

Communities Helping their Environment and Land by Bridging Interests  
(CHELBI) Project

Funded by: United States Agency for International Development (USAID)



FY16 Quarter I Progress Report: October – December 2015

PROJECT SUMMARY	
<b>Award No.</b>	AID-663-A-13-00024
<b>Start Date</b>	December 10, 2013
<b>End Date</b>	March 08, 2016
<b>Total Award</b>	\$1,200,000
<b>Report Period</b>	October – December, 2015

## PART I: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Communities Helping their Environment and Land by Bridging Interests (CHELBI) Project works in Konso, Alle and Burji woredas of Segen Area Peoples' Zone in the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS), and Teltele Woredas of Borana Zone in Oromiya Regional State. The goal of the project is to reduce violence among agricultural and pastoral communities in Southern Ethiopia by promoting sustainable natural resource management, land use planning and livelihood opportunities.

The program works towards its goal through the following objectives:

**Objective 1:** Facilitate people-to-people solutions to land and natural resource competition by creating opportunities for inter-community engagement around natural resource issues of shared interest.

**Objective 2:** Develop capacity and linkages among formal and non-formal institutions to facilitate and enforce inter-community agreements around sustainable natural resource areas of shared interest.

**Objective 3:** Facilitate market linkages for natural resource products and improved technologies that can sustainably enhance resource dependent livelihoods.

The CHELBI project operates in an area known as the Chau Bahir watershed, where six distinct ethnic groups are often competing over limited key livelihood resources – rangelands, farmlands, water points and forests. Konso farmers and Borena pastoralists' frequently engaged in life threatening conflict with each other as the Konso expand their farm lands into Borana's dry season grazing lands and occupy seasonal river banks for farming. The agro-pastoral Tsemay compete for access to farmland along river banks with both Konso and Alle. The Borena, Hamer, and Arbore pastoralists increasingly rely on resource-rich territories in their borderlands to feed and water their cattle, which commonly leads to escalated raiding and revenge-killing among the communities.

The project works to promote interdependence among pastoral and agricultural communities of the Chau Bahir watershed through sustainable natural resource management (NRM), land use agreements and livelihood opportunities. The natural resource management component of the project focuses on consensus-driven, sustainable management and utilization of key shared resources, land use planning and rehabilitation processes through people-to-people (P2P) facilitation approaches. The project also works with community based traditional institutions and local government structures to build their institutional capacity to promote and effectively facilitate multi-stakeholder natural resource management processes. Building on Mercy Corps' best practices and lessons learned in the area, CHELBI supports market linkages and value chains for input supply, livestock, and improved agricultural technologies that will build resilience of the target pastoral and agricultural communities for the increasing impact of climate change.

## PART II: PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### A. Project Accomplishment Summary

**OBJECTIVE ONE:** *Facilitate People-to-People solutions to land and natural resource competition by creating opportunities for inter-community engagement around natural resource issues of shared interest*

- Consultation and training on draft bylaw development process for watershed management committees organized in three Kebeles
- Bylaw ratification process facilitated
- Youth focused peer to peer discussion supported in two Kebeles
- Volunteers and key community members mobilized for dissemination of environmental protection messages

**OBJECTIVE TWO:** *Develop capacity and linkages among formal and non-formal institutions to facilitate and enforce inter-community agreement around sustainable natural resource (NR) areas of shared interest*

- Community experience sharing visit to successful Agroforestry site organized
- Ongoing support provided for nursery sites

**OBJECTIVE THREE:** *Facilitate market linkages for natural resource products and improved technologies that can sustainably enhance resource dependent livelihoods*

- Stakeholders reflection workshop aimed at presenting market assessment findings organized
- BBS training facilitated for fuel efficient cook stove producer groups and SACCO members
- Promotion event supported for fuel efficient cook stoves and alternative post-harvest technologies products

### B. Program Accomplishments by Objectives

**OBJECTIVE 1:** *Facilitate People-to-People solutions to land and natural resource competition by creating opportunities for inter-community engagement around natural resource issues of shared interest.*

#### **Consultation meeting and training for NRM committees on draft by-law development process**

In the reporting period CHELBI facilitated three consultation meetings and trainings for NRM committee members from Kilicho, Billa & Gera rehabilitation sites (the other rehabilitation site kebeles were addressed in the previous quarter). The events were organized for two consecutive days in respective kebele administration compounds in which a total of 49 participants attended. The event participants consist of NRM committee members, kebele administrators, woreda NRM experts, and kebele development agents.

The sessions aimed to build capacities and enable NRM Committee members to reflect on process and engage actively in drafting by-laws for CHELBI supported watershed rehabilitation sites in their

respective kebeles. As part of the preparation for these sessions, CHELBI supported the establishment of NRM Committees and organized environmental awareness raising events in each of the target kebeles in the previous quarters. Participants of the event covered key consideration in bylaw development process and discussed detail points of the draft bylaw that will be presented to the wider community. At the end of the session the participants developed action plans and agreed on roles and responsibilities of NRM committee members to finalize the bylaw ratification process.

### **Bylaw ratification process supported**

Following the draft bylaw development process and reflection session among key stakeholders, CHELBI supported wider community bylaw ratification processes in seven rehabilitation sites of Konso, Burji and Alle woreda. During these events community members aired their opinions on the draft bylaw and forwarded their recommendations and points to be included in the final documents. After inclusion of major comments in the draft document participants fully ratified to become a binding law for management and use of natural resources in their respective Kebeles. Moreover, volunteer environmental youth group members used the opportunity to disseminate useful messages about the importance of environmental protection and management via drama and songs to inspire community members to actively engage in all NRM activities and play their role in the process of restoring nature. A total of 894 community members participated during these sessions.



Larger community discussion event to ratify by-law in Billa kebele of Burji Woreda

### ***Youth focused peer to peer discussion facilitated***

CHELBI continued supporting youth focused peer to peer conversations. In the reporting period two youth focused peer to peer conversations were facilitated in Alle woreda – specifically in Gergema and Kerekerte kebeles. These two kebeles are situated along the borders of Konso and South Omo woredas, where scarcities of natural resources are widely experienced and perceived to be conflict prone areas unless NRM issues are carefully addressed. These youth focused peer to peer discussions were facilitated for two consecutive days aimed at helping youth and other community members better understand the current status and future scenarios of their environment. In addition to this, it was designed to motivate or inspire them to engage through active participation in those joint efforts made to strengthen environmental protection activities and management of scarce shared natural resources and hence contribute to improve relations among neighboring communities. Specifically these youth focused events were expected to realize the following outcomes:

- Raise awareness of youth towards their environment- which includes how people affect the environment & are being affected by environmental issues like Climate Change, and other environmental hazards and shocks;
- Establish a platform for youth in which they can share ideas, skills and knowledge in areas of natural resource management and environmental protection;
- Establish youth volunteer environmental protection groups who will take an active role in disseminating key environmental protection messages & mobilize communities for natural resource management and protection activities;
- Develop communication and experience sharing mechanisms for youth focused on environmental management and protection initiatives.

A total of 165 youth participated in the event from both Kebeles and they established a volunteer youth environmental protection club in both Kebeles comprising of 30 members (of which 10 are female youth). The youth envision the environmental youth clubs will play a central role in maintaining rehabilitated sites and ensuring active youth engagement and environmental protection issues.

### ***Volunteers and key community members mobilized for dissemination of environmental protection messages***

Mercy Corps supported refresher training and consultation meetings for youth volunteer club members from Nalyasegem and Abaroba Kebeles of Konso Woreda. The session aimed to review the progress made to date and draw action points to speed up their efforts for dissemination of environmental related messages to the wider community members. A total of 31 club members' and two kebele managers participated in the session. Following the refresher training the volunteer groups organized half day



Gergema youth event

mass events in Arbaroba kebele of Konso. More than 260 people attended the mass event in Arbaroba in which the youth disseminate key environmental messages through drama, music and role play.

***OBJECTIVE 2: Develop capacity and linkages among formal and non-formal institutions to facilitate and enforce inter-community agreement around sustainable NR areas of shared interest***

**Community experience sharing visit to successful Agroforestry site organized**

Experience sharing and learning visit to selected agroforestry site of Gedeo Zone was facilitated from December 14 – 18, 2015 for 40 (8 women) selected community representatives, DAs and government officials from Alle and Burji Woredas. The areas visited are well known for their best practice in agroforestry activities across the country. The visit was aimed at enhancing community awareness on sustainable natural resource management and integrated livelihood diversification schemes through agroforestry practices. The participants reflected that they were very impressed with the demonstrations on agroforestry techniques and indicated that they will replicate the experiences in their respective woredas and kebeles for improved NRM activities and livelihood opportunities. The participants took responsibility to share the experiences and the lessons they learned for wider community members.



Experience sharing visit to best practice agroforestry sites

***Continued technical and material support to Nursery Sites***

Ongoing technical and material support was provided to nursery sites. In the reporting period about 187 Kg seeds of different tree species were transported and distributed to all three nursery sites to facilitate smooth and proper seedling production for the upcoming planting season. As a result of ongoing support, currently more than 200,340 seedlings were raised and put under proper management techniques in all nursery sites to make them ready for out-planting during the next rainy season. In addition, 3,420 Junipers and Moringa Oleifera tree seedlings were distributed in three Kebeles of Alle woreda and planted in rehabilitation sites and individual farms.



Follow up in Arfaide nursery site

***OBJECTIVE 3: Facilitate market linkages for natural resource products and improved technologies that can sustainably enhance resource dependent livelihoods.***

**Stakeholder’s reflection workshop on the main findings of EMMA assessment organized**

Mercy Corps organized a one day stakeholder’s reflection workshop on the main findings of EMMA assessment on 10<sup>th</sup> of December, 2015 in Arba Minch Town of Gamo Gofa Zone. The goal of the workshop was to present and discuss the main findings of the assessment, validate the findings and sort out possible strategic interventions for better impact during the life of the project and future direction. Main findings and possible recommended action points on Agricultural input, post-harvest technologies, alternative energy (solar and fuel efficient cook stoves ), financial services and haricot beans were presented and discussed with 42 stakeholders from Zonal and Woreda level government sector departments and offices. The participants agreed on the following key points for better intervention and impact:

- Due consideration should be given by all stakeholders to management, storage and proper and timely distribution of agricultural inputs to farmers.
- With respect to energy efficient stoves, currently producers at Woreda and kebele levels are producing “Mirt” stoves which are believed to be suitable to make the staple food ‘Injera’ and local drinks. However, different community members have different eating habits and hence commented and recommended for the introduction and promotion of other energy efficient cook stoves like “Gonzye” in addition to the Mirt cook stove.
- Stakeholders have to coordinate and collaborate in planning and implementation of their activities in areas of promotion and market linkages.
- Financial service is core for all sectors, hence strengthening linkages of producers, associations, and financial service providers (Union and SACCOS) with micro finance institution is important for easy access of micro financial services.
- Currently the solar lantern market is dominated by the illegal black market; hence all sector partners agreed to take measures to legalize and/or control smuggling and increase their efforts of promoting certified solar lantern products.

### **Basic Business Skill training facilitated for fuel efficient cook stove producer group**

With the intention of building the entrepreneurial capabilities of group members and to enhance the performance of their business, Mercy Corps facilitated a Basic Business Skill (BBS) training for two stove producer association members at Madeiranagizaba and Kerkerte kebeles of Konso and Alle woredas for five consecutive days. Supporting these associations was believed to reduce pressure on environmental resources and empower poor rural households economically by engaging them in productive business activities. The training enabled participants to understand what business means, identify profitable business ideas, review current business activities in their localities, understand dynamics of market and marketing elements (4Ps of marketing- Product, Price, Place and Promotion), how to assess customer needs and acknowledge the importance of customer service, develop skills on business planning, cost estimation, product pricing, profit calculation, financial record keeping and managing business resources. A total 27 participants attended the training sessions (14 and 13 were from Chala and Kodmo Fuel Efficient Cook stove producer association respectively).



BBS trainers from Chalala and Kodmo Fuel Efficient Cook Stove Producer Associations

### **Market linkage for alternative energy supply chain**

Mercy Corps understands the importance of identifying reliable solar lantern suppliers and linking them with local distributors or retailers in order to sustain and overhaul gaps in solar lantern technology market systems at the local level. Mercy Corps supported market linkages through facilitated agreement signing process between Tigist Taddesse Solar Lantern Import Company and Segen Genet Multipurpose Cooperative in Konso woreda. Both parties agreed to work together to supply solar lanterns at affordable prices for end users.

### **Alternative energy product promotion**

Fuel efficient cook stove promotion events were conducted in different Kebeles of Konso and Burji woredas. These events were organized to promote the technology and create opportunities for market expansion and to disseminate market related information. During and after the promotion events 96 households adopted fuel efficient cook stoves and more than 150 people attended promotion events in both woredas.



Fuel Efficient Cook Stove Promotion Events at Burji and Konso Woredas

### ***Promotion alternative storage technologies***

Promotion events on alternative post-harvest storage technology were facilitated at Billa & Gera Kebele of Burji Woreda and Maderianagizaba Kebele of Konso Woreda in collaboration with the respective Woreda Agriculture Office on 25/11/2015 and 24/12/2015, respectively. The promoted technology was an above ground storage bag called Super Grain bag. It was made from insect and pests penetration resistant material and found to be strong and more elastic. It was also user friendly, reduces storage loss caused by insects, preserves quality of stored grain and is used for a variety of grains like maize, sorghum, haricot bean, wheat, barley and coffee. Following these promotion events a total of 125 households adopted improved post-harvest storage technology and more than 250 people attended the events.



Super grain storage bag promotion event at Naderianagizaba Kebele

### **Alternative livelihood opportunities for youth and women groups through promoting small enterprises and savings and loans associations (SACCOs)**

In this reporting period Mercy Corps facilitated Basic Business Skill (BBS) training for SACCO and enterprise group members aimed at building their entrepreneurial capabilities and enhance their business performance to support poor rural household economic empowerment efforts. Participants were equipped with basic business skills that could allow them to undertake businesses, identify major challenges in their businesses, look through business opportunities and share experiences among themselves. A total of 278 SACCO members in Konso and Alle Woreda attended the training sessions for 5 consecutive days<sup>1</sup>. The training enabled participants to understand what business means, identify profitable business ideas, review current business activities in their localities, understand dynamics of market and marketing elements, how to assess customer needs and acknowledge the importance of customer service, develop skills on business planning, cost estimation, product pricing, profit calculation, financial record keeping and managing business resources. In addition to this, technical supports were provided for SACCOS and enterprise groups to enable them to manage and run their association and business properly and effectively.



BBS trainees from Nib and Sariko SACCOs members

### **PART III: PLAN FOR NEXT QUARTER**

***Objective 1: Facilitate People-to-People solutions to land and natural resource competition by creating opportunities for inter-community engagement around NR issues of shared interest.***

- Continue Mobilizing volunteers to disseminate messages on environmental protection
- Conduct inter-community dialogue among Alle, Burji, Konso and Borena communities
- Organize public outreach campaign on environmental issues and promotion of environmental products
- Mobilize community to undertake degraded area rehabilitation activities
- Organize public outreach campaign on environmental issues and promotion of environmental products

<sup>1</sup> Aleta andero SACCO members from 3 - 7/11/15; Nib SACCO members from 9-11/12/15; Sariko SACCO members from 21-26/12/15; Eyariko metro hiskete SACCO members from 26-30/12/15

***Objective 2: Develop capacity and linkages among formal and non-formal institutions to facilitate and enforce inter-community agreement around sustainable NR areas of shared interest.***

- Progress review and experience sharing work shop among NRM stakeholders
- Material and technical support for zone, woreda and watershed management committees
- Organize workshops to disseminate best practices and lessons learned
- Training on leadership for shared natural resource management, rehabilitation and sustainable utilization
- Assess land carrying capacity and land use practices in identified key resource areas

***Objective 3: Facilitate market linkages for natural resource products and improved technologies that can sustainably enhance resource dependent livelihoods.***

- Ongoing support for SACCOs
- Organize exposure visit for SACCO and micro-enterprise groups
- Training on market facilitation approach for government partners and key stakeholders

**PART IV: MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

USG Indicator	LoP Target	Performance		
		Previous Semesters Cumulative	This Quarter (Oct – Dec, 2015)	Total to Date (Dec 31, 2015)
No. of USG-assisted facilitated events geared toward strengthening understanding and cooperation among natural resource user groups	57	62	5	67
No. of people from at risk groups reached through USG-supported shared natural resource management activities	23,000	16,087	2,910	18,997
No. of additional hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	6,000	1,728	0	1,728
No. of policies, laws, agreements or regulations promoting sustainable natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance	6	5 underway	7	7
No. of people receiving USG-supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation	490	511	234	745
No. of micro-enterprises participating in USG-assisted value chains	30	14	9	23

## PART IV: CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

### *Challenges:*

- **Tension in Konso Woreda related to administrative issues:** Tension between the Konso Woreda community and local governments seriously affected the overall planned program activities. The effect was immediately felt when Konso community participants were unable to participate in the exposure visit to best practice agroforestry sites. Based on current context it will be difficult to organize the cross-border dialogue among Konso, Borana, and Burji community. This event is one of the major expected deliverables of the project and at the moment we are not sure if we can manage it before the end of the project. However will try to organize at least SNNP side cross community dialogues among Burji, Konso and Alle communities.