

Annual Report for 2014

Project Name: Empowering Women at all Levels for Better Health in Ethiopia

Reporting year: January 1-December31-2014

Implementing Agency: Women's Health Association of Ethiopia/ WHAE

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Funding Agency: Norske Kvinneres Sanitetsforening(NKS), Twinning partners, FOKUS

Project Location: Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples and Addis Ababa, Harar, Diredawa, Beninshangul Gumuz and Gambella

Total Budget: 5,101,800.00

Activity Cost: 3,734,000.00

Administration Cost: 1,367,800.00

Brief Introduction

Women's Health Association of Ethiopia is a local NGO working in nine regions in Ethiopia. WHAE has been functioning for four years in Ethiopia. WHAE in this short term covers nine regions in Ethiopia and is committed to enabling grass root women to lead a better informed life.

In 2014 WHAE's main activities were strengthening the health education for Harar, Diredawa; make sure the business for Gullele, Mekele, Bahir dar, Shonie and Chancho become a sustainable and profitable business for the women; and establish strong local units in Beninshagul and Gambella.

Accordingly the health education is taking place in all regions including in Beninshangul and Gambella every month with majority of the members present. The local units have also been able to undertake community health education in between their community by organizing themselves in the one to five structures.

In addition to the health education realizing the benefit of economic empowerment, a business plan review was conducted for Gullele, Mekele, Bahir dar, Shonie and Chancho; to better the existing business. A new business plan was developed for Harar local unit.

With Beninshagul and Gambella, WHAE has been able to conduct a series of discussions to find the right target group and then carry out discussions with the women groups. We are now working on establishing a strong committee to strengthen the base of the local unit.

Additionally WHAE is working towards increasing its professional members by conducting series of discussions.

WHAE also started implementing its five year strategic plan this year after finalizing it at the beginning of January 2014. This is believed to lead the organization into a stronger national independent organization.

WHAE gets its funding from FOKUS, NKS and twinning partners of local units which are local units under NKS.

The Vision, Mission, Goal and Objectives of WHAE (Women's Health Association Ethiopia)

Vision: To see WHAE grow as a dynamic organization enhancing Ethiopian women's wellbeing

Mission: - To increase the active participation of underprivileged Ethiopian women within the country's development process to create healthy individuals and healthy community.

To accomplish this, it works to ensure women are beneficiaries of the development process by

- Creating and mobilizing women groups
- building their capacity
- and assisting the development of social and economical empowerment.

WHAE also works towards strengthening and expansion of professional women members and the organization to exchange skills among themselves and among their community.

Goal

Contribute towards active participation of Ethiopian women to be beneficiaries from the overall country's development process.

General Objective

The general objective is to economically and socially empower women to contribute to the well being of the society.

Specific Objectives

- To increase the number of local units in Ethiopia from 7 to 12 by 2018
- To create awareness on women wellbeing among 12 local units members by providing 12 informal and 1 formal training per year
- To increase the number of women owned businesses by the local unit members from 4 to 12 by the year 2018
- To graduate 6 local units from the 12 local units by the year 2018
- To strengthen the network with international and national organizations and individuals working on women health and economical empowerment
- To strengthen the organizational capacity of Women's Health Association of Ethiopia to be a partially administratively financially independent organization by the year 2018

Activities from January- December 31, 2014

1. Membership meeting

1.1- Members plan and report sharing meeting

Women's Health Association of Ethiopia conducted a half day membership meeting on February 12, 2014. On this day existing members of WHAE, local unit representatives from nine regions, new members, and government and nongovernmental organization representatives were present. The meeting had a report and planning session. The activity report for 2013 was presented and the external auditor was able to present his report to the audience. Thereafter, the activity and financial plan for 2014 was discussed. This meeting helped WHAE to share its activities and receive input from the participants.

1.2- Organizing women health conference

In November 2014, WHAE organized a women health conference with the theme of the contribution of economical empowerment to women's health. More than 80 participants attended the meeting. Most were members, representatives from all regions in Ethiopia and twinning partners from Norway. This conference started with a scientific study of the link between women's health and wealth and also hosted successful business women who discussed on their contribution to the community.

1.3- Organizing Women Entrepreneurship day(WED)

In November 19, 2015, the world celebrated the women entrepreneurship day for the first time. WHAE joined this celebration by organizing a discussion forum and dinner of women entrepreneurs in Ethiopia. This event brought more than 100 renowned men and women. It was attended by the Minister of Trade Mr Tadesse and the Canadian and Norwegian Ambassador. The event incorporated the celebration of women in business and emphasized on corporate social responsibility of business people. It was also a great opportunity to promote the products of the local units to the attendees.

2. Local unit experience sharing

This program is organized for the local units to learn from each other and perform an organized and joint planning for the local unit. This year two experience sharing visits among all local units and one local unit to local unit trip was organized.

Local unit coordinators and committee leaders

The local unit coordinators and committee leaders from the nine regions came to Addis Ababa and did a joint planning session for the year 2014 in February 2014.

This event brought the regional coordinators of WHAE and one representative from the local unit committee. This event was a great opportunity to share experiences among each other. Especially the new regions like Gambella and Benishangul learnt from other local unit experience on how to establish a strong local unit.

Local unit coordinators, nurses and marketing officers

In November 2014, the local unit coordinators, Marketing officers and nurses from nine regions met in Addis Ababa. They had a planning and experience sharing meeting for three days where they discussed on the strength and weakness of each local unit activities.

Harar local unit visited by Diredawa local unit

In April 2014 two local units; Harar and Diredawa local unit organized an experience sharing trip among each other. Ten local unit members from Diredawa travelled to Harar and visited the activities of the local unit, including the cleaning campaign and they discussed with the committee on how to better lead and inspire members.

3. Increasing Professional Women Membership

Small group discussions

WHAE has been trying to increase its professional membership using various means. This year it started its series of small group discussions to bring in more members. Accordingly, two discussion forums took place in March and May on parenting and Marriage consecutively. These discussions were very interesting and created a closer communication among the professional women.

Social Media

One of the other activities undertaken to increase the involvement of more professional members is the opening of a face book account for WHAE. Continuous updates about activities and other opinions are shared to members through this means.

4. Evaluation visit

NKS

NKS conducted evaluation in the beginning of this year to measure the activity of WHAE in the past three years. Accordingly seven local units were visited and meetings with the local units and with regional government offices were conducted.

NORAD

Visitors from NORAD also came and undertook a monitoring meeting and went through the financial documents and system of WHAE. They also visited one of the project sites in Gullele.

5. Commission on the Status of Women, NY-March 2014

Women's Health Association of Ethiopia and NKS organized a parallel event on women empowerment in March 2014. NKS in partnership with WHAE uses the CSW

venue to promote its activities and also learn from others experience. This year NKS and WHAE partnered with Rehabilitation International and organized a conference on inclusion of women with disability in the empowerment process.

6. Business Plan Revision and Status of Business

The business plan for Bahir dar, Mekele, Shonie and Chanco were revised based on the one year performance and experience of each local unit. This was done so that the challenges in the business can be addressed on time. Financial Audit of the businesses was undertaken by the accountant of WHAE by the end of 2013 to help with the revision of the business plan. Accordingly the following was done for each region.

Bahir dar local unit- In Bahir dar the women were waiting for source of electricity to start the milling business. In the mean time, they had started a local honey wine 'tej' business to generate income. The business plan revision identified the fact that accessing electricity can be difficult in the short period. The local administration was not providing a concrete response on when the women were going to access the electric power. Basing this information and looking at the women's frustration, the women were consulted on what alternative they can start working. The women agreed to start a restaurant business as it is something they already do in their house. It was studied and a small restaurant was established for the women. The restaurant has hired three of the local unit members with 500 birr and they are planning to expand the business.

In Bahir dar the other source of income for the local unit is the income from the shower and toilet. The local unit is generating an average of 2000birr per month from the shower and toilet. They also sell soaps and tissues.

Shonie local unit¹- This local unit is running a bridal dress rental shop. They rent dresses during wedding seasons and have generated a total of 7400 birr in that past year. This local unit had planned to run a milling place in parallel but the source of electricity was not accessible.

So the business plan is revised into running an engine run milling machine. Two milling machines that work with engine have been purchased and installed in the first half of this year. The women will start running the milling place in 2015.

Mekele local unit- Mekele local unit is running a milling business. The local unit works with the University of Mekele and does the milling for the Ayder Campus. They are already generating income from it but to increase their income the revised business plan suggested for the local unit to have one more milling machine to start milling pepper and pea. It also added a part where the local unit can buy grains like 'teff' and grind, pack and sell to the community. This is believed to increase their income and make them more profitable. 100 quintals of teff was purchased for the women and one more milling machine is purchased.

Chancho local unit- This local unit had not been able to start their dairy farm business due to the bureaucratic challenges in the government to provide them with land. The women have been waiting for a year and half and there was no

¹ The twinning partner(Kristiansand) provided the budget for this.

cooperation from the government in terms of availing land to the local unit. So the revised business plan incorporated for the local unit to buy land and start their business. Accordingly the Chanco local unit purchased a 200 square meter land and built a cow shed. Now the local unit has two cows and they have hired two of their members for the business with 500 birr.

Gullele local unit: This local unit is running a weaving business which is growing. This local unit did not have a business revision but the 14 members from the local unit took training on better quality product and design for a period of one month. The local unit is working on providing a better finishing to be more marketable. Gullele local unit has managed to produce scarves, curtains, table clothes and bed covers. Two extra weaving machines and a sewing machine have been purchased to increase the number of production and increase the value of their product.

Harar local unit: This local unit has identified the production of peanut butter and production of food materials like 'injera' as their potential business. A business plan is finalized and the local unit is registered and ready to start running its business. The bureaucracy for the registration of the business took longer time not enabling the women to start their loan and start their business in 2014.

Hiring marketing officers

This year one of the gaps identified was the lack of proper financial management by the local unit. To solve this, Marketing professionals were hired for Gullele, Mekele, Harar and Bahir dar local units to support the local unit.

Business assessment Plan

At the end of the year a more thorough assessment of the businesses was developed and a general report is produced for six local units (Gullele, Mekele, Bahir dar, Chanco, Harar, Shonie local units)

Extra funding for businesses

In 2014 Mekele local unit, Chanco local unit, Gullele local unit and Bahir dar local unit were granted an additional 175,000birr for scaling up their business.

7. Establishing and strengthening two new local units

In this year the agreement for both Gambella and Beninshangul was finalized. The operational agreement was signed between the Regional Health, Women Affairs and Bureau of Finance and Development. The agreement is for three years with potential for extension. After finalizing the agreement, selection of 50 women was undertaken by the local women affairs based on the criteria provided by WHAE. Five of the women are women with disability.

The local units were equipped with a coffee set to undertake their monthly meetings and a formal committee was formed. All the local unit members were trained on leadership and health and they have been meeting for six months in the year 2014.

8. Monthly women health education

The local unit members in nine regions have undertaken their monthly health education as per the plan. Each region meets over a coffee ceremony once a month to make their monthly saving and also discuss about different health issues with the company of a nurse or another related professional. This monthly event also strengthens the relationship among the women and helps them share new information within their village.

Each region undertook different fields of discussion (See the Annex)

9. Community health education

Seven regions out of nine namely Addis Ababa, Bahirdar, Mekele, Chanco, Harar, Shonie, Dire dawa local units have been undertaking community health education. This community health education is the contribution of the local unit members back to the community. After completion of their first year they are expected to share the information they acquired to their neighbors. Each woman has 5 women under her and teaches community members in a specific area 'got'.

This takes place in an informal form making coffee in the middle of the village and in some regions in community police compounds. WHAE hires a community nurse to overlook this process. The community nurse is also responsible to assure the participation of members with interest. One of the tools we use for this is measuring blood pressure of attendants. We use this method for encouraging people to come and be aware of their health status.

The participants discuss about a range of health issues in their community and in their family. The discussion is mostly an open discussion facilitated by the local unit members. The community nurse taps in for concrete information.

Each region has its own strategy and means of undertaking the community health education. (See Annex)

10. Formal training for local unit members

Formal health trainings were provided for seven local units in the first half of 2014. This training mainly revolved around maternal and child health and communication. The training took place for five days.

The number of trainees in the region is as follows:

| No. | Name of local unit | Number of women trained |
|------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Bahir dar | 29 |
| 2 | Mekele | 24 |
| 3 | Gulele | 14 |
| 4 | Shonie | 25 |
| 5 | Chancho | 27 |
| 6 | Harar | 27 |
| 7 | Diredawa | 27 |
| 8 | Gambella | 49 |
| 9 | Beninshangul | 50 |
| | Total number of women trained | 272 |

11.Strategic plan

The five year strategic plan for WHAE was finalized. The strategic plan was mainly prepared by the board members of the organization.

12.Molde University Health Education

Six students from Molde University, Norway, visited Gullele and Chancho local units in February 2014. These students are nursing students from the University. The students had a community visit and then provided a two day training for both the local units. The students trained the women on HIV/AIDS, maternal health, diarrhea and conducted a one to one health status assessment of the women in Gullele local unit. This group also did a house to house visit for bed ridden patients in Chancho and trained the local unit women on how to take care of such patients.

13.Sensitization meeting

This meeting is undertaken between the staff of WHAE and government stakeholders in all regions in Ethiopia. In 2014, a sensitization meeting was conducted in all the nine regions and government bodies were briefed about the work of the local units. The government bodies on the other hand recommended better way of running the project and briefed WHAE and the local units about existing government policies.

14.Twinning projects

14.1- Twinning Visit (February 1-9, 2014)

Twining partnership is one of the unique partnerships of the health project. Each local unit in Ethiopia is partnered with one or two local units in Norway. This year local unit partners came and visited their twinning local units in Ethiopia for one week in the beginning of February. Kristiansand Sanitetsforening (twinning partner of Shonie local unit), Vestfold Sanitetsforening (twinning partner of Gulele local unit), Oesfold Sanitetsforening (twinning partner of Bahir dar local unit), Stavanger region(twinning partner of Mekele local unit), Lysak rotary(partner in building a community toilet and shower in Mekele, Trondheim (Potential twinning partner of Beninshangul local unit), Mandal Sanitetsforening (twinning partner of Dire dawa local unit represented by a board member, Ms Nana Fines), the special adviser of NKS, Mr. Jan Monsbaken and the board president of NKS Ms. Ellen Sofie were part of the visiting group. Each local unit visited the local Units by traveling to the project site. The twinning partners monitored the activities undertaken, had a detail conversation with the local unit members and government officials.

During this time Representatives from Stavanger region and Lysak Rotary launched the opening of the toilet and Shower in Mekele in the presence of the regional administration and women affairs office.

Kristiansand Sanitetsforening visited the milling place they sponsored, the safe house and the bridal dress shop of the local unit. They also undertook a meeting with the steering committee that is comprised of the regional Women affairs, Health bureau, Justice Bureau and other important government actors.

The representative from Mandal local unit visited both Harar and Diredawa local units and had a meeting with the local unit women.

The potential partners from Trondheim visited the new local unit in Assosa and held a meeting with the women and representative of women affairs in the region.

Vestfold Sanitatesforening visited the weaving business of the women, did a house to house visit of the member women. It held a meeting with the vice head of the women affairs office and discussed about the needs of the women in the area. This local unit also visited Chancho local unit which is partnered with Opland sanitatesforening.

This visit that is organized once in two years mainly helps the local units to observe the changes in the community especially on the women they are partnering with. This visit also helps to create a closer relationship among the women in Norway and Ethiopia and for a transparent way of utilizing the budget. This venue created a rich experience sharing event and availed a good opportunity for the local units in Ethiopia to present their plans for 2015 and 2016.

This group attended one of the national health conferences of WHAE and held a meeting with the board and staff of WHAE.

A photographer called Trine Melhuus joined this group to document the trip and the project of WHAE.

14.2 -Home Based Care-Chancho

The women in Chancho local unit came up with the idea of taking care of bed ridden patients especially those that do not have support system. WHAE supported this idea and the women now treat ten bed ridden patients. The local unit members voluntarily visit the clients three times a week. During the visit they take flour and

one liter of milk/day to the clients and spend time with them discussing about their status. This is also teaching the community around to come and visit these patients and fight discrimination.

A bed sheet and other sanitary materials like soap are provided to the patients and a first aid kit is being provided for the local unit members.

To strengthen this activity a one day Home Based Care introductory training was conducted for 26 members of the local unit.

In addition to the bed ridden patients, the local unit members are taking care of one orphan living by himself. The members contribute money and pay for house rental and make sure he eats well.

House renovation: One of the home based care beneficiaries was living in a desperate situation and her house was almost falling. Looking at this WHAE helped to rebuild her house by mobilizing the community and contributing around 26,000Ethiopian Birr.

14.3- Cleaning campaigns.

One of the methods the local units use to mobilize the community is cleaning campaigns. The local units conduct cleaning campaigns in their area collaborating with government bodies and the community around. This helps raise awareness and it also makes the women visible in their area. WHAE constantly provides the women with cleaning materials to run this activity and the women carry out the cleaning for free.

Cleaning campaigns take different forms and are conducted in different schedules in each region. (Refer Annex)

14.4 Purchasing Iodized salt for members

One of the main health challenges in Gullele local unit is 'Goiter'. This is mainly caused by lack of iodized salt. The local unit was trained on this issue and to help them start the consumption, WHAE purchased and gave 12 packs of iodized salt per women. This is believed to enable them use the salt in the future.

14.5 Purchasing Sanitary materials

The other main challenge in Gullele local unit is hygiene. In order to enable the women wash their essentials continuous hygiene training is provided. Additionally soaps and bowls for washing were provided for the women. After the provision of the material there is a close follow up to see if the women are using the material and there is a competition among the members.

14.6 Mekele Toilet building

In Mekele a two shower and toilet construction is finalized and running. The land given to the women for this construction is next to the stadium which enables them to access a lot of young people to use the shower. The toilet construction is financed by LYSAK rotary and is serving the people while generating income for the local unit.

14.7 Cleaning material and Camera purchase

As the regions conduct cleaning campaigns they run out of materials. To address this WHAE purchased gloves, gowns and shoes for all the local unit members. This is believed to encourage the women undertake their voluntary activity.

Additionally to enable the women to register their activities and for better reporting, a camera was purchased for each local unit in all the nine regions in Ethiopia. This mainly helps to promote their activity on social media.

14.8 Steering committee

Shonie local unit has established a steering committee to cooperate with the government in their day to day activities. This committee has been running for the past two years. The committee met 15 times in 2014 and partnered with the women in their cleaning campaigns and also helped them in their day to day activities.

14.9 Harar local unit-government partnership

The local unit in Harar identified that partnership with government bodies was the key to their community work success. For this, the local unit called for the head of the regional women affairs, health bureau and the administration and discussed about its activities and how it is planning to work with the government. The meeting was successful and they managed to form a steering committee at the end of the meeting.

14.10 Steering committee experience sharing

The steering committee in Harar and Shonie met in Addis Ababa in October 2014. The committee members from Shonie who have been working for the past three years shared their experience of how to work and mentor the local unit. The steering committee in Harar learnt on how to work with local units and the two committees worked on a joint plan.

14.11 Renovation and Handover of toilets

In the year 2013, due to the request of Chancho and Bahir dar local unit a two toilet and shower construction was underway. In February 2014 the two toilets and showers were completed and handed over to the local units. The local units have complete ownership of the property and the toilet and shower is open for the public upon payment. This will be a good service for the community and at the same time it is also a good means of income for Chancho and Bahir dar local units.

Both toilets are constructed in the middle of the market and also near the community which will allow the toilet and shower serve people that come for shopping and the surrounding community.

14.12 Health insurance for local unit members

Fourteen local unit members from Gullele(3), Mekele(3), Bahir dar(3), Harar(3), Diredawa(2), have been able to get a full coverage of a health checkup in the past period of time. This program is initiated to provide a quality health access to members with severe health challenge.

14.13 Community center

All local units have a community center where women can meet and discuss. This is the safe place for women to come and discuss about their own issues. It is also where the committee puts all its documents and stores the cleaning materials.

Challenges

The main challenge we faced during the year 2014 is the lack of electric power for most regions to start their business. In case of Chancho the unwillingness of the local land authority to grant land to the local unit delayed their business for one year. This led towards investing almost half of their business loan on land purchase.

Lack of market for the businesses of the local units was an identified problem in 2014. This is a challenge that will require more resource for the year 2015.

The other challenge is the recruitment process in Gambella and Beningshangul. It was very difficult to access women with our criteria. Additionally the local women affair was not sending us women with disability and we had to push and write a letter gain to meet the target women.

The conflict in Gambella region also delayed the activity in the region with three months.

The other challenge was the quality of building materials used by the contractors in building the toilet and shower. Even though we had external supervisors we are

facing some challenges because the toilet in Chanco needed to have a different kind of sewerage system and required a better finishing for public use. The toilet in Bahir dar is also facing some challenges as the soil quality around the toilet and shower is sliding. In 2014 renovations were undertaken for the toilets forcing WHAE to reinvest more resource.

Lack of trained staff on marketing in the head office was a challenge this year as the staffs were overburdened with the businesses of the local unit.

Drop put of members due to lack of commitment to work on the business was also the challenge faced in 2014. In areas like Gullele the number of local unit member was less by seven from the beginning of the year as the women were looking for fast money and income.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring takes place at two levels. The first part is through monthly reports submitted by local unit members and regional coordinators. Every month titles of issues discussed and minutes of the meetings are sent to the community coordinator. The reports are filled in the format designed by the office. These reports are compiled and sent to the directress once in three months.

Additionally field visits are carried out as required and meetings with local unit members and government bodies are conducted. This year all local unit documents and leadership systems and documentations were reviewed based on the

monitoring schedule produced in the office. All gaps were assessed and proper solutions and recommendations were sought.

Evaluation was carried out by NKS and professionals from NORAD. This process involved desk review and travel to the specific project areas.