

1. SUMMARY

1.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AND EVALUATION CONTEXT

The project „*Anti-erosion measures in the surrounds of Lake Awassa, Ethiopia*“ (34/MZe/B/08-10) was implemented in 2008 – 2010 2011 with support from the Czech Development Cooperation (CZ DC). The project was implemented by the non-governmental organization People in Need, o.p.s., administered by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic and co-funded by Comité Internacional de Rescate Espana. Project partners included the local Government (Bureau for Agriculture and Rural Development of the SNNPR, the corresponding Department of the Sidama Zone and Office of the Awassa Zuryia Woreda) as well as the Ethiopian non-governmental organization Concern for Environment.

The development objective of the evaluated project was *Contribute to decreasing soil degradation and increasing the biodiversity in the surroundings of Lake Awassa* by introducing anti-erosion measures. The Implementer, in close consultation with partners, selected particularly degraded areas in Awassa Zuryia Woreda, in Lebu Koromo and Kajima Umbulo Kebeles. Focus of project interventions was regeneration of eroded land by constructing simple anti-erosion structures, closing selected areas and plantation of seedlings grown in the rehabilitated tree nursery. Important components of the project were participative cooperation with communities, introduction of sustainable practices for soil and water conservation, raising awareness on sustainable land management and environmental protection as well as related training and capacity building. The project also introduced the production of fuel saving stoves.

The main purpose of the evaluation was to obtain objectively, well-founded information that can be used for decision making by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (MFA CZ) in cooperation with the Czech Development Agency (CZDA) about the overall perspective and future direction of CZ DC in Ethiopia in the sector Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, in the area of protecting soil from erosion.

The evaluation approach was comparative non-experimental comparing the intervention areas and beneficiaries before and after the project. Baseline data were compared with available information about situation after the project completion and at the time of evaluation. Isolating outcomes of the evaluated project with the outcomes of the following project “*Sustainable Management of Soil, Forest and Water Resources as a Pilot Model for Community Development in Southern Ethiopia*” implemented in 2010 – 2012 in the same locations has at times proven to be difficult.

Evaluation methodology took into consideration the evaluation objectives and client's expectation. Conclusions and recommendation are evidence based. The evaluation matrix including evaluation questions has been consulted with the Reference Group and accepted by the Client. The evaluation approach was participatory involving key stakeholders and other informants and information sources from both the public and the private sector including the target groups. Evaluation was implemented at three stages: (i) Preparatory phase (before field work) aiming at the consolidation of and consensus on the evaluation questions and gathering information from available secondary data and interviews. (ii) Field investigations where additional information was gathered on specific project outcomes and results as well as on factors that contributed or hampered successful implementation. This phase included preliminary analysis of findings related to the evaluation questions and to the objective of the evaluation. (iii) During the final phase, information gathered during the preparatory and field phases has been sorted, analyzed, and assessed in relation to the evaluation questions.

1.2. MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Below is a summary of evaluation conclusions according to the evaluation criteria.

Evaluation criteria		Rate of fulfillment
Relevance		High
Effectiveness		Rather high
Efficiency		Rather high
Sustainability		Rather high
Impacts		Rather high
Cross-cutting principles	Good governance	High
	Human rights and gender	Rather high
	Environment and climate	High
Visibility of CZ DC		Rather high

Relevance

The evaluated project was and remains fully compliant with the priorities of the Ethiopian Government. The National *Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP), 2005/06 – 2009/10*, pointed out the importance of integrated development and use of natural resources with the aim to improve standard of living and protection of these resources for future generations. The *Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) 2010/11 – 2014/15* includes continuation of efforts for improved environmental protection, sustainable management of natural resources and afforestation, with the participation of communities.

Decreasing the risk of siltation of the Awassa Lake is among the priorities of both the Federal and the local governments. Project implementation anti-erosion measures with the purpose of decreasing soil degradation and increasing bio-diversity is also in compliance with the current priorities of the Regional Bureau and Sidama Zonal Department for Agriculture and Rural Development.

Perception by the communities of the anti-erosion measures as beneficial developed gradually and remains limited to the groups of direct beneficiaries including farmers who live in places positively affected by the project interventions.

The project intervention aiming at support of production and sale of fuel saving stoves made from local materials (Gonzie) with the purpose of decreasing fuel consumption and increasing incomes of the target group in the project area has not been successful. Production of Gonzie is no longer supported by the SNNPR.

The project was also fully compliant with the priorities of CZ DC for cooperation with non-priority countries. In 2010, Ethiopia has been included in the group of priority countries for CZ DC; priority sectors include agriculture, forestry and fishing.

The overall rating of relevance is „high“.

Effectiveness

The objective of the project “*Introducing anti-erosion measures in Awassa Zuriya Woreda*” has been partially achieved. The evaluation team considers as most significant achievements the introduction of procedures for sustainable management of natural resources, effective public awareness raising on sustainable use of land and environmental protection and trainings in methods and techniques proposed by the project.

The introduction of procedures for sustainable development of the planted- and closure areas, anchored in the communities and supported by the Woreda Office for Agriculture and Rural Development, has contributed to their further development and presents an important contribution to the project objective. In Lebu Koromo and Kajima Umbulo, Commissions for Environmental Protection were established at the Kebele level. These Commissions formulated with the support of the Project Public Regulation and Rules

that should ensure the future management of the rehabilitated areas. The Kebeles, in cooperation with the Commissions and Woreda Office, also established a system of guards (8 in total) tasked with supervision of adherence to and implementation of these Rules and Public Regulation.

Training of experts at all levels in soil and water conservations and sustainable management of natural resources and approaches to these trainings and capacity building activities (participative, with emphasis on gaining knowledge on-the-job and by sharing experience) contributed to improvement of practical skills and levels of information. This knowledge combined with increased awareness about the meaning of anti-erosion measures, present an important prerequisite for the successful introduction of anti-erosion measures and modification of attitudes and practices (improved sustainability). In particular the Sidama Zonal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and to some degree also the Woreda Office and Kebeles are well acquainted with the project and its approaches.

The establishment and rehabilitation of the tree nursery including the introduction of new species has succeeded only partially. From the planned 1.5 million seedlings, only about two thirds were produced. Only 4% of the planned area has been planted; the (unrealistic) target has not been revised. The introduction of multi-purpose species (in particular *Moringa stenopelata*) has however contributed to increased biodiversity and incomes from non-timber forestry products. On the other hand, the project exceeded the plan for closure areas; 2.61 km² are now regenerating, instead of the planned 2 km². The visited closure areas are in good condition, covered by grass and other vegetation. Their good condition has also been confirmed by the Environmental Committees, members of Kebele committees and local farmers. This success is attributed mainly to the participative approach of the project, work with the communities and economic benefits for local inhabitants.

As a commercial activity, the production and sale of Gonzie in Awassa Zuryia Woreda has not been successful; demand depends on subsidies that the Woreda will not provide. Contribution of Gonzie to anti-erosion measures (lower consumption of wood) remains limited to fuel savings from Gonzies that are used.

The overall rating of effectiveness is “rather high”.

Efficiency

The project expenses are considered, on the basis of available information, as necessary and adequate with some reservations:

The evaluation team considers as very efficient the technical and financial cooperation with Rescate. Complementarity of financial, human and other resources along with sharing experiences contributed to efficiency of the evaluated Project.

Expenses for the procurement of 100 Gonzies that were distributed free of charge in the second half of the project are considered inefficient. A business plan for this income generating activity, prepared at an early stage of project implementation, could have revealed the unprofitability of this activity in the project area before the inputs for Gonzie production were procured (direct cost for these inputs were below 1% of the total cost of the project).

The Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic conducted regular financial monitoring of the Project on the basis of itemized annual expenditure reports. The Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, SNNPR was reportedly not familiar with the project and its budget¹. The Sidama Zonal Department of Finance and Economic Development monitored both the financial and technical aspects of the project on the basis of regular reports received from People in Need.

The total expenditure of funds provided by the CZ DC is considered adequate in relation to generated outputs. The costs of individual items correspond with prices usual on the market for procurements of similar character and nature. On the basis of a simplified model, the evaluation team established the unit cost for production of seedlings of selected species by the evaluated project, the following project

¹ According to information provided by the Implementer, the Bureau has been regularly informed; the likely cause for the discrepancy in information could be internal communication gap within the Bureau.

(implemented by the Mendel University) and the Ethiopian Forestry Research Center. Partial conclusion from cost comparison (details are provided in Annex I) is (i) compatibility of the different seedlings producers; (ii) adequacy of the expenditure for production of the different species; and (iii) information on financial demands of above-standard technologies (grafting).

The logical framework has not been revised and some indicators (such as increasing agricultural productivity by 20% or decreasing erosion by 20%) cannot be objectively verified. In expert's opinion, decreasing the depth of erosion gullies by 30% takes 8-12 years.

The project was implemented with minor deviation within the time plan.

For the reasons mentioned above, efficiency is rated as “rather high”.

Sustainability

Anti-erosion measures are in a good condition, regeneration of growth in closure areas is obvious. The closure areas continue to be guarded by 7 guards allocated by the Kebele Committees. Works on anti-erosion measures do not continue; their revival would require intensive work with communities and support of local administration.

The tree nursery continues functioning, but only to a limited extent. During the evaluation, all seedlings were still in the nursery, although delayed planting in less favorable season can result in substantial losses. Woreda does not support the option of selling seedlings and local people are not interested in planting, in particular on communal areas with unclear ownership of the trees. Subsequent funding of the nursery will be reportedly secured by the Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development from the „*Rift Valley Lakes Basin Integrated Watershed Management Fund*“, complemented by the budget of the Zonal Department for Water, Mines and Energy.

The procedures for sustainable management of natural resources introduced by People in Need and supported by the following project implemented by the Mendel University continue to function. Awareness, understanding and interest of the local population in supporting anti-erosion measures is evident, but is mostly linked with the expectation of payments.

Environmental clubs in schools are not active. Production and sales of fuel saving stoves Gonzie do not continue.

It can be expected that the positive impact will continue and the anti-erosion measures remain at least partially in place, in particular in locations where they bring direct benefits the community. With time, however, the momentum created by the projects can be lost and gradual losses incur in the form of encroachment on the enclosed areas (grazing, extraction of wood) and due to the influence of weather.

Sustainability is rated as “rather high”

Impacts

The development objective of the Project was to “*Contribute to decreasing soil degradation and increasing the biodiversity in the surroundings of Lake Awassa*”. Isolating impacts of the evaluated from the following project has proven difficult, not only for the evaluation team but also for the beneficiaries and impact assessment is partially related to both projects.

The inhabitants of Lebu Koromo and Kajima Umbulo Kebeles residing at the foot of mountains affected by serious erosion perceive the project results as positive due to actual merits for the adjacent agricultural lands. However, community representatives list anti-erosion measures after other priorities: Water supply, electrification and roads. Inhabitants living and farming in Kebeles located in the lower areas of the watershed perceive the impacts as rather negative due to the decreased of fertile sediments brought by floods and lower water levels. Selection of areas for implementation of anti-erosion measures needs to be based on watershed- rather than on administrative boundaries.

Main impacts of the project include: Increased awareness on relationship between erosion and productivity of land by the communities. Organization structure at the community level that supports the sustainability of project results and that can also support further development of anti-erosion measures. Decreased erosion in the intervention area due to: Stabilization of the top soil, stabilization of upper parts of the gullies and decrease of their depth leading to increased retention of rain water and increased productivity of land. Increased biodiversity results from the introduction of new species and regeneration of growth in the closure areas. Infiltration of rain water to ground water has increased. Local institutions and authorities are acquainted with the experiences of non-traditional approach to community participation (work for free as opposed to payments for work).

Taking in to consideration risks related to their long-term sustainability, impacts are rated as “rather high”.

Good governance

Throughout the project implementation, People in Need involved relevant stakeholders including local government, Kebele Committees community representatives, farmers and others in the planning and implementation of interventions and ownership of outputs.

The communities perceive the closed areas more as their own due to tangible benefits.

Overall rating of good governance is high.

Human rights and gender equity

Women, children and men equally benefits from decreased harvest losses due to decreased flooding and soil erosion as well as from access to cheaper grass for fodder and roof construction.

Potters have traditionally low status. Women form the majority of potters and of users of Gonzie, the production of which the project supported. Men and women participated equally in trainings and capacity building activities.

The project was focused on working with farmers. Poor, landless households living in the intervention areas did not directly benefit from the project activities and were not equal partners in its implementation.

Human rights and gender equity are rates as “rather high”.

Environment and Climate

Project objectives, outputs and activities aimed at the improvement of the environment, in particular by introducing anti-erosion measures resulting in decreased land degradation and increased biodiversity. Interventions were implemented with consideration for environment and partial negative operational impacts were more than compensated by the positive impacts.

The role of women in environmental protection was strengthened as a result of the production of fuel saving stoves and particularly of their distribution (less fuel for preparing meals). At the same time, health risks from inhaling smoke and air pollution have decreased.

The overall rating for environmental protection and mitigation of climate change is high.

Visibility of CZ DC

Visibility of CZ DC has been high on the Federal, State, and Zonal levels. Logo CZ DC has been used during seminars, trainings and workshops. Training of government staff also included presentation of the topics in the field to the media.

In July 2010, People in Need received for their work in Awassa Zuryia Woreda *Ethiopian Green Award* for the best environmental project implemented by a NGO in the SNNPR. This prize is awarded every year by the Forum for Environment under the Office of the President.

Visibility is rated as high.

1.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations related to project and continuation of CZ DC

Recommendation	Main addressee	Degree of importance
Watershed should be the unit for implementing soil and water conservation and anti- erosion measures	CZDA	1
Project approach based on community participation	CZDA	1
Including activities benefitting disadvantaged community members	CZDA	2
Support to improved access to high quality seed	CZDA	2
Hydrological/hydrogeological study of the Awassa lake basin	CZDA	2
Extended duration for projects implementing anti-erosion measures	CZDA	2

Recommendations to processes and mechanism

Recommendation	Main addressee	Degree of importance
Using the LFA as instrument for planning and monitoring, revision of LFA	CZDA	1
Detailed phasing out plan/handing-over plan	CZDA	1
Business plan for income generating and business activities	CZDA	2