

Western Ethiopia Women Empowerment Programme 2012-2014 Final evaluation report



By:

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Abbreviations and acronyms

CO	Coordinating Office
DASSC	Development and Social Service Commission
EECMY	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
EECMY-BDS	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – Birbir Dilla Synod
EECMY-BGS	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – Begi-Gidami Synod
EECMY-CGS	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus - Central Gibe Synod
EECMY-GJS	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – Gimbi-Jorgo Synod
EECMY-WS	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – Western Synod
EECMY-ADS	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – Abay Dabus Synod
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HTPB	Harmful Traditional Practices and Beliefs
HTPBFC	Harmful Traditional Practices and Beliefs Focal Committee
Kebele	Smallest governmental administration unit in Ethiopia
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
NMS	Norwegian Mission Society
PA	Project Advisor
PC	Project Coordinator
PM	Project Manager
PCUMC	Programme Coordinating Unit Management Committee
ToT	Training of Trainers
WEWEP	Western Ethiopia Women Empowerment Programme
WEP-ADS	Women Empowerment Project – Abay Dabus Synod
WEP-BDS	Women Empowerment Project – Birbir Dilla Synod
WEP-BGS	Women Empowerment Project – Begi-Gidami Synod
WEP-CGS	Women Empowerment Project – Central Gibe Synod
WEP-GJS	Women Empowerment Project – Gimbi Jorgo Synod
WEP-WS	Women Empowerment Project – Western Synod
WMD	Women Ministry Department

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Executive Summary

Background and purpose

Western Ethiopia Women Empowerment Programme (WEWEP) was initiated in Ethiopia in April 2012 and will be phased out at the end of 2014. The six WEP-projects are the following: Abay Dabus WEP, Birbir Dilla WEP, Begi-Gidami WEP, Central Gibe WEP, Gimbi Jorgo WEP and Western Synod WEP. The overall programme goal of WEWEP is *to empower the women of the programme area*. The programme is designed to empower the women through the following three components:

- *Strengthening the position of the women in the synods by educating them and providing good systems and documents for gender equality*
- *Educating women in the synods and in the local society by giving them knowledge about their rights and the consequences of HTPBs and HIV/AIDS*
- *Giving women in the local society access to income by organizing self-help groups and providing lectures on handicrafts.*

Norwegian Mission Society is providing funds for the programme. The six EECMY synods are the implementers of the programme.

The purpose of the final evaluation is to evaluate the process and results of the first phase of WEWEP (2012-2014), with the intention of informing a possible continuation in line with the program's work. Hence, the objective of the evaluation is: *To assess the results, successes and limitations of the programme according to the overall program goal*. The evaluation is focused on four areas of assessment: assessment of results, assessment of implementation, assessment of efficiency and assessment of sustainability. The four areas were investigated at three levels: the program level, the synod level and the project level.

Methodology

The evaluation team conducted the evaluation by using both quantitative and qualitative research methodology with a gender-sensitive approach in all steps. The study was carried out by using different methods and tools: document reviews, observation of a few activities and assets in the field, a questionnaire, in-depth interviews (41 interviewees) and focus group discussions (18 groups with 158 discussants) with a selection of beneficiaries, synod leaders, project managers, volunteers of the six projects and other relevant bodies (government officials etc). Besides desk top work the study included a two-week field trip (Oct 27 to Nov 9, 2014). After having incorporated the feedback from the stakeholders on the draft evaluation report the final evaluation report was submitted to NMS.

Key findings and conclusions

The key findings on the achievement of the objective *“Increased empowerment of the synods of the women staff/volunteers in the program area, through institutionalizing a women empowerment process at synod level”* are:

- A considerable increase in female representation in different positions in the decision making structure at parish level is seen
- Capability and functionality of Women Ministry Department has been strengthened in four synods, but in two synods there is still room for improvement
- Gender Guideline is not institutionalized
- Gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation system is not in place.

The key findings on the achievement of the objective *“By the end of the project period the local community has good awareness about the impact of HTPBs and HIV/AIDS and behavioural changes on gender equality is seen”* are:

- Norms enhancing behavioural changes have started to change

- Women’s participation in self-help groups has contributed a lot to bringing a change in the lives of families, both economically and socially
- The awareness level of community members has been raised, but there exists a challenge to bring it to practice, because HTP is still practiced hidden
- There is a reduction in the number of girls dropping out of school; the rate in sample woredas is only about one quarter of the average of Oromia region.

The key findings on the achievement of the objective *“By the end of the project period the knowledge about women’s rights is improved in all levels of the society in the program area”* are:

- The collaboration between the synods and crucial institutions in the programme catchment area is very good; in one synod only a networking system has been established
- Trainings of trainers on women's rights have been arranged but the Ethiopian family law and the Oromia family law have not been distributed as planned.

Recommendations

As outcome of the evaluation the evaluation team gives the following recommendations to be considered:

1. Self-help groups should be established in all congregations in the programme area. In this regard, employing social workers for all projects is indispensable.
2. Rewarding best ranking girls should be done not only in high schools and preparatory classes, but also at primary level. This could be done without any additional financial resource by giving cheaper rewards.
3. Needy female student’s support in the form of an onetime monetary cash does not solve the problem. It is recommended to consider an income generating system like rearing sheep or goat and giving the first lamb to another person, who in turn gives the first lamb and so on.
4. HTPB and Community Conversation groups should be strengthened by searching committed young persons and empowering them technically, professionally and ethically.
5. Awareness raising on women’s rights need to be taken to the grass root.
6. It is recommended that planning of logistics is done well in advance together with synods departments in order to save resources allocated for transportation.
7. This programme is unique in that it works mainly in the family of EECMY. Hence all synods should value the programme/project highly and strengthen internal cooperation regardless of issues that would be seen as obstacles.
8. The Gender Guideline needs to be revised, organized into a logical framework and presented to the synods for institutionalization.
9. WEWEP Management Committee is not integrated into church management structure. This means that there is no inbuilt control over the MC members in the synods. The structure of the programme needs revision. It is recommended that the MC is accountable to the EECMY WMD or EECMY DASSC.
10. As major part of Western Ethiopia community Central Synod (located in Nekemte) should also be taken into account as part of WEWEP Programme in the future (if this is already included in the plans, this recommendation can be removed).
11. The CO should build a follow-up system to check the regularity of meetings of the decision making bodies and the implementation of the decisions made by them.
12. In order to secure sustainability of the activities it is advisable that the project and synod WMD plan and implement the activities jointly. It is also recommended to arrange training and consultation on issues like building team spirit, sustainability and inter-program experience sharing.
13. More attention should be given to grass root level; congregations and parishes, where there exists interest and financial capacity.
14. All projects should report on their activities in the same format and in a more organized manner.

15. In some synods there was usage of current expenditure for administrative expense over and above what is required by law, thus it is recommended that the project utilize its recurrent expenditure as it is required by law even if the law does not govern it.
16. Some synods requested additional budget from the CO by over-utilizing some budget lines. It is strongly recommended that such synods make critical budget analysis and transfer budgets from surplus lines to deficit budget lines instead of requesting additional budget from the CO.
17. There should be continuous follow-up by WEWEP at synod level regarding money transfer by the CO to them. Bank advice should be collected from the bank as soon as possible and a receipt voucher should be issued in addition to this, the project at synod level and the CO should request a bank statement from the bank and prepare bank reconciliation on a monthly basis to enhance control over cash.
18. WEWEP accountants at synod level should continuously follow up their bank balance and send an acknowledgement letter to the donor on a timely basis to make the transfer of funds as fast as it has to be and there should be transfer of funds by the donor to the WEWEP CO and by the CO to WEWEP at synod level on a timely basis to efficiently and effectively perform project activity.
19. It is better to have uniform payments procedures throughout the WEWEP and there should be clear duties and responsibilities for PM, accountants, cashier and WMD head at synod level regarding financial transaction of the projects: "who does what and how."
20. Cheque signatories of WEWEP at synod level should be informed and it is recommended that these be individuals directly involved in project operations, namely PMs, accountants and WMD heads.
21. The project should develop its own per diem payment system and strictly adhere to it to avoid the inconsistency and non-uniformity or per diem payment system practiced, and avoid discrimination among its workers at different synods related to per diem benefits, and to efficiently utilize its recurrent budget.
22. To reduce expenditures incurred for transportation and to have uniform transportation expenditure system, the project should make an agreement with all synods to use synod cars on fuel basis or on fair price mileage basis.
23. It is advisable for the CO to develop a system for auditing the financial performance of each project separately and give feedback or the auditors opinion to WEWEP at synod level on a timely basis.
24. It is strongly recommended that there should be a purchasing committee for the project at all synods that is responsible for approving and purchasing goods & services for the project and the approval has to be minuted.
25. Synods that do not use a material ledger card should develop and use one in order to enhance control over materials.

1 Background and purpose of the evaluation

1.1 Western Ethiopia Women Empowerment Programme (WEWEP)

Western Ethiopia Women Empowerment Programme (WEWEP) was initiated in Ethiopia in April 2012. The programme was approved by NORAD (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) through Digni (Norwegian Missions in Development) and Norwegian Mission Society (NMS) for a three year period, and will be phased out at the end of 2014. The programme includes Coordination Office (CO) placed in Boji, and six Synod Women Empowerment Projects (WEP) found in the areas of West Showa (Ijaji), Wollega, and Beneshangul Gumuz region. The six WEP-projects are the following:

- Western Synod WEP in Western Synod, Boji
- Begi-Gidami WEP in Begi-Gidami Synod, Begi
- Gimbi Jorgo WEP in Gimbi-Jorgo Synod, Gimbi
- Birbir Dilla WEP in Birbir Dilla Synod, Aira
- Abay Dabus WEP in Abay Dabus Synod, Mendi
- Central Gibe WEP in Central Gibe Synod, Ijaji.

The overall programme goal of WEWEP is *to empower the women of the programme area*. This includes both women in the congregations and parishes, their position in the concerned synods, and the women in general in the local communities of the respective synod areas.

The programme is designed to empower the women through the following three components:

- Strengthening the position of the women in the synods by educating them and providing good systems and documents for gender equality*
- Educating women in the synods and in the local society by giving them knowledge about their rights and the consequences of HTPBs and HIV/AIDS*
- Giving women in the local society access to income by organizing self-help groups and providing lectures on handicrafts.*

NMS is providing funds for the programme with NORAD through Digni as the main back donor. In addition NMS provides expatriate service to the programme through one person in an advisor's position. The six EECMY synods are the implementers of the programme providing technical and administrative services for the smooth implementation of the programme, both at the synod level and at parish and congregation level. All synods have employed their own WEP-Project Manager (PM) who is responsible for their respective WEP project, which in the synods structure belongs to the Women Ministry Department. The concerned synod's presidents have signed a *Joint Agreement*. Hence the stakeholders are these EECMY synods including their parishes and congregations, NMS and local governments in the community.

1.2 Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

As stated in TOR the purpose of the Final Evaluation is to evaluate the process and results of the first phase of WEWEP (2012-2014), with the intention of informing a possible continuation in line with the program's work. Hence, the objective of the evaluation is: *To assess the results, successes and limitations of the programme according to the overall program goal*. Moreover;

- to assess performance of the project in terms of implementation of its planned activities and achievement of objectives/goals
- to assess if and how project outputs were achieved and the efficiency with which outputs were achieved, according to the indicators set out in the program document's LFA, and compared with the Baseline survey for WEWEP from 2012
- to describe precisely divergence between plans and results
- to assess overall program management including relationship with stakeholders and

internal cooperation, the program's structure and capacity to achieve the overall program purpose

- to assess economic effectiveness in the program; examine effectiveness in terms of resource utilization (both financial and non-financial)
- to assess whether the program has contributed to bring a change in the lives of its beneficiaries (empowering women)
- to evaluate the sustainability of the program; to what extent are the target groups and implementers (the synods) capable of operating the initiated activities independently once external support cease
- what were the major challenges or opportunities in the course of project implementation; and what are the lessons drawn from the previous phase
- to draw lessons for potential future work.

The evaluation is expected to be a learning tool for the organizations who initiated the program; Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – in this case being the six synods of the program area that signed the Joint Agreement, which created WEWEP, and The Norwegian Mission Society. The two organizations need to know whether the first phase of the program fulfill the goal set for the program, and how the resources invested in the program have seemed to be used efficiently; is it prudent and expedient to continue working and investing in line with the work of WEWEP.

1.3 Objectives of the programme

The overall programme goal has been expressed as three specific objectives:

1. Increased empowerment of the synods of the women staff/volunteers in the program area, through institutionalizing a women empowerment process at synod level.
2. By the end of the project period the local community has good awareness about the impact of HTPBs and HIV/AIDS and behavioral changes on gender equality is seen.
3. By the end of the project period the knowledge about women's rights is improved in all levels of the society in the program area.

1.4 Conducting the evaluation

1.4.1 Evaluation team

The evaluation team consisted of four members; a team leader (an Ethiopian citizen with good knowledge of the local culture and language in the Oromia region), an Ethiopian team member specialized in assessing financial management, two expatriate team members with expertise in gender issues as well as project evaluation in different fields (social science, education). Out of team members two are male and two female. All team members are independent, not connected to the programme.

The Programme Coordinator, the Programme Advisor, the project staff and the Management Committee members (WEWEP-MC) were resource persons for the team.

The evaluation work of the team has been guided by the following norms and values: openness, transparency, participation, credibility and independency.

1.4.2 Methods of study

The team conducted the evaluation by using both quantitative and qualitative research methodology with a gender-sensitive approach in all steps. The evaluation was carried out through following steps and measures:

1. *Review of documents relevant to the program work* (programme and project documents,

- programme policies and routines/manuals from NMS and EECMY-synods).
2. *Meeting* with WEWEP-CO/NMS to agree on the specific design, methods and questions for the evaluation within the timeline and resources available.
 3. *Observation* of a few activities and assets in the field.
 4. *Quantitative questionnaire*: created in relation to the previous baseline survey, providing baseline data for a possible new phase of WEWEP.
 5. *Interviews and Focus group discussions* with a selection of beneficiaries, programme workers, volunteers of the six projects and other relevant bodies (NMS Ethiopia staff, government officials etc).
 6. *Preparation of the Draft Evaluation Report* and presentation to the relevant stakeholders (WEWEP-CO/NMS)
 7. *Incorporation of received feedback* into the Final Evaluation Report
 8. *Preparation, adaptation and submission* of the Final Evaluation Report.

1.4.3 Data collection and analysis

All six EECMY synods that formed the programme target area were included in the study. Purposive and random sampling was used to select representative units from the six synods. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Prior to the field work data collection tools were prepared: a questionnaire for collecting secondary data, in-depth interview format, focus group discussion guides, formats for observation and document review at synod level (annexes 4 – 9). A desk-top review of programme documents as well as projects' activity plans and annual reports was conducted.

Primary data was generated during the two-week field trip (Oct 27 to Nov 9, 2014) through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observations. The total number of informants interviewed was 41 (annex 2) and they represent all levels of the synods and the projects as well as government line departments as follows:

- at programme level: Programme Coordinator, Programme Advisor
- at synod/project level: Executive Secretaries, Women Ministry Department Leaders, Project Managers, Accountants
- at parish level: Parish Women Ministry Secretaries, Women Ministry Committee members
- at congregation level: Chairpersons of Congregation Women Committee, Self-help Group Committee members, Community Conversation Facilitators, needy students
- zone and woredas: Secondary School Supervisors, Educational Officers, Officers of Women and Children Affairs.

The number of focus group discussions conducted was 18, three FGDs in each synod. Total number of discussants was 158. The size of the group varied between 6 and 17 (annex 2). The groups were the following:

- Synod Management Committee and Project Steering Committee members
- Self-help Group Committee members
- Community Conversation Group members
- FGM Focal Committee members
- FGM/HIV/AIDS-club members

A couple of observations were also conducted. For secondary data collection the questionnaire (annex 4) was distributed to project managers three weeks prior to the field visit. The project managers in turn dispatched relevant parts of the questionnaire to synods, parishes, congregations and woreda educational offices. The aim was to collect data from five parishes and five congregations in each of the six synods, i.e. 30 parishes and 30 congregations. Since some selected church units did not submit data the total sample was 24 parishes and 20 congregations. The sample parishes represent about a quarter of all parishes in the six synods. The sample from congregations is not as representative as that of parishes. The number of

decision making bodies studied was at synod level 82, at parish level 100 and at congregational level 80.

Primary and secondary data was first screened and then analyzed and summarized by using computer software. Quantitative analysis consisted of calculating averages and percentages of different measurements used as indicators. Data from different sources was used in triangulation to improve the validity and reliability of data.

1.5 Structure of the report

The report is organized into three chapters. Chapter one describes the background and the purpose of the evaluation as well as the evaluation process. In chapter two evaluation findings and conclusion are discussed. Chapter three provides recommendations based on the findings of the study.

2 Findings and conclusions

2.1 Evaluation findings by project components

2.1.1 Institutionalizing the women empowerment process at the synods, parishes and congregations

Objective 1.1: Increased empowerment of the synods of the women staff/volunteers in the programme area, through institutionalising a women empowerment process at synod level.

Female representation in the decision making bodies

The total number of EECMY members in the six synods is 1,379,325 . There are 104 parishes and 1,378 congregations in the six synods. There are 529 pastors and 390 evangelists serving in the church units. Total number of volunteers serving in the six synods is 124,850. (EECMY Statistical report 2013).

Out of the members in the decision making bodies of the six synods proportion of males is 72% and females 28%. Proportion of females is highest in ADS (36%) and lowest in BDS (16%). Out of chairpersons 89% are males and 11% females. There is not much variation between the synods. Out of secretaries 88% are males and 12% females. The proportion of female secretaries is biggest in BGS (17%). Information by synods is given in table 1.

Table 1. Proportion of females and males in the decision making bodies of the synods

Synod	Members		Chairpersons		Secretaries	
	females %	males %	females %	males %	females %	males %
ADS	36	64	13	87	13	87
BDS	16	84	10	90	10	90
BGS	33	67	13	87	17	83
CGS	29	71	10	90	10	90
GJS	29	71	11	89	12	88
WS	27	73	13	87	data not available	
Average	28	72	11	89	12	88

In the decision making bodies at parish level 62% of members are males and 38% females. The proportion of females varies a lot between synods. It is highest in WS (47%) and lowest in GJS (25%). Out of chairpersons at parish level 71% are males and 29% females. Proportion of females is highest in ADS (38%) and lowest in BDS (22%). Out of secretaries at parish

level 70% are males and 30% females. The proportion of female secretaries is highest in BGS (38%) and lowest in WS (24%). Information by synods is given in table 2.

Table 2. Proportion of females and males in the decision making bodies of the parishes, by synods.

Synod	Members		Chairpersons		Secretaries	
	females %	males %	females %	males %	females %	males %
ADS	45	55	38	62	25	75
BDS	38	62	22	78	39	61
BGS	38	62	33	67	38	62
CGS	25	75	32	68	28	72
GJS	36	64	27	73	27	73
WS	47	53	24	76	24	76
Average	38	62	29	71	30	70

In the decision making bodies at congregational level 55% of members are males and 45% females (only five synods, no data from ADS). Out of chairpersons 75% are males and 25% females. 64% of secretaries at congregational level are males and 36% females. The number of congregations in the sample is too small to enable reliable comparison between synods.

Compared with the baseline there was not much change on the average in the proportion of females in the decision making bodies at synod level. The proportion of female members of the decision making bodies decreased a little, but the proportion of secretaries increased a little.

At parish level there was a clear increase in the proportion of females as members (from 35% to 38%), chairpersons (from 25% to 29%) and secretaries (from 27% to 30%) compared with the baseline. Increase in the proportion of female members of decision making bodies was biggest in GJS (from 18% to 36%). Female proportion of secretaries increased considerably in BDS (from 25% to 39%) and BGS (from 25% to 38%).

In comparison with the baseline at congregational level on the average there was only a very small increase in female proportion of members of decision making bodies (from 44% to 45%) and of chairpersons (from 23% to 25%). Female proportion out of secretaries increased considerably (from 25% to 36%). The number of congregations in the sample is too small to enable reliable comparison between synods.

Outputs

Output 1.1.1: A capable and functional Women Department is found in all synods in the programme area.

In five synods there is a Women Ministry Department reporting to executive secretary. BDS is in the process of finalizing promoting Women's Coordination Office to departmental level. The staff usually consists of two persons with the exception of Begi-Gidami synod and Abay Dabus synod where the staff is three. ADS, BDS, BGS and GJS seem to have a capable and functional WMD. WS and CGS have a functional WMD but they are not as capable as expected. All synods have started allocating budget for running the activities of WMD, especially ADS and BDS seem to have a very promising budget for WMD activities. For example the budget for 2014 in BDS was 97 579,80 ETB and in CGS 53 349 ETB.

Output 1.1.2: Organizational gender policy and gender mainstreaming strategy formulated and communicated.

Generating the baseline survey document started in August 2012, but was finalised only in the second quarter of 2013. Therefore, the planning and implementation of the first year activities of the programme were conducted without having the data from the baseline survey. The baseline survey did not provide data for some indicators (f.e. girls' dropout rates, norm enhancement) stated in LFA. The baseline survey document provides satisfactory bases for tracking anticipated changes in most of the indicators.

Development process of Gender Guideline for the Church Ministry began with a good representation of females (40%) in the team, but ended up with a lower (20%) female representation. The draft document was presented in a workshop with a good representation of females (33%). The Gender Guideline document was finalised in April 2013, discussed over in the Programme Management Committee and decided to bring to the attention of the synod decision making bodies for institutionalization. None of the synods have institutionalized the Gender Guideline so far. It seems that BGS has advanced furthest by bringing it to the attention of its Management Committee and Women Ministry Department Board. The two bodies have decided to take it to the attention of the Synod Council. The rest of the synods are at the beginning stage in institutionalizing the Gender Guideline. The content of Gender Guideline for the Church Ministry document seems relevant for the synods as it gives direction on the activities to be accomplished. In this sense it seems to be usable by the synods, parishes and congregations. However, the document is not developed as a guideline that governs activities of the synods as it mixes up concepts of policy, guideline, strategy, long-term activities and short-term activities.

Output 1.1.3: Gender monitoring and evaluation system is implemented in all synods.

The process for developing the gender monitoring and evaluation system started before the end of 2013, but due to delays was finalised only in October 2014. Stakeholders were involved in the formulation of the gender monitoring and evaluation system document through data collected for midterm evaluation at all the synods and selected parishes. Distribution and training and validation workshop have been postponed because of the delay in finalising the document.

Output 1.1.4: Increased educational status of synod women staff/volunteers and female students in synods' catchments area.

A total of 18 women staff or volunteers in the synods were supported in raising their educational level (1 or 2 women in each synod). Four women accomplished a Bachelor degree in Leadership and Development and 14 women a Diploma (5 in Theology, 9 in Gender and Development). Some of these women are still studying for their degree and will graduate in 2015. So far all the graduates have returned back to their jobs in the synods or parishes. The educational level of Women Ministry Department staff in the synods has therefore increased considerably.

Because of lacking or fragmentary nature of data on educational support to staff and volunteers at parish level it is not possible to draw any definite conclusions. Three synods (ADS, CGS, GJS) submitted some data on educational support to staff and volunteers while three did not (BDS, BGS, WS). In ADS 112 persons benefitted from support (52% female), in CGS 16 persons (44% female) and in GJS 110 persons (36% female). Only one synod (ADS) provided data on educational support to staff and volunteers at congregation level. Out of 130 persons who benefitted from support 54% were female. This data is based on secondary data (questionnaires) filled out by the the synods and thus do not necessarily relate to the project but were carried out by the synods themselves.

In the whole catchment area of the programme a total of 450 best ranking female students in 84 high schools have been rewarded. In all synods needy female students have been supported by a scholarship to cover the expenses of uniforms and stationery. The total number of girls supported was 112.

2.1.2 Increase awareness and sensitize communities on gender, HTPBs and HIV/AIDS

Objective 1.2: By the end of the project period the local community has good awareness about the impact of HTPBs and HIV/AIDS and behavioural changes on gender equality is seen

Outputs

Output 1.2.1: Norms enhancing behavioural changes promoted

Promoting or changing norms is not easily measurable. The indicators in the LFA document, activity plans and annual reports contain no measure of this at all. There is no baseline data available to track anticipated changes. Therefore, no definite answers can be given on the question on whether the project has been able to bring about a change in norms and attitudes of people in the project areas. Many informants witnessed changes in behaviour of both men and women, changes that promote gender equality. Therefore, this information can be considered as relevant and valid in measuring norm enhancement.

A comment that was heard often from the informants was: *“Because of intensive training both men’s and women’s norms are changing.”* Another frequent answer was that the taboo on sexuality has broken to some extent and the families have started talking about sexual topics. The old norm of women being silent and shy is seen to have changed and women now speak their voice, ask questions and defend their rights. Men have started to understand that women’s oppression is not right and male dominance over women is reducing. Families have started appreciating boys and girls in the same way. Men have started sharing the burden of wives by participating in household work and taking care of children.

Women’s improved financial status through income generation activities has also helped in promoting gender equality. 2500 women, who are members in self-help groups, have been trained in handicrafts, vegetable and poultry production and basic business skills. 93 self-help groups have been established with a total number of 1907 beneficiaries. The number of self-help groups is highest in BGS (36 groups). 890 committee members of self-help groups have been trained in running the groups. Five groups in WS have been registered as cooperatives and two more are in the process (CGS). With a loan 557 women have started small businesses. Annual monetary reward has been given to 58 best performing self-help groups.

Output 1.2.2: Community members and EECMY staff has good knowledge on HTPBs and HIV/AIDS

The knowledge level of people in the target areas on HTPBs and HIV/AIDS has been raised by various kinds of activities and materials. About 120 Community Conversation Facilitators were nominated and Community Conversation sites (CC) established in selected congregations. The purpose of CCs is to sustain attitudinal change at congregational level. The topics of community conversations are HTPBs, HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, marriage and family planning. Community conversations stimulate men and women to abandon harmful traditional practices and gender-based violence. 347 people received training (CC facilitators, parish leaders, elders, selected members of communities) on the topics. As a result of CCs communities have started to support orphan children, to build houses for widows and to construct bridges.

18 new HTPB Focal Committees have been established in selected congregations to mitigate HTPB. About 5,400 people (FC members and people from parishes and congregations) have been trained by lawyers and health professional from the government and the synods.

About 50 Anti-HTP/HIV/AIDS clubs were established in different congregations. The clubs show drama on different issues in order to create awareness and to train people in the communities and congregations. Clubs were capacitated through workshops and training.

570 people from synod staff have received training of trainers on FGM/HTPBs, legal aspects and eradication and advocacy strategies. Educational campaign were conducted in eight parishes and 17 congregations. Stakeholder mobilization workshops were arranged for 71 leaders of synods, parishes and external stakeholders.

1,535 posters were distributed, two Anti FGM/HTPB Manuals developed and distributed. Symbolic rewards (T-shirts, small amount of cash) were given to seven families with outstanding contribution to eradicate FGM/HTPB and to 152 uncut girls.

According to the informants' opinions the knowledge level in the community and at church is good, but there is still a challenge: *"Knowledge is there, problem is in bringing it into practice, because HTP is still practiced hidden."* Another person mentioned: *"There was some teaching before but with the project there is more power to raise the awareness level of community."*

Output 1.2.3: A reduction in number of girls dropping out of school is seen in the programme area
The National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAP-GE, 2006) identified seven priority areas that need to be handled in order to ensure gender-equitable development. One of the critical areas is education and training of women and girls. Traditionally in Ethiopia girls' education has not been regarded as important as that of boys. School enrolment rates of girls have been lower than those of boys. As a result of government's efforts the inequity has reduced during previous years, but still the gender parity index (GPI) deviates from 1.00, which means that girls are underrepresented at schools. During four previous years the reduction has been highest at preparatory level (grades 11-12). At primary education level (grades 5-8) the gender inequity in education has almost disappeared (GPI 0.98), but in preparatory schools it is still remarkable (GPI 0.81).

Another challenge in education in Ethiopia is dropping out of school. Only about half of children complete grade 8. At the national level the dropout rate at grades 1-8 is 15.7%. In the past female dropout rate has been higher than that of males, but in recent years the difference between genders has gradually disappeared. Actually the male dropout rate at primary education level is somewhat higher than female rate in the academic year 2005 E.C. (15.9% and 15.4% respectively).

In Oromia region the dropout rate at primary education level is somewhat higher than the national average, 18.6% [*Education Statistics Annual Abstract 2005 E.C. (2012/2013)*]. In the sample woredas of the programme area addressed during the final evaluation the average dropout rate is only about one quarter (4.7%) of the rate in the Oromia region. Dropout rate of females (4.4%) is lower than dropout rate of males (5.0%) On the average the gender equity has not been fully reached in the sample woredas since boys outnumber girls, but contrary to the national status girls outnumber boys at preparatory level in almost all sample woredas.

The reduction in the number of girls dropping out of school was also witnessed by the interviewees during the field trip. One government official even mentioned that in rural areas many girls escape their homes if their parents do not allow them to continue going to school. Girls move to towns and try to make their living by working in the evenings. Many informants also notified that in line with government's strategy the woredas have invested great effort in enhancing especially the girls' educational level.

2.1.3 Build the capacity of women and girls in the society

Objective 1.3: By the end of the project period the knowledge about women's rights is improved in all levels of the society in the programme area

Outputs

Output 1.3.1: The collaboration between the synods and crucial institutions in the programme catchments area is good and trainings on women's rights are given to these institutions

In WS a network has been established and the members have signed Memorandum of Understanding already in 2010 (the preceding project). The network members are religious institutions: Mekane Yesus Church, Orthodox Church, Full Gospel Church, Muslims, Seventh Day Adventist Church; as well as governmental offices: administration, police, women affairs, education/schools, justice and health offices. The signatories commit themselves to work on FGM/HTPB mitigation, legal support for women, decreasing school dropout and referring fistula cases. The different offices and departments work in their respective places to implement the agreed upon activities.

In all synods there exists visible cooperation with relevant government and religious institutions. Cooperation includes meetings and trainings organized by the projects. Training on women's rights have been given by using relevant government experts as trainers. In most synods collaboration between the synod and crucial institutions seems to be good. Some synods reported challenges in muslim dominated communities caused possibly by the fear of converting. Collaboration with government offices also seems to be a challenge in some cases, depending on the contact persons in the government offices.

Output 1.3.2: The Ethiopian family law and the Oromia family law are known in the community

Training of trainers on women's rights were organized by the projects using lawyers from the woredas as trainers. Participants were from all levels of the synod structure. The trainers developed handouts that described the major provisions and the laws. In general, the community awareness on women's rights seems to be increasing.

According to some informants' views the laws are quite well known in the community: "*Women know their rights now, also government gives training*". There were also those who had an opposing view: "*Not known in the grass roots*". In spite of the knowledge there are some women who do not want to own their rights, especially old uneducated women.

2.2 Relevance of the programme

The programme is highly relevant as it addresses the most crucial issues of the communities; poverty, feminization of poverty, women's rights, girls' education, HIV/AIDS, HTPBs and related issues. The WEWEP Programme addresses critical areas of The National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAP-GE, 2006). The programme also goes in line with EECMY policy on women's participation in decision making (25 – 50%). The vision of the church is to have an economically self-sufficient, missional and vibrant church. The programme also contributes to having a self-reliant church by empowering women of the church economically.

Implementation of the programme

2.3.1 Assessment of results

Objective 1.1: Increased empowerment of the synods of the women staff/volunteers in the programme area, through institutionalising a women empowerment process at synod level.

There has been no change or very little change in female representation in decision making bodies at synod level and at congregational level since the baseline survey. Out of the members in the decision making bodies in the synods 72% are males and 28% females. On the contrary, at parish level a considerable increase can be seen. Out of members in the decision making bodies the proportion of females is now 38% (35% in baseline), proportion of females out of chairpersons is 29% (25% in baseline) and proportion of females out of secretaries is 30% (20% in baseline).

Women Ministry Departments in four synods are capable and functional, but in two synods there is still room for strengthening their capacity and functionality. None of the synods have institutionalized the Gender Guideline for the Church Ministry so far. Gender monitoring and evaluation system is not in place in the synods. Educational level of synod female staff/volunteers has been raised but not sufficiently.

Based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that the objective of increased empowerment of the synods of the women staff/volunteers in the programme areas has been achieved only partially. The female representation in the decision making bodies at parish level has increased, in four synods Women Ministry Departments have become functional and capable and educational level of synod female staff/volunteers has been raised to some extent.

The representation of women in synods' Conventions and Councils is in line with church policy (25 – 50%), but in other decision making bodies in almost all the synods the representation is below the expectation of the church policy. Two synods (WS, CGS) did not use the opportunity created by the project to empower the Women Ministry Department. The policy and strategy documents do exist but have not been communicated and institutionalized. There are no tutorial services provided and no scholarship funds created by parishes and congregations. The projects have supported needy female students for one round, which is not sustainable.

Objective 1.2: By the end of the project period the local community has good awareness about the impact of HTPBs and HIV/AIDS and behavioural changes on gender equality is seen

Based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that this objective has been achieved well. Even though there were no exact measurements available from the baseline survey on norms and attitudes one can with certainty say that the norms have started to transform and people's behaviour change. The following changes in the behaviour were mentioned most often by the informants: families have started talking about sexual issues, women are not shy any more but have started to go out of their homes, to speak their voice and to defend their rights, families have started to appreciate boys and girls equally, men have started sharing the burden of wives by participating in household work and taking care of children, young boys have also started helping their mothers, men have started to understand that women's oppression is not right.



Improved financial status of families through women's participation in self-help groups is possibly the most successful result of the programme in contributing to bring a change in the lives of beneficiaries. Because of the success and satisfaction of women in SHGs the groups became attractive models for women outside the project. Several new SHGs were established without no external financial support.

Awareness level of the local community on the impact of HTPBs and HIV/AIDS seems to be good in the whole programme area. In this

sense the programme has achieved its goal. However, some informants witnessed that HTPB is still practiced hidden, especially FGM. Some congregations require taking HIV/AIDS blood test before marriage. The majority of couples arrange their marriage out of the consent of their congregation.

The goal of reducing the dropout rate of girls has been achieved with efforts from both the programme and the government line departments.

Objective 1.3: By the end of the project period the knowledge about women's rights is improved in all levels of the society in the programme area

Based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that this objective has been achieved.

The collaboration between the projects and the crucial institutions is very good but not guided by a networking system except in the case of WS. Training on women's rights have been given to the concerned stakeholders.

2.3.2 Assessment of the implementation

Implementation of activities

Documents review was conducted in order to assess performance of the project in terms of implementation of its planned activities and achievement of objectives/goals. The reviewed documents were the annual plans for running the projects and annual project reports. Most of the planned activities were implemented and many individuals and groups were reached through the program. However, the planned activities and information provided in the documents was often unclear and imprecise. In addition, although the programme enabled flexibility to the projects in terms of the activities planned and implemented, these specific activities were not clearly defined or reported for each project in the analyzed project documents. The planned activities that were not successfully implemented included institutionalizing gender guidelines as well as endorsing gender monitoring and evaluation system; facilitating the self-help groups to becoming cooperatives (except 5 groups in WS); establishing a network system and signing a memorandum of understanding (except WS); and distributing Ethiopian and Oromia family laws in selected kebeles and congregations.

Resource utilization

All available resources (financial and human) have been utilized, but not always in a good manner. To some extent the resources were regarded insufficient: "*budget utilized well, but does not meet the demand*", especially the budget allocations for transportation and training. Lack of training material and qualified trainers was also mentioned.

Satisfaction of the target group

The target group is very satisfied, especially the poor women who have been empowered economically through self-help groups. Satisfaction is so obvious, that it can easily be seen: *“One can see from outside that they are very happy and successful, this attracts other women from outside the groups to be included.”* Afaan Oromo words *“amma garu”* (in English ‘but now’) were repeatedly heard in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, when women described their lives before the project and now. Needy students and CC group members also expressed their satisfaction.

The financial support in the form of a loan was an essential part of the contributions provided to the beneficiaries. It was not, however, mentioned as the most important or foremost contribution in bringing forth change in women’s life. *“By teaching and training people’s minds have changed, this brings forth change”*, as one informant put it. Social interaction and cooperation between women, sharing of knowledge, experience and ideas as well as supporting each other were seen as driving factors behind the change that has happened.

The project activities have promoted gender equality in the targeted communities. Through training, discussions and other awareness raising activities taboos have to some extent broken and families have started talking about sexual topics. Practicing of HTPBs has been reduced as more and more people understand the harmfulness. Many women witnessed change in their husbands’ attitudes and behavior. Men have started to participate in household task and share the burden of their wives. It is not possible to bring about cultural changes quickly, but the project has been seen paving the way to a more equal status of the genders.

Internal cooperation

Generally speaking the internal cooperation across departments of the synod seems to be good. However, remarkable differences exist between synods in cooperating across departments to support the project activities. Very good interdepartmental cooperation is observed in BGS, GJS and BDS. In ADS cooperation seems to be good but in CGS and WS cooperation is poor. In CGS the structure of the synod does not allow them to plan and implement their activities jointly. In WS there seems to be tensions between the project and Women Ministry Department. It seems the project and the WMD do not plan and implement together and there also seems to exist poor communication and understanding between the two.

Significant differences in cooperation between the projects and the respective WMD exist. In BDS, BGS and GJS the project and the WMD seem to work together with full consensus; in ADS there is good cooperation while in WS the project and the WMD do not know each other. In CGS the consultant could not get sufficient information to evaluate the cooperation between the project and WMD.

Unexpected or unfortunate effects

According to the informants many positive unexpected effects from the implementation of the programme has been seen, while only a few unfortunate negative effects were mentioned. The most often mentioned positive unexpected effect was the nature of the impact that self-help groups had in the women’s whole life, status and mindset. The effect of membership in a self-help group was seen not only or even not mainly economic (income generation and business skills) but social. Women who had been very shy and had almost never been outside their homes started to go out to gather together, to have fellowship, to share their knowledge, experiences and ideas and to help each other. Their whole life changed, they acquired self-esteem and started to manage their own resources.

The self-help groups also became attractive models for women outside the project. Learning from the experiences of the established groups several new self-help groups were established without any external financial support.

Additional positive unexpected effects of the implementation of the programme were the following:

- a couple of girls joined the church after having seen the improvement that membership in a self-help group had brought on the lives of women
- a few married couples were saved from divorce.

Not very many negative effects were mentioned. In some cases conflicts between husband and wife had risen because of participation in the self-help group and some men were reported to have become harsh on their wives because of the fear that their wives will start dominating them.

It is hard to decide whether the decision of one congregation to restrict practitioners of FGM from Holy Communion is positive or negative.

Program structure and management

The six synods have signed a Joint Agreement for WEWEP. All decision making authority is given to Programme Management Committee, which is the highest body of the programme. Management Committee has a good representation from each synod (Executive Secretary, Women Ministry Coordinator). The programme's structure and management capacity seems good in order to enable achievement of its goals. The Management Committee meetings were held quarterly. The Committee has decided on a number of relevant issues. One of the decisions of the Committee was institutionalizing the gender guideline policy by all synods. This decision was not acted on by most of the delegates of the synods. There is no higher authority to enforce the implementation of decisions of the Management Committee, thus it seems that the Management Committee is not accountable to any such relevant body.

Each project has its own Steering Committee composed of Executive Secretary, Women Ministry Department leader, Accountant, two relevant professionals from the community and Project Manager (no vote). Some Steering Committees have had their meetings regularly, some of them with certain irregularities. The challenges have been caused by overlapping responsibilities and unexpected events arranged by different stakeholders. The professionals from the community in some synods (BGS, GJS) seem to be very committed to contribute in the Steering Committee. For the rest of the synods the evaluators were not able to access information on the commitment of the community representatives.

2.3.3 Assessment of efficiency

The financial management evaluation of the project was conducted by gathering data from concerned personnel (accountants) at synod level and CO using interview and document review.

Utilization of budget (recurrent & capital budget)

Capital budget was released to the project at all synods in 2012 except for WS where it was transferred from the previous project in 2011. In the process it was evaluated that these budgets had been effectively utilized.

Recurrent expenditure has been released as it has to be throughout the life of the project from 2012-2013. This budget has expensed for the WEWEP at all synods being divided in two as administrative expense and project implementation cost. The level of consumption of recurrent budget for administration and project activity implementation is different across WEWEP in different synods. The expenditure pattern for different synods is indicated below

as evidence for the year 2013. Note: Data in the required form was not obtained from BDS and ADS.

Table 3. Expenditure pattern of WEWEP for the year 2013

Period: 2013					
Type of budget	WEWEP at synod level				
	CGS	GJS	WS	BDS	ADS
Administration expense	216,614.00	140,725.00	427,840.00	79,200.00	220,172.00
Project activity implementation cost	168,254.00	231,959.00	399,505.00	280,800.00	151,645.00
Total	384,868.00	372,684.00	827,345.00	360,000.00	371,817.00
% of administration expense	56%	38%	52%	22%	59%

The allocation of recurrent expenditure between administrative expense and project implementation cost at CO is also indicated below for comparison.

Table 4. Allocation of recurrent expenditure between administrative expense and project implementation cost at CO

Type of budget	Time period (year)		
	2012	2013	2014
Administrative expense	447,140.00	256,460.00	121,646.00*
Project implementation cost	467,722.00	521,145.00	412,474.00*
Total	1,004,862.00	805,605.00	592,120.00*
% of administrative expense	44%	32%	21%

*The expenditures reported in the year 2014 are actual expenditure incurred to date of evaluation process (mid-November 2014).

As indicated above, there is excessive administration expense incurred over and above what has been permitted by law for non-governmental organizations in the Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009 and Users' Manual for the Charities and Societies Law for Civil Society in Ethiopia, which is 30 %, though this legislation does not govern WEWEP as a program within the church,. However, knowing the ruling legislation, which applies to other organizations and projects, gives perspective on the expenditure. The administration expense of 30% could still be wise guide for the program.

In the evaluation process it was observed that recurrent expenditure has been revised on a quarterly basis and reallocation has been made from one budget line (budget live with surplus funds) to another budget line (budget line with deficit funds) by WEWEP at all synods. After the revision was approved by the CO, expenditure was made for project activities.

Even though discouraged by the CO, there have sometimes been circumstances under which projects at synod level made over expenditure for a given projects activity i.e. actual expenditures for a given activity exceeded the budgeted amount. In such a case, an additional budget request was presented to the CO and the office released additional budget based on the request. In this regard, some projects at synod level have used the system of re-allocation from one activity to another in order not to over expend their maximum allowable budget.

Internal control over cash

The flow of cash from donor to the CO and from the CO to the WEWEP at synods is in its proper channel. Funds for performing project activities were transferred by the donor (NMS) to the project account at the CO. The CO distributed the money to each WEWEP at the synods and transferred it to their bank account on a quarterly basis. Regardless of this, almost all WEWEP projects at all synods did not collect bank advance for the money that was transferred to their account, did not request and collect a bank statement and did not prepare bank reconciliation on a monthly basis to enhance control over cash. As a consequence, the projects could not send an acknowledgement letter to the CO on a timely basis and this created delay in transfer of funds by the donor to the CO and by the CO to projects at synods.

As far as expenditure for projects activity is concerned, there exists inconsistency and non-uniformity in making payments of cash for project activities. Except a few, in almost all synods a work advance form was prepared by the project manager before amounts were expended for project activities. On the basis of advance form payment voucher was prepared and approved by an accountant and the cheque was issued. In some synods money was withdrawn by the cashier and then given to the one who was responsible to conduct project activity with suspense accounts and upon completion of project activity it was settled with settlement from, whereas in some synods there were conditions when money was sometimes drawn by the cashier and sometimes by the project manager or somebody else. To enhance control over cash, it is recommended that cash used for various project activities should be drawn by the cashier and given to the one that performs project activities with suspense accounts and has to be settled on a timely basis upon completion of a specific project activity. Signatories of cheque in different synods are people with different responsibilities; of course, in all synods there are three signatories, one standing and two alternate signatories. In all synods PMs are standing signatories, but alternate signatories differ from synod to synod.

Project cost and expenses

Document evaluation of the project at all synods indicated that financial resources have been more or less efficiently utilized. But there exists inconsistency and non-uniformity among synods in making payments of per diem and transportation cost. Although the project document stated that per diem has to be paid in line with the synods financial manual, some synods made payment of per diem over and above what was stated in the financial manual. There are also others that paid double per diem when events were organized by the CO. Some synods had paid per diem from their own project fund in addition to what had been paid by the CO.

The payment system for transportation to perform project activities among synods was also not uniform. In some synods the project used synods care on fuel cost reimbursement basis, whereas in other synods the project used the synods car on a mileage base at different rates ranging from Br.12/km-Br 15/km and even in some case, there were situations to lease private vehicles if either of the above options were not possible.

Purchase and store procedure

Purchases of equipments for the project at synod level were made in 2012 in accordance with each synod purchase manual by collecting Performa. Purchase of consumable items for the project at different synods varied. In some synods purchase of items was requested by the PM and purchased by someone for whom it was convenient to purchase, in other synods, there was a purchasing committee that approved the purchase of consumable items and responsible person to purchase these items.

It was observed that there was a right procedure for movement of consumable items to the store room upon acquisition and from the store room upon requisition, since the store keeper uses both good receiving note and store issue voucher. But there was no stock card or bin card that indicate items available for use, items consumed /used and items available in the store room for future consumption for the project at some synods.

Financial report preparation and communication

An activity report that indicates the performance of WEWEP was prepared for the project at all synods on a quarterly basis and reported to the CO. The report included activities performed by the project according their budget line and actual budget utilized or consumed for each activity. Budget revision was also incorporated in the project. At the end of the fiscal year, a consolidated financial report was prepared by the CO by gathering financial sources documents from WEWEP at all synods. This implies that the system of preparing a financial report is highly centralized and financial documents are transferred from projects synods to the CO only once a year. An audit of the financial report was held at the CO for the consolidated financial report. The final evaluation noticed that the CO faced difficulty in giving feedback separately to each WEWEP at synod level.

Utilization of resources

The project has been utilizing financial, material and human resources for accomplishment of the goal of the project. During the evaluation it was observed that the available material and human resources were efficiently utilized and there was no resource constraint in this regard. But as to financial resources, there was a problem of high demand and limited funds i.e. project implementers at all synods complained that the activities performed to achieve the goal of the project and the budget maintained for the project was not comparable. In order to achieve the same results with the same or less resources some suggestions were presented by the informants. There was a suggestion to integrate at least some of the project activities into synod's functions: "*Some of the components of the project can be worked on by diaconia*". Provision of local resources was also suggested: "*Local resources could be used to support more SHGs*". There was also one suggestion on allocation of resources: "*Allocating the resources differently, form synod/project to the grass roots*".

2.3.4 Assessment of sustainability

Majority of the informants seemed to possess quite positive views on the continuation of the activities without external support after the programme phases out. Only a few persons had clearly negative opinions. Most informants said it is possible to continue, if not all but at least some of the activities. As one person put it: "*Yes, the project has awakened us to see what can be done and we can do it.*" Certain preconditions were mentioned: "*If resources are allocated in a strategic way at the grass roots, yes*" and "*if more awareness training and time for preparation is given it is possible*".

The most optimistic informant said: "*We can continue every activity, we have a vision to bring forth change, we need money but we'll get it.*" Others were a bit more hesitant: "*Current self-help groups can continue, but it is not possible to establish new ones, even those groups which are not saving enough are in danger.*" A common view was that with the training that has been given and with the Women Ministry Departments taking the ownership there will be sustainability.

Concerning synods' non-financial capacity to continue work on their own leadership skills seem to be lacking: "*Leadership development is needed in all synods.*" Many informants said that without external support it is not be possible to hire a project manager and therefore "*We cannot have such strong follow-up and encouragement from the synod*".

The consultant's evaluation on the sustainability of the programme initiatives is that none of the six synods is ready to continue the project activities by its own resources. However, the sustainability of the project could be improved by creating local and sustainable income generating means, by further training and awareness raising, by utilizing grass roots resources of the synods and by integrating project activities into the synod's activities.

3 Recommendations

Based on the overall understanding gained during the final evaluation the evaluation team sees the WEWEP Programme having strong potential to transform the lives of the community members in Western Ethiopia. The team gives the following recommendations:

1. Self-help groups should be established in all congregations in the programme area. In this regard, employing social workers for all projects is indispensable.
2. Rewarding best ranking girls should be done not only in high schools and preparatory classes, but also at primary level. This could be done without any additional financial resource by giving cheaper rewards.
3. Needy female student's support in the form of an onetime monetary cash does not solve the problem. It is recommended to consider an income generating system like rearing sheep or goat and giving the first lamb to another person, who in turn gives the first lamb and so on.
4. HTPB and Community Conversation groups should be strengthened by searching committed young persons and empowering them technically, professionally and ethically.
5. Awareness raising on women's rights need to be taken to the grass root.
6. It is recommended that planning of logistics is done well in advance together with synods departments in order to save resources allocated for transportation.
7. This programme is unique in that it works mainly in the family of EECMY. Hence all synods should value the programme/project highly and strengthen internal cooperation regardless of issues that would be seen as obstacles.
8. The Gender Guideline needs to be revised, organized into a logical framework and presented to the synods for institutionalization.
9. WEWEP Management Committee is not integrated into church management structure. This means that there is no inbuilt control over the MC members in the synods. The structure of the programme needs revision. It is recommended that the MC is accountable to the EECMY WMD or EECMY DASSC.
10. As major part of Western Ethiopia community Central Synod (located in Nekemte) should also be taken into account as part of WEWEP Programme in the future (if this is already included in the plans, this recommendation can be removed).
11. The CO should build a follow-up system to check the regularity of meetings of the decision making bodies and the implementation of the decisions made by them.
12. In order to secure sustainability of the activities it is advisable that the project and synod WMD plan and implement the activities jointly. It is also recommended to arrange training and consultation on issues like building team spirit, sustainability and inter-program experience sharing.
13. More attention should be given to grass root level; congregations and parishes, where there exists interest and financial capacity.
14. All projects should report on their activities in the same format and in a more organized manner.
15. In some synods there was usage of current expenditure for administrative expense over and above what is required by law, thus it is recommended that the project utilize its recurrent expenditure as it is required by law even if the law does not govern it.
16. Some synods requested additional budget from the CO by over-utilizing some budget lines. It is strongly recommended that such synods make critical budget analysis and transfer budgets from surplus lines to deficit budget lines instead of requesting additional budget from the CO.

17. There should be continuous follow-up by WEWEP at synod level regarding money transfer by the CO to them. Bank advice should be collected from the bank as soon as possible and a receipt voucher should be issued in addition to this, the project at synod level and the CO should request a bank statement from the bank and prepare bank reconciliation on a monthly basis to enhance control over cash.

18. WEWEP accountants at synod level should continuously follow up their bank balance and send an acknowledgement letter to the donor on a timely basis to make the transfer of funds as fast as it has to be and there should be transfer of funds by the donor to the WEWEP PCO and by the CO to WEWEP at synod level on a timely basis to efficiently and effectively perform project activity.

19. It is better to have uniform payments procedures throughout the WEWEP and there should be clear duties and responsibilities for PM, accountants, cashier and WMD head at synod level regarding financial transaction of the projects: "who does what and how."

20. Cheque signatories of WEWEP at synod level should be informed and it is recommended that these be individuals directly involved in project operations, namely PMs, accountants and WMD heads.

21. The project should develop its own per diem payment system and strictly adhere to it to avoid the inconsistency and non-uniformity of per diem payment system practiced, and avoid discrimination among its workers at different synods related to per diem benefits, and to efficiently utilize its recurrent budget.

22. To reduce expenditures incurred for transportation and to have uniform transportation expenditure system, the project should make an agreement with all synods to use synod cars on fuel basis or on fair price mileage basis.

23. It is advisable for the CO to develop a system for auditing the financial performance of each project separately and give feedback or the auditors opinion to WEWEP at synod level on a timely basis.

24. It is strongly recommended that there should be a purchasing committee for the project at all synods that is responsible for approving and purchasing goods & services for the project and the approval has to be minuted.

25. Synods that do not use a material ledger card should develop and use one in order to enhance control over materials.

WEWEP cases of women in the SHG

Case-I:

Beshatu Benti is a 51 years old widow living in Gori with three children (1 girl and 2 boys). She sustains her livelihood by daily labor. Besides daily labor she used to rear sheep for other people and share the lambs. She joined WS-WEP in 2012 and received a 600.00 birr loan. With the loan she bought one sheep, which gave birth to a lamb that died soon. Beshatu sold the sheep and bought another, which gave birth to two lambs. Again she managed to buy another sheep, which also gave birth to a lamb. She sold one of the five sheep and paid back her loan. Currently she has four sheep and is saving 4.00 birr every month, although she is expected to save about 370.00 birr. Now her future looks bright with God and by continuing to work hard.



Case-II:

Maritu Kana is a 35 years old woman, who has been a widow since 2003 after losing her husband to typhoid. She also lost her first son in 2000 because of a heart problem. Now she



lives in the Andu-Yubdo area with her two sons Ifa and Iyasu who are attending grade 3 and 6 respectively though Ifa, the eldest, is less interested in education. She used to sustain her family by the income she received from daily labor and pottery work up to 2012, the year she joined BDS-WEP SHG. She received a loan of 1,000.00 birr from the project. With the loan she bought a sheep and also expanded her small business/activities. Currently she has paid back the loan and has an ox. Having the ox has given her family life hope,

because she can plough the land that she has with it.

One very important lesson that others can learn from Maritu is her refusal to get married for a second time. Although many have asked for her hand in marriage, she does not want to expose her sons to problems that may be created in the new family.

Annexes

Annex 1 TOR

Annex 2 List of informants

Annex 3 Secondary data sources

Annex 4 Secondary Data Collection Questionnaire

Annex 5 In-depth interview format

Annex 6 Focus Group Discussion Guide, programme level

Annex 7 Focus Group Discussion Guide, synod and project level

Annex 8 Observation format

Annex 9 Document review at synod level

Annex 10 Field trip itinerary