



**FOOD FOR
THE HUNGRY**

Food for the Hungry (FH) Ethiopia

**Targeted Response for Agriculture, Income and
Nutrition (TRAIN) Project**

Second Quarter Report – January 01 to March 31, 2017

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[Contract/Agreement] Number: [AID-FFP-A-16-00007]
Activity Start Date and End Date: Sep 30, 2016 – Sep 29, 2021
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I. PROJECT OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

Program Name:	Targeted Response for Agriculture, Income and Nutrition(TRAIN)
Activity Start Date And End Date:	Sep 30, 2016 – Sep 29, 2021
Name of Prime Implementing Partner:	Food for the Hungry
[Contract/Agreement] Number:	AID-FFP-A-16-00007
Name of Subcontractors/Subawardees:	Kifiya plc, Amhara Development Association and SFCG
Major Counterpart Organizations	Regional, zonal and district level government line offices
Geographic Coverage	Ethiopia, Amhara Regional State, Six districts [Semada, Lay Gayint, Tach Gayint, Abergele, Zequala and Sahela]
Reporting Period:	January 01 to March 31, 2017

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BOQ	Bill of Quantity
CG	Care Groups
CU2	Children Under 2
DFSA	Development Food Security Activity
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EW	Early Warning
FDP	Final Distribution Points
FFP	Food For Peace
FHE	Food for the Hungry
GBVs	Gender Based Violence
GOG	Gender Outreach Group
HH	Household
HTPs	Harmful Traditional Practices
MCHN	Maternal & Children Health & Nutrition
MT	Metric tone
PLW	Pregnant & Lactating Women
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Program
SBCC/CG	Social & Behavior Change Communication
SWC	Soil and Water Conservation
ToR	Terms of Reference
TRAIN	Targeted Response for Agriculture, Income and Nutrition
TRAIN	Targeted Response for Agriculture, Income and Nutrition
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WoE	Woreda office of Education
WoWCA	Woreda office of Women and Children Affaires
WoYS	Woreda office of Youth and Sport
WRA	Women in Reproductive Age

1.1 Project Description/Introduction

FH Ethiopia launched implementation of DFSA, known by a project name “**Targeted Response for Agriculture, Income and Nutrition (TRAIN)**”, in South Gondor and Wag-himira zones within the Amhara region. Across these two zones, the TRAIN project is implemented in six woredas namely Lay Gayint, Tach Gayint, and Simada of the former and Sahila, Abergelie, and Ziquala of the latter, respectively. These woredas are characterized by chronic food insecurity and some of the highest rates of malnutrition in the country. In order to contribute to the governmental and non-governmental efforts of reducing this situation, the TRAIN project works towards an overarching goal “**Resilience to shocks and livelihoods enhanced, and food security and nutrition improved for rural households vulnerable to food insecurity**”. TRAIN seeks to improve food security and nutrition needs of the vulnerable populations in the target woredas through a multi-sectoral approach that increases food availability and household income and improves the nutrition and health status among adolescent girls, women of reproductive age and children under five years of age. The project constitutes four purposes that summarized the pathways selected from the theory of change developed for the project. These are: (1) HHs/Communities have increased adaptive and absorptive capacities; (2) Increased availability of safe, diverse, nutritious and high value foods; (3) Increased equitable income for men, women and youth; (4) Reduced acute and chronic malnutrition for CU2, WRA, including PLW and adolescent girls.

Comments responses:

Should the DFSA award align to the ration cut down to wheat only? Or should we return to the full 3commodity ration once programed in the DFAP? USAID has been a long time champion of maintaining a diverse ration basket due to the dietary diversity and transfer value it provides to the households. Would there be any challenges with FH moving back to the 3 commodity ration for PSNP beneficiaries?

FH discussed these scenarios of changing the rations and have the following observations: The commodities provided to 80% the beneficiaries are supposed to be classified as payment for work done on public works and other interventions, however the commodities also ensure dietary diversity and contribute towards the household consumption of nutritionally efficient food. FH believes that the current composition of wheat and yellow split peas provides adequate nutrition to the household members. Before this current ration, there was the oil component of the ration, which was cut to align to the change in the other PSNP ration. Most of the beneficiaries in our coverage areas didn't take this change lightly and at some point thought that the change was due to our own internal decisions. However over time they begun to accept the change in the rations as the increase in the quantity of pulse provided seemed to reduce any apprehension on their part. However it was clear that the removal of the oil was affecting their household preparation of meals and thus if we have to go back to the three ration FH believes that would be acceptable to the communities. We recognize that given a budget neutral change, we would have to reduce the quantities of wheat and yellow split peas and that would require another prior education of the communities to accept the change.

Also, PSNP donors are being asked to program PDS clients to 9 months, what is FH's stance on that? As you know we currently are only supporting 6 months of PDS in the DFSAs as it is not a productive population.

FH believes that extending the support to PDS beneficiaries within the zones of operation from the current 6 months to 9 months would be a good idea and would support it. During a recent trip to update the level of operations on the grounds in Waghimira Zone, a few PDS respondents were voicing their concern even for cash transfers because in their words there is nothing to buy especially in Sahala and Ziquala woredas. It is therefore clear that the food support to these beneficiaries would go a long way. FH recognizes that it would need to review the amount of food that will be needed in this expansion however we want to be sure that our current food commodities and budget can accommodate any such expansion”

Finally what is FH's capacity to expand? Could FH manage a scale up to supply wheat commodity only to the old DFAP woredas we handed over? If additional resources mobilize, would FH be in a position to add expansion woredas? Also as of now what are FH's plans for expanding Kifiya cash transfers to other woredas in implementation year 2? Given the ongoing scale up challenges now, is expansion possible?

The old expansion Woredas are Sahila and Ziquala, which FHE is covering now. ORDA is covering them only with JEOP. If what FHE is been asked for are the old DFAP woredas, they are covered by ORDA with this DFSA. We are operationalizing JEOP in the old DFAP Woredas including ORDA's DFSA operational sites now while ORDA is implementing JEOP in the lowland Woredas of Wag-Himra where we are implementing DFSA. FH has the capacity to expand and would consider providing food commodities only especially wheat into woredas that need the support however given the condition of budget neutrality we want to be sure that our current food commodities and budget can accommodate any such expansion. FH would need further guidance from FFP on which woredas are target expansion woredas before committing to expansion. The question also presumes there could be additional resources and if that were the case, FH is confident of expansion.

With regard to the cash transfers with Kifiya, we recognize that every new pilot is a tough one and we admit that some assumptions were made in our relationship with Kifiya that we are finding not to be tenable. For example we assumed that Kifiya would adequately engage ACSI on the project without any delay as Kifiya assured us that it was given conclusion because they are already collaborating in other projects. We therefore did not engage ACSI directly as a partner. Now due to the lessons learned we have realized that it would be better to have a tripartite meeting between ACSI, Kifiya and FH to iron out any problems of operations that may be hindering the successful launch of the project. Since we are in the last and final month for the transfer for this first year, we are monitoring the process to engage fully the partners during the interval period. FH has also begun to look at the contract with Kifiya to see if there might be the need to revisit it to assume more control over the partnership with ACSI. Given those alternatives we firmly believe that we will be able to expand to other woredas but mostly those in the South Gondar areas. We don't anticipate any expansion of cash transfers yet to the Waghimira Zones because of the absence of a fully functioning market that would be spurred on by a cash economy. Besides, currently cash is distributed for 1 month in the three new woredas and Simada. Expanding the e-cash transfer to those woredas might not be

economically feasible because the later requires additional investment to purchase the POS/ android mobile and budget for Per Transaction Payment (PTP).

The project planned to target a total of 245,139 people (including contingency) with food and cash transfer for the fiscal year. During the reporting quarter, a total of 23,354 people (18,577 Public work and 4,777 Direct support) received food transfers. Since the transfers schedule begins with cash transfers, the number of food recipients is smaller than the annual plan. On the other hand, 15,380 households (91% of the total) have received cash transfers in Lay Gayint Woreda in the month of March. The transfer was not made for 9% of the participants because they were absent during Public Works days. Lay Gayint woreda office of agriculture has firm stand to not pay cash or food for PW absentees. In addition to the PSNP rations, TRAIN targeted PLW and mothers of children under two years of age (CU2), WRA including adolescent girls (10-19 years) with SBCC messages and training on nutrition practices, WASH and healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies (HTSP) through Care Groups (CG). TRAIN targeted individual PSNP participants that have access to at least 0.15 hectares, currently produce crops or livestock, and are willing to participate in and adopt the technologies promoted by the project with training to improve agricultural production for nutritious and high-value crops. Included in this will be those targets to link with market-based value chains to support improved on-farm incomes based on demonstrated early adoption and accelerated performance. The project targets youths with skills training and access to market-based income opportunities since they are highly vulnerable and have limited access to land resource. The project also targets members of *woreda* and *kebele* EW committees with targeted training and support development of DRR and EW plans in each *kebele* to better minimize effects of shocks and stresses at the community level.

Has the market analysis been completed? What high-value crops have been selected?

This is more of a statement of purpose that the training will be conducted to improve the production of the nutritious and high value foods. The market analysis has therefore not been completed and nutritious and high value foods are yet to be identified

2. ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

2.1 Progress Narrative

Most of the project activities planned for the year are progressing at a reasonable pace, though started late and slow due to various reasons, including staff placement, agreement signing, etc. Natural resource management related PW activities such as bench-terraces, check dams, stone/soil bunds, area closures were started in the month of November as scheduled and have registered satisfactory results as detailed in the narrative report compared to the annual and quarter plans. Important preparatory works such as site selection and handing over, preparation of Bill of Quantity (BoQ) and cost estimation, drawings for the Cap/Admin activities such as Small scale irrigation schemes and springs development, culverts, Health and Vet posts are completed and factory materials purchase is under progress. Local materials (sand and stone) collection for the construction works for most of the construction works is under progressing involving community members in a way that ensures sustainability of the project activities. The project has completed first round cash transfer in one of the Woredas (Lay-Gayint) where FHE is piloting electronic cash transfer. Food distribution also started in Simada woreda during the quarter. To help clarify processes and set protocols for uniform implementation of project activities across the Woredas, FHE prepared a field guide by which field workers are guided in carrying out activities.

FFP takes note that many of the NRM related activities have begun without full IEE clearance. A retro-active phased approval is in process with the DCHA Bureau Environmental Office which is not an approved project-level IEE, but rather an agreed phased approval of activity likely to have environmental consequences.

FH is currently revising its IEE and also has advertised for the required Environmental and Climate Safeguard Specialist position. We hope to have all these completed as part of our year 2 PREP submission in June.

That said, most training activities across the purposes are postponed to the third quarter of the year owing to staff recruitment process for the lowland Woredas of Wag-Himra and, long process of project agreement signing with the Amhara regional government. Furthermore, most studies and assessments planned for the year have not yet conducted due to the above issues.

2.2 Implementation Status

This section consists of a narrative of activities planned for the quarter versus actual by the project purposes.

Purpose 1: HHs/communities have increased adaptive and absorptive capacities

This purpose is meant to increase absorptive capacity (the ability to minimize the extent of exposure to shocks and stresses and to recover quickly when exposed) and adaptive capacity (proactive and informed choices about alternative livelihood strategies based on changing conditions). The lower chains of result constructed under this purpose in turn contribute to these capacities.

Sub-purpose 1.1: Communities and HH assets maintained and improved

Under this sub-purpose, four activities were planned to take place in the quarter. These are physical soil and water conservation structures, forestry, agro-forestry and forage development, construction of social infrastructure and capacity building on public works (PWs). The detail description of each activity is as follows.

Physical soil and water conservation activities

Watershed management has become one of the focusing areas of the Amhara regional state as well as the government of Ethiopia. The six DFSA project offices with woreda natural resource management and agricultural offices have given high priority to establishing watershed systems. The system involves a combination of activities such as terraces, soil bunds, eyebrow basins, cutoff drains, bench terraces, and artificial waterways to curb soil erosion and improve water conservation structures in the watershed sites. In order to achieve these results, various physical soil and water conservation (SWC) measures were taken under the watershed sites during the reporting period.

The physical SWC structures constructed in the quarter include 80km of soil bund (173%), 305km of stone bund (96%), 455km of hillside terrace (104%), 6672m³ of cut off drain construction (371%), 53 bench terrace construction (58%), 13,330 micro basin construction (62%), 37km of road maintenance/construction <5% (91.5%), 142km of hillside terrace and trench construction (393.75%), 5082 eyebrow basin (43%), 6391 water collection trench construction (16%), 74.93Ha of area closure and 41869m³ of stone check dam construction (1,478%).



Figure 1: Stone bund and trench construction in PW (Simada woreda)

Over achievements in some of the SWC activities is mainly attributed to planning that relied entirely on past trends. The fact that these activities are given due emphasis by government and the need to make alignment with this direction escalated the amount of public work channeled into them. Particularly, the overall project achievement of “stone check dam construction” massively exceeded the plan (1,478%) because it was an activity that was not planned at all by the Woredas except in Abergelie woreda. The same holds true for area closure which was not planned by any of the sites in the quarter. The achievement in the quarter exceeded that of the annual target by four folds. Yet they had to align with the current direction of the government that focuses on these activities. Moreover, these activities are not demanding and can relatively be speeded up with available PWs. On the other hand, underachievement of some activities is attributable to their nature being demanding in terms of labor requirement. The amount of PWs that is poured into these activities makes slow incremental to cumulate to the planned quantity.

Forestry, Agro-Forestry and Forage development:

The TRAIN project uses integrated soil and water conservation techniques of both physical and biological nature such as gullies treated with gabions and then planted with forest seedlings. Beneficiaries use their own nurseries and support central nurseries to raise and multiply the required seedlings for the woreda. With this in mind, purchase and collection of 1030 kg different varieties of forest seeds (25.48% of the target) was made and provided to the woreda natural resource management components. In order to complement the physical aspect of the SWC, 300 m³ of gabion structure was constructed (23.27% of the plan).

On the other hand, the nursery sites were provided with polythene tube to facilitate timely rising of seedling. Based on the need of the Woredas agriculture office, 1450 kg of polythene tube (43.03% of the plan) were purchased and provided to the nursery sites. Specific to Simada woreda, a total of 350 watering cans were purchased and handed over to Simada Woreda Agricultural Office.



Figure 2: The future forest and watering can support to nursery sites (Simada woreda)

Late start-up of the project had impact on the purchase of seasonal forest seeds. This in turn contributed to under achievement of the activity. In the case of gabion box provision (9%), underlying processes are underway.

Social Infrastructure Activities Construction

Originally in this year, the project planned to construct one health post in one of the DFSA intervention woredas. However, the woreda steering committees made changes during CAP/Admin budget allocation planning for three more health posts. In this quarter, site selection, drawings, BOQ (Specification, billing and cost estimation) and related document preparations are completed for the four health posts. The health posts which are now ready for construction are located in Abergelie (2), Ziquala (1), and Tach Gayint (1). Site handing over for winning contractors is underway in Tach Gayint and Sahila woredas. Site clearing and excavation are also completed in Tach Gayint. HCB, cement, sand and basaltic rock purchase are on progress for all health posts construction.

Will the health posts have WASH components too latrines, hand washing stations?

It is standard construction procedures to have latrine and hand washing stations. However in very rare cases the woreda government may have other priorities under their CAP/ADMIN where budget becomes diverted to other activities but FH provides technical support and advice to assist them in putting the latrines and hand washing stations attached to the health posts

Vet post construction

Livestock species play very important economic, social and cultural roles for rural households. Livestock helps on food supply, family nutrition, family income, asset savings, soil productivity, livelihoods, transport, agricultural traction, agricultural diversification and sustainable agricultural production, family and community employment, ritual purposes and social status. Sustaining productivity and survival of this valuable livestock species require sound animal health service delivery system. With this in mind, construction of vet posts was planned in three woredas. To date, preparation works for veterinary health post (site selection, BoQ and cost estimation, drawings) are completed for three veterinary health posts. The vet posts will be situated in Simada, Sihala and Ziquala. Bid document preparation and advertising for local contractors for the Simada and Sahila vet posts as well as technical evaluation are completed. The financial evaluation is delayed because FH Ethiopia is preparing standard for construction work norms across the six districts of DFSA projects. Collection and purchase of local construction materials are started in those districts where the vet posts will be constructed.

Is there access to electricity for these locations? Some of the vet pharmaceuticals require cold storage.

In areas without electricity, there are refrigerators that work on gas. This is a decision that the woredas have to make because our role is to construct the vet posts and not to furnish them which is the responsibility of the woreda government

Ford / crossing structures construction

In this quarter site selection for six fords is carried out and respective BoQ and cost estimate as well as drawings are prepared. The fords are located in Tach Gayint (2), Abergelie (3) and Ziquala (1). Moreover, site selection for suspension bridge is carried out in Abergelie and detail study (drawings, BoQ and cost estimate preparation) is underway by experts from HELVATAS.

How is engineering review assured for these larger more technical construction projects? Who provides structural engineering review?

The engineering review and construction is being performed by HELVATAS https://www.helvetas.org/projects__countries/countries/

Helvatas will provide structural engineering reviews and construction. FH's role will be to work with the woredas administration to convert their original CAP/ADMIN funds, which were originally planned for the construction of culverts into this project. The final discussion and production of MOU to fully describe the role of FH is being crafted.

Capacity building on Public Works:

Preparation in the six districts has been finalized to facilitate SWC techniques training for kebele development agents and PW site foremen/women in collaboration with agriculture offices in the reporting quarter.

Training for central nursery foremen/women on nursery management and seedling preparation was given to 19 persons (31.67% of the plan). The training was provided by woreda agriculture office experts for two days at Arb-Gebeya town. Topics covered during the trainings were seedling preparation and production, seedling management and seed collection method from mother trees.

In the reporting period, 63 public work site foremen/women (10 female) received training on PW management (19.94% of the plan) at Tach Gayint and Ziquala. The trainers were technical experts of PW and PSNP. Major topics covered were standards for each PW activities, follow up PW client attendants, ensuring gender participation, watershed management and sustainability.

On the other hand, training of watershed committees on watershed management and sustainability issues was provided to 267 committee members (253 male and 14 female) in Tach Gayint. This training was not originally planned. However, it was found out to be crucial to enhance the capacity of the participants as well as help them undertake their responsibilities more effectively and efficiently. Major topics covered during the training were watershed management and sustainability, controlling free grazing and promoting cut-and-carry feeding system.



Figure 3 Watershed committee members attending the training (Tach Gayint)

Purpose 2: Increased availability of safe, diverse, nutritious and high-value foods

The TRAIN project under this purpose aimed to contribute to increased production/productivity of high value and nutritious crop/livestock. This will be realized by strengthening local FTCs as hubs for technology demonstration and dissemination and building the capacity of local DAs. FH Ethiopia intends to employ Agricultural Cascade Extension (ACE) model to train the target participants. In addition to this, FH Ethiopia plans to increase access to inputs by supporting local market-based input suppliers and encourage HH-level seed multiplication schemes.

Finally, FH will support the GOE's irrigation priorities in selected kebeles to ensure that producers have sustainable access to water.

The activities under this purpose are delayed due to the pre-implementation works that have to be done. These include a series of orientation to government stakeholders at regional, zonal and woreda levels and process to sign agreement with regional government. Despite these factors the following activities were conducted in the quarter.

Sub-purpose 2.1: Increased production of safe, diverse, nutritious and high-value foods

IO 2.1.1: Increased availability of quality extension services

Activity 1- Strengthen government agricultural extension system

1.1 Conduct Capacity Gap Assessment of FTCs

FH envisaged strengthening local FTCs and using them as hubs for technology demonstration and dissemination. FH plans to work on 30 selected FTCs across the six operational woredas. The FTCs are being identified using the following main criteria.

- Number of direct and indirect participants benefiting from the FTC
- Accessibility of the FTC
- Number of DAs assigned
- Whether FTC have guards
- Potential for irrigation and agricultural production

The identification process of 30 FTCs is underway and so far 17 FTCs are identified. Once the 30 FTCs are identified, then capacity gap assessment will be conducted for each FTC, which will serve as a starting point to plan and fill the gaps and build their capacity in collaboration with Office of Agriculture and Natural Resource (OANR). The FTCs will be used to demonstrate new agricultural innovations, render training to lead farmers and convey market information and undertake related activities.

IO 2.1.4 Increased sustainable use of alternative water sources

Activity 1: Promote small scale irrigation/water harvesting schemes

1.1 Conduct feasibility study

In this quarter feasibility study was planned for six schemes of which only one is conducted (17%). The study was conducted by a team of experts represented from FH project office and zonal and woreda Agriculture and Natural Resource Department and Office. As part of the feasibility studies, various socio-economical, agronomical, topographical, hydrological and geological data were collected. The major recommendations of the feasibility study for one of the schemes at Lay Gayint for instance was to construct intake structures rather than weirs as clay soil is dominant and gully can easily be developed and destroy the weir. The process for the remaining sites is underway in similar fashion.

1.2. River diversion/Spring Development for irrigation

The Goradit river in Lay Gayint was found feasible for river diversion scheme. The team recommended constructing intake structures on the river. Along with the intake structures, lined canal construction is underway.

1.3. Irrigation scheme upgrading

It was that three irrigation schemes be upgraded in this quarter. Two irrigation schemes are being upgraded and are on a stage of head work/ weir/ construction in the case of Tach Gayint. In Lay Gayint, two irrigation schemes are being upgraded in which the activity of upgrading took various forms such as seepage protection (50% is completed) and retaining wall (35% is completed). The former scheme is expected to benefit 65HH (16 female) or 313 beneficiaries (147 female) and irrigates a total command area of 24Ha. The latter is anticipated to benefit 50HH (10 female) or 217 beneficiaries (104 female); 30 of these are PSNP beneficiaries (female=16) and 70 of them are PSNP graduated; whereas the remaining 117 are Non-PSNP (female =54).



Figure 4: Canal work in Tach Gayint, Kebele 03

On page 11 of sub-activity 1.3, It was mentioned that two irrigation schemes are planned to be upgraded and are anticipated to benefit 217 beneficiaries. Out of these; 30 are PSNP beneficiaries, 70 are graduated ones and 117 are non-PSNP beneficiaries. We understand that water schemes are a communal benefit, but was it the intention that more benefit would go to non-PSNP beneficiaries as opposed to PSNP beneficiaries?

The siting of an irrigation project confers on FH the need to ensure that property rights are protected for everyone within the coverage areas even if they are not PSNP beneficiaries. Ideally, FH would have liked the project to benefit more PNSP beneficiaries and FH seeks to do that in some activities like family hand dug well construction for irrigation, but in this particular case and more of such projects would come up, there were more non PSNP beneficiaries who already had land near the water source and were benefiting from the previous project before the irrigation project was rehabilitated.

1.4 Hand dug well construction for irrigation

Ground water is an important type of sources for small scale irrigation development especially in the high land woredas. This activity is not planned in this quarter. However, consensus was reached with partners on seasonality of this particular activity. As a result, seven (7) hand-dug wells were initiated for irrigation and to install rope and washer pump in Lay Gayint. Currently, four (4) irrigation hand-dug wells are excavated, masonry work completed and ready to install the rope and washer pumps to serve PSNP beneficiaries. The remaining three (3) hand dug wells are under excavation. The hand dug wells are proposed to irrigate PSNP beneficiary backyards to ultimately improve access to nutritious foods.

1.7 Conduct ESMF screening

The TRAIN project understands the sensitivity of the environmental concern from sustainability point of view. As a result, ESMF screening for the new irrigation (Goradit river) was done as stated in the foregoing section. The screening process was carried out in collaboration with Woreda Agriculture Office and approval was made by the Woreda Environmental Protection, Land Administration and Utilization Office.

Activity 2-Formation and training of irrigation users committee

1.3 Training to irrigation users on agronomic practices

This activity was not planned in this quarter. Having the aforementioned water sources in place, however, training irrigation users concurrently seemed appropriate to help them embark on the irrigation practices. With this, training on agronomic practices was given at Lay Gayint for 44 DAs and 60 irrigation user households. The training is aimed to aware the farmers about proper agricultural practices including post-harvest handling, efficient use of water and production of high value and nutritious crops. Training of irrigation users on agronomic practice is one of the key activities for the effective utilization of water resources.

Purpose 3: Increased equitable income for men, women and youth

Sub-purpose 3.1: Increased diversification of livelihoods for me, women and youth

IO 3.1.1: Increased access to markets for on-farm production activities

Activity: Facilitate linkages between producers and buyers

Awareness raising for agro-dealers to start agro-business was planned to be carried out in this quarter. However, value chain study has to take precedence before going for this activity. As a result, it is not conducted in this quarter.

Activity: Support fishery production and marketing

In Tach-Gayint, it is realized that there is a potential for fishery production in one of the perennial rivers-Beshilo where a group of 49 organized youth has been producing fish. In connection, the Woreda office of Agriculture has requested the project to provide materials support such as gillnets, cast nets, hooks, fish-boxes along with the training for these organized group members in order to improve their production method. To support the decision making process, the project has conducted a rapid assessment by way of making on-site visit and interviewing the youth group to subsequently plan for the support.

IO 3.1.2: Increased non/off-farm livelihoods opportunities

Identify market needs and relevant training opportunities

This activity is not planned to be conducted in this quarter. However, the project sites held preliminary discussions with respective Woreda Administrations, TVETs and Sport and Youth offices to ready grounds for collaborative needs assessment.

TVET capacity assessment

Four of the project sites (namely Simada, Tach-Gayint, Lay-Gayint and Ziquala) have TVET colleges while Abergelie and Sahila are relying on the nearby training centers. These Colleges are central to the vocational and technical capacity building planned for the youth by the projects. Most of these training centers suffer from inadequate mix of professionals in addition to critical shortage of training materials. Despite this fact, in Tach-Gayint, rapid capacity assessment conducted by the project staff has revealed that there is adequate mix of vocational teachers ready to give vocational training to the youth while training materials have to be provided by the project. Simada project is under process of collecting secondary data from the training center, as well.

IO 3.1.3. Increased access to financial services for individuals and small enterprises

Under the IO, two major activities were planned for the reporting quarter - namely SHG manual translation and printing and training grass root staff. Due to competing priorities in the programming aspects both activities are postponed to the upcoming quarter.

Organizational capacity Assessment of RUSaCCOs:

Prior to going for capacity building of RUSaCCOs, there is a need to make capacity assessment of these entities. To this effect, in Tach-Gayint, discussion was held with Woreda Cooperatives Promotion office and information was gathered concerning the RUSaCCOs. Accordingly, of the 16 Kebeles in the Woreda, 15 Kebeles have formed RUSaCCOs (in principle, each Kebele has to have one RUSaCCOs). Of the 15 Kebele RUSaCCOs, 13 are reported to have better performance compared to the others. Five RUSaCCOs in Kebeles 03, 02, 07, and 13 are found to be the best performing ones. Similar assessment was conducted in Simada and data is being analyzed at the project level. Assessment areas included repayment rate, amount of capital, management capacity, documentation and office setup. While this was conducted by the project level staff as

a preliminary study, FHE intends to conduct an in-depth assessment by the Agriculture and Livelihood Advisor in the reporting year.

Strengthen road networks:

In order to improve access to market and financial services in the target areas, it was planned to construct/maintain 40Kms of road, which is 92.5% achieved in the reporting quarter. Lay-Gayint project constructed 26Kms in the quarter using PSNP public work leading in the share of this particular activity (62.5%). It was also planned to construct four culverts. The actual construction work was started in Simada whereas other projects have completed preparatory works such as site handing over, design work, collection of local materials and purchase of factory materials. At completion, better linkage would be created among the rural communities thereby contributing to improvement of their socio-economic condition.

Sub-Purpose 3.2: Increased practice of gender equitable norms, including HH decision-making

IO 3.2.1: Gender equitable norms accepted

FH actively mainstreams gender throughout DFSA activities

Developing gender mainstreaming strategy manual is planned under this activity. Development of manual is aimed to help project practitioners identify and employ tailored approach to address women, men and youth needs within the scope of the program. Besides, in Abergelie contextualized gender-mainstreaming manual is drafted to enhance integration of gender and youth across the thematic activities.

Staff orientation on gender was not planned in the reporting period. However, it was found timely to align the orientation along with mainstreaming activity. In the reporting period orientation on DFSA gender intervention strategy and gender integration was given to project staffs. The orientation session focused on methods to integrate gender and youth aspects in DFSA purposes and generally in the project management cycles. Gender division of labor and power imbalance in the social system was discussed in detail in alignment with HH and community livelihood /food security. The road map to be followed in integrating gender and youth elements in the project activities was presented to maintain consistency within and across the project purposes. In the gender mainstreaming session held in Simada, a total of 23 project staffs (15 female) and two government officials participated. Various methodologies such as peer to peer interview, role play and dialogue were employed to increase interactivity of the session.

Early communication with key stakeholder is crucial to bring them on board and create an opportunity to set the groundwork for collaboration and shared responsibility. Accordingly, gender and youth officers in all project woredas organized briefing and awareness raising session on gender and youth intervention objective as well as the gender outreach and media tools. The Key stakeholders addressed includes officials and experts from Woreda office of

Women and Children Affairs (WoWCA), Education (woE), and Youth and Sport (WoYS) and community local leaders .The orientation session enabled them to understand project’s gender intervention objective, strategy and get acquainted with the gender media and outreach tools.

Facilitation skill training to community facilitators

Selection of community facilitators was undertaken in all project areas. The initial plan was to have one community facilitator in each kebeles. However, the gender and youth team believed that having at least two community facilitators (one male and on female) in each kebeles is important to reach and mobilize male and female community members to ensure their equitable involvement in community dialogue sessions and public demonstration. To this end, a total of 72 (36 male and 36 female) community facilitators are selected in 36 target kebeles to lead GOG discussion.

In the quarter, it was planned to facilitate skill training for community facilitator at woreda levels using image boxes and comic book. A total of 30(71%) were trained of which 14 are female.



Figure 6 Gender Facilitators Training in Simada

Amend image boxes and comic book based on comments

The project intended to make use of various tools (such as image box, comic book, etc.) to trigger development of positive gender norms in the target communities. In the process, officials and experts from Woreda Women and Children Affairs office reflected their comments provided by the community on the comic book. The comments revolved around the dressing style of the characters represented in the cartoon. The stakeholders suggested contextualizing the dressing style to the culture of the community in the intervention woreda. Accordingly, hiring of the consultant to revise comic book is underway.

Printing and dissemination of amended comic books

The bidding process for the image box printing is completed and the work is commissioned to the winner consultant. Even though they are few in number, printed image box, comic book and mobile cinema from former DFAP stock (two from each/ project) were distributed to gender and youth Officers to be used for initial communication with stakeholders, community facilitators training and local leaders awareness raising.

Participatory theater ToT for gender club leader

This activity was planned to be undertaken in this quarter. However, there was a need to employ a person with relevant professional background and sound experience to deliver participatory theater. Hence, this activity had to be delayed.

Purpose 4: Reduced acute and chronic malnutrition for CU2, WRA, including PLW and adolescent girls

Sub-Purpose 4.1: Increased equitable and diverse intake of nutritious foods:

IO 4.1.2: Increased adoption of MCHN practices

Output 4.1.1.1: Improved access to high quality community and facility-based services

Activity 1- PSNP beneficiaries receive timely and predictable food and / or cash transfers

One of the primary objective of the DFSA Project is to bridge the food gaps of the chronically food insecure HHs during the critical months. FHE has carried out some key activities to ensure that food has reached the program participants in a timely manner thereby bridging their food gaps and avoiding negative coping mechanisms such as selling household assets.

New warehouse construction at final distributions sites

Following a rapid assessment in the new Wag-Himra Woredas regarding the condition of existing food resource Warehouses, FH has discussed with other implementing partners and reached consensus on the importance of creating additional warehouses capacities. Construction of long-term standard warehouses requires reasonable time and hence was not be feasible for the current year due to shortage of time. There are eight Final Distribution Points (FDPs) in these lowland Projects. It was decided to install four Rubb-Halls in areas with urgent needs (133% of target). These are two sites (Telajie and Kedamit) in Ziquala, Fefa-Dildiy in Sahila and Newraq in Abergelie. Local procurement including installation of the rub-halls was processed and finalized in the quarter using the allocated fund for the year. FHE has also rented a temporary warehouse in Tekeze in Abergelie Woreda and established a mini-store to be temporarily used in Siria FDP (This is one of the sites FHE is considering immediate construction of warehouses). In connection to this, USAID has approved construction of warehouses in the lowland Woredas.

The installed rub-hall warehouses have capacity of storing 2000 MT of food aid commodities (500MT each) and contribute towards improving management capacity of FHE and benefiting more than 27,494 food insecure community members in the three Woredas.

Table 1. New Rubb-halls constructed by Woreda and by beneficiaries

	District	Warehouse site	Warehouse capacity (MT)	No of KAs benefited	No of clients	Remark
1	Sahila	Fefa-dildey	500	3	2772	
2	Ziquala	Kedamit & Telajie	1000	6 & 2 respectively	11,829	Two new warehouses are constructed
3	Abergelie	Newrak	500	9	12,893	
		Total	2000	20	27494	



Figure 7 New warehouses (Rubb-halls) installed at Ziquala project site

Warehouse maintenance and equipment provision

In addition to construction of new warehouses, maintenance of warehouses was made for the existing warehouses in South Gondar Woredas (Lay-Gayint, Tach-Gayint and Simada). All warehouses are equipped with basic warehouse materials such as fire extinguishers, cleaning materials, ladders, weighing scales, first aid kits, pallets, office furniture, scoops, and rat glue to ensure that minimum warehouse management practices are maintained.

Food Commodities Pre-Positioning

A single call forward consisting of two shipments was requested and all the required commodities arrived at Port Djibouti with two months intervals as per the schedule and transported to Primary Distribution Points (PDPs) almost in the same months of arrival. FHE

has requested 20,004MT of wheat, and YSP. Accordingly, 20,031.85MT is received (15830.95 MT of Wheat, 4200.90 MT of YSP). Out of the total wheat call forward which was (15793 MT), 37.95 MT of food commodity was reported in excess. Conversely, 10.1 MT of Yellow Split Peas were received in shortage noting that the call forward amount paused at 4211MT while 4200.9MT is received at the PDPs. Following this, loss and claim report was filled and forwarded to the forwarding agents.

FHE follows two rounds of food prepositioning after receiving commodities in the two central warehouses (Nefas Mewcha and Kombolcha). In the first round 6190.67 MT of food (61.8% of the annual requirement of projects) was dispatched to all FDPs. The second round prepositioning is planned to take place in the month of May 2017. Remaining food commodities will be dispatched starting from the month of May 2017. Details of dispatched food resources to each Woreda, compared to the annual allocation is shown in the below table.

Table 2: Food resource dispatched by woreda

Woreda	Unit	Annual Target	Biannual target	Accomplishment	%
Lay-Gayint	MT	3,672.28	1,836.14	590.86	32.18
Tach-Gayint	MT	3,663.79	1,831.90	1,445.53	78.91
Simada	MT	5,920.55	2,960.28	3,408.63	115.15
Abergele	MT	2,742.33	1,371.17	0	0
Ziquala	MT	2,442.62	1,221.31	346.05	28.33
Sahila	MT	1,562.90	781.45	399.6	51.14
TOTAL		20,004.47	10,002.24	6,190.67	61.8

Could FH please add detail below the chart explaining why there was an over dispatch above plan to Simada and no dispatch yet to Abergele during the reporting period.

At the time of the report, Abergelie had not received food because there was no space to store any food due to the impending construction and installation of the rub hall there, while Simada had enough space to take overflows from the Primary Warehouse in Lay-Gayint. FH decided to use the Simada space to store food for the period, that helped us reduce our cost in storing food at private warehouses. So, part of the food for the second pre-positioning was transported to Simada by the time. There is food now stored at the rub hall in Abergelie and will be reported during the next quarter.

Commodity distribution

In the reporting period, commodities distribution was made in Simada woreda. A total transfer amounting 438.74 MT of commodities to 23,092 (10,744 male and 12,348 female) PSNP beneficiaries was made.

Staffs recruitment

A total 68 commodity staffs-Storekeepers (16), Distributors (24), cleaners (16) and guards (12) were recruited for the three Wag-Himra projects and given orientation regarding their assignment.

Innovative cash transfer system piloted and expanded

Electronic cash transfer is one of the new initiatives with this grant which FHE is piloting in one of the South Gondar Woredas, Lay-Gayint. While the electronic cash transfer is done by a service provider called Kifiya Financial Solutions, the transfer is planned to be made for the first three months of the resource transfer period (January-March). Accordingly, the first round transfer is completed disbursing \$411,501 to 15,380 beneficiaries (91% of the target).

Could FH add detail why this is not 100% of the target.

The issues surrounding the challenges of implementing the cash transfer are well known and have been well discussed in meetings between FH and the Mission. FH is still looking to improving this rate through consistent engagement of all parties. We will issue a final report on those strategies in June or during our next quarterly report

The transfer was not made for 9% of the participants because they were absent on Public Works. Lay Gayint woreda office of agriculture has firm stand to deny payment for absentees.

Build MCHN capacity of WDAs

Care group formation for WRA/PLW adolescent girls in new woredas Care group formation takes precedence in the implementation of any DFSA health component activity. The project sites in the new areas are giving orientation on how to align this purpose with the existing health system.

Sub-Purpose 4.3: Reduced WASH-related illness

Most of the activities under this sub-purpose and related activities are not accomplished due to various reasons. In addition to the late start-up of the projects, there was a need to engage all project sites concurrently after detailed orientation in new approaches and the need for integrating with other purposes. Furthermore, registration of beneficiaries was delayed not to duplicate effort and resource with mobile registration of the entire project beneficiaries. Now having all key project staff and community level, orientation was given to the staff on beneficiary registration and implementation guide.

Does growth through nutrition investment by USAID overlap with the PSNP HHs at all?

Yes, GTN overlaps in 2 woredas, namely Lay Gayint and Tach Gayint. FH has also established discussions with Save the Children (SC) for collaboration, layering and harmonization of plans

2.3 Implementation Challenges

In the reporting period, the project encountered some challenges of administrative and programmatic nature in the course of implementation.

- Most activities were delayed due to the pre-implementation works such as series of orientation to government stakeholders at regional, zonal and woreda levels and process of signing agreement with regional government. The projects will fast-track the activities that were delayed without compromising the quality.
- Overlapping and competing activities pushed forward the timely orientation on operational guideline and implementation modalities to establish consistent implementation across the project sites.
- Plans for SWC activities were set based on past trend and available secondary data. Aligning PW with pressing needs and over-stretched plans of partners forced project sites to accommodate the development dynamics. However, this experience will help make realistic plans in the upcoming fiscal year.
- The new low land woredas are extremely demanding. The remoteness coupled with unfriendly environment had a repelling effect in the staff placement process. This was followed by lack of facilities both for living and working place. One more layer is the challenge to establish the soft system (financial, etc.) in the middle of an environment with limitations. Despite these facts, basic facilities are being in place without losing the motivations of the staff.

We recognize that FH has new woredas in the current award (DFSA) in Waghumera zone. We learned from the regular meetings with FH that office establishment and staff recruitment are taking a considerable amount of time. Could FH briefly describe the different in accomplishments between the two zones as the above details for SWC, social infrastructures and other activities are presented in an aggregated fashion.

Overall what is the comparative activity accomplishment status between the two zones?

Public work activities are catching up against planned timelines in the new woredas and 75% of Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) activities are already up in the reporting period whereas the accomplishment status in the new woredas is close to 60%. The CAP/ADMIN activities on socio-economic infrastructure including irrigation are slow in the new woredas especially in Ziquala for the specific reason that the woreda administration chose the wrong irrigation project for rehabilitation or construction and forced to choose other activity, which delayed implementation.

2.4 PMP Update

Generally FH is making revision of M&E components after the M&E workshop. As a result, new version of TOC, LogFrame and IPTT will be used after approval. This report, however, has made use of the previous version of DIP and accomplishments of activities are reported under their corresponding purposes. Detail orientation on the updated PMP will be given to project level M&E officers to ensure data quality.

3. INTEGRATION OF CROSSCUTTING ISSUES AND USAID FORWARD PRIORITIES

3.1 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

Most of the gender activities planned in the reporting period are executed and brought the implementation process in alignment with gender perspective. As stated in the implementation status section, the orientation went further to the community level ensuring that reliable foundation is being in place. Number of facilitators for positive gender norm development was double to have both male and female facilitators in pair. The amendment made to image boxes and comic books emerging from the community guarantee the effectiveness of the tools in making the set objectives a reality. The public work will also be used as a platform to deliver gender specific messages. These will definitely contribute to the upcoming efforts of the project to improve gender equality and female empowerment.

3.2 Sustainability Mechanisms

Along with mobilizing the communities through PWs to improve watershed management, committees are concurrently established and capacitated to help them manage the watersheds with little/no external support. This is believed to lay foundation for sustainability by empowering the committee be in charge to oversee such community assets.

Ensuring participation of stakeholders at different stages of implementation creates inherent sense of ownership which will ultimately contribute to sustainability, as well.

3.3 Environmental Compliance

There are number of water and irrigation schemes that were started in the reporting period and carry on in the upcoming implementation periods. Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) was completed for each schemes as a requirement. FH is preparing the revised IEE based on USAID's comments and will submit with the M&E plan on 22nd of May. Once the approved IEE is in place, FH will adhere to the IEE recommendations and report environmental compliance accordingly.

3.4 Global Climate Change

One of the major components of the TRAIN project is building community capacities both to adapt to and absorb shocks and stresses. The public works are directed towards contributing the adaptive and absorptive capacities at community level mainly through watershed management. Besides traditional public work, participants of this huge activity will be made to intentionally engage in the activity in such a way that they are aware of contributing to the landscape and community level impacts.

3.5 Policy and Governance Support

Gender specific activities will definitely address the existing gender gap that may not amply be addressed by government at community level due to lack of capacity. These gender-specific activities will have impact on the governance in the long-term by facilitating women participation and empowerment process.

3.6 Local Capacity Development

Local leaders and community members are engaged in various training and orientation sessions in the reporting period. This will definitely contribute to the development of local capacity.

4. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

In the reporting period, government stakeholders at different levels were involved in the implementation process of the project. Woreda level line offices contributed their knowledge and expertise in selection, identification and assessment activities initiated and carried out for different components of the project. Involvement of TVETs and RUSSaCOs in the reporting period stands out despite the early stage of the longer-term implementation processes that belongs to purpose III.

Discussion with other implementing partners to create additional warehouses capacities in the new project areas was also typical to this quarter demanding participation of stakeholders.

5. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

This reporting period is characterized by recruitment of community level project staff as stated in the former sections. No changes are made to other project staff.

6. LESSON LEARNED

Starting up the project in the new areas proved to be challenging and demanding than initially anticipated. It involves complex processes of establishing relationships, setting up systems, placing staff (in a challenging environment with limited services) and rolling out interventions with a desired quality and timing. In fact staff commitment to serve the vulnerable communities is of higher value in this regard. With no warehouse capacity in the new areas, alternative use of temporary warehouses (rub halls) played critical role for the immediate warehousing needs as opposed to time-taking proper warehouse establishments.

Past trends may not help predict the emerging realities in the ongoing dynamics of development. Continuous adaptation and accommodation is required to respond to relevant needs of the communities as well as government partners. The adaptation and accommodation has to be reflected in into the future plans.

Based on the regular meeting we have with FH DFSA, we learned that the innovative cash transfer at Lay-Gayint woreda has faced lots of implementation challenges initial transfers didn't move as expected. As it is new for FH and DFSAs overall in Ethiopia to start the cash transfers as part of the PSNP, it would be great is FH could expand here in the quarterly report on the different challenges faced with doing cash transfers as an NGO and how they managed the challenges. Are there any key lessons learned from this pilot?

The transfers have not gone the way it was intended and talking it through with different partners and stakeholders on the ground, it was noted that our original approach of working through Kifiya may need to be revisited. There is currently a relationship between Kifiya and ACSI, which were thought to be the main partners for our work. However in the existing

relationship ACSI are in the dominant role while they engaged Kifiya to be their agent of technology transfer. Our current model is different and reversed. We are dealing directly with Kifiya only and we expecting them to engage ACSIs on the transfers. FH is therefore not directly engaged with ACSI in this transfer. This situation is causing a lot of relational confusion between the two organizations (FH and Kifiya) and that is affecting the transfer operations. FH has internally discussed this situation and looking for ways to restructure this relationship by engaging in a tripartite discussion with Kifiya and ACSI together. We have also documented our lessons learned through the past three months and will share that with the Mission and other partners at the right time.

7. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER INCLUDING UPCOMING EVENTS

- Speeding up construction of social infrastructure activities such as schools, health posts, vet posts and culverts;
- Construction of Small Scale irrigation Schemes;
- Food distribution in all the target Woredas;
- Continuation of PW activities;
- Completing cash disbursement in Lay-Gayint Project;
- Conducting various training across sectors planned for the year;
- Conducting in-depth assessments such as on RuSaCCos and TVETs;
- PREP preparation and submission;
- Technical and Vocational training for identified youth;
- Formation of different groups including producers, Gender Outreach Group (GoG); and,
- Starting mothers cascade groups across Woredas.
- Community facilitator training (in the projects woredas not yet conducted
- ToT on assertiveness and leadership (for Gender club Leaders)
- ToT on Participatory Theatre on Gender equality

8. HOW IMPLEMENTING PARTNER HAS ADDRESSED A/COR COMMENTS FROM THE LAST QUARTERLY REPORT

No issues were raised from the last quarter.

9. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial reports are submitted by FH HQ separately.