be a member of the GB. All together the 22 GBs have collected Br 370,794 from their members and accumulated as start-up capital. It is also known that these GBs are able to get a gross profit of Br 596,823 in this short period of time. The GB members in SNNPR have decided to pay their dividends and on average each member has received Br 246 (with a range from Br 157 to Br 577) while those in Oromia have added the whole profit to their capital. According to the HH survey, about 46% of the respondents are included in GBs and almost all of them are the users of the GBs 82.5% of them have agreed that their GBs are engaged in buying and selling of grains.

In order to meet their intended objectives, intensive trainings on warehouse management, grain purchase and selling, financial management and pests and rodents control are given to management bodies³. In addition Development Agents (DA) assigned at Kebele level are also trained to assist the GB cooperatives/groups. Furthermore, FS-IAP supported all the GBs with seed money of up to Br 230,000 in CARE areas and Br 122,000 in FA areas for each GB for initial stocking of the GBs. This money is used as a working capital for the GB and not shared by the members. Rather, according to Cooperative regulation, it has to grow every year through addition of at least 30% of the profit gained.

According to project field staff, the delay in construction is attributed to high inflation rate that resulted in very high price increases of the construction materials that occurred after signing of the agreement with contractors who claimed a revision of their quotation (in some cases) and even some contractors disappeared without notice (e.g. Meiso). In addition, negotiation with the donor took some time in order to get a revised-budget approved. However, in spite of all the challenges, in the entire visited sample GBs the grain banks are completed and started functioning and about 82% of the respondents have appreciated the supports given to them through this intervention.

³ Each GB has five different committees with 17 elected members. The committees are: Management, Control, Saving, Lending and Store Committees.



Figure 3-1: Maize grain stored in Gerba Kebele GB (SNNPR)

Table 3-6: Responses of HH Survey on GBs

S/N	Responded Statements	Respondent %
	Organized in GB groups	46
	Their GBs are engaged in Grain trade	83
	GBs have helped them very much	82

Please see Annex 8 for more.

Table 3-7: Number of grain bank constructed and their members by gender

Operation area (Zone/Region)	No of GBs	GB members		Total	% of Women
		Men	Women		
SNNPR – FARM	8	386	815	1201	68
W/Hararghe – FARM	8	600	600	1200	50
E/Hararghe – CARE	2	508	326	834	39
W/Hararghe – CARE	4	581	293	874	34
Total	22	2,075	2,034	4,109	49.5

3.4 CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity Building of Community-based Extension Services:

Training Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs): These are identified from the community and are trained on the basics of animal health keeping. After training they are provided with animal drugs and equipment to provide basic veterinary services at Kebele level. They provide services like deworming, castration, spraying for external parasites and the like. They sell drugs with marginal profit to maintain the availability of the service sustainable. They continue the service even after the end of the project time. They are closely supervised by the woreda veterinary department.

Community Based VSLA Trainers (CBTs): These are also coming from the community, and are extensively trained on VSLA methodologies. They closely supervise group savings and loan repayments and also actively involved in business skills and financial literacy trainings. They are very good in mobilizing the community to be part of the VSLA movement. They stay within the community and continue providing the service. In most cases they are members of the VSLA groups.

Learning, influencing policy, monitoring and evaluation

A number of activities were implemented under this output. Among these, the following are the major achievements during the life of the project:

Planning Workshop- A planning workshop was organized at the inception stage to coordinate stakeholders. Key stakeholders including representatives from regional, zonal and woreda level government structures as well as community representatives from project sites participated. From key informant interview, it was learnt that the workshop helped to create a common understanding about the nature and content of the project, identify issues that required attention, and identify the role of the different actors.

In addition, the project established links with agricultural research institutions like Haramaya University, and Fedis and Melkassa Agricultural Research Centres. This helped implementing organisations to get access to and distribute appropriate technologies to target HHs. ***Management information system-*** the FS-IAP project adopted an Excel-base Management Information System (MIS, Version 2) that was developed by Chuck Water field (chuck@vsla.net) and Hugh Allen (hugh@vsla.net). Both implementing organization effectively used this MIS to keep records of participating HHs as well as status of VSLAs. Review of the MIS database revealed that all the information was kept up to date, and the system provided not only easy access to any information related to VSLA but it also serves as a management tool to follow up and assess the performance of field facilitators, too.

Joint Supervisions and Review Meetings: it was planned to make quarterly joint supervision of accomplished activities by government concerned line sector offices and project staffs. Annual and semi-annual review meetings at Woreda levels and visits of the activities accomplished are conducted and various problems have been resolved on the spot.

Assessment of Enablers and Constraints of Graduation from PSNP and Other Food Security Programmes: CARE commissioned Institute of Development Studies (IDS, UK) to do field research to identify the major enablers and constrainers of graduation from the PSNP. The study identified the enablers and constrainers at various levels.

Programme-specific constrainers (enablers), include, Inappropriate benchmarks, Inadequate income transfers, absent or inappropriate complementary programmes and activities, dilution of transfers, partial (full) family targeting, inflexible (index-linked) transfer rate in context of price changes, scale effects and coverage of programme.

Beneficiary-specific constrainers (enablers) identified were lack of desire to graduate (dependency), dilution of the transfer, sharing of resources between families, initial household asset base and business know-how. There are also Community/location-specific constrainers (enablers), initial community infrastructure and asset base, land, water/irrigation, community level investment activities (large scale), community spirit and decentralisation.

Market-specific constrainers (enablers) included: changes in prices, lack of markets (goods, labour and credit), scale effects and agglomeration effects (size of graduate pool)

Environment-specific constrainers (enablers) included climatic changes/ natural shocks.

Project Partners Learning Assessment Workshop: a two days' workshop was conducted in Adama town on which most of the concerned government line sectors from Woreda up to Regional structures from both Oromia and SNNP regions, beneficiary community members, project field and country staffs, participated. More than 150 participants including officials from Oromia and SNNP regions Finance and Economic Development Bureaus attended. Presentations on achievements were made by field staff from Oromia and

SNNP regions and by CARE Ethiopia on overall project achievements. Beneficiary communities and partner government staff also made presentations. Preliminary finding of this final evaluation has also been presented and thoroughly discussed.

The workshop participants have uploaded the accomplishments achieved by FS-IAP project and expressed their commitments to sustain the implemented activities. All the presentations revealed that the project achieved its targets and even exceeded for some of the targets. The government partners and the beneficiary community members have particularly renewed their full commitments to scale-up and expand the best lessons learned from the project to their neighbouring Kebeles or Woredas.

3.5 CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Gender Issues: the Project document puts gender issues as main crosscutting issue, and encourages women participation in general and female headed HHs in particular should be the majority of the project beneficiaries in all its interventions. Moreover, in most of the result areas, the document clearly identified that women would constitute about 70 percent of the total (WAG, BKG and VSLA) beneficiaries.

Generally, the evaluation found out that more than 80% (except in BKGs and GBs) of the project beneficiaries are women. This figure is more than the initial target of 70 percent.

In terms of Women empowerment, both FA and CARE Ethiopia have experiences of implementing projects, which focussed on empowering women. For example, FA was implementing a 'Rural Women's Empowerment Programme (RWEP) in all project target Woredas in SNNPR and Oromia. Similarly, CARE was implementing a project entitled 'HH Income Building and Rural Transformation for Empowerment (HIBRET)' along with Safety Net and PSNP+ programme' in five Woredas of East and West Hararghe (CARE-Österreich, 2009). Thus, there are a number of indications that the experiences acquired from implementing such projects have been incorporated into this project.

In FA Woredas the RWEP project has been implemented in conjunction with FS-IAP project and the Women groups have benefited much. In this line FA has trained three community members as Community Based Legal Advisors (CBLAs) in each woreda. They provide legal supports to their community members. The CBLAs are well linked to Woreda Justice Offices and fighting against Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP) such as polygamy, girls' genital mutilation, forced marriage and the likes. They are very successful in reducing these actions in their communities.

HIV/AIDS: Though actual figures were not obtained, the discussion with various stakeholders and the community revealed that the project made efforts to target People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).

Environmental protection: discussion with the community and key informants revealed that the project is working an environmental friendly way. The beekeeping activities undertaken in most of the visited groups tried to conserve natural resources through planting bee forage and other soil conserving/multipurpose plants

3.6 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The project approved budget is £2,515,516. Out of the total budget, £2,451,570 (97.5%) of the approved budget is utilized by the project. Each sub category utilized its budget effectively. Some sub categories which used more than the allocated budget (See Table 3-8).

Table 3-8: Approved budget for the project and its utilization (Euro)

S/N	Description of the budget	Approved budget	Used budget	
			Amount	%
1	Human Resources	851,856	827,854	97.2
2	Travel expenses	8,005	7,547	94.3
3	Equipment and Supplies	1,062,348	991,865	93.4
4	Local offices' expenses	150,575	157,069	104.3
5	Other costs of services	268,097	282,410	105.3
6	Other expenses	7,963	10,02	125.8
7	Direct eligible costs	2,348,843	2,276,766	96.9
8	Contingency allowance	2,106	0	0.0
9	Total direct eligible costs	2,350,949	2,276,766	96.8
10	Administrative costs	164,566.50	159,373.64	96.8
11	Total eligible costs	2,515,516	2,451,570	97.5

4 EVALUATION OF PROJECT BASED ON THE STANDARD CRITERIA

This Chapter reviews the pertinent issues related to the design and implementation of the project. This includes, among others, assessing of Project Implementation Arrangements and Strategies, relevancy of the components to address the food insecurity problems, how efficiently and effectively the problems are addressed and targeting is done and sustainability of the implemented activities. Furthermore, the value added, internal synergy of the interventions and coherence of the project with other government programs and policies will be discussed.

4.1 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS AND STRATEGIES APPLIED

A consortium of three organizations, CARE Austria, CARE Ethiopia and FARM Africa are involved in the implementation of the project. CARE Austria has an overall responsibility to oversee programme implementation and to meet reporting requirements to the donor. CARE Ethiopia and FARM Africa are responsible for implementation of the project in their respective target Woredas. However, CARE Ethiopia shoulders the overall responsibility of coordination and leadership of the project. CARE Ethiopia and FARM-Africa have designed components of the FS-IAP project based on their previous experiences of implementing similar interventions and working with communities, groups and traditional institutions for many years in the past.

CARE has been implementing the PSNP in five of the target Woredas, namely Grawa, kurfachele (East Hararghe Zone), Chiro, Gemechis, and Doba Woredas (West Hararghe) together with the government. CARE also delivers additional support services through its PSNP plus⁴ project in two of these Woredas (Doba and Kurfachelle with a total HHs population of about 12,000 HHs). Therefore, the FS-IAP project enabled CARE Ethiopia to replicate the activities of PSNP plus initiatives like establishment of VSLAs and

⁴ PSNP+ is a USAID funded 3 year multi-partner pilot project to enhance graduation of PSNP HHs, through asset building & creating linkages to micro-finance and markets

Asset Groups formation in the remaining three Woredas. In addition, the FS-IAP enabled CARE Ethiopia to promote a new activity namely developing community Grain Banks in its target Woredas.

With regard to technical support, CARE has assigned experienced Micro Finance and Livelihoods advisors to each of project field offices. Furthermore, project staffs in the field together with government experts are also responsible to provide technical assistance to communities and organized groups. CARE also trained Community Based Trainers (CBTs) and Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) to provide technical supports.

Similarly, FARM Africa (FA) has been implementing its Rural Women's Empowerment Programme (RWEP) in four Woredas in SNNPR since January 2009. The FS-IAP project allows FA to establish VSLA and Women Asset Groups (WAG) which are considered as core activities to empower rural women.

With the financial support from the FS-IAP project, FA established community managed GBs in each of the eight woredas of SNNP and Oromia Regions. To deliver its services effectively, FA recruited technical staff and community facilitators to ensure that all target households obtain the necessary support. FA also recruited Voluntary Community-Based Trainers (CBTs) from the target communities. The CBTs have a responsibility to provide technical and advisory support

to VSLAs. In addition, FA has also trained and equipped CAHWs that are effectively providing minor veterinary services in their localities.

In general both organizations have effectively used the following implementation strategies:

- All activities are supported with awareness creation, full package of trainings, provision of appropriate manuals and guidelines;
- Full participation of government partners from the beginning;
- Meaning full and informed participation expressed in terms of willingness to be organized, contribution in-kind and by labour; by voluntarily saving and paying fees; respecting its own bylaws and enforcing rules and regulations; by practicing check-and-balance in its locality and safeguarding the communal assets;
- Group formations and membership was based on voluntary choice of individuals;
- Use of local government capacities, particularly professional experts, for conducting of trainings where ever appropriate, that has cost saving and local capacity building effects;
- Use of community members (CBTs) as facilitators, animators and CAHWs as well as local knowledge to build up on;
- Focused on Women groups to eradicate poverty and gender inequalities;
- Targeting of the poorest of poor from PSNP and other vulnerable members of the community;

4.2 VILLAGE SAVING AND LENDING ASSOCIATION

4.2.1 *Relevance*

Relevance of VSLA intervention can be seen from needs of the beneficiaries. . As described by the communities, for the last two years drought has been the main cause of household resource depletion and crop failure. The intervention has considered the problems of the people and designed to enhance the community potential to withstand the drought effects through mobilizing savings and provision of loans that generate income to fill food gaps. In line with this, VSLA members are involving in small trading to generate household income. VSLAs were used as entry point to small and medium enterprise business. It is women focused development approach where the women exercise their potential and are relevant to the target groups to reduce food insecurity and to boost asset building.

Regarding the implementing strategy, it is managed by the members, through holding regular meeting every week. This creates tight linkage between the members and management committee to monitor and evaluate the performance of their group and its relevant experience in the context of local socio-cultural condition.

Relevance of Trainings: The topics are very relevant to improve the knowledge of the participants on saving and loan procedures, business management skills, financial management, and preparation and exercising of the bylaws. The project gave opportunity not only to the beneficiaries but also experts from partner offices that improved their leadership, bookkeeping, business skill and income generating capacities. The experts from agricultural offices, women, youth and children affairs, cooperative promotion, and agricultural development centre are involved in relevant trainings to facilitate the implementation. It created ownership attitude among the stakeholders.

Relevance in asset building and attitude change: Nearly all of the VSLA members particularly women have changed their attitude of dependency on government aid. Currently the women are actively involving in trading to generate income. As the result of VSLA intervention, the IGA becomes more diversified and reliable household income source for poor family. The members are lending from Br100 to Br 300 at a time to buy, goats/sheep for fattening or rearing that builds the HH assets.

4.2.2 *Effectiveness of the VSLAs*

The project is very effective in addressing the problem of the women in asset building by organizing quite large number of women beneficiaries in VSLA group. Their participation reached up to 93% in Oda Bultum woreda with an average of 81%, which significantly exceeded the plan (70%). All the members are accessing loan services from the own savings. It is encouraging and effective for women empowerment to realize food security and sustainable development in the project kebeles.

The intervention is effective in achieving the following:

- prevent farmland from renting-out;
- selling of household assets during food deficit period;
- develop confidence that their scarce resource can generate additional resources through savings;
- in providing alternative credit access which is more effective and reasonably with low interest rate compare to local money lenders;
- avoiding provision of free labor service for local lenders to secure the loan;
- accumulating relatively fair amount of money to contribute for festival expense and for school fees.

VSLA management: The management committee is a member elected managing body with no payment. Each of the VSLA has 5 committee members assigned for different responsibilities. According to the results of the field assessment, the management committees are carrying out their responsibilities successfully. The graduated VSLAs are operating with minimal support from project office and hopefully the members will manage the system in future. As a result the VSLA approach is effective in establishing community based financial service providers, especially women leaders.

4.2.3 *Efficiency of VSLA*

Basically the support from the project office in this intervention is limited to training and provision of materials. The training is considered as the major input for the VSLA activity and it creates favorable ground for graduation of the VSLAs. In general when investment cost is considered as efficiency measurement, without a doubt the VSLA approach is significantly outstanding one.

Technical assistance: The project office structure which extends to grass root level facilitates technical assistance required by the beneficiaries. Technical experts from cooperative promotion and women affairs and development agents are involving actively in project implementation. The coordination work to arrange the technical supports to the beneficiaries is efficient in selecting appropriate staff for particular intervention

mainly in training components. Use of the government staffs for training has contributed much in efficiency of the implementation of the project in general and that of VSLA intervention in particular.

4.2.4 *Impacts of the Intervention*

It might be difficult to demonstrate the qualitative change generated by the VSLA intervention in isolation because it is a joint effort employed from different sources to support the livelihood of the beneficiaries. However, the following economic, social and cultural impacts attained or potential to be achieved could be mentioned as attribution of the VSLAs.

Economic impacts: These are measurable impacts attained by the project. The VSLA beneficiaries have gained an economic potential by borrowing up to Br 300 per head to run IGA and to solve their immediate needs. The beneficiaries asserted that, in particular, the poor households are able to cover school expenses by adding some from their annual share.

The opportunity cost of farmland to be rent-out if VSLA is not in place shows substantial economic importance of the intervention. For instance, in East Bedowancho land rent rate is 2000birr/ha. Assuming that the average farmland size is 0.25 ha, this means that he/she can get 1000 birr for his land for next two years, because in this area the minimum contract is for two years. If the land is not rent-out he saves a minimum of the opportunity cost/value of 1000 birr for two years.

In reality the farmer who own 0.25 ha can cultivate twice a year and get higher income. He can get about 3680 birr from sell Teff during one season and 2000 birr from other cropping season by cultivating maize and haricot bean. In very conservative estimation the owner could get crop products with value of 5,680 birr from two harvests per year or 2840 birr/year. Thus due to saving the land from renting as impact of VSLA intervention, it gives opportunity to earn 2840 birr/year.

Some of the beneficiaries involved in trading bought donkey, Shoats, and poultry from accumulated profit. For instance husband and wife received credit from their group and involved in a petty trade. As the result, they able to buy a Donkey with 750 birr for transportation and that also will be rented and fetch additional income for the family.

Some outstanding traders are emerging because of VSLA intervention. As one of the success story presented below from Mieso Woreda, many business women are flourishing in different project Woredas, mainly due to their active participation in their VSLA groups.

Social impacts: the attitude of the non-members community towards the poor households has changed due to their active involvement and performance. Currently the VSLA members are not prayerful for money as they know that VSLA could access credit for business or social purposes and as a result, their social status in the community is up graded and respected.

4.2.5 *Sustainability of the intervention*

Ownership and achievement: all potential stakeholders from governmental offices like agricultural office, women, youth and children office, and traditional institutions such as idir, religion representative have consulted from the initial stage of the VSLA intervention and allowed them to own and participate in project implementation. During our consultation, the indicated office heads and experts confirmed that the VSLA groups will be technically supported by the governmental offices after project phase-out through regular government structure and activities.

Current institutional capacity and Budget: Women affairs office has critical role in sustaining the benefits because the women empowerment is one of the major objectives of the sector. At all administrative levels capable experts are assigned to undertake the activities. However, the frequent turnover of the experts might be a constraint for certain period. In terms of the budget, fortunately the system adapted by the FS-IAP project is very cost effective and easily manageable. Therefore the budget would not be a constraint to sustain the project achievement in VSLA as there is a revolving system.

Socio-cultural factors: Continuous awareness creation and up-grading trainings have brought significant changes in perception of the community towards potential capacity of the poor households and gender equity. Therefore there is no social and cultural barrier confronting the activity to continue and replicate to other voluntary households.

The VSLA management committee and others proved that they are capable of managing the group finance, social issues and enforce their bylaws. As a result the VSLA groups are able to manage most of their affairs by themselves, which was difficult to believe before the project implementation in some part of the project areas.

Financial sustainability: As indicated earlier, the VSLA groups are managing their own savings. So they don't face financial problem to handle the activity to continue. If the group decides to increase their financial capacity to involve in more profitable business then they require additional money to lend to their members. Since they are well organized, it will be easy to get credit from micro finance institutions working in the region and woredas. The VSLA kits given to the groups are sufficient to carry-out the intervention for the moment.

Technical issues: awareness creation and upgrading skills are the two major inputs applied to realize the project objectives and enhance human capital. Therefore the technologies are easily adapted and manageable. Here we can say that the VSLA activity does not require complicated technology in which the introduced system is technically feasible for the sustainability of the intervention.

Finally it is possible to say that; the intervention has started to achieve the overall objectives set as, improve the resiliency to food insecurity through increasing their saving. VSLA could have achieved more had it not been for short project life, small loan size accessed, small amount of saving agreed to contribute, drought occurrence, higher commodity price used in trade transaction and others VSLA. However, we can say that VSLA is a relevant, effective and efficient tool selected to reduce food insecurity problems and it is a promising start to meet its target successfully in future. Therefore, supporting the VSLA which are currently found in different stage of activities is critical to ensure the sustainability of the system to improve the livelihood of the beneficiary communities.

Case story 2: Thanks to Farm Africa Support



Lega Bekalo is a member of Women Asset Group residing in Huleteгна Koto kebele of West Badowacho wereda of the Hadiya Zone. She is 53 years old, married and has three children. The WAG was established in August, 2010. She explained that, at the beginning of the project received two goats and the first two kids are transferred to W/ro Ayelech Sorito. She remained with three goats including the mother goats. West Badowach project office gave her forage seeds which used for feeding animals. In 2011 the number of her goats increased to five. She proudly told that, her goats are healthy because she takes care of them by applying the

knowledge obtained from Farm Africa, trainings on animal production and forage management. W/ro Lega Bekalo told that she is not a beneficiary of the productive safety net program because during the target identification of PSNP she had numbers of animals and could not be included in the program, after a while the animals are died and the family lost all productive assets which could be used for home consumption during the 2010/11 drought period. She said that; during such difficult time Farm Africa came to her village and saved from miserable life. "I would like to thanks Farm Africa staff and all stakeholders for their support".

4.3 LIVESTOCK ASSET TRANSFER (WAG)

Small ruminant distribution is one of the livelihood asset transfer intervention implemented to enhance the household asset accumulation and providing an income source for the beneficiaries.

4.3.1 *Relevance*

According to the asset survey conducted by FS-IAP field office, the very poor households identified are those who do not have land (except very small plots of land around homestead) and livestock. The project followed community leaders participation based selection procedures which is consistent with project design. Thus in such situation provision of Shoats is a relevant intervention to reduce food insecurity through creating productive assets.

This component is very relevant to the targets as it builds assets which is one of the way out to reduce poverty. The assets transferred are the locally adapted and the beneficiaries have historical background to rear sheep and goats. .

The trainings given to beneficiaries, partner staff, CAHWs, and CBTs found very appropriate to enhance the management capacity of the stakeholder and create favorable human resource capital to ensure the sustainability of the intervention. Availability of trained CAHWs in the villages with WAGs is particularly important and a relevant action taken to make the intervention successful.

4.3.2 *Effectiveness of WAG*

The intervention is effective in creating household asset by providing two to three Shoats for every beneficiary. The beneficiaries are expected to pay back by transferring equal number of offspring to the mirror beneficiaries waiting. Such kind of repayment mechanisms is found effective and comfortable to all beneficiaries. According to the results of field visit and consultation, a few beneficiaries were able to have three to five Shoats after repayment. Thus it is possible to say that the intervention is very effective to create asset in poor HHs.

Unfortunately due to short period of the project life, most WAG members are unable to transfer offspring and have marketable shoats, but the current performance shows that the intervention has good potential to achieve the desired objective.

Effectiveness towards women empowerment: Evidently the intervention is gender responsive as it targeted women poor households/ beneficiaries. All WAG members are women and they are poor according to the wealth ranking measurement. Since lack of resource of their own is one of the reasons for gender inequality in the society, now the intervention has solved this problem and effectively empowered women through provision of assets on which they can decide.

Each member of the WAG gets veterinary service from the community animal health workers that are women trained from each group. As a result Women are able to undertake new responsibilities and strengthened their status in the community.

Transfer mechanism: the project designed effective, easy, and applicable repayment system. It exercises effective follow up system where the second round beneficiaries are able to follow up the health status and appearance of offspring as agreed in WAG bylaw. It links the payer and receiver to ensure the transfer of the kids.

Effectiveness in productive asset enhancement: as revealed in HH survey the beneficiaries' livestock asset built due to the project ranges between 1 and 8 Shoats, where majority of the beneficiaries or 62.5% of the beneficiaries currently do have 2 to 3 Shoats. Due to multiple breeding abilities of shoats, the project is effective to increase the number of Shoats in the households and the community by two folds per year.

4.3.3 *Efficiency of the intervention*

Efficiency in input supply: Purchasing of Shoats was conducted together with the beneficiaries and representatives of different social groups as well as concerned government sector offices so that the procedure was transparent and considered the interests of the beneficiaries within the allocated budget. The presence of representatives of elders, idir leaders, women affairs, and project staff can be considered as social collateral that prevents mismanagement of the animals and selling of Shoats before the transfer. The Shoats distribution system said to be efficient to get productive animal. Moreover, the intervention package includes health care, animal feed and livestock increases the efficiency of the project.

The animal health care kits were distributed on time to community animal health workers (CAHWs). CAHWs are well trained to provide basic animal health care including castration and treatment within their responsibilities and capacity. Thus use of these CAHWs is by itself is means of efficient use of resource in terms of their training costs, the services they render, accessibility or availability of the services within the locality and being the community members who are always with them.

The WAG intervention has established efficient reporting system where the CAHWs are responsible to report regularly every month and at any time when ever new animal diseases appear.

4.3.4 *Achievements of the wider effects (Impacts)*

The impacts of the asset transfer is evaluated in reference to the specific and overall objectives, Despite short period of project life the beneficiaries are capable of solving their immediate needs and generate some amount of money to involve in petty trades.

Economic impacts: the intervention is designed to support the poor and vulnerable households to create assets. The economic importance starts by giving milk to children, as it is common in the project Woredas to feed children with goat milk.

There are farmers who owned four shoaat kids at the first birth transferred two of them and allowing the remaining two kids to grow and fetch good return. For instance, there are beneficiaries like W/ro Werke Anans from East Gortancho Woreda who sold three sheep and bought heifer with 1,300 birr and currently has two mother sheep and two kids. It is a promising business effectively managed by the beneficiaries.

Most of the beneficiaries joined the WAG at the middle of 2010 are not yet able to sell the kids because they are too young to get reasonably high price. After few months however, many beneficiaries will start to test the fruits of the intervention and enhance their household income.

Social and cultural impact: According to the *Halaba*⁵ ethnic culture, animals are considered as prestige and the one who do not have animal in the compound will be isolated from the society, have no reputation. It means that each household requires to have some animals to be accepted acceptance and reputation among the society. Therefore distributions of Shoats to poor and very poor families have greater meaning beyond their economic benefits.

4.3.5 Sustainability

Ownership of the objectives and achievement: the stakeholders of the project were well informed at the beginning of the project about the overall objectives and implementation plan. FS-IAP field office workers invited the government officials to participate in selection of project areas in reference to the project objectives. They established an action committee at woreda level to provide immediate support as required throughout the project period. The stakeholders are also involved in identification and organization of the WAG beneficiaries. Further the contribution of the community and other stakeholder was satisfactory in implementation of the intervention. The consultation has been made by the project office at kebele and woreda level on the application of the implementation strategy and achievements. The stakeholders have ensured that the intervention will continue and the required support will be available for the beneficiaries.

Policy support: the rural development and agricultural policies of the country and the region in particular, are supporting the intervention strategy and have similar development goals. Agricultural development policy encourages the capacity building of the smallholders to create productive assets and generate household income. In similar way the WAG intervention is entirely addressing the smallholders and women in the rural part of the project area. From this point, government policies have supporting roles to the intervention that will help its sustainability.

Institutional capacity: the government institutions mainly agricultural office and women, youth, and children affairs office have adequate human resource from Woreda up to community level to manage the WAG intervention. The FS-IAP project has also established beneficiary groups to manage the whole process at grass root level. However, these WAG committees require additional technical support from livestock health and production departments which can be provided by kebele level development agents and woreda experts. Woreda women and youth affairs office has involved during the implementation period by supporting the WAG beneficiaries. The extent of the stakeholder participation and the current capacity ensures the sustainability of the intervention.

Socio-cultural factors for sustainability: the beneficiaries are employing mixed farming system to support their livelihood. As a result the intervention is complementary to their day to day activities. Rearing of animals is culturally accepted and respected practice in the society. Therefore, the WAG intervention will not be affected by any social and cultural factors

Financial sustainability: the budget is required to buy Shoats at initial stage then after; the resource will revolve to reach other beneficiaries. The introduced system has linked the primary and mirror group beneficiaries to receive six-month kids and proceed with similar pattern for third groups. Thus the WAG mechanism does not require injection of new budget to continue.

⁵ Halaba is one of the 56 ethnic groups found in SNNPR with a special woreda status

Technical issues: the technology promoted to the project area is not new for farmers because the Shoats are local breed bought from local markets. In regard to improved breeds of male Goats (Bucks) brought; they may require some special treatments on which the CAHWs are already trained.

4.4 COMMUNITY MANAGED GRAIN BANKS

Grain price fluctuation and shortage of food grains throughout the year are the main factors for the introduction of Grain Banks (GBs) one of the interventions of FS_IAP project. There is a slaked period that sometimes lasts 6 to 7 months in which the community needs to import food grains from other areas. On the other hand, the majority of the people who are found the poverty line are out off food reserve for the same months and most likely supported by the government safety net program or traditional social security arrangements.

4.4.1 Relevance

The project areas are food insecure Woredas where poor people are suffering from food shortage for significant period of time. Thus the grain bank intervention is mainly focused reduce vulnerability of the poor food shortage through accessing food grains from the grain stores within the community in cash or in kind during this critical period. Therefore, the designed objectives are quite relevant to the problem.

This intervention is implemented in grain growing areas and at the same time grains are the main sources of staple food for the community. However, it is known that the grain prices fall below the average during harvesting and soar above the average at the time of scarcity. Therefore, the roles of the Grain Banks are to respond to these existing problems and attempt to make grain distribution even throughout the year through collecting and saving during the harvesting and reselling them when the grains are scarce in the market. It directly addresses some of the related economic and social problems of the PSNP beneficiaries and vulnerable groups in project Woredas.

The quality of the identification of stakeholders and target groups: the relevance of identified stakeholders and target groups to the project objectives and intended beneficiaries is important to implement the intervention as planned. The beneficiaries are identified with intensive involvement of local administration and the community. The community and Food security task force identified the beneficiaries according to their wealth groups. Similarly, the stakeholders were identified based on the nature of the intervention in which Cooperative Promotion, Marketing and Agricultural Development offices are most relevant government partners. The Staffs from these government offices have provided technical supports as required and their contribution to the Grain Bank achievements are crucial. In general, identification process and results of beneficiaries and partners is found relevant and good lesson for future.

4.4.2 Effectiveness

Benefits attained compared to the plan: grain bank facility is constructed in 22 kebeles as planned in the document. The project is effective in accomplishing the planned activities including establishment of GB management committees, development of operation manual and

bylaw and provision of capacity building training for management committees and partner office staffs.

In all 11 project Woredas, the grain bank groups bought significant quantity of grains and sold to their members and some non members. The selling of grain was undertaken when the prices were higher and during food deficit period, that shows the effectiveness of the grain banks to solve social problems of the beneficiaries and others. For those who are not able to buy in cash the grain banks have provided grains loan to be repaid in kind at the time of harvesting.

The grain banks established in project Woredas of SNNPRS had an average profit of Br 36,929 in the first season and shared 70% of this as dividend. Accordingly each member received a dividend share ranging from Br 157 to Br 580 based on their contribution and amount of shares they have.

According to the household results about 81% of the respondents confirmed that income generated from Grain bank and benefits during food shortage period helped them to sustain the food demand of the families.

Participation of intended beneficiaries: effectiveness of the project needs to be evaluated from beneficiaries' participation and their commitment. The beneficiaries have involved in all aspects such as decision making, contribution in kind and in cash, labor contribution, and in grain marketing. In the overall activity of the grain banks the role of women was appreciable and fruitful. Out of the total members about 50% are women, which is as planned. Thus this is an evident for the effectiveness of the intervention in participation of the beneficiaries in general and in addressing women beneficiaries and vulnerable female headed poor households in particular.

Balance responsibilities between the various stakeholders: the project office was effective in sharing responsibilities with relevant stakeholder to support the grain bank intervention. For instance according to the grain bank guideline, the community established different committees like management, purchasing, loan, complain hearing, and control committees to undertake specific assignments. On the other hand the quality control has been carried out by crop production experts from woreda office. Similarly the Cooperative Promotion/Marketing office carried out the legal process for legal registration. This experience of the project shows the effectiveness of the project in sharing responsibilities among the stakeholders.

4.4.3 Efficiency

Efficiency in input delivery, activity and budget management: FS-IAP project provided the grain store with the capacity of 1000 qt and initial capital of from Br 122,000 to Br 230,000, which are the major inputs of the grain bank activity. All stores are constructed and started the business. Apart from the above-indicated provision from project office, the members have committed to contribute 25 kg or 50 kg of Teff and Maize respectively in kind and from Br 30 up to Br 100 in cash. Accordingly the Grain bank management committees have collected all and kept safe.

According to the audit report of cooperative promotion office, all grain banks have bank account in commercial banks of the nearest town. The established five committees in each group are working efficiently to attain their plans. Some of the grain banks have started purchasing different grains from cheapest markets for the second round.

Efficiency in Technical assistance: the technical assistances obtained from agricultural office and cooperative office helped to enhance efficiency of activity and budget management. The cooperative experts involved in conducting audits of the GBs accounts and supporting them in financial recording.

Quality of monitoring: the monitoring has been done by the beneficiaries, committee members and partner staff. The established management system is efficient to control day to day activities and intensive follow up is done by the indicated staff to ensure the efficiency of the system.

Unplanned outputs arise from the activity: the intervention found flexible to reach the poor families in bad time. It is evident that during last drought period the grain banks allocated some part of the grain for non-member families by supplying grains in cash and in credit. This event was not mentioned in activity plan and detail responsibilities of the grain banks but the general assembly on their meetings decided to support

their neighbors during hard times. This shows the efficiency of the system being flexible at any time as far as the members are agreed to engage.

4.4.4 *Achievements of wider effects (Impacts)*

The grain bank intervention has only one year experience in the area and may be early to realize significant impacts on stabilization of market prices. However, its effects are observed by creating opportunity for the beneficiaries and others to get grains at reduced prices in their localities. The household survey results asserted that about 89% of the respondents are protected from the 2011 rise of grain price because of accessibility of food grains at reduced price from grain banks.

The major impacts of the intervention are in development of beneficiaries' confidence in the grain banks outputs. They believe that grain banks are reliable community managed institution to access food grains and seeds for the community. It is the most valuable impact of the grain banks that has achieved within short period of time. No matter the amount of grain received or dividend share the significant achievements of the intervention is strong belief of the community.

In addition to this the household survey results indicated that 27.3% and 56.6% of the respondents stated that either shared the dividend for personal use or saved in common respectively. This has an implication that most of the beneficiaries have developed saving culture that will generate household income and increase productive assets.

Contribution to poverty reduction: Poverty reduction requires integrated multi-sector efforts and long-term interventions. Thus, the grain bank intervention has a significant contribution by increasing availability food grains and increasing household income from the grain business. In 2011 cropping year, the grain banks have transacted an average of about 300 qt of grains each. This amount of grains could not have significant impact on the market price because it is a small injection in the market. In drought prone, highly populated and impoverished areas, the intervention with current capacity could not be expected to reduce food insecurity by itself for ever. However the activities achieved in one year are encouraging results to contribute to attaining the food security in near future. Therefore, strengthening of the grain banks activity with additional budget for purchasing more grains and other consumable goods is essential.

4.4.5 *Sustainability of the intervention*

Ownership of objectives and achievements: from the outset of the project the potential stakeholders including the community in project kebeles were consulted to give them sufficient information on project objectives, implementing strategy, targeting group and role of stakeholders. Consistent communication and discussion with community and partner staff have enhanced the involvement of the stakeholders and the beneficiaries during the entire project life. This approach develops sense of ownership regarding the grain banks by the stakeholder and beneficiaries. As the result, the Cooperative Promotion /Marketing offices, which have important roles in grain banks, showed encouraging participation which ensures the sustainability of the intervention to continue the existing achievements without major institutional support constraints.

According to the consultation held with concerned government offices and GB management committees, some grain bank groups are registered and have got legal entity from government office and the rest are under auditing process for registration. This is an indication that the grain banks are embedded in existing local institution structures.

Adequacy of the budget: is a key factor for sustainability to meet the long term project goals. The amount of money given to each GB is not sufficient to bring the required change and to maintain the attained human and social capital in the area. There are two options: either provision of some additional fund from

concerned government body or link Grain Banks cooperatives with microfinance institutions, commercial banks by resolving the collateral problem to get loan for operation as working capital.

Management committee potential: through FS-IAP project different relevant trainings were conducted to improve the management capacity of the committee members. Based on our observation in surveyed kebeles, the management committee members are capable to undertake their responsibilities and if required, the system has self-check and balance to undertake corrective measures. Therefore the system can operate sustainably with minimum technical support from concerned body after the phasing out of the project.

4.5 BEEKEEPING GROUPS

4.5.1 Relevance

Beekeeping groups are considered as part of asset transferring component of the intervention. It is aimed at introduction of modern honey production through provision of modern and intermediate beehives and the auxiliary equipments and materials, appropriate trainings and conducting of value chain analysis in honey production and marketing. Accordingly the intervention is implemented in five project Woredas of East and West Hararghe Zones of Oromia region. It has used the conducive natural conditions of the Woredas and the previous experiences of the beneficiaries in use of traditional beehives to produce honey. As a result many BKGs with significant number of beneficiaries were organized, received beehives and accessories and intensive trainings. Thus it is a relevant approach in terms of looking for new options to increase income for the poorest of poor community members. Since Bees are environmentally friendly animals, the selection of the action is more relevant especially from point of view of land degradation situations of Hararghe Zones. This has been practically proved through recovering of the natural vegetations in the area after the implementation of the intervention.

4.5.2 Effectiveness

Beekeeping intervention was implemented without complication and full participation of the beneficiary communities. They have effectively adopted the new technology and able to start honey production. Members were trained on intermediate beehive making. Group members have improved their honey production from 33 to 50 kgs through the use of modern beehives; compared to five to seven kgs from one traditional beehive. Thus they were able to significantly increase their income. Moreover, the simplification of the process through use of the new technology has contributed to the effectiveness of the intervention and added its demand by the users and others that are not included in the groups.

4.5.3 Efficiency

Beekeeping group formations are implemented with low cost as most of the equipments and materials are made locally or purchased from near-by cities. The trainings provided to the group members in construction of intermediate /transitional beehives from the local materials and Queen rearing and colony multiplication are also efficient in terms of preparing them for self-sufficiency even after the phasing out of the project. The intervention has efficiently addressed both environmental conservation and creating of asset for the landless and poor HHs simultaneously.

4.5.4 Sustainability

The intervention is well accepted and appreciated by the whole community in general and by the beneficiary members in particular. Some of them are already interested in expanding the business to make their mainstay for livelihood sources and asset development. Moreover, it does not need incurring of any additional cost to produce honey for some years to come. It is simply producing and marketing of as much the product as possible. As a result, there is no constraint foreseen to hamper the sustainability of the intervention. Furthermore, the Woreda Livestock Agency and Agricultural Development offices are ready to take over the activities implemented and their records to continue following up after the phasing out of the project.

4.6 SYNERGY AND COMPLEMENTARITIES

The interventions are basically designed to facilitate the graduation of Productive Safety Net program beneficiaries by creating productive asset, income and build their potential to sustain their livelihoods. All the interventions are reinforcing each other. On the other hand in relation to the PSNP, the government of Ethiopia is implementing asset building program for the PSNP beneficiaries through Household Asset Building program (HAB). This program gives about Br 4000 after graduation in credit to help households to involve in income generating activities in order to sustain the food security at household level. The WAG intervention has similar objective but in different way. Through WAG intervention the included PSNP beneficiaries could create and increase their productive asset while in the safety net program and WAG support is kind with a provision of Shoats for breeding.

As stated in Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP, 2010), development packages of women and youth will be implemented ensuring socio-economic and political participation, and benefit women and youths. In reference to these national efforts the WAG intervention of FS-IAP project is involved in solving women's capacity problem through accessing productive assets to poor and vulnerable households.

The FS-IAP project components were built on existing experiences of CARE Ethiopia and FA. The project components are directed to increasing HH assets and income, as well as building people's capacity to respond to seasonal food shortage. As these interventions are intentionally

designed to reach PSNP and other vulnerable HHs, the project has a synergetic effect with PSNP in reducing the graduation period of PSNP beneficiaries.

4.7 MUTUAL REINFORCEMENT OR COHERENCY OF THE INTERVENTIONS

All the project interventions implemented by FS-IAP project are mutually reinforcing one another. The VSLA is always used as good entry points for the implementation of others. When the groups are able to generate incomes in WAG, BKG or GB they are motivated to save in VSLA. In turn the VSLAs are availing finance through their credit facility to members that will pay for membership in other groups, like paying insurance fund contribution to WAG or paying 10% cost of modern beehive to be the member of BKG or paying of registration and share contribution in GBs. They may produce more result if all four interventions are given as a package to each targeted HH. They reinforce each other and can bring effective, deep rooted and meaningful changes in the life of the beneficiary HHs.

4.8 VALUE ADDED

FS-IAP project has added tremendous values to reduce food insecurity in implemented Woredas, Kebeles and communities. According to the FGD and KII participants, the knowledge transferring processes used by the project had brought a paradigm shift in attitude of the community. They are shifting from more consumption to more saving, from self-sustenance to business oriented, from dependency on aid supports to self-sufficiency and the likes. They have stated that "above all the knowledge we get from the trainings will remain with us forever and we can change our life by using them. They further strengthen this by saying "Before the day of project, we didn't know even how and where we should sell what we have, but now we are able to know from where and when to buy things we need. We are now business makers."

Organizing of the community in to different groups itself is a value added that has opened their eyes to see around and use the best opportunities they have.

The community themselves have started to collect their own savings that could be estimated to be about a million as a result of a value added in the community.

Moreover, the project has delivered different physical inputs such as various equipment and material kits, more than 10,000 heads of Shoats, more than 550 modern Beehives and 22 big stores with a capacity of 1000 quintals each and injected more than Br 3.3 million as a revolving fund for the purchase of grains. Thus these all are the new values induced into the community to create their own assets by using them. These will have a multiplier effects in value adding.

4.9 VISIBILITY

The European Union (EU) and both the implementing NGOs (CARE Ethiopia and FARM Africa) are clearly visible in project Woredas and Kebeles. Sign posts with the logos and names of these institutions are well erected on road junctions to the project implemented sites and other areas having sign posts on the spots. The evaluation teams have observed this in the visited five sample Woredas and Kebeles (one of them as shown on picture).



Furthermore, logos and names of these institutions are prepared in the form of stickers and fixed on various assets of the project. All reports and brochures prepared by the project have used the logos and names of EU, CARE and FA together on their cover pages.

Above all, the beneficiary community members are mentioning names of the donor and the implementing NGOs while discussing on FGDs. Thus the donor and implementers are well known up to the grass-root community level for their contribution to FS-IAP project implementation.

4.10 ADVANTAGES OF WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The project enabled both FA and CARE Ethiopia to replicate innovative project implementation approaches (e.g. WAG, and VSLA) as well as to reach thousands of poor and vulnerable households. Importantly, the project enabled these organisations to exchange already existing expertise, knowledge and experiences. This in turn helped each organisation to avoid spending their valuable time, resource and energy on trying to develop approaches/ methodology that already exists. For example, CARE Ethiopia is well experienced in VSLA approach. Therefore, FARM Africa simply adopted the approach from CARE without going through the 'ups and downs' in order to develop this methodology. The financiers, implementing partners and the stakeholders have established a well-practiced system of working together in other areas on similar or related projects. CARE Austria brought its international experience to Ethiopia during the project implementation.

4.11 CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

4.11.1 Gender

The gender issue is one of major focuses of the FS-IAP project as indicated in the project document and proven during the entire project implementation. There are national consensuses that if women's multidimensional problems are not well addressed then the socio-economic and cultural barriers of the women remain as the major limiting factor of the food security at national and household level. To resolve this, the FS-IAP project is designed as gender sensitive and women focused project and all its implementation strategies are targeting very poor and vulnerable households residing in chronically food insecure areas. Accordingly, the four sub-projects WAG, VSLA, GB and BKG are all targeted to reach more than 70% of women beneficiaries. In particular, in WAG intervention all beneficiaries are women.

Women have actively involved in project implementation, monitoring, and evaluation through group meetings, being member of the management committees and working as CAHWs. Women in the project area are also participating in public forum discussions and of course they become respected due to the FS-IAP interventions that created household assets and enhanced awareness in the society. Currently the attitude of the society and partners in the family has changed because of valuable trainings conducted on skill upgrading and women leadership. The women are deciding on household resource because their contribution is found visible as a result of FS-IAP inputs.

Through Women Asset Group (WAG) they manage their system with minimum support from project and partner offices which indicates that the women are empowered in decision making and project management. They are capable to manage the system and to ensure the sustainability of the project initiatives which realize the potential of the women in attaining food security. The most important output of the FS-IAP is change of attitude of the society towards what women can do to support the economy of the family and the community in large. It is observed during the field visits which women are freely explaining their achievements and demonstrating their success by showing shoats and their business plans. Considerable numbers of women are engaged in petty trade and getting profit, as a result of the provision of business skills. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that the FS-IAP project addressed the gender issues in practice and effectively as witnessed by the beneficiaries, non-beneficiary community members and partner staff.

4.11.2 Environment

Environmental issues are another critical issue which requires attention in development projects. In the context of the FS-IAP project, it was addressed indirectly through two major interventions. Beekeeping and WAG interventions have direct linkages with environmental conservation issues. The beekeeping groups were organized and are give space on degraded land, BKGS in East and West Hararghe zone rehabilitated the degraded lands that are not usable for anything by the community are able to get enough nectar for bees to forage and produce honey. It is believed that beekeeping intervention, which is well accepted among the project area communities, would be appropriate strategy for afforestation and aversion of soil erosion. According to the explanation of the beneficiaries and our field observation, the demand for the beekeeping business is getting higher in the project areas and expected to encourage planting of different valuable tree species that will continue to give dual benefits.

Livestock asset transfer intervention is another potential to conserve the environment at community level. The forage planting materials distributed to the WAG beneficiaries play important role in enhancing the vegetation cover of the area and protect overgrazing which appear because of the increase of shoats. The WAG beneficiaries planted different types of grass and bush species around their homesteads and in the fields to feed their small ruminants. It is expected that in future the experiences from the WAG beneficiaries will disseminate to other communities and the vegetation cover will be improved as a result, the environment will be conserved.

4.11.3 HIV/AIDS

It is a concern of all communities to support the victims of HIV/AIDS and create awareness on preventive measures. The evaluators did not observe a direct connection of the project with this burning cross cutting issue of the society. Of course, as indicated in project document, the vulnerable social groups are among the targets of the project or interventions, but there is no clear strategy of including in beneficiary targeting an implementation strategy that directly addresses the HIV/AIDS victims. However, according to project field staffs, they stated that they have given due considerations to include people living with virus in to different activities as much as possible.

4.11.4 Participatory Approach and phasing out of the project

HH interviewees, FGD, KII and stakeholders consultation have revealed that all participated in all project activities and as such the project activities will continue beyond phasing out. The full participation and capacity the actors to manage have been proved in the following activities;

- Beneficiaries and Concerned government sector office experts have received TOT trainings on VSLA methodology, value chain analysis, CAHWs training, general Beekeeping and queen rearing, financial literacy, management and leadership skills and other related areas.
- The concerned government staffs have fully participated in sharing their professional knowledge to the beneficiary communities through provision of specific trainings and this will be a continuous stream lined process.
- The concerned government staffs have participated on targeting of the poorest of poor through wealth ranking and use of already existing list of PSNP beneficiaries;
- They have participated in the purchasing and distribution of Shoats to selected WAG beneficiaries;
- The lands used for the construction of GBs were provided by the Kebele and Woreda Administration offices.
- All kits and materials provided for implementation of each intervention were given to the community groups under the supervision and monitoring of the concerned government experts in which M & E will be a continues process .
- The concerned government offices have assigned permanent focal persons to regularly work with the project staffs, mobilize and organize the community members in to groups, participate on review meetings, workshops and periodical project monitoring, conduct supervision field visits and own and know the implemented activities equally as the implementers project staff.

4.12 EVALUATION RESULT OF THE PROJECT FROM HH RESPONDENTS

The HH survey conducted is also in line with evaluations given above of the different components of intervention. All the respondents know the project and participated one way or another. Almost all of them agreed on the relevance of the interventions and 96% of them are satisfied with implementation processes of the project. Most of the respondents agree that the project is efficient, effective, participatory and sustainable. However only 66% of the respondents have stated that the activities are sufficient, i.e. the remaining 34% are reserved due to the short life of the project. See the following table 4.1 for the detail.

Table 4-1: HH Respondents Evaluation of the project

S/N	Evaluation Criteria	% of HH Respondents
1	Know the project	100
2	Participated on project preparation	44
3	Participated on decision making	50
4	Participated by resource contribution	
	In-kind	40
	In cash	33
	In labor	33
5	As a committee member	70
6	Project interventions are our first priority	99
	By increasing income	68
	By creating asset	61

	By increasing saving	79
	By provision of training	72
7	We are satisfied with project implementation	96
8	The project has achieved its objectives	95
	Our life now much improved	61
9	The project activities are efficient	98
	They are cost saving	91
10	The project activities are effective	96
	The activities are problem solving	88
	The life of the community are changing	81
11	The project is participatory	98
	Always conduct community consulting	78
	Community are participating on decision making	63
12	The project is effectively accountable to community	96
	The project staff are respectful for community	78
	Community meetings are on schedule	76
13	Project activities are implemented with responsibility	96
14	The project activities are sufficient	66
15	We will continue with implemented activities	93
	We will continue to protect our assets	83

5 OVERALL PROJECT EVALUATION

As discussed above each of the FS-IAP interventions has been analyzed and evaluated with respect to each evaluation parameter. In this section, overall project is evaluated using EU –CARE evaluation guidelines and other important criteria using quantitative and qualitative matrix derived from FGD, KII, HH survey, secondary data, stakeholders consultation, evaluation team field assessment as shown in Table 5.1. Their cumulative (both quantitatively and qualitatively) were worked out based on the HH, FGD, KII, Stakeholders consultation, secondary data analysis.

Table 5.1 Overall FS-IAP Project Terminal Evaluation

S.N	Parameters of Evaluation	Evaluation score	
		Qualitative	Quantitative in %age
1	Quality of Project proposal and plan	Very high	98
2	Achievement against Plans	Very high	90
3	Relevance of the project to prevalent objectives & problems in the area	Very high	95
4	Effectiveness	High	85
5	Efficiency in fund & other resource utilization	Very high	92
6	Integration and leverage of project components	High	75
7	Stakeholders participation & capacity building	High	85
8	Improving livelihood & Cost benefit analysis	High	80
9	Sustainability	High	n.a
9.1	Policy support	Very high	n.a
9.1.1	Policy impacts on project outputs	High	n.a
9.1.2	Level of support from stakeholders	Very high	n.a
9.2	Institutional capacity	High	85
9.2.1	Project consistency with existing institutional structure	High/appropriate	n.a
9.2.2	Legal framework of the established associations	Medium	60
9.2.3	Capacity of the CBOs in project management and continuing of the intervention in sustainable way	High	80
9.2.4	Exit strategy and hand over of the project to counterpart local institutions	Medium	n.a
9.3	Socio-cultural factor	Very high	n.a
9.3.1	Acceptance of the project interventions pro their cultural belief	Very high	n.a
9.3.2	Relevance of the project implementation strategy with the culture of the community	Very high	n.a
9.4	Financial sustainability		
9.4.1	Adequacy of project budget	High	85

S.N	Parameters of Evaluation	Evaluation score	
		Qualitative	Quantitative in %age
1			
9.4.2	Affordability the intervention to continue after the end of the project by the beneficiaries to combat food insecurity.	Very high	90
9.5	Technology issue		
9.5.1	Appropriateness of the technology transferred through the project to culture, local skills, tradition and level of beneficiary knowledge,	Very high	95
9.5.2	Sustainability of technology application	Very high	95
10	Mutual reinforcement with other similar project outputs		
11	Gender Issue: level of women and vulnerable social group involvement and food security level	Very high	90
12	Project implication on environmental conservation activities	High	80
13	The extent of mutual cooperation with other on-going projects	Medium	65
14	Lessons learned & possibility for Scaling up to other areas	Very high	93
16	Over all Impacts	high	85
17	Cumulative Success	High	85

Legend for qualitative evaluation

Low < 50%

Medium 50 – 70%

High 70 – 90%

Very high= > 90%

6 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Besides to the best achievements, there are challenges and a few drawbacks observed during the implementation of the project. Some of these challenges and limitations are presented below for learning purposes and to be considered in designing and implementation of similar projects in the future.

6.1 MAJOR CHALLENGES

Short period of project life: evidently everybody from beneficiary HHs up to project staffs and government partners agree that the 24.5 months life span of the project is extremely short to bring about the envisaged results. As a result:

The project is not able to finish the cycle of some interventions (Shoats transfer, Honey production, use of GB stores);

Almost all interventions are not consolidated and some are newly established groups (i.e. there are many new VSLA organized around the end);

The project design didn't consider time required for preparation before the start-up of actual implementation (sensitization, mobilization, bidding and contract awarding for) so that its start upstart-up was delayed;

Unforeseen drought and Goats' disease outbreak: the drought that occurred in 2010 has undermined the expected results of the project. Similarly the outbreak of Goats' disease in some of the project Woredas has influenced on the result of the project in general and that of the WAG intervention in particular.

Limited amounts available for lending by VSLAs: some members of VSLA groups are highly encouraged with the business skill training they received and engaged in different IGAs that require good amount of money to effectively run. But at the moment the amount of savings they have mobilized are not enough to satisfy this demand and they are facing critical shortage of money.

6.2 OTHER CHALLENGES

- Scarcity of some inputs like mother goats and bucks, bee colony and some construction materials;
- Delayed in construction of GB stores due to Inflation and low capacity of contractors
- The GBs Lack some services such as fencing, guard house and toilet in their design;
- Smallness of grain purchasing fund in some Woredas (FA areas Br. 122,000);
- High government staff turnover and engagement on other urgent assignments and campaigns resulted in additional costs to train new comers;
- Delay of some project interventions implementation;
- Too many needy people compared to fund allocated that made the targeting hard;
- slow budget revision process and approval“and delayed project start-up;

7 LESSONS LEARNT

There are many lessons that could be grabbed from implementation of FS-IAP project. The Final Evaluation Team is happy to share the following best practices that need expansion and scaling up in different parts of the country with similar food insecurity problems.

Use of knowledge based approach: the project was designed with clear objectives and expected result from each component. All the required processes of implementation such as preparation of manuals and training materials, provision of TOT to government and project staffs and use of training as an entry point to the community are the best practices that have contributed much to the success of the project in short period of time.

Use of hidden community capacity with little cost: FS-IAP project has revealed huge hidden capacity of the community particularly through establishment of VSLAs. The project has used a minimum cost for training and purchase of small items (small box with padlocks, plastic bowls and registration books). Then the beneficiaries came together and established the VSLA group that is fully managed and run by their own members. As a result they were able to collect a reasonable amount of money and started lending to each other. As they say now they are saved borrowing money from local lenders at high rate including labor works by their family members. Now they have a guarantee if they face any specific problem to them. Thus one can learn from this that it is possible to lift the capacity of the community through provision of meager but appropriate support.

Asset transferring mechanisms adopted: the asset transferring mechanisms adopted in both livestock and beekeeping groups are innovative and best practices that have created full sense of ownership of the assets and initiated sense of mutual support between the beneficiaries. Not only the in-kind repayment of shoats loan is appreciable but the transferring mechanism to mirror groups applied is also the best way of reaching more beneficiaries with a limited cost incurred for the first round only. Similarly the 10% cost of the modern beehives collected as a down payment from the users is also the best way of cost sharing to include other poor community members.

House-to-house verification of wealth ranking: this is also another innovative lesson that could be learnt from implementation of FS-IAP project. The conventional way of wealth ranking that was done on general meeting has failed to properly target the poorest of poor among the community due to many factors including rushing to finish the task and adjourning the meeting, mass mobs and overwhelming bias to or against individuals and other related issues. When the wealth ranking is verified with house-to-house visits, most of these mistakes will be amended and the proper identification of the target groups will be achieved. Physical observation of the houses of the beneficiaries can tell many things that are not seen on general meetings.

Full participation of concerned government staffs and beneficiaries at all levels: Inclusion of the partner government sector offices from inception of the project has strengthened the participation these partners and facilitated the phasing out process starting from the beginning. The community has also participated in the implementation of the project through sensitization and consultation on different issues such as selection of target groups by conducting wealth ranking together, purchasing Shoats and site selection for Beekeeping and construction of GB stores. Participation of the community right from the inception throughout the implementation is important factor for the success of the project. Such meaningful participation of stakeholders should be a culture on other similar projects.

Training and use of community members: trained CAHWs, VSLA promoters and animators are members of the community that will remain in the community after the phasing out of the project. Thus these are great resources to resolve some of the problems that arise in the community and can add to sustainability of the interventions implemented. As herd during the field assessment, some of these trainees are able to get employment at the Kebele level. The project has opened a window of opportunity for such people.

Use of LS insurance and social funds: the livestock insurance introduced by FS-IAP project is a new innovative approach to encourage the beneficiary WAG members. It is a guarantee beyond their capacity

calamities or misfortunes. Since the dead or lost shoat is ready to be replaced by buying another, it is also one of the measures that can reinforce the sustainability of the intervention.

Organizing of landless youth on degraded lands in BKGs: as mentioned under the discussion on this issue, the landless members that are organized in BKGs have enclosed and protected the degraded lands to revive. Of course, they did this for their own need for flowering plants that produce nectar for the bees. Nevertheless, indirectly they are able to conserve and protect the natural environment in their areas and in the mean time create employment and income for themselves

Exchange of experiences among the partners: The project enabled both FA and CARE Ethiopia to replicate innovative project implementation approaches (e.g. WAG, and VSLA) as well as to reach thousands of poor and vulnerable households. Importantly, the project enabled these organisations to exchange already existing expertise, knowledge and experiences. This in turn helped each organisation to avoid spending their valuable time, resource and energy on trying to develop approaches/ methodology that already exists. For example, CARE Ethiopia is well experienced in VSLA approach. Therefore, FARM Africa simply adopted the approach from CARE without going through the 'ups and downs' in order to develop this methodology. CARE Austria brought its international experience into play.

Coordination of GO, NGOs and EU has proved to be successful in mitigating the food security problems within relatively short period of time. Therefore GO, NGO, EU and bilateral partners can pool their technical and financial resources and implement large similar projects

8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

8.1 CONCLUSIONS

FS-IAP has been implementing in three result areas and activities with the aim to contribute towards increasing the resilience, and food security and the livelihoods of the beneficiary communities, which form the overall development objectives of the FS-AIP. From the findings of evaluation, the team believes that the implementations as well as the achievements in relation to the different constraints are for the most part successful.

The project design is well fit and the best for attaining its development objectives. The implementation approach, planning process, the project fund and procurement management, M&E and MIS systems being followed as well as the staffing of the project have greatly contributed for the empowerment of communities. The placement of woreda level facilitators and community promoters placed at kebele level has enabled the timely provision of technical supports to the communities and committees. The partnership with the woreda level relevant sector offices such as ADO and Cooperative desks appeared to contribute to the success of the project.

The interventions selected are relevant to reduce food insecurity; they are effectively implemented to be felt by the community & government bodies; they are coherent to each other and have synergy with other government programs; and they gave due attention to women and other vulnerable groups to increase their savings and income in order to reduce the overall food insecurity problems.

The capacity building components such as consistent trainings, experience sharing programs and practical exercises have contributed much to the success of the project.

Based on data analysis and acts observed during the field survey it can be concluded that the project has introduced better approaches to reduce food insecurity and could be a good model for further expansion and scaling up.

8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are to be considered in current and future similar projects designing and implementation. The recommendations are presented by classifying them into general to the project and specific to the interventions.

8.2.1 *General to the project*

- Some period of consolidation should be considered in order to strengthen activities implemented under all interventions;
- In the future such projects should be planned at least for 3-4 years to fully accomplish the cycle of all interventions and see their complete impacts
- Best practices observed, such as assets transferring mechanisms, use of community based service givers, organization of BKG on degraded lands and others should be properly recorded and transferred to other similar users and projects;
- The Woreda Food Security Task Force (WFSTF) in collaboration with the technical staffs assigned from each of the concerned sector offices should maintain its current supervision of the implemented interventions after the phasing out of the project;
- Unless there is a good reason, implementing NGOs have to keep uniformity in giving support and implementation of different intervention such as:
 - In number of implementation Kebeles in each Woreda;
 - In number of beneficiary HHs in each Kebele;
 - In number of mother goats distributed to each HH;
 - The amount of seed capital given for grain purchase;

- EU has its own established approval procedure of revised budgets and scope of works. However, the evaluation team and the implementers realized that it took relatively long time to get approval of revised budget on this project. This had significant impact on overall performance of the project. Thus we recommend EU to review its approval system.

8.2.2 *Specific to interventions*

- Up to four groups of VSLAs organized in each kebele needs consolidation or merging for registration as legal entity (according to CPO);
- Low level of loans financed by VSLAs needs attention: Either provide supplementary seed money (say 2X of their saving) or connect them to nearest MFIs from where they can borrow in group and lend to their members individually;
- The VSLA graduation criteria needs to be more objective than being measured with one year time span only;
- To overcome the scarcity of Goats in local market, it would be better if the project purchases from other places with similar climatic conditions and supply to the beneficiary HHs (of course by developing appropriate modality);
- Proper packaging materials should be provided to BKGs and good to train beneficiaries in the same line;
- It needs to provide additional capital for those GBs received lesser amount of fund for grain purchase;
- The GB groups or Cooperatives should get assistance in accounting procedures or hiring professional accountants and store keepers as their transactions are growing;

ANNEXES

Annex 1: TOR for Final Evaluation FS-IAP Project

Annex 2: Composition of Evaluation Team

Annex 3: Documents Reviewed

Annex 4: HH interview questioner for of FS-IAP project

Annex 5: FGD checklist

Annex 6: KII Check list

Annex 7: List of Contacted Persons

Annex 8: FS-IAP Project HH Survey Analytical Output

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