

Evaluation of the Integrated Rural Development Project in Abuna Gindeberet Ethiopia

Report



Stuttgart, 08.12. 2014



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Abbreviations

DA	Development Agent
EPI	Expanded Program on Immunization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
GAA	German Agro Action
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HPS	Higher primary school
HSS	Higher secondary school
LPS	Lower primary school
MAPP	Method for Impact Assessment for Programs and Projects
MfM	Menschen für Menschen
NGO	Non Government Organization
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PA	Peasant Association (smallest administrative unit equal to „Kebele“)
PCO	Project Coordination Office
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
SAFE	approach of the project to fight Trachom, S standing for surgery, A for antibiotics, F for facial cleanliness and E for environmental cleanliness
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WaSH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WiD	Women in Development

1 Summary

Menschen für Menschen in Ethiopia

The Menschen für Menschen Foundation (MfM) is working in Ethiopia's rural regions since some 30 years. It started its activities with relief work in 1981, broadening and solidifying its efforts during its first decade into an integrated development approach. Today MfM runs 11 integrated rural development projects in different parts of Ethiopia with an annual budget of roughly 20 million Euro. These integrated rural development projects usually provide a comprehensive support to the region, addressing productive, social, economic and ecological sectors at the same time, in order to support an all including development of the regions to work with.

Project Region

The Woreda Abuna Gindeberet is some 180 km to the north-west of Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa. It is part of the Oromia Regional State. Ambo, the zonal capital, is to be reached by a 3 hours car ride on dirt road. The Woreda consists of 42 rural and 2 urban communities (Kebeles or PAs) and covers 1360 km² of land. The majority of the 126.000 inhabitants of the Woreda live on small scale agriculture, producing for the families subsistence and selling some surplus in local and regional markets. Agriculture is practiced in a hilly landscape with sometimes steep slopes in altitudes from 1000 to 2600 m. This, together with 1250 mm of rain in two rainy seasons, is the basis for a high diversity in agricultural crops. However, holdings are small (average 1,25 ha) and the grazing pressure on common land is high.

Objectives of the evaluation

The present report provides information on the process and the results of an evaluation performed for the „Integrated Rural Development Project in the Woreda of Abuna Gindeberet“. The project is finalizing its third year of implementation, with an intended extension of another three years. It is the objective of the evaluation, to analyze project planning, implementation and steering and to validate the achievement of project objectives. Recommendations for changes and possible improvements for the project phase to come is a major request. The main evaluation questions are oriented at the OECD-DAC criteria relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation took place in October/November 2014 and was performed by a team of two independent experts, supported actively by management and staff of MfM. After a thorough analysis of project documents and background interviews with MfM management in the preparation phase the actual field work consisted of:

- Interviews with actors in the field of rural development in Ethiopia
- Elaboration of an impact analysis¹ with the project team, in order to grasp their understanding of relations between activities, outputs and outcomes of the project.
- Field visits and interviews with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of project activities
- Group interviews with the individual project departments, a group of project development agents and Woreda line officers
- A 1,5 day workshop with 24 representatives of the cooperating Kebeles, applying the instruments of trend analysis, collection of activities and influence matrix to understand the target groups evaluation of project activities and project impacts.

¹ Impact analysis or theory of change is a model that relates project activities with envisaged and as well with unintended effects and thus explains the understanding of causes and consequences, a project planning, implementing or evaluation team uses as a basis for its work.

Project approach

The Abuna Ginde Beret Integrated Rural Development Project works with a holistic approach, addressing all relevant sectors of rural life and supporting thus mutual reinforcement of development impulses in neighboring sectors like water-provision and health care. The departments of the project comprise agro-ecology, health, water and sanitation, women in development and education.

Planning, implementation and reporting

Planning of the project is based on a baseline and needs assessment study, performed in 2010, activity lines following the most pressing needs detected in the needs assessment. The planning document provides understandable justifications for planned activities and the yearly planning documents are concise and clear. Justification for the integrated approach is only scarcely elaborated. The elaborated logical framework is not enough linked with the baseline, thus some of the outcome indicators cannot be checked as the information in the baseline related to them is not precise enough.

Project implementation, results and reactions of the beneficiaries show that project management lives up to the claim of conducting an integrated project. The integration and interrelation of activities beyond sector limits is actively promoted and the interfaces between departments are designed and taken care of.

Reporting is comprehensive and comprising activities, outputs and budgets. It does not focus on outcomes, at present data are not collected for all outcome indicators.

Effectiveness and impact

The formulated output indicators could be reached in most of the cases a number of activities even over-performed the planned objectives. As for the outcomes a direct measurement is not possible in a number of cases as the baselines for the indicators are missing and as reporting does not provide data on this level. However, highly plausible conclusions can be drawn from field visits, interviews and workshop with beneficiaries that the direct effects, the project was aiming at, have been well reached.

The same is true for the indirect effect, the project aimed to contribute, "Improving the livelihood of the inhabitants of Abuna Gindeberet". Efforts in the agro-ecological sector helped to better and more diverse yields and thus contributed to nutrition security and diet diversification. This in turn improved the health situation of children and adults. High importance was given by the beneficiaries as well to the improvement of the home and sanitation situation in a very broad sense. People are well aware of the combined effects of clean and tidy homes with separated rooms for animals and humans, less smoke in the kitchen, clean water and closed latrines on the health of the family. With information and immunization campaigns the health status of the population is as well improved on a broad base. Thus better health and better well-being, resulting from efforts of different project departments is definitely a strong contribution to the aspired impact.

Higher incomes as well have been invested into better clothing for men, women and children. For the women especially this is one of the expressions of a better standing in the family and in society, another indicator of an overall improved livelihood.

Efficiency

Evaluating the costs in relation to other rural development projects in Ethiopia, the figures for agricultural advice and extension as well as for women promotion are in a usual range. Most of the activities could be implemented and concluded within the planned period.

Sustainability

In the field of agro-ecology a number of specific interventions are well understood and integrated into the thinking patterns of the beneficiaries. This seems to be the fact with the natural resource management interventions, whose usefulness and necessity is well understood and supported by the beneficiaries. Individual farmers even re-invested their gains of newly

applied agricultural practices into other production features like ploughing oxen, thus granting the sustainability of the economic improvement process.

For a number of interventions it is the approach of the project, to improve and enhance carefully the already given potentials of the landscape, the culture and the people. This approach of low profile but comprehensive development seems to be effective and sustainable as the visited farmers were easily able to explain their activities and perform them without massive support of their field advisors. Sustainability in a mid-term is as well provided by the very solid and robust construction of infrastructure, the project is implementing. Schools, wells and springs are being constructed with durable material, a solid design and tightly controlled construction firms.

Sustainability has to be reconsidered on the other hand, where necessary inputs or knowledge for initiated activities are overly expensive or hardly obtainable without the project. Farmers, who are not used to buy inputs for every production cycle² or are scarce with money, usually discontinue this kind of production as soon as input provision is not easily to be reached any more.

More complex interventions, needing mature organizational setups and good steering capacity can as well be critical when it comes to sustainability. In the case of the project this applies to the management of the public goods water springs and deteriorated pasture land that are being improved and developed with the support of the project. In some cases the boards seem to be overstrained with the enforcement of their by-laws in a peaceful and balanced way. Surging disagreements and quarrels may then endanger the sustainability of such an intervention.

A last area, that may endanger the sustainability of the project efforts, is the cooperation with the Woreda administration. It is this administrative body that should take over initiatives and activities of the project, when MfM is pulling out. However, an institutional learning and take-over of responsibility of the Woreda officers is hardly to be observed.

Recommendations

Summing up the above findings and observations, the evaluation team recommends an extension of the project as it is foreseen by MfM without hesitation. As in every good work, there are areas, that can and should be further developed and where improvement is possible.

- At present, the planning and reporting does not develop enough on the fact that many of the effects are the result of project activities of very different departments and sectors, a real impact analysis is missing. As a consequence it is difficult to develop indicators that are more than a mere counting of activities. This is especially true when we come to the level of outcomes. In order to proceed further in a systematic and coherent process of planning, monitoring and evaluation, the elaboration of the projects impact analysis that has been started during the present evaluation, should be continued and further differentiated. Based on this process the recent version of the logical framework has to be revised, a number of output and outcome indicators to be reformulated. As a last step for outcome and impact oriented planning, a baseline should be elaborated that corresponds with the logframe indicators and thus provides a solid ground for any further planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- It is the basic principle of the project to support the development of given potentials. Difficulties with this principle arise, when people or groups of people lack potentials to be developed as it is the case with very poor or handicapped people. Already first strategies for including very poor households have been developed and successfully applied (combination of credit and vegetable gardening). Still there seems to be need for further efforts. Perform a pilot-study on the distribution of livelihood assets (potentials) within a typical Kebele. On that basis elaborate further strategies for the inclusion of very poor households.

² Which is usually the case with high yielding hybrid seeds

- The handing over of project supported infrastructure establishment (developed springs, wells, closure areas) into the responsibility of user groups usually as well takes place in a process that starts even before construction work starts and enable the to-be management to maintain the facility and to formulate a first round of by-laws. However, it seems that a more intensive process of accompanied organizational development would be necessary in order to provide especially boards of user groups with capacities to deal with new and unforeseen situations. Therefore we recommend to build up further capacities for organizational development in the project and provide follow-up to boards of associations that manage scarce goods (water, land, money). Support them to develop their capacities for steering, adaption to new situations, participatory formulation and peaceful enforcement of by-laws and common rules.
- At present the projects' approach to improve pastures is mainly undersowing existing pastures with better forage varieties. This approach surely can make a difference, producing higher qualities and quantities for the existing animal population. However it doesn't solve the problem of complete overstocking of the area and the missing of any rules for the use of public pastures. Without a progress in any of these questions, untimely use will further prevent pastures from regeneration and overgrazing will further deteriorate and devastate public pastures. We therefore recommend to consider common efforts with Kebele and Woreda administration to elaborate agreements and rules for the use of public pasture land in participatory processes.
- The seeds for some of the high yielding varieties for agriculture and animal husbandry are only accessible through MfM and with the further extension of vegetable growing the local and regional markets may not render adequate prices. Therefore strive for farmer accessibility to improved input and support the establishment of marketing structures through:
 - o Promotion of high yielding composite varieties.
 - o Strengthening of the already initiated and existing seed multiplication and distribution program
 - o Initiation and strengthening of input providing and produce collection cooperatives that can obtain imported high yielding inputs and at the same time develop marketing and logistical skills to gradually increase market access for their members.

Conclusion

The decision to bring forward rural development with a combined effort in a number of usually separated sectors has been proved successful in a number of MfM projects all over Ethiopia and it is successful in Abuna Gindeberet too. The striking argument behind this decision is the fact that in real life there are no separations between nutrition, living, health, production, education asf. All of these activity fields are interwoven parts of one individual, family and community life. The analysis elaborated above as well as the recommendations therefore are hints and advices to improve and develop further a well working and functioning project. We recommend the extension into a further 3 –year implementation period.

2 Introduction

2.1 Background of the evaluation

The Menschen für Menschen Foundation (MfM) is working in Ethiopias rural regions since some 30 years. It started its activities with relief work in 1981, broadening and solidifying its efforts during its first decade into an integrated development approach for defined rural areas, mostly following the administrative lines of a district or Woreda. Today MfM runs³ 11 integrated rural development projects in different parts of Ethiopia with an annual budget of

³ Besides some alone standing projects (orphanages, vocational training centres)

roughly 20 million Euro. These integrated rural development projects usually provide a comprehensive support to the region, addressing productive (agriculture, animal husbandry, home-economics, artisan work, infrastructure), social (health, education, family planning), economic (micro finance service, saving and credit) and ecological (natural resource management and protection, water provision), sectors at the same time, in order to support an all including development of the regions to work with. Ethiopia is still one of the poorest countries in the world, ranked on position 173 of 187 countries included in the Human Development Index of the UNDP⁴.

The present report provides information on the process and the results of an evaluation performed for the „Integrated Rural Development Project in the Woreda of Abuna Gindeberet“. Preparations for this project are underway since 2010, the actual implementation started in 2012, with an annual yearly budget of roughly one million Euro⁵. The project is financed by an individual donor (Red Chairity) through the Austrian branch of the MfM foundation. The



first phase will be finalized at the end of 2014, an extension into a new 5-year phase is intended.

The Woreda Abuna Gindeberet is some 180 km to the north-west of Ethiopias capital Addis Ababa. It is part of the Oromia Regional State. Ambo, the zonal capital, is to be reached by a 3 hours car ride on dirt road. The Woreda consists of 42 rural and 2 urban communities (Kebeles or PAs) and covers 1360 km² of land. The majority of the 126.000 inhabitants of the Woreda live on small scale agriculture, producing for the families' subsistence and selling some surplus in local and regional markets. Agriculture is practiced in a hilly landscape with sometimes steep slopes in altitudes from 1000 to 2600 m. This, together with 1250 mm of rain in two rainy seasons, is the basis for a high diversity in agricultural crops. However, holdings are small (average 1,25 ha) and the grazing pressure on common land is high. Thus deterioration of land through erosion and overuse is a common feature. Declining soil fertility, erratic rainfalls, overused pastures and non-adapted practices led to a situation of nutrition insecurity during the last decade⁶. Connection to the Ethiopian road structure is bad, health

⁴ UNDP: Human Development Reports. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries>

⁵ 24 million Birr per year

⁶ Menschen für Menschen „Final Report on the Need Assessment of 4 Woredas in West Shoa Zone, Oromia Regional State“. September 2010, p. 28.

services are hardly existent and most school buildings are in a deplorable state. The productive economy is limited to the production of agricultural raw materials, processing in a bigger extent is not existing. In order to address utter poverty of the people, which is the result of these conditions and to improve the livelihoods of the population, the project launches and implements activities in all the above mentioned sectors.

MfM in Ethiopia has an implementing structure with 750 Ethiopian staff that allows for all above mentioned measures to be conducted under internal responsibility. The project in Abuna Gindeberet with 23 staff is cooperating with the administration on Woreda level and on the level of Kebele administration of the 23 Kebeles it is reaching at present. These structures are meant to take over responsibility for the implemented development measures, whence MfM is withdrawing.

2.2 Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

The project is finalizing its third year of implementation, with an intended extension of another three years. During this second period MfM wants to carry on and intensify the commenced activities in the already covered Kebeles and to extend its coverage into further Kebeles of the Woreda.

It is the objective of the evaluation, to analyze project planning, implementation and steering and to validate the achievement of project objectives. This analysis is to serve as a basis for conclusions and considerations on major functions of the project. Recommendations for changes and possible improvements for the project phase to come is a major request of MfM as a whole and the project management specifically. Main focus of the evaluation is thus to provide a common learning experience for both, the evaluation team as well as the stakeholders of the project on all levels.

The main evaluation questions are oriented at the OECD-DAC criteria relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Besides that, MfM asked the evaluation team to have an eye on the aspect of targeting and including especially poor families as beneficiaries of the project activities.

2.3 Evaluation mission

The evaluation took place in October/November 2014. After document research, intensive telephone contacts with Sigrid Janssen, consultant to MfM Austria and formerly responsible project-coordinator for Abuna Gindeberet, the evaluation team met for further preparation and briefing at the Project Coordination Office (PCO) in Addis Ababa and started actual field work in Abuna Gindeberet on October 29th. Managing director of MfM Austria, Mr. Rupert Weber and PCO project director Ato Yilma Taye accompanied the evaluation team from October 29th to November 2nd and from November 2nd to November 7th successively. The actual work in Ethiopia was concluded on Nov. 7th with a debriefing meeting at the PCO in Addis Ababa.

The evaluation team was headed by Jochen Curre, working for some 25 years in the field of agriculture and rural development, as a project director, consultant and as an evaluator. He was accompanied by Chali Guteta, Ethiopian specialist for agro-forestry, rural development and project management. He could contribute his vast experience of working on grassroots level in rural Ethiopia as well as his knowledge on national development-planning and -legislation. The report has been elaborated in close collaboration with a final responsibility by

Jochen Currle. Chali Guteta is working for the second time with MfM, Jochen Currle had his first working experience with the organization. Both evaluators do presently not have any further relations with MfM beyond the assignment.

MfM is implementing the project in Abuna Gindeberet in collaboration with the local administration and a small number of subject matter experts in different working areas (embroidery training, training in specific agricultural topics, etc.). Various encounters of the evaluation team with local administration staff (individual and group interviews) and interviews with implementing individual trainers provided an insight into the cooperation structure. Within a 1,5 day workshop with representatives of beneficiary groups, the perspective and project validation of the target group could be appraised.

No external influences hampered the proceeding of the field mission, which was very well organized by MfM, both the PCO and the project management. Interviews have been arranged even on short notice, the wishes of the evaluation team considering the selection of communities to visit and conversation partners have been respected and responsible staff was ready to answer questions of the evaluation team openly. Therefore we would like to express our gratitude to all, who shared their knowledge and time with us, starting from interviewed and visited rural dwellers and farmers, administration staff and foremost of course to the staff and management of MfM, who were ready to provide us with a deep insight into their daily work, to share and to discuss with us.

3 Methodological Procedure

3.1 Evaluation Methods

The evaluation process is meant to analyze and validate project planning, implementation and steering. Effects of the conducted activities have to be collected and compared with the envisaged objectives and impacts. In order to obtain overview and insight, that provides at the same time a good and comprehensible overview of the project activities, its effects and the interlinking consequences of these effects and a thorough understanding of the functioning of individual activities, it is important to apply a number of different data collection methods. These should help to look at the project from different perspectives (triangulation), to provide reliable and trustworthy data and they should allow stakeholders on all levels to learn more about achieved objectives, working mechanisms as well as furthering and hindering factors for change for the better⁷. Therefore the following methods have been applied:

Document analysis

The document and internet analysis helped to understand the general background of MfMs work in Ethiopia^{8,9,10}, it gave an overview on the political and administrative structure of the country as well as of the socio-economic and ecological situation of the project region¹¹. Es-

⁷ Misereor, 2006: Evaluierungs- und Beratungskonzept von Misereor. Internal paper.

⁸ Freiberg, Benjamin: General Guiding Principles for Sustainability. Sustainability of key project activities. 26.02.2013. Menschen für Menschen.

⁹ www.mfm.at

¹⁰ Menschen für Menschen, 2014: Jahresbericht '13.

¹¹ Menschen für Menschen, 2010: Final Report on Baseline Survey and Need Assessment of Abuna Gindeberet Woreda, West Shoa Zone, Oromia Regional State.

pecially planning documents¹² and yearly reports helped to understand the local context realities, the livelihood of the community, the structure and the logic of the project as well as subsequently implemented activities and achieved objectives^{13,14}.

Elaboration of a theory of change

The project is working in a number of sectors in order to bring forward an integrated development of the district. During a workshop with the heads of the different sector departments before the start of the field visits and interviews a comprehensive theory of change¹⁵ could be elaborated, that shows the implicit logic of the project interventions within individual sectors. With the moderated and visualized elaboration of that intervention logic (s. Annex 4) the interrelations and linkages between activities of different sectors as well as their effects beyond sector boundaries became visible.

Interviews with key informants

Extensive interviews were conducted with a wide range of stakeholders considering the very project but as well considering the political background of project implementation in Ethiopias' rural areas. There have been interviews with staff of NGOs working in the sector¹⁶, individual and group interviews with officers of cooperating administrative structures on regional¹⁷-, district¹⁸- and community¹⁹-level. From MfM side information was provided during briefing and debriefing discussions on management level, during group interviews with MfM department and section heads and supervisors as well as with development agents on field implementation level. Representatives of different beneficiary groups could be interviewed during the four days of field visits (s.b., Annex 1). For most of the 38 conducted interviews a question guideline was elaborated, oriented at the OECD-DAC criteria and aiming towards filling information gaps or testing an already formulated hypothesis with newly provided information.



Guiding questions used during interviews with department and section heads were:

- Beneficiaries selection criteria
- Achievements of objectives
- Hindering and furthering factors
- Linkages between different sectors and activities
- Training: planning, how it is conducted, documentation
- Organizational development of beneficiaries

¹² Menschen für Menschen, 2012: Abuna Gindeberet Integrated Rural Development Project Document, 2012-2014, as well as yearly operational plans for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014.

¹³ Menschen für Menschen, 2012, 2013: Annual Reports of the respective years.

¹⁴ Menschen für Menschen, 2014: Third Quarter Report for the fiscal year 2014.

¹⁵ S. footnote 1

¹⁶ Interview with Dirk Hillerkus of Bread for the World, Oct. 13th, Interview with Manfred Bischofsberger, country director German Agro Action, Oct. 28th

¹⁷ Interview with Mr. Alemayehu Sambi Dinka, director of NGOs Affairs Directorate, Oromia Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, Oct. 29th

¹⁸ Group interview with line officers of the Woreda administration, Nov. 3rd.

¹⁹ Interview with Mr. Teshoma Gemachisa, Dep. Chairman of Kebele Administration of Megala Bite, Nov. 5th.

- Contribution of sub projects to the final goal

Participatory Workshop with representatives of the target groups

In order to systematically capture and inquire the perspective of the beneficiaries on changes within their family and their communities' life and to understand their view of the impacts of the projects activities, a workshop with selected representatives of the beneficiaries has been performed. The workshop followed a methodological procedure defined as Method for Impact Assessment for Programs and Projects (MAPP), developed by the German Institute for Development Policy.²⁰ With a systematic sequence of group discussions the participants describe important changes in their life within the last couple of years and relate them with the activities of development projects. Thus the method can provide answers to the question of project effects – be they positive or negative - from the perspective of beneficiaries and help to understand, which most important factors helped to bring about these effects. With the results of this workshop other information and already elaborated hypothesis could be complemented and cross-checked (triangulation). The workshop with 24 participants (9 women, 15 men), lasted 1,5 days and worked with the following instruments:

- Trend- Analysis – defines participants' criteria for good life quality and elaborates the development of these criteria along a timeline.
- Activity List – shows relevance and significance of development measures, implemented in the region, for the life of the participants.
- Influence Matrix – validates the project activities in relation to the participants criteria for good life quality.

In order to provide a gender differentiation, all instruments were applied in gender-homogenous groups. The group results were then presented and differences between men and women were discussed and questioned for their reasons. Participants of the workshop were selected and invited, making sure that the gathered group of people contained representatives with all following criteria:



- Male-female
- Direct beneficiaries - No direct beneficiaries
- Upland communities – lowland communities
- Old – Young
- Well to do – landless

²⁰ http://www.die-gdi.de/CMS-Homepage/openwebcms3.nsf/%28ynDK_contentByKey%29/MSIN-7JJHP8?OpenDocument&nav=expand:Forschung%20und%20Beratung/Projekte;active:Forschung%20und%20Beratung/Projekte/MSIN-7JJHP8

Field visits in the communities

During eight days in the project region the mission team could visit 4 selected Kebele²¹ with activities in all sectors the project is working in. A number of “project sites” could be seen additionally along the way. The selection of Kebeles followed the criteria:

- Cooperation with the project started long ago – cooperation started only recently
- Short distance to the project seat (upland) – long distance (lowland)
- Broad range of activities – only some activities implemented so far
- High responsiveness – low responsiveness (according to the evaluation of project management)

These visits provided a deep insight into the activities of the project, the way of cooperation with the communities and the beneficiaries and the actual implementation of recommended practices through the target groups. Infrastructure measures (schools, developed and consolidated water sources) could be visited, and on-the-spot-interviews could be conducted with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

3.2 Limitations of the evaluation process

The evaluation team was provided with all information and documents needed immediately. Project documentation is comprehensive and well prepared, which was helpful for the evaluation procedure.

All interviews with key-informants have been organized smoothly either by the PCO in Addis Ababa or by the project management in Abuna Gindeberet and spontaneously submerging needs for additional meetings have been arranged in due time. PCO and project staff was always ready to provide necessary information and to reflect together on observations made.

As MfM is the only NGO working in the Abuna Gindeberet, other non-governmental implementing institutions could not be visited in the very region. For an institutional perspective in the very region the team had to rely on the views of the Woreda officials, who –for any development activity - are in a situation of strong dependency on MfM²². However, this could be balanced by the intensive knowledge and experience of the local mission member on project implementation in rural Ethiopia, who was in a position to contextualize the answers of the office holders. It as well helped to have had interviews with two other NGOs working in rural development in Ethiopia (even though not in the very region). Here however a broader range of different perspectives would have helped to compare and classify approach and measures of MfM better.

All selected communities could be visited and allowed thus a solid understanding of the projects procedure, implementation processes and impacts to be observed. Here as well contacts and interviews with people who did not or only very marginally benefit from the project, have been possible. With the composition of participants of the MAPP workshop as well a broad range of beneficiaries could be brought together. Their discussions and presentation

²¹ Presently the project is working in 23 of the 42 Kebeles of the Woreda.

²² Of the yearly Woreda-budget of 55 million roughly 8 million are available for operational expenses. MfM on the other hand spends roughly 23 million Birr every year on the implementation of activities (2014/2015 Budget paper of Abuna Gindeberet Woreda; MfM planning document 2012).

allowed for a good understanding of the development situation in the region and provide an important basis for the assessment.

The basic professional background of both evaluation members is focused on the use and management of natural resources. In spite of various experiences in comprehensive and broad ranging development projects, this professional focus of course influences the attention given to different areas of project activity and results in a dominance of observations related to these areas. However, given the relative importance of these areas and at the same time the restriction of any expert to gain an all including insight into the high number of activities within a short time, this limitation seems to be justifiable as long as the project as an integrated whole is perceived.

4 Project environment

Following a short description of administrative, natural, economic and socio-cultural conditions will be given

4.1 Administrative environment

Abuna Gindeberet is one of the 20 Woredas of the West Shoa Zone within Oromia Regional State. It has been recently created (beginning of the new century) through a separation from the Woreda Gindeberet, now neighbouring district to the west. The capital of Abuna Gindeberet is Bake Kelate, 173 km away from Addis Ababa and 132 km away from Ambo, the capital of the zone. The Woreda consists of 44 so-called Kebeles or PAs, the smallest administrative unit, comprising one to several smaller settlements or villages. Total population of the Woreda is 126.000²³ with an average family size of 5,6 persons per household. Of the roughly 22.000 households 17% are female-headed.

4.2 Natural environment

The Woreda Abuna Gindeberet is situated to the northwest of Addis Ababa and covers an area of 1360 km² (136.000 ha). Its landscape includes high and rugged mountains, undulating to rolling plateau, panoramic gorges and steep river valleys. The altitude ranges from 1,150 to 2,500 m.a.s.l., comprising two main agro-ecological zones, the lowlands (30% of the Woredas area) and highland (70% of the area). Average precipitation ranges from 700 to 1400 mm/y with a double peaked rainfall pattern. The small rainy season usually is in March/April, the main rainy season starts in June with a peak in July through to the mid of October. Usually the small, somewhat unreliable rainy season in the beginnings of the year is used to prepare the fields, whereas the planting starts with the beginning of the main rainy season. It is remarkable to see the big difference between minimum and maximum extremes of precipitation, meaning that drought and inundation are ever present options. This is, according to some of the interviewed farmers and project staff in fact the case, with an increasing occurrence within the last decade. It is especially the growing irregularity of dry and rainy seasons that provides major challenges to the farmers. Average temperature in the Woreda is 20°C. The Woreda possesses relatively fertile soil which is good for farming. However, soil erosion, due to intensive agricultural and pasture use, has already damaged a considerable area, leaving soils with only limited fertility.

²³ According to the national population census of 2007 projected to 2012

4.3 Agriculture

Agriculture and animal husbandry are the economic mainstays of the Woreda. Other significant economic activities are not to be observed in the district. As for the land-use, the Woreda Agriculture Development Office (2011) offers a rough estimate of 86,400(63.5%) hectare being cultivated, 18,600(13.7%) hectare being used as natural pastures and as little as 540(0.4%) hectares being under bushes and forest cover. A relatively big area of 30,560 hectares of land that is used for so-called "other purposes" is under human settlement and infrastructure,



however the bigger portion of it most probably is just rocky, steep and extensively degraded land without any possibility for human productive use.

Individual cultivated lots are very small, land-holdings of the visited families varied from zero to 3,75 ha. According to project staff, this mirrors as well the broader reality in the Woreda²⁴. In Ethiopia all land is formally state-owned. Individuals and communities (Kebeles) hold traditional using rights, which are, in the case of individual landholdings inheritable. Community land is considered to be open land. It usually is not under cultivation, but used as open grazing land.

Human labor is the basis of almost all agricultural activities, supplemented by the oxen-drought ploughing on feasible lots. No other kinds of mechanization are observable as to yet. Main staple crops are teff, maize, sorghum and wheat, rendering yields that are lower than the ones of countries with highly intensive agriculture, but higher compared to the figures of worldwide averages²⁵. Reasons for comparably low productivity are seen in a deficient and not systematic soil fertility management (fertilization, rotation, manure application), low-yielding varieties and the lack of improved cultivation and irrigation techniques²⁶. Niger-seed, beans, line-seed and sesame are oil-crops, usually sold and processed out of the very region. Vegetables that are traditionally grown in the home-gardens are onion and garlic.

The Woreda hosts 181.000 heads of animals, 103.200 (57%) of them cattle, 61.500 (34%) of them small ruminants and 1.500 horses and donkeys. Compared to the 18.600 hectares of pasture land, this is an incredible overload (5-10 times!) of the natural potential of the area, which can hardly be balanced even with dramatic raises or imports of animal forage. The totally unregulated access to common grazing land adds to the challenge.

Agriculture activities are mainly directed to covering the family subsistence, with small portions of cash-crops (oil-seed) and the marketing of yields that surmount the family needs. However, according to the baseline survey of MfM from 2010 a high percentage of the households suffer from recurring food deficiency, especially during the first months of the crop growing season (August/September/October)²⁷.

Even though comparably close to major consumer markets (180 km to Addis Ababa), more than half of the distance being rough and gravel surface road has surely a limiting effect on market access.

²⁴ Families with no own land are a reality in the area, the figure for Bedessa Gajo, a Kebele in the lowland areas was, according to the MfM baseline (2010) at 24% of the total households. However, the percentage of landless households in the whole Woreda could not be found out.

²⁵ FAO, 2014: FAOSTAT. <http://faostat3.fao.org/home/index.html#DOWNLOAD>

²⁶ MfM, 2010: Final report on baseline survey and need assessment of Abuna Gindeberet Woreda.

²⁷ MfM, 2010: Final report on baseline survey and need assessment of Abuna Gindeberet Woreda.

4.4 Nutrition and public health

Less than 20% of the population did have access to safe water supply in 2010²⁸, which is usually a protected and developed spring or a protected well. Interestingly, even those safe water sources did not dispose in their majority of a functional water and sanitation committee. Both, lack of safe water and the deficiency of sanitation education lead to a high prevalence of water-borne diseases like trachoma, diarrhea, intestinal parasites²⁹. Access to health infrastructure is limited, medicals are hard to obtain and expensive. Nutrition security is not only difficult within certain periods (s.a) the diet is as well not well balanced. This leads, especially with children and bearing mothers to deficiencies in minerals and necessary vitamins. Chronically mal-nourished children suffer from growth retardation (stunting) and a deficient mental development.

4.5 Socio-cultural context

Education facilities (Lower primary-, Higher primary- and Higher secondary schools) are provided on Kebele (18 LPS, 27 HPS) and on Woreda (1HSS) level. However, the condition of the infrastructure in most cases is deplorable, the student-teacher ratio is 1:72³⁰, quality of teaching suffers from this situation and the partially deficient qualification of staff.

As a result, even though enrolment figures are high (32,665 students in a population of 126.000) 29% of school aged children and 38% of adults over 25 years are illiterate. Women especially show low secondary education compared to men (10% compared to 20% respectively), a reason behind this may be early marriage.

Girls and women specifically usually suffer from high workloads. It is their traditional duty to collect water and firewood, keeping them busy for long hours already in the early mornings.

5 Findings of the evaluation

The following chapter will elaborate on the findings gained during the evaluation process applying the above described methods. Given the broad range of activities in a number of sectors, the project is implementing compared with the relatively short time of data collection, these findings do not claim to having pondered into the details of all activities. However, even limited time allowed the evaluation team to having a comprehensive view of the structure, main pillars of the work and important linkages between sectors and activities. For some of the activities even more detailed observations were possible (s. chapter "Evaluation Methods").

5.1 Quality of planning

The planning of the Abuna Gindeberet Project started with a "Baseline and Needs Assessment", which was conducted in 2010. This study has been done following different requests of the Zone-, the Woreda- and some Kebele-Administrations on MfM, to start an integrated intervention³¹. The data base has been elaborated in an intensive participatory process, performing – beneath secondary data collection and focus group discussions - a PRA-process in two Kebele, one of them in the lowland the other in the highland-area of the Woreda. The planning document³² of the project refers to the above mentioned baseline study, the recommended areas of intervention are to be found in the planning document and the described

²⁸ MfM, 2010: Final report on baseline survey and need assessment of Abuna Gindeberet Woreda, pp. 34.

²⁹ "50% of the children aged one to nine years suffer from Trachom". MfM, 2012: Survey on prevalence of trachoma and risk factors in Abuna Gindeberet.

³⁰ MfM, 2010: Final report on baseline survey and need assessment of Abuna Gindeberet Woreda, p.35

³¹ Since the beginnings of 2011 MfM is running a similar project in the neighbouring Woreda Gindeberet, thus examples and effects of the work there must have been convincing to the respective administrative bodies.

³²MfM, 2012: Abuna Gindeberet Integrated Rural Development Project Document 2012-2014.

needs and problems are being tackled with planned activities. All the project activities are systematically derived and elaborated by providing a comprehensive picture of the specific problem situation before suggesting the measures to be taken. However, the analysis as well as the development of solutions does rarely go beyond the specific sector, thus integrating and interrelating causes and consequences of the challenges as well as linking positive effects of activities within one sector with neighboring sectors³³. A comprehensive theory of change³⁴ that could show the integration and interrelation of development activities thus has not been elaborated.

The yearly planning documents provide a sensible picture of the activities to be implemented and give a reasonable justification for the very measure. The yearly reports as well provide a clear picture of all activities performed during the year. The planned activity outputs are displayed and commented, regarding the expected further effects (outcome-level). However, the very reporting is restricted to the activity and output-level. Data on effects (production, productivity, income, health status etc.) are not provided. The logical planning framework has been further elaborated as the original version lacked workable indicators, that could help to evaluate and proof effects of the project work. This has been corrected and a logical framework has been developed, based on the original planning and equipped with indicators for outputs and outcomes. However, some of the formulated outcomes are still very close to activity outputs³⁵ and, as the indicators had to be developed after the baseline study and planning exercise, it is especially a couple of the outcome indicators that miss a baseline and thus are difficult to verify³⁶.

5.2 Quality of implementation

Project implementation, results and reactions of the beneficiaries show that project management lives up to the claim of conducting an integrated project. The integration and interrelation of activities beyond sector limits is actively promoted and the interfaces between departments are designed and taken care of. An example for integrated activities is the 10-day training for beneficiaries, organized by the Women in Development Department yet planned and conducted together with the projects Agro-Ecology Department (vegetable growing, poultry rearing), the Health Department (family planning, hygiene and health) and various Woreda offices. Another example for a well-designed interface is the combination of vegetable growing support by the Agro-Ecology Department and the vegetable preparation trainings the Women in Development is implementing. There are more examples of this kind, facilitated by a highly motivated team of teamleaders that works and lives together and thus supports the finding of informal agreements and the easy exchange of information.

With the establishment of a sector-cutting WaSH committee on management level a short-come in the area of water provision may as well be tackled, and the up to now called "Water User Association Boards" will undergo an extended training, that is not only directed towards the organisation and maintenance of consolidated spring and well facilities, but as well to the sanitation and hygiene issues of the communities.

All infrastructure facilities (schools, developed springs, wells) have been solidly built, using high quality materials³⁷ and executing a tight and knowledgeable accompaniment of the construction firms and volunteers implementing the physical work.

The so-called village-approach of the project consists of a number of steps for the initiation of activities in a specific Kebele and a long-term coverage of cooperating Kebeles with reliable

³³ i.e. linking the introduction of vegetable production with generation of income but as well with a diet enrichment leading to better health.

³⁴ S. footnote 1

³⁵ i.e. "road network service improved"

³⁶ i.e. the indicator of increased (by 5%) average household income is impossible to verify, as there are no baseline data on the average household income in 2011.

³⁷ High quality corrugated iron sheets for school buildings, extremely high-value mixture-relation of sand and cement for concrete and wall construction.

project field staff, living in the Kebeles and being the well trained promoters of all project activities, cross-cutting all sectors. For initiating cooperation with a Kebele the project – with the consent of Woreda- and the support of the Kebele-administration presents its integrated approach with its different packages in a public community meeting. The community or groups within the community (water-user-groups) may then apply for the support of the project (i.e. consolidation of a spring). The project



will conduct a technical and financial feasibility study, and then sign an agreement with the Kebele, that describes the necessary community contributions (labor) and the support, the project is ready to provide. Parallel to this process or consecutively farmers are organized to construct terraces or other erosion prevention measures, they are offered trainings on improved agricultural practices and provided with improved seeds of staple crops and vegetables. Inputs are sold at a subsidized price to farmers. As well the WiD department offers trainings on household and sanitation improvement and supports i.e. the construction of improved stoves or improved grain-stores with the expert follow-up of the project field staff. Households, that are implementing at least five project-supported activities are considered model-farmers, and are obliged to promote the acquired new skills with their neighbors and peers. The evaluation team could not contact farmers, who were convinced only by a neighbor or peer to just imitate the newly introduced activity on his own. The step into own activity usually seemed to have needed a contact with the projects field staff. As the project is there and as it supports with advice and inputs (partially subsidized), farmers of course use this service. It would have been interesting to see, whether proposed changes are propagating without any such push provided by the project or whether the project input (be it material or “only” advisory support of the project field staff) makes the decisive difference. However, all of the beneficiaries were highly satisfied with the results of the changes and reported interest of neighbors and peers.

Development agents and social workers represent the integrative approach of the project on field level. The predominantly young college or university graduates are staff of the project, live and work in the villages and provide a reliable support and follow-up to all project partners on community level. They receive regular trainings³⁸ in their subject matter areas and additional trainings and accompaniment in all areas, the project is actually working and offering support to the target groups. They are visited weekly by their supervisors giving oral report and agreeing on a working plan for the coming week.

Farmers cooperating with the project praise specifically the reliability of the project field workers, benefitting from their close follow-up while implementing project supported activities. All of the field workers are male, which is a disadvantage, especially when it comes to the accompaniment of household-improvements or other, typically more women related activities.

Training of all forms and to different target groups is a core function of the project. Trainings are provided to the beneficiaries as well as to field staff or other disseminators (teachers, Woreda officials, association board members). These trainings are usually organized by the respective subject matter departments and a good number of them consist of slightly changing standard modules. However methodological implementation varies strongly from trainer to trainer and supporting didactic materials have to be organized and put together by individual trainers. As these are usually experts of their respective subject matters but not in adult

³⁸ DAs are being trained quarterly in all fields of agro-ecology

education, the methodological quality of the observed trainings was poor³⁹, participants had a hard time to follow long lectures without visualization.

5.3 Relevance of the intervention

The Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP)⁴⁰ of the Government of Ethiopia names seven pillars for the development of the country, agriculture, social development and empowerment of women and youth being three of it. The further elaboration of the national planning is further highlighting the necessity of developing water resources for both, safe human use and small scale irrigation, of improved education and of expansion and improvement of health services. This supports the statement of the project planning document that proposed project activities are compliant with government rural development strategies and priorities. This compliance has been confirmed by the Director of NGOs Affairs Directorate of the Oromia Regional State⁴¹ and through the group interview with Woreda officials, who expressed their utter satisfaction with all steps that were taken by the project and stressed the necessity of further and ongoing support in all the areas, the project is presently active⁴².

As already described above, the project planning is based on an extensive baseline and needs assessment study, conducted in 2010. This procedure helped to determine the relevant areas of work and it further provided necessary hints for the design of activities. The MAPP-workshop⁴³ with 24 representatives of the beneficiaries confirmed this assumption. Most important criteria for a good life were determined: Access to safe water, food security, education, access to health services, good natural environment. With the “influence-matrix”, project activities were rated in their contribution to these important criteria for quality of life (Annex 5). None of them was rated low, rather were all of the activities seen in a close linkage, one supporting the other. Even natural resource management activities were rated very high in spite of the fact, that they demand a lot of labor force in the first place, without providing immediate economic results. Participants clearly saw and expressed the relation between the protection of natural resources and food security as well as between education and food security and good food quality. It was striking to observe, that participants were able to see very concisely, how things are linked and integrated and that they were able to express and determine these linkages very clearly. One of the results of this workshop is a clear confirmation of the relevance of the projects activities from the perspective of the target group.

5.4 Effectiveness

The elaboration of the planning document is based on a sound need assessment and baseline study worked out by multidisciplinary study teams in collaboration with experts from Woreda line departments. The Woreda administration as well disposes of an operational development plan that is broken down from national planning. As described above, the planning document of the project was aligned with this plan and circulated from Woreda administration upward through the zonal office to the Directorate of NGO Affairs within the Oromia Regional State Administration. With a formal agreement between this office and MfM the project was entitled to start its activities. It is this office, that receives quarterly reports and that will perform a final evaluation towards the end of the present project phase.

As already mentioned above, the logical framework has been further developed after the initiation of the project and thus shows some inconsistencies and does not coincide with all

³⁹ Especially, if there are no practicals included

⁴⁰ Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 2010: Growth and Transformation Plan 2010/11-2014/15.

⁴¹ Interview performed on Tuesday Oct. 28th 2014.

⁴² Group interview performed on Nov. 3rd 2014.

⁴³ Performed on Nov. 4th and 5th 2014 in Bake Kelate

formulations of the original planning document. However, for the most part, outcomes are understood as direct effects of project outputs and thus follow the logic of development processes, initiated by project activities that, in cooperation with the beneficiaries produce certain outputs, which in turn result in a planned outcome. Outputs and outcomes are equipped with indicators, which, for most of the outputs consist in project activity counts. The figures that are provided with the yearly reports of the project will subsequently only be commented concerning their plausibility. Outcome indicators as suggested in the new logframe, can as yet not be checked, as the reports do not include information on most of them and as the baselines for some of them do not yet exist. In order to display the achievement of objectives, the most recent logframe matrix⁴⁴ will be used.

Indirect effect (impact)	
<i>Livelihood of people in Abuna Gindeberet Woreda is improved</i>	
	An impressive result of the Trend-Analysis, conducted during the MAPP workshop has been the statement of the gathered participants that all relevant criteria, describing the quality of live, have developed positively during the last couple of years. Even though other influencing factors were mentioned, the MfM project was identified as a major driver of this positive development in the Influence-Matrix during the same workshop (s. Annex 5)
Direct effect (Outcome) – Agro-Ecology	
Income of targeted households in 23 Kebeles of Abuna Gindeberet Woreda improved	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, average annual income of targeted households increased by 5%	This is one of the newly introduced indicators (s.a.) that is not related to data of the baseline study. Neither are recent data on this indicator to be found in the project reports. However, limiting the statement from “targeted” to “reached” households, the field-visits have provided some plausibility for the achievement of the indicator, as all visited and interviewed beneficiaries reported dramatic income increases, resulting specifically from the growing and marketing of vegetables in their home gardens.
Output – Crop cultivation	
Crop production and productivity improved.	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, production and productivity of major crops is increased by 10%	The reported figures on this indicator are provided by the last recent third quarter report of 2014, summing up the training of 2323 farmers in soil fertility management techniques, the provision of 967 households with improved seed for staple crops and the distribution of high numbers of sweet potato and cassava cuttings to 440 households (up to 2013). All in all, 12.330 farming households have benefitted or are cooperating with one or more project activities in this sector (double and multiple counts included).

⁴⁴ ...which was revised by the project team just after the original planning document was agreed up on and signed with the Regional Government.

	<p>Indeed these figures can serve as hints for a production and productivity raise, yet in fact they provide no evidence on that because they do not really report on the indicator of production and productivity increase.</p> <p>The most recent report on the other hand reports of a reluctant application of improved crop production methods in spite of having trained by now more than 4708 farmers on-site and 548 off-site. The report envisages an increased effort of the project to work on that with further training. However, a thorough analysis of the causes for farmers' reluctance is missing.</p> <p>On the other hand, the evaluation team could see that especially in the field of vegetable growing and agroforestry convincing steps ahead could be taken. Vegetable growing as introduced by the project is applied by farmers of all wealth categories and provides those, who cooperate, with a considerable raise in income through the marketing of their products. The same is true for the cooperating farmers implementing agro-forestry practices with mixed cultivation. Newly introduced cassava and sweet potatoes as well as tropical fruit trees (papaya, mango, banana) grown in a mixed cultivation obviously provide much better results than the traditional maize monoculture. Examples of individual farmers have been encouraging, however, it is obvious that 26,8 ha of mixed cultivation in the project region is still a pilot area.</p> <p>Another observation strengthening the plausibility of an increased production are the project efforts to extend and improve irrigation. The introduction of 5 night storages and the provision of 70 sets of drip irrigation equipment definitely helped to increase production and productivity (even though this is especially true for vegetable growing s.a.)</p>
<p>Output – Animal husbandry</p> <p>Animal productivity and production improved.</p>	
<p>Indicator</p>	<p>Comment</p>
<p>By the end of 2014, production and productivity of livestock is improved by 5%</p>	<p>1500 households grow improved forage plants and on 250 ha of pasture land improved varieties are being under sown. At the same time more than 5.000 poultry birds have been distributed, contributing to an increased household income and an improved diet. The same is true for the distribution of 90 modern and 80 transitional beehives. As for trainings, the project reached more than 6.700 farmers with trainings in improved animal husbandry. All in all 12.833 farmers benefitted of or participated in one or more of the project activities in this sector (including multiple counts).</p> <p>Obviously these activities contribute to an improvement of income and nutrition. Eggs of the improved varieties provide a steady income for the women farmers, which was confirmed in a number of interviews and during the workshop as well as the modernization of beehives.</p> <p>However, the relation of improved forage plants and undersowing on the run down pastures with higher productivity of the animals is to be proved. The same is true for the imparting of training to huge numbers of farmers. It would be desirable to see more plausible evidence for effects of these measures on production and productivity.</p>
<p>Direct effect (outcome) – natural resource management</p> <p>Natural resource base is sustainably improved.</p>	

Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, the forest cover of the Woreda increased from 0,4% to 0,5%	<p>3.638 farming households participated more or less closely with the establishment of 230 ha of area closures, 686 km of stone and 126 km of soil bunds have been built together with 1700 families and 15 km of gully reclaiming constructions. All in all 6.600 households have participated in one or more of the projects activities in this sector (multiple counts included).</p> <p>Even though there are no data of present forage cover of the Woreda that could provide evidence for the formulated indicator, the figures on improvement in natural resource management are impressive. This is true for the above mentioned figures as well as for the more than 3.6 million tree, vetiver grass and sisal seedlings produced in the project run nurseries and more than 1.7 million in private nurseries. The individual households who involved in running the private nurseries have not only managed to produce this huge number of seedlings but also they gained the necessary nursery management skill, technical knowhow and generated additional income by selling these seedlings through cooperation with MfM.</p> <p>Even more convincing of the effectiveness of the project approach is the awareness shown by all interviewed representatives of the target group. The people are aware of the danger of depleting and destroying their natural resources and all of the visited area closures and gully reclamations have been initiated after persistent requests of the concerned households. In fact the project approach in this respect is very effective, as the areas to be closed or reclaimed, are usually totally run down by erosion and without any relevant use for the surrounding people. Thus even closure of the areas does not cause any further loss to the users. Rather they observe and appreciate the astonishing recovery of vegetation already after two or three years of careful management and reclamation.</p> <p>The beneficiary workshop showed the high awareness of the problem of natural deterioration and the linkage made between a run-down natural environment and nutrition security (Annex 5). It as well showed that beneficiaries are well aware of the necessity and ready to invest their resources (predominantly labor) in order to protect and sustain the natural resources.</p>
Output– Natural resource management	
Areas closed and gullies treated	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 270 ha of land closed and 12 km of gully reclaimed	Up to the third quarter of 2014 230 ha of land could be closed in and 14,75 km of gully rehabilitation construction could be put in place
Output – Natural resource management	
Seedlings planted	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 2,8 million seedlings planted.	Altogether more than 5.3 million seedlings are being produced in project and private nurseries.

Output – Natural resource management	
Bunds constructed and stabilized	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 650 km of bunds constructed and 70 km stabilized.	With more than 800 km of bunds (soil and stone) the formulated indicator has been more than reached.
Direct Effect (Outcome) – Road construction	
Road network service improved	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 45 km of roads constructed and maintained.	119 km of rural roads have been constructed. The formulated outcome is rather an output and the indicator is clearly an output indicator.
Output – Road Construction	
Rural road constructed	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 3000 households accessed road network.	11.439 inhabitants have an improved access to the road network now, after the construction of rural roads by the project. The indicator is rather an outcome indicator, indicators of outcome and output should be swapped.
Outcome – Women in Development	
The socio-economic condition of rural women in Abuna Gindeberet is improved	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 3800 households will have improved home conditions By the end of 2014, 900 women will have increased income from 0 Birr to 5000 Birr	3.600 households have improved their home conditions Improved home-conditions refer to the construction and use of latrines, the separation of the homes into animal sheds and human living and cooking areas, in order to prevent the occurrence of intestinal diseases and of zoonosis. The importance of these measures has as well been emphasized especially by the female participants of the MAPP workshop. 3.600 households use improved and energy saving stoves and daily cooking stoves. These improvements will definitely improve the situation of the women, as the necessity of firewood is considerably reduced and thus the daily toil of the women and girls as well is decreased. Considering scarce fuel wood and devastation of forest and shrub areas as a problem, there is as well a tremendous effect on natural resource protection to be expected. However, this first indicator is not really providing evidence on the above outcome as it is formulated as an output indicator. The second indicator, on the other hand could provide some information on outcome level.

	<p>However, there is neither a baseline nor a reported figure available.</p> <p>Still, the formation of 5 credit associations the provision of 505 women with credits, the participation of 595 households in vegetable growing and the distribution of more than 5.000 pullets and cockerels provide a high probability of income increase for a considerable number of women. This is because the first intervention is directed exclusively towards women and the evaluation team could verify through a number of visits and interviews that practically all credits indeed were used for productive investments that paid off. The second and third intervention are aimed at households, however, women usually play an important part in the vegetable growing and in poultry activities. Thus, it can be assumed that the income generated with these activities as well is mainly women's income.</p>
<p>Output – Women in development</p> <p>Home management and food preparation technologies for rural women in Abuna Gindeberet improved</p>	
Indicator	Comment
<p>By the end of 2014, 3800 hhs provided with improved home management technologies (houses partitioned, and latrines constructed)</p> <p>By the end of 2014, 3800 hhs provided with improved stoves</p> <p>By the end of 2014, 2400 women trained on improved food preparation techniques</p>	<p>Comments on indicator one and two s.a.</p> <p>2703 women have been trained in improved home-economics, 1176 in vegetable cooking and preparation (double counts included). These trainings were reported by the female workshop participants to be very effective and helpful for an improved and more efficient housekeeping and for the enrichment of the families' diet.</p>
<p>Output – Women in Development</p> <p>Saving and credit service for rural women in Abuna Gindeberet provided</p>	
Indicator	Comment
<p>By the end of 2014 saving and credit service provided to 900 women</p>	<p>Credits could be provided to 505 women. This is less than the originally planned 900, a figure that could not be reached as during the first year political reasons prevented the initiation of this intervention. Given this late start only in 2013, the establishment of 5 savings- and credit associations, a total credit amount at the end of 2013 of 1.2 million Birr and a loan repayment of 869.394 Birr is a very good sign.</p> <p>The approach of building savings- and credit groups of 3 to 5 women, who function as guarantors and as a feedback-group, as well as the tight accompaniment of this groups by the projects social workers obviously helped to engage only in sound investments that provide the necessary margins to pay back the credits.</p> <p>On the other hand the provision of credit in combination with other project interventions helped even poor and landless people to earn and accumulate some money (s.chapter "Conclusions").</p> <p>Interestingly the female participants of the workshop proofed to be very self-conscious, outspoken and able to express their needs. This may as</p>

	well be one of the effects of the project work, supporting them to actively support to the household income or even earn an autonomous living as a single head of a household.
Direct effect (Outcome) – Health	
Health service provision in Abuna Gindeberet is improved	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, access to basic health coverage increased from 65% to 85%	<p>Again it is hard to come to a conclusion as to whether the objective has been achieved as the indicator is missing a clear baseline and a clearly defined base to relate the percentages to.</p> <p>However it is clearly visible that the 6 existing Health Centers by now are well equipped with solar fridges (to store vaccines), parturition stools and microscopes and that EPI could be extended considerably with the support of the project.</p> <p>The project approach is it, to complement state efforts to public health care instead of arming an extra health program. A number of preventive health aspects are as well part of other project sectors (s.b. SAFE approach on Trachoma). As the project does not dispose on own field health staff, all activities are implemented by Woreda staff (except minor and major eye surgery) in close cooperation with the projects health department.</p> <p>The problem Trachoma, which proved to be endemic in the Woreda, has been tackled effectively with the combined SAFE approach of the project, S standing for surgery, A for antibiotics, F for facial cleanliness and E for environmental cleanliness. The project is working on all levels, supporting access to safe water sources by well construction and spring development, the facial cleanliness by information campaigns at schools and through water user associations, the antibiotic provision with a massive Zithromax campaign, providing more than 100.000 inhabitants of the Woreda with the preventive medical and the surgery as a last resort for long suffering patients in 220 cases.</p> <p>Other basic health interventions are the massive distribution of iodine to more than 100.000 people, in order to fight the high prevalence (39,2 % of the population) of goiter and the deworming of almost 50.000 students.</p>
Output – Health	
Essential solar fridges and furniture provided	
By the end of 2014, 6 health centers provided with medical equipment and 15 health institutions provided with solar fridges and furniture	6 health centers are provided with medical equipment , 15 health institutions (health centers and health posts) are equipped with a solar driven refrigerator (double counts) and health workers, who are able to handle this equipment.
Output – Health	
Support provided to extended program of immunization (EPI)	

Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, EPI coverage increased from 53% to 75%	Baseline and targeted percentage are not provided in the reports, however, EPI has been massively extended to about 10.000 children.
Direct effect (Outcome) – Health	
Incidence of HIV infection decreased and its effects mitigated	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, the HIV prevalence rate decreased from 0,9% to 0,3%	The prevalence rate of HIV is not provided in the baseline and in the final report ⁴⁵ . However, the projects support to awareness creation and preventive communication campaigns seems to help for higher alertness and precaution as treatment of other sexually transmitted diseases and opportunistic infections have been requested four times as much as planned (1801 cases). This high treatment rate is being attributed to the high awareness rate of the target population.
Output – Health	
Knowledge on HIV/AIDS improved	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 30.000 people are aware of HIV transmission and preventive methods	40.013 people have been reached with information on HIV transmission and possible methods for prevention.
Output – Health	
Capacity of stakeholders in prevention and care enhanced	
By the end of 2014, 15 Anti Aids Clubs members and 160 community members trained	21 Anti Aids Club members have been trained. With these trainings the project supports the official efforts to fight HIV/AIDs. School teachers, initiating these clubs of up to 25 students are supported with trainers and information material for the club members. The idea is, that the knowledge that is provided to the club members, is spread throughout the school and as well within the students' families to thus making infection ways and preventive measures publicly known and at the same time fight the stigma, HIV positive patients are suffering from.
Outcome – Health	
Access to reproductive health and family planning services improved	

⁴⁵ The 2013 report tells of 1 positive case in 11.000 tested people in the Woreda. This is of course not a statistically reliable figure, but it suggests a far lower incidence rate than the one taken as a baseline in the indicator (0,01%).

Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, the contraceptive prevalence rate increased from 36% to 74 %	<p>The contraceptive use rate provided in the baseline document is 33%. As for the present situation there is no prevalence rate reported.</p> <p>However, the baseline survey clearly points out, that the most relevant reasons for not using contraceptive methods are the lack of access to contraceptive methods and the fear of side effects, applying these methods.</p> <p>Thus, providing information to more than 40.000 people about the good use of these methods as well as providing about 60.000 people with different contraceptive means surely helps to increase the contraceptive prevalence rate.</p>
<p>Output - health</p> <p>Knowledge about reproductive health and family planning enhanced</p>	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, knowledge of 30.000 increased on reproductive health and family planning	See comment on the outcome indicator.
<p>Output – Health</p> <p>Provision of contraceptive methods and choices improved</p>	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, the number of reproductive age group people who use contraceptive choices is increased to 12.000	As more than 60.000 contraceptive long and short term remedies have been distributed, the assumption seems plausible that the number of people, who permanently use them, will be higher than 12.000, especially because its almost 30.000 of the beneficiaries whose choice was on long- and medium term contraceptives.
<p>Output – Health</p> <p>Capacity of stakeholders on reproductive health and family planning enhanced</p>	
By the end of 2014, 132 health professionals trained on reproductive health and family planning	Training in reproductive health and family planning was provided to 91 health extension workers, Woreda professionals on community level as well as to 88 health development armies, voluntary health workers on community level with basic health training.
<p>Outcome – Education</p> <p>Education service delivery improved</p>	

Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, conducive school environment created for 9.947 students	<p>At present the construction work of three schools is finalized, teaching is provided within the new buildings. Estimating an average of 1.300 students per school, it is 3.900 students who are benefitting. Three more schools are about to be completed (another 3.900 students). Two more of the eight planned school compounds are in the process of planning and tendering.</p> <p>Construction work is lagging behind a bit. However, project staff is confident to accomplish the planned constructions within the next year of a new project period as well as one or two newly included school buildings not foreseen in the initial planning (Megala Bite).</p> <p>The newly constructed school compounds are highly valued by students, parents, teacher and the Woreda administration. This is very easy to understand, if one is comparing the old, mud-constructed and windowless school-buildings with very poor sanitation with the new, stable buildings with high and light rooms and clean toilet buildings, separate for male and female students. Participants of the MAPP workshop were even arguing, that with MfMs investment in schools the importance and image of school education increased, resulting in higher readiness and will of the parents, to send their children (including girls) to school.</p> <p>Higher enrolment rates in the newly constructed schools are however only partially due to this basically higher appreciation of school education in general. There are as well parents and children of neighboring Kebeles, who prefer to enroll in the new school building of the nearby neighboring community. However, this effect has a problematic consequence: The new schools, built for a certain number of students calculated on the basis of the Kebeles inhabitants, have to digest much higher numbers of students resulting again in a relatively high number of students per classroom.</p> <p>Presently not all of the newly constructed schools dispose of water. This seems to be especially important considering the prevention of intestinal diseases and parasites as well as Trachom. Thus, the project is considering to provide the school compounds with rainwater harvesting and – storing devices in order to provide students and teacher the opportunity to wash their hands.</p>
Output- education	
Primary and secondary schools built, renovated and furnished	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 8 higher primary schools constructed and furnished	s.a. comment on outcome
Output – Education	
Teachers trained in English	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 140	Up to the date, 116 teachers have been trained additionally in English.

English teachers trained	
Outcome- Education	
Non-formal education service delivery improved	
By the end of 2014, favourable conditions facilitated for adults	The project is contributing and supporting state efforts to fight illiteracy. Therefore it contributed school material and covered minor expenses for the courses.
Output – Education	
People attended non-formal education	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 9.000 people enabled to read and to write	9.071 people have attended project supported literacy classes.
Direct effect (Outcome)– Water	
Supply of potable water improved and workload of women reduced	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, water supply coverage increased from 16% to 28% By the end of 2014, time spent for water fetching reduced by ¼ for 14.011 women/girls who have access to improved springs	<p>Lack of clean water has been identified in the baseline study⁴⁶ as most important problem for the rural households in Abuna Gindeberet. Indeed, access to water is a key-contribution to a number of other issues like human and animal health, nutrition, productive gardening asf.</p> <p>Consequently the project put an emphasis on the development of clean water sources, consolidating 18 springs and supporting the construction of 14 hand-dug wells.</p> <p>Figures of the annual reports 2012 and 2013 provide as well information about the number of 2.400 benefitting households. Supposing that a consolidated spring is used by 100 families on average, the seven in 2014 consolidated springs benefitted another 700 households, summing up to 3.100 households that have access to save drinking water, thanks to project activities. Calculating with an average of 8 persons per household, 24.800 people have benefitted.</p> <p>The baseline provides the percentage of 16% of interviewed households having access to save water supply, the suggested 28% of the indicator one however, cannot be confirmed, as the basis is not clear, on which to relate the figures.</p> <p>The baseline study as well provides figures about the walking time of women and girls to fetch water, stating that 57% of the interviewed households had walking distances of more than half up to more than two hours to find a water source. It is a pity that neither the logframe-indicator nor the report relate back to these figures.</p> <p>The visited water points were kept proper and tidy, an indication for the well-functioning of the water user committees. In that sense, the training of the boards of these committees definitely was successful. However, at all visited water point users or even board members reported of frictions be-</p>

⁴⁶ MfM, 2010: Final report on baseline survey and need assessment of Abuna Gindeberet Woreda, p. 51.

	tween users and people who formerly used the spring but were not partaking in the consolidation activities or are hardly able to pay the maintenance fee, levied by the water user board. These kind of frictions are to be expected, dealing with the most precious and scarce good but it seemed that the board members were not adequately prepared and could as well not rely on a professional backstopping. In contrary, the responsible person on Woreda level firmly denied any such problem, stating that he had never ever observed this kind of dispute and disagreement.
Output – Water	
Water points developed	
By the end of 2014, 36 water points will be developed and functional	32 water-points have been developed and provide safe water to the users
Output – Water	
WASH committees trained and functioning	
Indicator	Comment
By the end of 2014, 36 WASH committees trained and equipped	32 water-committees have been trained and equipped with the necessary maintenance tools. 2012 and 2013 these were 175 board-members with another 77 in 2014.

5.5 Efficiency

The provided dates allow a rough⁴⁷ statement concerning the relation of financial input and output.

Component	Beneficiaries (individuals)	Woreda coverage	Costs in €	Costs per person
Agro-ecology	172.000 P ⁴⁸ .	80%	405.000 €	2,35 €/P.
Women in dev.	37.000 P ⁴⁹ .	17%	187.000 €	5,05 €/P.
Education	7.800 students ⁵⁰ and 9.000 adult people	8%	1.490.000 €	1,30 €/P ⁵¹
Water dev.	24.800 P ⁵² .	11%	86.000 €	0,23 €/P. ⁵³
Health	250.000 P ⁵⁴ .	115%	283.000 €	1,13 €/P.
Total			2.451.000 €⁵⁵	

Evaluating the costs in relation to other rural development projects in Ethiopia, the figures for agricultural advice and extension as well as for women promotion are in a usual range⁵⁶.

⁴⁷ The figures are indeed only rough estimations as multiple counts are not to avoid and as low cost-high reachability interventions (information campaigns) are added together with the costs of intensive cooperation processes with small groups.

⁴⁸ Resulting of 20.000 households, that are in any kind of material cooperation in the agro-ecology sector (not only training or information) with the project with an average household size of 8 persons and 12.000 people benefiting from access road construction.

⁴⁹ Consisting of the total beneficiaries of 4.700 households (average 8 persons) that improved the home-conditions, started vegetable gardening and received credit.

⁵⁰ Estimated number of students, benefitting from 6 newly constructed schools.

⁵¹ Estimated operating time 15 years and only counting the number of students

⁵² Benefitting households multiplied by the average household size of 8 people

⁵³ Estimated operating time 15 years.

⁵⁴ Rough estimation of people who received some kind of treatment (immunization, deworming, medicals). Not included are people participating in awareness creation campaigns.

⁵⁵ The costs are exclusively project costs without administration costs in Addis Ababa and Austria.

Figures on education are not very conclusive, as they comprise the cost intensive construction of school buildings benefitting a relatively small number of students and the relatively low-cost support of literacy courses benefitting 9.000 people. It is interesting that the construction costs for the three already completed school compounds in Gitirie, Haro and Gute Andode seem to be much less expensive than planned (32%, 31% and 64% of the planned costs respectively). The total project costs are 9 million Birr (360.000 €) lower than planned. Agro-ecology and Women in development exceeded the planned budget, Health, Water and specifically Education stayed below the planned figures.

However at this point in time when not all payments have been finalized it is premature to interpret financial figures available to the consultants.

Most of the activities could be implemented within the planned period.

5.6 Impact

Improving the livelihood of the inhabitants of the Woreda Abuna Gindeberet is the overarching goal MfM intends to contribute to with this project. Document analysis, statements of the workshop participants as well as from interviewed beneficiaries and officials indicate that this contribution can indeed be confirmed. Efforts in the agro-ecological sector helped to better and more diverse yields and thus contributed to nutrition security and diet diversification. This in turn improved the health situation of children and adults. High importance was given by the beneficiaries as well to the improvement of the home and sanitation situation in a very broad sense. People are well aware of the combined effects of clean and tidy homes with separated rooms for animals and humans, less smoke in the kitchen, clean water and closed latrines on the health of the family. With information and immunization campaigns the health status of the population is as well improved on a broad base. Thus better health and better well-being, resulting from efforts of different project departments is definitely a strong contribution to the aspired impact.



On the other hand especially higher yields, vegetable growing and poultry rearing helped a big number of households to dispose of higher incomes. Partially this surplus money, like the money obtained through the credit program, has been reinvested into productive fields like bigger poultry cages, modern bee-hives, more vegetable seed or animals to be fattened. Parts of it obviously have also been invested into the education of the children, their provision with school uniforms and education material, contributing thus to the direct project effort to improve education and leading thus to an improved education situation in the Woreda.

Higher incomes as well have been invested into better clothing for both, men and women. For the women especially this is one of the expressions of a better standing in the family and in society, another indicator of an overall improved livelihood.

Understanding thus the multitude of closely linked activities that contribute together to the improvement of livelihoods, a differentiation can hardly be made into activities that contribute more and activities that contribute less to the overall goal. Better health as one important part

⁵⁶ <http://www.ata.gov.et/wp-content/uploads/Ethiopian-Extension-Report-August-2009.pdf>

of good live, is promoted directly by the health department, however the preconditions to stay healthy are provided by the provision of clean water and a sufficient and manifold diet. Thus the different branches of the project definitely work together and in working together they produce the desired results.

5.7 Sustainability

Sustainability of a still ongoing project cannot be evaluated through the factual presence of still existing project initiated activities and changes as in an ex-post evaluation exercise. However, the probability of sustaining effects can be deduced from features of given interventions, like:

- Is the necessary infrastructure in place to carry on with the activity after the project?
- How complex is the innovation introduced?
- Are the necessary resources accessible to perform the activity without the project?
- Are the necessary management skills in place?
- Are the initiated changes within the (sub)-cultural and capacity-framework of the targeted region, population and its institutions?

Applying these criteria to the field mission observations provides the following picture:

In the field of agro-ecology a number of specific interventions are well understood and integrated into the thinking patterns of the beneficiaries. This seems to be the fact with the natural resource management interventions, whose usefulness and necessity is well understood and supported by the beneficiaries. The same applies to the introduction of new crop varieties (vegetables, high yielding fruits). Farmers, who started with these, express their decision to stick to the activity, even if inputs are more costly than at present. Individual farmers even re-invested their gains into other production features like ploughing oxen, irrigation gear or additional chicken. In these individual cases, sustainability of an economic improvement process seems to be granted.

For a number of interventions it is the approach of the project, to improve and enhance carefully the already given potentials of the landscape, the culture and the people. Thus existing irrigation schemes are carefully improved in their effectiveness by minimizing water losses, providing drip irrigation materials⁵⁷, training the farmers in more effective ways of water use and production. This approach of low profile but comprehensive development seems to be effective and sustainable as the visited farmers were easily able to explain their activities and perform them without massive support of their field advisors.

The same applies to the credit program, which is designed in an easy to understand, transparent and at the same time effective way. Starting with small amounts only provided with the security of a guarantor group and a viable business plan is understandable for the beneficiaries. High repayment rates confirm the viability. Providing on the other hand the management of the associations with solid training and enduring accompaniment helps them to meet the right decisions and to administer the money in a reliable way. Experiences of former project regions confirm the sustainability of the approach after the pulling-out of MfM.

Based on given cultural patterns and on an existing regional market is also the training of women in embroidery. With the training they are able to improve their skills and acquire a necessary sewing machine to start a small business. To restrict the number of trainees to 20 helps to keep the



⁵⁷ As for irrigation equipment it became not totally clear, whether and how the project is subsidizing.

existing market stable and provides the trained ladies with a good perspective for a sustainable income. Experiences of the projects sector head and the trainer confirm that about 50% of the trained ladies earn their living or contribute a substantial part to the family income after the course.

It is especially these not very complex measures on a rather individual base that have a good perspective to be sustained as well without further project input.

Sustainability in a mid-term is as well provided by the very solid and robust construction of infrastructure, the project is supporting. Schools, wells and springs are being constructed with durable material, a solid design and tightly controlled construction firms.

Sustainability has to be reconsidered on the other hand, where necessary inputs or knowledge for initiated activities are overly expensive or hardly obtainable without the project. This is a danger with the high yielding hybrid varieties that are not to be propagated by the farmers themselves. Hybridisation is an effective breeding technique, providing very high yielding varieties of plants and animals. In the project this is the case especially with vegetable seed, maybe as well with some of the improved maize and sorghum seed and maybe as well with the distributed poultry. However, hybrids never produce offsprings that are nearly as productive as they are (if at all). This means, that the seed or the young animal always has to be bought anew in order to start a new production cycle. Farmers, who are not used to that or are scarce with money, usually discontinue this kind of production as soon as input provision is not easily to be reached any more.

More complex interventions, needing mature organizational setups and good steering capacity can as well be critical when it comes to sustainability. In the case of the project this applies to the management of the public goods water springs and deteriorated pasture land that are being improved and developed with the support of the project.

Both interventions have an important physical dimension (spring development, gully reclamation, tree plantation) but an even more important management dimension as well. This management dimension includes the rules of cooperation, maintenance and rights to use for individuals. As for now it seems that the project has well done with preparing the management bodies of these facilities, usually the



boards or committees of the user groups, with necessary knowledge and skills to organize the maintenance. Most of them as well have a sound organizational setup and have developed by-laws to regulate the access of individual users of the good (water, grass, wood). However in some cases these by-laws are not comprehensive enough or not well communicated within the association (i.e. who will have access to the firewood of a closure area, when, after some years a careful and planned extraction can take place?). In other cases the boards seem to be overstrained with the enforcement of the by-laws in a peaceful and balanced way. Surging disagreements and quarrels may then endanger the sustainability of such an intervention.

A last area, that may endanger the sustainability of the project efforts, is the cooperation with the Woreda administration. It is this administrative body that should take over initiatives and activities of the project, when MfM is pulling out of the Woreda. Even though there are agreements and joint activities of the different project departments with their Woreda line offices, an institutional learning and take-over of responsibility of the Woreda officers is hardly to be observed. Rather the project staff, together with user groups or even with Kebele

administration initiates, organizes and implements measures, inviting the Woreda officers to participate with selected activities or steps.

6 Conclusions

With the conclusions the above elaborated findings will be summarized and condensed into a couple of most interesting and most important argumentation lines.

6.1 Integrated rural development

The decision to bring forward rural development with a combined effort in a number of usually separated sectors has been proved successful in a number of MfM projects all over Ethiopia and it is successful in Abuna Gindeberet too. The striking argument behind this decision is the fact that in real life there are no separations between nutrition, living, health, production, education *asf.* All of these activity fields are interwoven parts of one individual, family and community life. Thus sector separation creates an artificial division of an existing whole. However, this separation is of course done as well with some reason as each of these activity fields have developed highly specialized and sector specific knowledge systems, difficult to be overseen and more difficult even to be administered and applied by non-specialists. Bringing together these extremes of interwoven real life needs with highly specialized expert knowledge of different sectors is the challenge for an integrated rural development approach and MfM is proving that it has the knowledge and experience to meet this challenge. Four factors seem to be most important for successful work:

1. The activities are based on the expressed needs of the beneficiaries. Based on a Woreda-wide needs assessment the project approaches the to-be communities and groups to work with carefully, developing a good ground within local administrations and within the population. Possible fields of cooperation are explained thoroughly, but then it is up to the beneficiaries themselves, to show interest and to cooperate.
2. The project has a steady and reliable presence in the cooperating Kebeles. This presence via development agents or social workers can probably not be overestimated, as it provides trust and closeness, helps to overcome set-backs and literally provides the most important interface of sector-knowledge (health, water, agriculture *asf.*) and everyday necessities. The field workers are most important interpreters and organize the sectoral concertation to solve intersectoral real life problems on Kebele level. Obviously they cannot do this without steady backstopping and training. MfM is knowledgeable about this and acts accordingly.
3. Even though the project management works according to sectors, the sector-interfaces are managed well. Department- and sector heads are in a continuous exchange on everyday project implementation and work-planning formally but as well during informal private life. This is partially due to the very remote location of the project, where social life is restricted to a small number of occasions and project staff spend as well good parts of their private life together.
4. Implementation of the project activities is organized with high quality and reliability. Thus school directors know, when the deworming campaign will start, field staff know, when they will be visited by their supervisors, working groups know, when the needed construction material will be coming and they can rely on that. This reliability in implementation is a fourth most important factor for the high appreciation and success of the project.

6.2 Project planning and reporting

MfM is presently on its way to coherent and outcome oriented planning and reporting. This does not mean to abandon concise planning and monitoring of activities and of day to day work as a most important part of project implementation. This is being done at present in an excellent way.

Rather outcome oriented planning and reporting provides a deeper insight and understanding of the envisaged effects, of the multiple relations between activities and effects within and between different sectors. And it helps to observe and describe more clearly, what own measures have contributed to in the end.

At present, the planning and reporting does not develop enough on the fact that many of the effects are the result of project activities of very different departments and sectors, an impact analysis⁵⁸ is missing. As a consequence it is difficult to develop indicators that are more than a mere counting of activities. This is especially true when we come to the level of outcomes, to a lesser extent it is as well true on the level of outputs⁵⁹. On the other hand, where real outcome formulations and indicators have been developed (income/yields/number of newly infected trachoma cases...), the relation to the baseline is often missing and the monitoring instrument is not yet in a position to report on these indicators.

6.3 Approach development

It is the basic principle of the project to support the development of given potentials⁶⁰. This is true for the development of springs, where the given natural potential and the potential of the water users to organize and provide labor is the base for further development, it is true for the improvements in agriculture, where given experiences of the farmer, their land and their labor are supported to achieve better yields and it is true for the credit program where the potential of social cohesion, group responsibility and the creativity and reliability of the credit-taker are the basis for the acquisition of an investment credit. Difficulties with this principle arise, when people or groups of people lack potentials⁶¹ to be developed as it is the case with very poor or handicapped people. Here the project already started to develop strategies that seem worthwhile to be continued and further explored. The mission could see the example of a landless widow who was integrated in the credit program, being part of a credit-group of other poor widows, whose default risk was taken over by the project⁶². With the borrowed money she could rent a garden and take part in the projects' vegetable growing program and is now looking forward to harvest and market carrots, beetroots and cabbage in order to pay back the credit and to invest the leftovers into an animal to be fattened and sold. Thus the combination of the two programs brought a first sign of hope for her situation. Interestingly here decidedness and her physical disposition to work have been discovered as potentials or assets to build on. For the future it is definitely important to be creative and find more approaches of that kind.

Another area worthwhile to develop further is marketing. At the moment vegetable growing is still in its beginnings and marketing in the nearby towns is not a problem. Supposed that an ever growing portion of farmers is taking up the innovation, growing amounts of vegetables may flood these local markets. As a medium and long-term perspective ideas should be developed about how and where the growing vegetable production can be sold.

At present the projects' approach to improve pastures is mainly undersowing existing pastures with better forage varieties. This approach surely can make a difference, producing higher qualities and quantities for the existing animal population. However it doesn't solve the problem of complete overstocking of the area and the missing of any rules for the use of public pastures. Without a progress in any of these questions, untimely use will further prevent pastures from regeneration and overgrazing will further deteriorate and devastate public pastures.

⁵⁸ S. footnote 1

⁵⁹ ...as i.e. count of distributed cuttings is but a mere figure that provides no information about the actual betterment of agricultural practices.

⁶⁰ ... or assets, as the livelihood approach is naming it.

⁶¹ ...or have potentials, that in the first view are not visible by them and by outsiders

⁶² ...as no economically better off women would share the risk of being a guarantor

Definitely general regulations about access to public land and their enforcement are at home in a higher level of politics. However, it may be worthwhile to consider the bottom-up options of voluntary agreements between users and user groups who in the long run must have an interest to commonly protect their limited resources.

One of the undeniable strengths of the project is its ability to construct high quality facilities (schools, springs, roads). As mentioned above the handing over into the responsibility of user groups or Woreda usually as well takes place in a process that enable the to-be management to maintain the facility and to formulate a first round of by-laws. However, it seems that a more intensive process of accompanied organizational development would be necessary in order to provide especially boards of user groups with capacities to deal with new and unforeseen situations, to discuss and issue new or adapted regulations, to solve disagreements between users and between users and non-users. In that sense it seems to be worth considering whether the strength of the project, to deal with physical issues, can be enforced with a focus on organizational development and accompaniment.

7 Recommendations

As already explained above the evaluation team considers the project to be of high relevance for the Woreda, very effective in implementing the planned interventions, successful in reaching its objectives and contributing to the envisaged development goal. Sustainable implementation of a good number of introduced innovations and sustainability of the effects is highly probable. In order to consolidate and broaden the development effects, MfM intends to extend the project into a second phase of three more years. The evaluation team supports this extension without hesitation. In order to further improve the projects performance during this next phase, the following recommendations may be considered:

- In order to proceed further in a systematic and coherent process of planning, monitoring and evaluation, the elaboration of the projects theory of change⁶³ that has been started during the present evaluation, should be continued and further differentiated. Based on this process the recent version of the logical framework has to be revised, a number of output and outcome indicators to be reformulated. This revision and reformulation could as well be done in cooperation with selected groups of beneficiaries and officials as they usually know well which data can be collected easily. Involving them may even help to get their support with the collection of monitoring data (i.e. yields, prevalence of diarrhea in the family asf.). Based on that revised log-frame, the monitoring instrument has to be developed, defining the sources and collection of the data relevant for the indicators. As a last step for outcome and impact oriented planning, a baseline should be elaborated that corresponds with the log-frame indicators and thus provides a solid ground for any further evaluation.
- One decisive pillar of the projects' success is the group of well-trained DA and Social Workers, well accepted by the communities. Ongoing support and accompaniment is important and well provided by project supervisors. Regular training provides them with a broad range of expertise in different fields and specific technical problem solutions. Challenges for the purely male group may arise with working in fields of traditionally female activities. Therefore keep up the highly motivating and qualifying training and accompanying procedure for DA and Social Workers. Recruitment of female ground-personal is paramount.
- Strive for methodological standards of training implementation through:
 - Training for implementing trainers on participatory adult education
 - Elaborated outlines and material kits for recurring training modules
 - Participant- handouts with basic information on training contents for recurring training modules

⁶³ S. footnote 1

- First strategies for including very poor households have been developed and successfully applied (combination of credit and vegetable gardening). Still there seems to be need for further efforts. Perform a pilot-study on the distribution of livelihood assets (potentials) within a typical Kebele. On that basis elaborate further strategies for the inclusion of very poor households.
- Agricultural activities add to higher diversity in nutrition and to household incomes and thus initiate re-investment and development cycles (production, education) and contribute to better living standards (improvement of diet, better clothing). Most relevant in this respect is the introduction of vegetable growing. Two challenges may endanger the sustainability of this success: The seeds for productive varieties are only accessible through MfM and with the further extension of vegetable growing the local and regional markets may not render adequate prices. Therefore strive for farmer accessibility to improved input and support the establishment of marketing structures through:
 - Promotion of high yielding composite varieties.
 - Strengthening of the already initiated and existing seed multiplication and distribution program
 - Initiation and strengthening of input providing and produce collection cooperatives that can obtain imported high yielding inputs and at the same time develop marketing and logistical skills to gradually increase market access for their members.
- Practices that are only applied by the beneficiaries, if necessary materials or inputs are given for free or heavily subsidized by the project (apple trees, irrigation materials) should be closely followed up. Sometimes the initiation of an up to now unknown practice needs convincing examples. However, after initiation and familiarization subsidies should be phased out.
- Develop further capacities for organizational development and provide follow-up to boards of associations that manage a scarce goods (water, land, money). Support them to develop their capacities for steering, adaption to new situations, participatory formulation and peaceful enforcement of by-laws and common rules. Specifically for the area closure management consider to familiarize the management boards with the methodological tool "Participatory Forest Management".
- Consider common efforts with Kebele and Woreda administration to elaborate agreements and rules for the use of public pasture land in participatory processes.
- The responsible Woreda administration is weak in relation to financial resources and institutional capacities. With involving it in the execution of trainings, MfM helps to build up capacities. However, final responsibility, especially for MfM public good activities (spring development, school building, area closures), is not felt by office holders and thus endangers sustainability of project impacts. In order to further strengthen institutional capacity, keep on involving the Woreda administration already in early stages of planning, implementation and evaluation.

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