

CASE STORIES FROM THE FIELD

RH/FP and Livelihood Results through Integration of Population, Health and Environment (PHE)

Rapid population growth remains a major barrier to poverty reduction in Ethiopia. The annual increment of above two million people puts tremendous strains on resource base, the economy, and the ability to deliver services to the existing population. It is much more difficult to make progress in achieving of the country Growth and Transformation Plan(GTP) and MDGs targets in maternal health, in creating sufficient employment (every year 1.2 million job seekers join the labour market), or in sustaining household food security.

Unmet need for family planning in rural areas of Ethiopia is 27.5% and the national average is 25% (EDHS 2011). This high unmet need results in high fertility rate, in rural areas 5.5 and nationally 4.8 births per women (EDHS 2011), which is still high as a result, hampering efforts to improve women and children's health. In addition, the unmet need for youth females age 15-19 is about 33% which requires special attention and intervention.

In addition, women's potential is held back by poorer health, and repeated and dangerous pregnancies. In addition to caring for their children much of their time is consumed with the gathering of water and fire wood. The combination of high unmet need, fertility and work load means that programs need to have the skills, partnerships, and political support to effectively reach women and youth in order to protect their health and their families.

Making use of the project fund obtained from the David & Lucile Packard Foundation, PHE Ethiopia Consortium has coordinated a project titled "Strengthening Reproductive Health/Family Planning (RH/FP) through Integration of Population, Health and Environment (PHE)", with the objective of increasing the utilization of RH/FP services in partnership with three member organizations namely; Lem Ethiopia¹, MELCA Ethiopia² and EWNRA³ at Girar Jarso, Dinsho and Metu woreda⁴ respectively since 2012.

At the outset of the project, woreda multi- sectoral committees/taskforces that incorporates the core sector offices woreda, the community representatives, associations and cooperatives, NGOs working in the woreda, etc. have been established for the coordination and implementation of the projects. Accordingly, MELCA Ethiopia and EWNRA have established woreda level "PHE Planning and Monitoring committee" and "multi sectoral steering committees" respectively. These multi sectoral committees/task forces work jointly together in planning, monitoring and implementation of all activities and have contributed for the project's success.

To build the capacity of committee/task force members and project beneficiaries (women and youth associations and school clubs) training on integrated messages and packages that include RH/FP issues, gender equity, livelihood, income generation and entrepreneurship and environmental conservation have been provided. With the contribution of multi sectoral engagement for the effective implementation of the project the following major results have been achieved:

1. The Environment and Development Society of Ethiopia(Lem Ethiopia)
2. Movement for Ecological Learning and Community Action (MELCA) Ethiopia
3. Ethio Wet Lands and Natural Resources Association(EWNRA)
4. Equivalent to District

Summary of performance Indicators

| S.N | Indicator | Project Implementation Woredas | | | | | |
|-----|--|--------------------------------|------|------|------|-------------|------|
| | | Dinsho | | Metu | | Girar Jarso | |
| | | 2012 (baseline) | 2014 | 2012 | 2014 | 2012 | 2014 |
| 1 | Contraceptive acceptance rate (%) | 32 | 65 | 45 | 64 | 51 | 66 |
| 2 | Delivery at health center (%) | 22 | 42 | 19 | 55 | 16 | 29 |
| 3 | Number of Energy saving stoves distributed | - | 325 | - | - | - | 80 |
| 4 | Number of Women association established | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 |
| 5 | Number of youth association established | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 |
| 6 | Number of PHE school clubs strengthened/ established | - | 8 | - | 2 | - | 2 |
| 7 | Number of nursery sites strengthened/established | - | 2 | - | 2 | - | 1 |

Sources: Health offices of Dinsho, Metu & Girar Jarso Woredas, 2014 & Lem Ethiopia, EWNRA and MELCA Ethiopia report, 2014.

PHE Providers⁵ at Metu Woreda of EWNRA Site

To improve contraceptive accessibility for the rural community, EWNRA use PHE providers as strategy in Metu Woreda after intensively being trained by the HEW⁶ on provision of short term FP (condoms and pills). The following excerpt was from Ato Wubshet Taye Head of Metu Woreda Health Office:

“The introduction of PHE Providers by EWNRA has filled our gaps in the provision FP services in our woreda. The PHE providers trained how to provide particularly short acting contraceptives of pills and condoms. PHE providers complement the HEWs and are becoming the source of services including when our HEWs are far from the health post for training and other meetings, the PHE providers are ready to provide in their Kiosks (rural shops). As a result, on average one PHE provider is able to address 10-20 short term FP users per month which contributed in reducing the unwanted pregnancy of the woreda from 12% to 2.5%. I personally has contacted the users and told me that it is friendly and is becoming as an alternative for some youths who are afraid of going to the health post.”



Ato Wubshet Taye, Head of Woreda Health Office



PHE Provider in her Kiosk

5. Trained rural shop owners (Kiosks) for distribution of Pills and Condoms. 6. Health Extension Workers

Improved Women Livelihood through IGAs in Girar Jarso Woreda by LEM Ethiopia

“ My name is Mulu Rega from Girar Jarso woreda of Doyo kebele⁷. I am 25, married and have 3 childrens. I was able to attend up to grade 9 but not able to continue because of forced marriage. Before this project I do not have enough means of income and I have had little knowledge on the use of FP. After the project through the training attended I started to use FP, particularly the injectable. But after continuous consultation with HEW I started to use long acting FP method which is called implanon. in addition, with the support of the seed money provided through saving and credit association by Lem Ethiopia PHE project, I have bought 6 sheep and 5 hens which helped me to get a monthly saving of Birr 150 which enabled me to buy a dairy cow. I have also benefited from energy saving stoves donated by Lem Ethiopia”.



W/ro Mulu Rega

Wro. Kebebush Senbeta, Abkera kebele of Dinsho Woreda by MELCA Ethiopia

“ After the death of my husband life was difficult for me and my families to rely on little harvest from the commissioned land. As a result I couldn't be able to send my children to school and they were hired as sheep herds with nominal payments. Two years ago with the assistances of MELCA Ethiopia and the kebele administrators we have established a poor women association. The association has 15 members and we get credit service and entrepreneurship training.

Through the association, I have been supported with four female sheep's and energy saving stove. By complementing with what I had, within two years I was able to make them over 10 through selling some of them. As a result my life has improved and my children started to attend school. The energy saving stove not only saved our time in fire wood collection but also reduces the amount fuel wood used and smoke that could affect myself and my family's health.



W/ro Kebebush Senbeta

7. The smallest administrative unit equivalent to village

Improved Livelihood for Youth through IGA⁸ in Girar Jarso Woreda by LEM Ethiopia

“ My name is Gete Abera from Dire Doyo Kebele youth association, Girar Jarso woreda. I am 22 and single. I was jobless after completing grade 10 and dependent on my family. As a result I was demoralized and life was difficult. Because of Lem Ethiopia, I was able to be engaged in the youth association established in our kebele in 2012. I was lucky by being a beneficiary in this project, which is improving my life truly. I have a monthly saving of birr 120 from selling of eggs and sheep. I was provided with three sheep which are currently raised to six female sheep. With my saving I have a plan to buy a calf.

I am also using the smokeless and energy saving stove, which keep my family healthy and keep my neatness. I am happy and I can say I am fruitful on applying all the training in my life especially on personal and environmental hygiene. Our saving and credit association are able to save about Birr 6,100 which we haven't had before the project”.



Gete Abera

Abakera Elementary School PHE Club, Dinsho Woreda by MELCA Ethiopia

In PHE implementation schools play an important role in advancing and transforming innovative ideas of PHE through PHE school clubs. Abakera elementary school PHE club is one of the eight clubs in the school. Using school mini media PHE club transmit integrated message on different issues. The HEWs were invited to teach the students on RH/FP issues and one of the school girls' problem related to menarche which was considered as the main reason for girls dropout. But currently with repeated lesson on girls' RH needs through mini media, dramas and by making avail the sanitary materials in the school, girls drop out reduced from 6% to 1%. As a result the number of female students (543) becomes higher than male students (404) in 2013/14 academic year.



Student at Mini Media



Drama Performance in Holiday

8. Income Generating Activities

Ale Buya kebele Community Saving and Credit Cooperative, Metu Woreda of EWNRA Site

The other income generating activities implemented by EWNRA project is women's saving and credit cooperative formation. This cooperative was established at Ale Buya Kebele with 50 female members. The cooperative has registered as legal entity by the name "Bikiltu Gudina" by woreda cooperative promoting office.

The association was established after intensive training offered to the members on RH/FP, environmental hygiene and conservation, awareness raising on population, health and environment linkages.



Members of Bikiltu Gudina Saving & Cooperative

As a result of the training most of the women have shifted from short acting to long acting FP methods and around 250 women have inserted implanon. In addition, about 86% of the members have received 1000 Birr loan per individual to improve their livelihood. Most of the beneficiaries purchased agricultural inputs to boost their agricultural productivity while some are involved in purchasing of sheep and calves.

PHE project Implementation in Dinsho Woreda by MELCA Ethiopia

Tesfaye Tolla , MELCA Ethiopia Project Coordinator – Dinsho Woreda

“ MELCA Ethiopia focuses on conservation of natural resources through SEGNI⁹, conserving sacred places and PHE intervention approach. After we introduced the PHE approach, we have registered remarkable achievements not only in the conservation activities but also on RH/FP issues. As an organization we are following the PHE approach comprehensively as our local communities have multifaceted problems in the area of environmental conservation, food security, livelihood diversification, FP/RH, environmental and personal hygiene that need integrated and inclusive approach in a sustainable way.

In addition, through this project base line assessment was able to identify 23 sacred natural sites (SNS) in 10 kebeles which was not certified but, in collaboration with Dinsho Woreda Land Administration and Environmental Protection office, and Culture and Tourism Office 23 SNS were recognized and certified by the local government”.



Tesfaye Tola, Project Coordinator

From the above case stories it is possible to conclude that PHE integrated approach is appropriate strategy in improving the multifaceted problems of the rural community. Therefore, scaling up multi sectoral PHE integrated approach in contributing for sustainable change in the life of the rural community is very crucial. For further readings on Effectiveness the PHE approach for achieving FP and fertility outcomes in Ethiopia (http://phe-ethiopia.org/pdf/GPSDO_Research.pdf) and other information visit our website: (www.phe-ethiopia.org)

9. Social Empowerment through Group and Nature Interaction

What is PHE?

Population, health and environment (PHE) interventions in Ethiopia are a holistic, participatory and proactive development approach whereby issues of environment, health and population are addressed in an integrated manner for improved livelihoods and sustainable well-being of people and ecosystems. The PHE integrated approach acknowledges that people do not live their lives in single sectors. Instead, every day they make decisions and face challenges across health, livelihoods, education and the environment. PHE integrates different sectoral approaches in order to address these challenges at the same time through developing partnerships and relationships with government offices, organizations from other sectors and the community.

The multisectoral PHE approach recognizes that community concerns are interlinked. Food security is tied to the amount of land one has to farm and the quality of the soil on that land. As population increases, parents must divide their plots among many children, leading to smaller and smaller land holdings. As there are more people to feed, traditional practices such as fallowing are stopped, preventing the land from regenerating and reducing soil fertility and agricultural productivity. To fully address any component of this scenario sustainably requires utilizing family planning, alternative income generation opportunities, soil conservation and improved agricultural practices. Leaving one component out reduces the effectiveness of the interventions in the other areas. PHE approach has been shown to be effective at meeting the diverse needs of communities while creating opportunities for cost savings as partners and communities address multiple issues at the same time, saving transportation and meeting expenses while respecting the time of communities.

PHE Ethiopia Consortium was formed legally in 2008 to promote the PHE approach in Ethiopia and support PHE implementing organizations. The mission of the PHE Ethiopia Consortium is: PHE Ethiopia Consortium exists to enhance and promote the integration of population health and environment at various levels for sustainable development. The vision of the PHE Ethiopia Consortium is: Ethiopia with healthy population, sustainable resource use, improved livelihood and resilient ecosystem. ■

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