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Newsflash

Ethiopia April 2013

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ActionAid Ethiopia

ActionAid Ethiopia (AAE) is member of the ActionAid International Federation. It envisions a poverty free Ethiopia where every person lives in dignity and prosperity through empowering communities to create change for themselves. It has been supporting the implementation of various development works in Ethiopia since 1989.

AAE aims at strengthening the organizational capability of people living in poverty and supports efforts towards achieving their development and humanitarian/emergency priorities. It works in partnership with community based organizations, local NGOs, the government as well as other development players.

Currently, ActionAid works across six regional states to support them modeling in the poverty eradication process.

This issue of our bi-annual Newsletter carries news briefs and change stories from various intervention areas. Stories pertain to the organization's priority areas of engagement.



AAE on Radio Fana

A weekly radio programme entitled 'Setoch Simeru' that highlights impacts of AAE's women development works has been on air through Radio Fana for over eight months now. The broadcast focusing on AAE's works on building women leadership capabilities in various sectors is transmitted every Sunday after the 10:00 AM morning news.

The women's live testimonies on changes achieved due to AAE's intervention and their empowerment towards sharing power at homes,

organizations and communities have motivated listeners.

A workshop organized to review the first six months deliberation witnessed that the programme was powerful, attractive and motivating. The nation-wide broadcast has so far focused on AAE supported women's success stories as change agents exemplary in social and economic development at household and community level.

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ActionAid welcomes a new Country Director

Jemal Ahmed is appointed as the 4th Country Director of ActionAid Ethiopia. He has assumed the position as of November 1, 2012. Jemal started his career in ActionAid Ethiopia in 1994 as food security manager and later served as a programme support manager.

Just before his appointment as AAE Country Director, Jemal was ActionAid Pakistan Country Director. He had also been part of the ActionAid International team, served as Country Manager of the Support for International Partnerships against AIDS in Africa (SIPAA) based in Ethiopia and later as international programme manager for the multi-country STAR Project funded by the European Commission.

Jemal further played key role in Asia Region since 1999 as director for the UNAIDS supported Asia Technical Support Facility (TSF) programme, a collaborative partnership between

ActionAid International and UNAIDS.

Jemal replaced Dr. Retta Menberu who served ActionAid Ethiopia as a country director for the previous five years.

Jemal has a BSc Degree in Agriculture from Addis Ababa University, MSc in Irrigation Development from the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK, and a post-graduate qualification in "Policy, Planning and Intervention on Food Security in Africa" from the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, UK.





AAE hosts international meeting

The International Child Sponsorship and Supporter Care (CSSC) Annual Meeting was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12- 18 November 2012.

The meeting was aimed at enhancing understanding of the shared accountabilities relating to Child Sponsorship and to further build staff capacity to deliver on the changing operational environment both at market and programme levels.

ActionAid Ethiopia Country Director, Jemal Ahmed welcomed representatives of the international Child Sponsorship & Supporter Care (CSSC) community, programme and other functional International secretariat staff who were in the attendance. The 80 participants were drawn from almost all countries where ActionAid operates.

Addressing the meeting, Jemal said, “This meeting takes place in challenging times of declining regular income. Despite difficulties they are facing, our supporters have maintained their commitments to continue supporting our development mission.”

“ This dictates that we pose questions whether we too have gone miles to improve quality of our work in child message collection, child profile, and timely submission of reports , meaningful integration of sponsorship and program where children are considered during design, monitoring and impact assessment of our program works. In so doing we retain our supporters. We also need to review to what extent our engagement with supporters is innovative to be champions on promoting our mission.”

AAE has new strategy

ActionAid Ethiopia’s fourth Country Strategic Plan (CSP IV), that guides the country programs’ entire work from 2012 – 2017, was launched in November 23, 2012 .

AAE’s Mission objectives for the period under review include:

- Mission Objective 1:** Improved livelihood and resilience of people living in poverty through engaging in sustainable agriculture and enhanced capability of managing risks
- Mission Objective 2:** Organized and empowered people living in poverty to influence and secure quality public education
- Mission Objective 3:** Empowered women and girls to protect themselves from violence and HTPs, and improved economic alternatives
- Mission Objective 4:** People living in poverty are organized and empowered to influence the responsiveness of the public sector and secured quality basic services

No more Impunity

By Bethel Terefe

Perpetrators of violence can no longer act with impunity in Yem special Woreda of the South Region, thanks to the creation of a women watch group against violence.

For instance, in October 2012, in Kerewa Kebele of Yem special Woreda, an eighth grade girl went out on her usual errand to collect firewood. An older man followed the girl to the field and tried to rape her. The girl, who was luckily strong from doing hours of hard domestic work, was able to thwart his attempt and run home and informed her family.

Initially the man denied the accusations when her family confronted him about it. But then he was taken to the community elders. The perpetrator confessed that he attempted to rape the girl.

The Kebele community had earlier issued local by-laws to punish those committing acts of violence following sensitization events carried out in the community by women watch groups with the support of Actionaid. Idir leaders and traditional and religious leaders had suggested lists of punishments for different acts of violence. These were endorsed by the community. Accordingly, the perpetrator was fined to pay 700 birr, to the community Idir.

The community watch groups organized and trained by ActionAid, however ,decided took take the case to the law, believing the punishment given out by the elders was not enough. Hence, they approached the Coordinator of the Gender Mainstreaming Directorate in Yem Woreda Women and Children Affairs Office where they reported the case. she confirmed to the watch group this is a criminal case that should be taken to court. The watch group then brought the girl together with the Kebele police with the evidence of the perpetrators confession to the legal affairs expert in the same office, who helped them take the case to the prosecutor’s office.

The perpetrator is now in custody and thanks to the effort of the women watch groups people committing violence against women and girls can no longer act with impunity.

A fora to learn, exercise management

For Semaynesh Gebretsadik, 40 and fellow women in Fofa town of Yem Special Woreda, the drinking water project has created opportunity to learn and exercise management.

Semaynesh, a mother of three states that the new drinking water facility has been more than a relief from physical wariness, worries about night walks in search of water in the wilderness and beyond sparing family members' from ill health due to water born diseases.

"We went in groups to prevent attack by wild animals and other inconveniences. At the spring we set fire to chase hyena and for warmth against the chilly weather of the nights. We had to wait until everyone fills her Jerican from a scanty spring or a pond as we could travel back home only in groups. It is a total bliss, now I have only to walk three to four minutes to the water point. We had to walk up to one hour to and from the unprotected water sources during the dry season. We no more need to stay awake and trek in search of water during the nights," Semaynesh said.

Semaynesh noted that the confidence and skills she and fellow women developed as members of the women addociation surpasses all the benefits she already mentioned.

Semaynesh is one of the 60 women organized in to the Fofa Women Water Development Association. "I am in a team entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the sanitation of the water points and the surrounding," she said adding that the training and day to day activities as well as the follow up, maintenance and other activities around the water points have given women the belief that they can play bigger management and coordination roles out of home.

The water and sanitation project was materialized through close collaboration of AAE, the local communities and Woreda administrations.



AAE accelerates development in Yem community

A new women led water and sanitation project and a school block were inaugurated in Yem, October 8 – 9, 2012.

The 8.3 million birr water and sanitation project benefits 6,100. So far, 22, 112 people from the special woreda are benefiting from AAE supported potable water facilities.

The inaugurated water scheme includes two deep water wells, with respective pumps and generators, 13km long water pipe line, tanker with holding capacity of 50, 000 m³ of water and many water kiosks. The project also includes three public latrines, three cloth washbasins, 354 hand washing stands and 550 family latrines built across Fofa town. One of the two deep wells was constructed by the regional government while its accessories are availed by AAE, according to Yemataye Tessema, the Yem Development Area Coordinator.

The Fofa Town Women Water Development Association is in charge of managing the scheme and availing the service to inhabitants of Fofa town and its environs. The association is led by a governing board and has general assembly. It has also organized a coordination office led by a female coordinator. The Yem DA had organized exposure visit to the association so that board members capture experience from their counterparts in Vicky Lera Women Water Development Association.

Realization of such institutions has demonstrated replication of ActionAids' efforts to promote women's leadership of institutions to challenge traditional thoughts that undermine women's leadership potentials besides addressing peoples' immediate needs.

The inauguration of the facilities coincided with the Yem community's new-year celebration and inauguration of other government constructed facilities.

The ActionAid supported school block inaugurated on the occasion accommodates 248 more students in Saja town of the Woreda. This and previous ActionAid supported extension works made the upgrading of the 1-4th grade elementary school to 1-8th grade.

AAE has also invested for the construction of the school block and additional furniture such as student desks, teachers' tables, chairs and shelves.

AAE- Partners national PRRP

AAE and its partners' participatory Review and Reflection Process (PRRP) was held 21 to 22 February 2013.

The PRRP brought about community and government representatives as well as AAE staff discussing the organization's 2012 performance, as well as the relevance and sustainability of its works. The meeting also reviewed AAE's 2013 plan and drew important lessons.

The meeting was opened by Jemal Ahmed, AAE CD who briefed participants on intents of the PRRP. Presentations on AAE's engagements, gallery walk viewing DA's and department/Unit engagements and achievements, reflection and discussions on areas of consideration in AAE's partnership engagements and Core elements of the new country strategic plan, the organization's future directions and priorities as well as budget for 2013 were among the issues discussed during of the meeting.

Presentations and related questions were followed by discussions including on whether AAE's interventions have been sustainable and if PRRP has been assimilated in the working modalities of the community organizations and Local governments in the areas AAE intervenes.

Responses to these questions' of AAE and partners' staffs as well as representatives of community organizations capitalized on positive impacts of AAE's interventions in these areas.

That AAE's training package and financial support have given women and men in poverty skills and confidence to improve their livelihoods are evidences of the sustainability of its impacts on economic developmet, according to the participants.

People were organized in to saving and credit cooperatives and other forms of community based organizations that enabled them to discuss and solve their common problems." Peasants in my area found it difficult to own cattle due to Tse Tse fly that infected them with a killer disease. Thanks to ActionAid, these days, the community has been enabled to control the killer flies and own oxen with which they plough their plots. Currently, most of us have cows that provide us with milk. We also have plenty of flocks, " said a participant from Yem.

An attendant from Itang intervention area in Gambella Regional State responded to the second question saying that the Itang community enquired civil servants to ensure their public accountability through review and reflection meetings like those carried by ActionAid and partners' staff.

Also among AAEs activities the participants applauded as good practices were, initiation and development of community participation in respective development areas, the facilitation of community ownership of social organizations and development undertakings as well as the initiation of organizations led by women and of mainstreaming women development in all its antipoverity initiatives.

Fetura stands against early marriage

by Muluken Arefaine

In Genda Oromo village of the Kombolcha district, 14-year-old Fetura Mohammed was appalled to learn that her father had arranged for her to marry an older man.

"I was shocked when I heard his plan because my aspiration was to complete my education and have my own job before getting married," said Fetura, adding that she was well aware of the "physical and psychological health injuries that girls who marry at early age face and about the law that protects girls from early marriage."

Fetura learnt about the laws protecting girls through a school-based club that raises awareness among students around customary traditional practices such as child marriage, female genital mutilation and polygamy, which are prevalent where she lives.

According to the traditions of her community, staying unmarried until age 16 is a serious taboo and brings disgrace to girls and parents. On the other hand, Kombolcha DA has been teaching about legal provisions and helping women get organized into watch groups. Through these watch groups, women have been taking collective action to raise public awareness around child marriage, identifying such cases, and linking them to concerned bodies in collaboration with traditional or religious leaders, school clubs and local institutions.

Fetura tried hard to convince her father not to push her into marriage, but he refused saying, "teaching a girl has no merit." Frustrated Fetura took the action of informing friends who were members of the Anti-HTP club and her teachers. The school principal's interventions failed, as Fetura's father insisted that he had the right to do as he wished with his daughter. Her teachers then joined with the women's watch groups and local leaders in the locality, taking the case to the district court. Fetura bravely testified against her father, who was informed by the court of girls' entitlement to education and the legal age for marriage, as well as the legal consequences of child marriage. He was finally convinced and allowed her to continue her education.

Since the beginning of 2009, a total of 655 women have been trained and organized into 78 watch groups in 10 districts. In Kombolcha.

See *Fetura...* on page 10

Birth of CBOs Union; a plus to AAE's achievements

By Yaekob Metena

December 3, 2012 heralded the transformation of community based institutions into their next level organization in Kemba Development area. The day marked the formation of the Kemba Minch Saving and Credit Cooperatives Union which is a step forward in AAE's efforts to further strengthen agencies of people who live in poverty.

The Union, made up of 11 basic saving and credit cooperatives, has 1,167 members. Seven of the cooperatives (five of them women cooperatives) were initiated by the Kemba DA during the last seven years. The remaining four were formed by the Woreda Cooperative Office.

Government representatives from the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State, Gamo Goffa Zone and the Kemba Woreda, members of the basic cooperatives, all kebele administrators across the district/woreda, general assembly members of the Union, AAE representatives as well as other invited guests came together to celebrate the event.

Regional and zonal government officials highly appreciated ActionAid's contributions in the fight against poverty in general and initiating community based organizations in particular. They indicated that these institutions were highly beneficial to low income groups specifically focusing on women and people living in poverty.

Speaking on the occasion, a representative of Regional Cooperatives Bureau mentioned AAE's pioneering commitment in initiating the Dicha Dawro Saving and Credit Cooperatives Union in 2004, the first of its kind in the country at that time. Speakers from the regional and zonal government side as well as community representatives further applauded efforts made by AAE to realize women's empowerment through ensuring their representation in the cooperatives membership (44.6%) and promoting them to leadership positions including in the governing board of the Union (five out of seven are women). The chairperson of the Union is a woman.

During the occasion, all actors pledged support to further strengthen the Union and its basic cooperatives. The Deputy Administrator of Gamo Gofa Zone and ActionAid representative jointly laid foundation on the site selected to construct office for the Union.

It is to be recalled that AAE recently celebrated the formation of similar Union in Azernet DA and legalization of community based organizations in Janamora intervention area in the North Region. So far, AAE has transformed basic saving and credit cooperatives into Unions in Yem, Gena Bossa, Azernet and Kemba intervention areas. Realization of these next level institutions is crucial to form solidarity among agencies of the people for collective actions and bring impact in the lives of people living in poverty.

Besides celebrating these important achievements, building capacities of the Community Based Organizations true and vibrant representatives of the interest and aspirations of people living in poverty is an assignment ahead of us.

March 8 celebration inspires inward looking

AAE head office staff celebrated this year's International Women's Day on March 8; a celebration that has inspired the need for more inward looking and discussions on trends and changes in gender norms among ActionAiders.

Imparting learning taken from the event, AAE CD Jemal Ahmed said, "Gender mainstreaming is both a centre of this celebration as well as a political agenda for this country. governance of power relation between men and women at individual, household, community and national levels is key in these discussions. Changing norms, attitudes and behavior on gender starts from oneself. on the reflection on how we handle gender issues among ourselves as AAE staff should continue even as we handle gender equity at the community grassroots levels."

The celebrations started with a brief introduction on International Women's Day and the theme for 2013 by Genet Abebe, AAE HROD manager. This was followed by presentation of a two minutes video clip on gender norms.

A 20 -minute staff debate on whether "Gender Norms in the Ethiopian society are /or are not changing", took a lion's share of the event. Judges appreciated debates





From destitution to role modelling

ActionAid's six years in Ofla Woreda, Tigray Regional State have been time of unprecedented economic and social transformation for Birhane Alem and thousands of other poor women who earlier lived in destitution.

Birhan, 40 and her husband led a hand to mouth type of life selling fire wood when AAE entered Ofla. She was one of the first beneficiaries of the development programme.

"Six years ago, I had no asset except for a piece of farm land that I rented out as I couldn't cultivate it because I had neither seed nor oxen to plough with. I sold firewood and breaded hair of women around to earn my living. We were not able even to properly feed our only child that a relative took to educate and raise him," she says.

What the family earned from renting the land was their only source of sustenance for four to five months.

When AAE came to Ofla I was also selling ambasha, a kind of homemade traditional bread, using a loan of eight birr that I borrowed from a neighbor. My husband used to work as a daily laborer. Hence, I was among the women selected for AAE's business skill training and support. But when the kebele people called me to attend a training and to take credit, I hesitated because I thought I wouldn't be able to repay the loan given as a startup. However, people from the locality administration approached me and insisted that I take the money and try the business as my name was in the list of very poor people screened and handed to AAE. Later, I was

convinced to take the loan and try honey business. On this, AAE gave me a bee hive and 200 Birr. They also introduced me to people at the agriculture office who advised me on how to manage the business.

AAE had also provided me with wax worth 3,000 Birr. Six months after I embarked on beekeeping, I managed to produce 12 kilos of honey. By the end of the year, I sold 48 kilos. This earned me 50,050 birr. I bought eight traditional hives full of bees and got additional 17 modern beehives as loan from the woreda. Currently, I have already paid the loan. Currently, I have a total of 34 beehives. My husband is a big support to me although he falls ill now and then.

I am now cultivating my land no more rent it out, I earn up to 20 sacks of grain annually. Now my family also owns 20 goats, 10 sheep and two donkeys. My house is very well equipped and I have more than what I need to lead a decent life.

Birhan also said that she has become a role model to one of her neighbors and two of her brothers who have already bought some beehives and embarked on the business. "I used to encourage people around but many refrained saying honey business is risky as the bee could fly away any time." "She is adopting a girl child, 12, who helps her herding the flocks after school.

Asked about her future plans and aspirations, Birhan said she aspires to become as rich as a honey business man in her locality, who is already a millionaire.

... March 8 celebration

on both sides but valued more the group debated "gender norms are not changing" for its evidence based presentations, persuasiveness and passion.

Presentation on the situation of women globally and areas where there is change and where change has been far beyond reach was made by Bethel Terefe, AAE Women Development Coordinator.

Facilitating the final session of the meeting Jemal picked a saying, "women's rights are political issues" and triggered a discussion on what this meant. The saying from one of the brief films on the journey / struggle for ensuring women development gave the staff insight on how the politics or power relations between men and women have key role in determining the situation of women.





Water development associations' leaders share experiences

Leaders of AAE supported women water projects from various parts of the country attended experience sharing in Azernet and Dallocha, 18 to 21 December 2012.

The group of women from the south, western and northern parts where AAE intervenes converged to Adiss Ababa before they traveled together to the Vicky's and Dallocha Women Water Development Associations (DAWWDA) in Lera and Dallocha towns of Gurage Zone in the South State, respectively.

The exposure visit brought together 31 women leaders of water projects and representatives of government offices having direct working relations with the associations. Also community elders and members of the Dallocha and West Azernet Woreda governments had joined the meeting at some points.

The hosts, Vicky-Lera and Dallocha Women Water Development Associations in the Southern State are the oldest and largest in terms of number of people they feed. DAWWDA with 72 kms pipeline and 49 water distribution points (kiosks) benefits a population of over 108,000 . Vicky's Women Water Development Project with pipe line of 26 kms benefits over 20, 000 people. It has 16 board members drawn from the seven localities in the Woreda and a total of 147 general assembly members who are exclusively women.

The plight of women due to water shortage was common to the areas of the participants of the experience sharing. Shaik Abdurahmen shaik Wajo , a community elder in Dallocha said DAWWDA spared women from burden of carrying heavy jerry cans from distant springs. "Miscarriage was common among Dallocha women as they had to walk long distance with heavy jerry cans on their backs even when pregnant. A mother had named her baby after river, Dijjo, as she delivered while collecting water there. Dijjo is a grown up now. Another woman named her son, Ramesh after the name of the person who used to be AAE's Dallocha office administrator during the construction of DAWWDA . This was meant to express her gratitude to AAE and its leader at that time".

These days, members of the water development associations are active players in their communities economic, political and social activities beyond the water projects. Seven of the DAWWDA board members have been elected in to the woreda council. Many of the general assembly members have been elected as kebele cabinet members. Similarly, a number of Vicky's board members participate in political activated in respective localities.

"Dallocha women never attended public meetings before AAE's intervention as it was not in our culture. Besides, they had no time as they spent four to six hours in search of water, especially during dry seasons. They had little time but to manage the house chorus," Sheik Abdurahman noted.

Unlike in the past, however, currently women at DAWWDA envision that three years from now, they will support initiation and maintenance of many similar projects elsewhere in the country.

"We have accumulated knowledge and experiences to share even beyond the visitors brought to us by ActionAid. We aspire to be practical partners in the government's and other development player's moves to enhance women leadership at water projects in other parts of the country", said Semira Assefa, the project Coordinator.

From what most of the participants uttered, the experience sharing was inspirational. Many of them went back home energized with new learning that would help improve management of respective associations.



UK MPs meet community development players



Community representatives from AAE's intervention areas in Oromiya and the Southern State shared their life experiences as anti-violence workers to a team of Parliamentarians from the United Kingdom.

The community members included religious leaders who challenged the deep rooted practices of polygamy, female genital mutilation, rape and abduction among respective faithful. School girls spoke on how they mobilized respective school communities against the practices and women watch group members explained how they have been modeling mobilizing communities against the practices.

The MPs said that the forum gave them a taste of the trends of change taking place in remote rural communities of Ethiopia due to AAE's interventions.

AAE Women Development Coordinator, Bethel Terefe and Florence Richard De Vesvrotte, Parliamentary Officer, of ActionAid UK facilitated the meeting among UK MPs and AAE beneficiaries. AAE CD Jemal Ahmed, Bethel and Florence Richard De Vesvrotte did the initial briefings while they and the Programme Development Manager Yaekob Metena carried the moderation and translation during discussions.

Among the community representatives was Zeineba, a ninth grader from Azernet who challenged her father and succeeded in rescuing her younger sister from FGM. As a representative of a school anti-violence club Zeineba has also been mobilizing her school community against Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

Haji Shifa Kelile a religious leader from Azernet also told his testimonies of how he played lead role teaching against VAWG during Friday religious sermons. He has been challenging fellow religious leaders helping them to change their attitudes and start teaching against VAWG.



Dirbe, a representative of girls' club in a school in Seru, Oromiya Region, has been part of a team that rescued a fellow student from early marriage. The team of women watch group helped the girl write a letter to the district Women's Affairs' Office. The Women's Affairs Office intervened and stopped her parents attempt to marry her off as premature.

A story of a woman who said "no" to the practice of widow inheritance was also among those told of on the occasion. This woman's husband died and his younger brother wanted to marry her as he wanted to inherit her property and because it has been a custom in the community.

She refused to marry and sought the help of the local government when he tried to force her in to the marriage. The lady now raises her children on her own.

After the three hours dialogue with the community members, the MPs said the experience helped them see things really working and that it was inspirational. They noted that the programme is on right track and needs to be expanded to reach larger communities.

Finally, The MPs also pledged to take the message back to the UK about how the programme was a success.

Prior to the smaller group dialogues with community members, the MPs were given an overview of VAWG in Ethiopia and ActionAid's moves to tackle this.

AAE-Ministry of Women, Children and Youth partnership

A team of ActionAid Ethiopia, (AAE) staff led by Jemal Ahmed, AAE Country Director, Getachew Ali, North Region Office Coordinator and Bethel Terefe, Women Development Coordinator paid the Minister of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs a visit on February 4, 2013, to explore possible opportunities for partnership.

Jemal opened the discussion briefing W/ro Zenebu on ActionAid's intents and works in general and AAE's women development engagements in particular. He noted that the ministry and AAE have common objectives and that their joined efforts would help making greater impact in the domain.

Following Jemal's briefing, Bethel and Getachew took turns giving the Minister more detailed highlights of AAE's practical women development engagements at national, regional and woreda levels.

W/ro Zenebu on her part noted that women related works of the ministry focus on economic empowerment, social empowerment, capacity building of women's affairs offices and mass women's associations at various levels and advocacy to reduce Gender Based Violence & harmful traditional practices.

"About 60 percent of the Ministry's work pertain to economic empowerment of women", W/ro Zenebu said adding that partnership with AAE and other organizations would help enhancing impact of interventions and avoiding duplication of works.

W/ro Zenebu also said that the Ministry's current efforts to ensure more networking between various actors working on women development. She noted the GO/NGO forum recently formed as a fora, where NGOs like ActionAid can make use of the opportunity to share their experiences and contribute for learning in the sector. ActionAid expressed interest to support a learning forum for multi-sector actors which may be linked to the GO/NGO forum.

The Minister welcomed AAE's partnership and expressed her organizations commitment for strong work relations. The Minister also expressed interest to see AAE's women development works on the ground and vowed to visit works in Janamora intervention area in the near future.



Fetura stands against ...

Continued from page 5

Here, there are 17 women watch groups engaged with local leaders and school clubs for the elimination of child marriage, challenging customary practices used to justify it. As a result, some of the male traditional leaders that used to tolerate the practice are now working towards its eradication, playing a crucial role as agents of change.

Sheik Mohamed Hassen, a religious leader in Kombolcha District, used to perform child marriages without verifying whether the girl had reached the acceptable age, something that has completely changed. He affirms: "The first thing to be asked is the age of a girl. If she is under 18, I don't allow the marriage. I identify the age seeing her school card or asking her parents about the time she was born. Then if she is over 18 and willing to marry, I allow the marriage."

Change is visible in this community, girls are becoming a catalyst for change and inspiration.

International Day of the Girl Child commemorated:

By Kassaw Chekol

ActionAid Ethiopia colorfully celebrated the international day of the girl child, 11 October 2012. Discussions on the occasion focused on types of early marriage and factors fueling Child Marriage, the laws governing early marriage at national level and strategies to combat the practice.

At the end of the International Day of the Girl celebration, the AAE declared its determination to contribute in ending the practice of girl child marriage as part of its country strategy commitments.

In Ethiopia, child marriage is outlawed and international agreements and national constitutions forbid the practice. Yet the practice persists. The legal suitable age for marriage is 18 although this is violated in rural areas. .

Each year, Action Aid in conjunction with the Ethiopian government rescue girls from early marriage. From 2005 to 2011, the incidence of girls' married between ages 15 and 19 years has declined from 27 to 23% (DHS, 2011).

የአክሽንኤይድ ማንነት

አክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ የአለም አቀፍ አክሽንኤይድ ፌዴሬሽን አካል ነው። ራዕዩ ከድህነት የጸዳች ዜጎች ሁሉ በክብርና በብልጽግና የሚኖሩባት ኢትዮጵያን ማየት ነው። በኢትዮጵያ ከ1981 ዓ.ም ጀምሮ የተለያዩ የልማት ስራዎችን ሲያካሂድ ቆይቷል።

አክሽንኤይድ በድህነት የሚኖሩ ሰዎችንና የድርጅቶቻቸውን አቅም በማጎልበት ተቋማዊ የልማት ፍላጎታቸውን እውን እንዲያደርጉ ያግዛል። ይህን ለማረጋገጥ ከህብረተሰብ ተቋማት ከአገር በቀል መንግስታዊ ያልሆኑ ድርጅቶችና ከመንግስት አካላት እንዲሁም ልማት ከሚሰሩ ሌሎች ተቋማት ጋር በአጋርነት ይሰራል።

ይህ ዜና መጽሔት ባመት ሁለት ጊዜ የሚታተም ሲሆን በዚህ እትም አጫጭር ዜናዎችና አክሽንኤይድ ከአጋሮቹ ጋር በሚሰራባቸው አካባቢዎች ለተገኙ ለውጦች ለማሳያ የሚሆኑ የተጠቃሚዎች ታሪኮች ተካተዋል።



ሴቶች ሲመሩ

አክሽንኤይድ ከሬድዮ ፋና ጋር በመተባበር ሴቶች ሲመሩ በሚል ርዕስ አርአያ የሆኑና በሴቶች ህይወት ላይ አዎንታዊ ለውጥ ያመጡ ስራዎቹን በሬዲዮ እያስደመጠ ነው። ስርጭቱ አክሽንኤይድ በድህነት የሚኖሩ ሴቶችን አቅም ለማጎልበት በተለያዩ ያገራቱ ክፍሎች የሚያከናውናቸውን ተግባራት የሚያሳይ ሲሆን ዘወትር እሁድ ከጠዋቱ በ4:15 ጀምሮ ይተላለፋል።

በአክሽንኤይድ ድጋፍ በሴቶች ህይወት ላይ የመጡ ለውጦችና ይህን ተከትሎ ሴቶች በቤታቸው በድርጅቶቻቸውና በህብረተሰቡ ውስጥ በሀላፊነት ስራዎች መሳተፍ መቻላቸውን የሚያሳዩ እነዚህ ታሪኮች አድማጮችን ለስራ

እያነቃቁ እንደሆነ የአድማጮች አስተያየቶች ያረጋግጣሉ። ዝግጅቱ ሴቶች በመሪነት በመሳተፍ በቤተሰብና በማህበረሰባቸው ውስጥ ያመጡባቸው ለውጦችንም ያስደምጣል።

የመጀመርያውን የ6 ወር ስርጭት የሬድዮ ፋናና የአክሽንኤይድ ሀላፊዎች እንዲሁም የስርጭቱ አድማጮች ከሚገኙባቸው ቦታዎች የመጡ የአክሽንኤይድ የስራ ሀላፊዎች ገምገመውታል። ከአድማጮች በሬድዮ ፋናም ሆነ በአክሽንኤይድ በኩል የተሰበሰቡ አስተያየቶች ስርጭቱ ሳቢና አስተማሪ እንደሆነ አረጋግጠዋል። የስነሁኑ ስርጭት ይዘቶች ሴቶች ከአክሽንኤይድ ባገኙት ድጋፍ በየቤተሰባቸውና በየማህበረሰባቸው የኢኮኖሚያዊና የማህበራዊ ለውጥ ሀዋርያት እየሆኑ መምጣታቸውን ያመለክታል።

አዲሱ የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ሐገራዊ ዳይሬክተር

ከሀዳር 22፣ 2005 ዓ.ም ጀምሮ አቶ ጀማል አህመድ የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ሐገራዊ ዳይሬክተር ሆነዋል።

በ1994(እ.ኤ.አ) ነበር አቶ ጀማል በአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ስራ የጀመሩት። በቀጣዮቹ አመታት በድርጅቱ ውስጥ በተለያዩ የሀላፊነት እርከኖች በተለያዩ አገሮች ሲሰሩ ቆይቷል።

የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ሐገራዊ ዳይሬክተር ከመሆናቸው በፊት የአክሽንኤይድ ፓኪስታን ሀገራዊ ዳይሬክተር ሆነው ያገለገሉ ሲሆን ከዚያ ቀደም ብሎ በተለያዩ የአፍሪካና የእስያ ሀገራት ሰርተዋል።

አቶ ጀማል የመጀመርያ ዲግሪያቸውን በግብርና ከአለማዊ ዩንቨርሲቲ፣ ሁለተኛ ዲግሪያቸውን

በመስኖ ልማት ከዩኒቨርሲቲ አፍ ንውካስል-አፖንታይን (እንግሊዝ አገር) ያገኙ ሲሆን በፖሊሲ ፕላንንግ ኤንድ ኢንተርቪዥን ኢን አፍሪካ ሌላ ሁለተኛ ድግሪ እንግሊዝ አገር ከሚገኘው ሱዳክስ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ኢንስቲትዩት አፍ ዲቪዥን መንገድ ስተዲስ አግኝተዋል።

ከአቶ ጀማል በፊት ዶክተር ረታ መንበሩ የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ሐገራዊ ዳይሬክተር ሆነው ለአምስት አመታት ማገልገላቸው ይታወቃል።





አለም አቀፍ የስፖንሰርሽፕ ስብሰባ

አክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ አለም አቀፍን አመታዊ የስፖንሰርሽፕ ስብሰባ አስተናገደ። የስብሰባው ዓላማ ከስፖንሰርሽፕ ጋር በተዛመደ ሰራተኞች ያላቸውን ግንዛቤ በማሳልበት ሃላፊነታቸውን እንዲወጡ ማስቻል ነበር።

ተሳታፊዎቹ 80 የሚሆኑ አክሽንኤይድ ከሚሰራባቸው ሀገራት የተወጣጡ የድርጅቱ የስፖንሰርሽፕና ኬር እንዲሁም የፕሮግራም ሰራተኞች ነበሩ።

ባቀባበሉ ወቅት ባደረጉት ንግግር የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ሀገራዊ ዳይሬክተር አቶ ጀማል አህመድ ስብሰባው የተካሄደው የድርጅቱ ገቢ እያሸቆለቆለ ባለበት ወቅት መሆኑን አመልክተዋል። የጊዜውን የኢኮኖሚ ችግር በመቋቋም ድርጅቱን በመደገፍ የቀጠሉትን ደጋፊዎች ያደነቁት አቶ ጀማል በዚህ ጊዜ ሰራተኛው ወቅታዊና ትክክለኛ መረጃ በመስጠት የደጋፊዎቹን ፍላጎት ማማላት እንዳለበት ገልጸዋል።

አዲሱ የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ስልታዊ እቅድ

አክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ከ2012-2017 የሚመራበትን ስልታዊ እቅድ ህዳር 12 ፣2005 ዓ.ም አጽድቋል።

የስልታዊ እቅዱ ረቂቅ ከአክሽንኤይድ ጋር በሚሰሩ ማህበረሰቦች ተወካዮች የህብረተሰብ ተቋማት፣ የመንግስት አካላትና ሌሎች የአክሽንኤይድ አጋሮች እንዲሁም በሰራተኞች ወይይት እንዲዳበር ተደርጓል።

አዲሱ ሰትራቴጂ ተልዕኮአዊ አላማዎች የሚከተሉት ናቸው፡

1. በዘለቄታዊ ግብርናና አደጋን የመመከት ብቃትን በማሳደግ በድህነት ውስጥ ያሉ ሰዎችን ኑሮ ማሻሻልና አደጋን የመቋቋም አቅማቸውን ማጠናከር
2. በድህነት ውስጥ የሚኖሩ ሰዎች ተደራጅተውና አቅማቸው ተጠናክሮ ጥራት ያለውና ደረጃውን የጠበቀ የትምህርት አገልግሎት ማግኘት መቻል።
3. ሴቶችና ልጃገረዶች አቅማቸው ይጎለብታል የተሻለ ማህበራዊና የኢኮኖሚ አማራጮችንም ያገኛሉ፤ አሉታዊ ተጽዕኖ ከሚያሰድሩ ጥቃቶችና ሁኔታዎች ራሳቸውን ይጠብቃሉ
4. በድህነት የሚኖሩ ሰዎች አቅማቸው ይጎለብታል፤ ጥራታቸውን የጠበቁ መሠረታዊ አገልግሎቶችን ለማግኘት ሕዝባዊ ተቋሞች ተገቢ ምላሽ እንዲሰጡ ተፅዕኖ መፍጠር ይችላሉ።

ፈቱራ ያለ እድሜ ጋብቻን አመለጠች

ፈቱራ የ14 አመት ታዳጊ ስትሆን በኦሮሚያ ክልል በኮምቦልቻ ወረዳ ትኖራለች። በተለምዶ በአካባቢዋ፣ በገዳ ኦሮሞ መንደር ሴት ልጅ ሳታገባ እስከ 16 ዓመት እድሜዋ መቆየት የለባትም። ለዚህ ነገር ታደያ አባትዋ በ 14 አመቷ ሊድሯት ዝግጅት የጀመሩት።

ቀደም ብሎ በትምህርት ቤቷ የተማሪዎች ክብብ አማካኝነት ስለ ያለእድሜ ጋብቻና ሌሎች ልማዳዊ ድርጊቶች ተምራ ስለነበር ፈቱራ ጋብቻውን አልተቀበለችውም። በመሆኑም አባትዋ እንዳይድሯት ለማሳመን የተቻላትን ሞክረች። በውሳኔያቸው መጽናታቸውን ስታይ ደሞ ጥቃት ተከላካይ ለሆኑ የትምህርት ቤትዋ ክበባት አባላት፣ ለንደኞችዋና ለአስተማሪዎችዋ ነገሩን አማክረች። ሆኖም አስተማሪዎችዋ አባትዋን ለማሳመን ያደረጉት ጥረት ሳይሳካ ቀረ። ከዚህ በኋላ አስተማሪዎቹ በአካባቢው በአክሽንኤይድ ድጋፍ ከተቋቋመው ጥቃት ተከላካይ ቡድን አባላት ጋር በመሆን ነገሩን ለህግ አካላት አስታወቁ።

የፍትህ አካላቱና የጥቃት ተከላካይ ቡድኑ የሴት ልጆች ያለመማርና ያለእድሜ ጋብቻ የሚያስከትሉትን ችግር በመግለፅ፣ ያለእድሜ ጋብቻም በህግ የሚያስቀጣ ወንጀል መሆኑን በማስረዳት አባትዋው ሃሳባቸውን እንዲቀይሩ አደረጓቸው። ይህ ዕርምጃቸው ፈቱራ እንደፈለገችው ትምህርቷን እንድትቀጥል አስችሏታል።

ባለፉት አራት አመታት በኮምቦልቻ ወረዳ 655 ሴቶች ሰልጥነው በ78 ይታዩ ጥቃት ተከላካይ ቡድኖች ተደራጅተዋል። በኮምቦልቻ ከተማ ያሉ 17 ጥቃት ተከላካይ ቡድኖች በአካባቢው ካሉ የሀይማኖት መሪዎች፣ የትምህርት ቤት ክበባትና መስተዳድሮች ጋር በመቀናጀት ያለእድሜ ጋብቻንና ሌሎች ጎጂ ልማዳዊ ድርጊቶችን አጥብቀው እየተዋጉ ነው።



አክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ በየም

በየም ልዩ ወረዳ በአክሽንኤይድ ድጋፍ የተሰሩ በሴቶች ሚመራው የመጠጥ ውሀ ፕሮጀክትና የትምህርት ማስፋፍያ ስራ መስከረም 28 እና 29 ቀን 2005 ዓ.ም ተመረቁ። በፎፋ ከተማ የተገነባው የመጠጥ ውሀ ፕሮጀክት 8.3 ሚሊዮን ብር የፈጀ ሲሆን ለ 6,100 ሰዎች አገልግሎት ይሰጣል። ይህ ቀደም ሲል በአክሽንኤይድ ድጋፍ በወረዳው ከተሰራው የውሀ አገልግሎት ጋር ሲጨመር በድርጅቱ እገባ የንጹህ ውሀ ተጠቃሚ የሆነውን ህዝብ ቁጥር ወደ 22,112 አሳድጎታል።

የውሀ ፕሮጀክቱ ሁለት ጥልቅ የውሀ ጉድጓዶች ሲኖሩት አንዱ በአክሽንኤይድ ሌላው በወረዳው መንግስት የተሰሩ ናቸው። ፕሮጀክቱ 13 ኪሎ ሜትር ርዝመት ያለው የቧንቧ መስመርና 50,000 ሜትር ኪዩብ የሚይዝ የውሀ ማጠራቀሚያ እንዲሁም 13 የውሀ ማስራጫ ኪዎስኮች አሉት።

በተጨማሪም ፕሮጀክቱ ሶስት የህዝብ መጻዳጃዎች፣ በከተማው የተለያዩ ቦታዎች የተተከሉ ሶስት የልብስ ማጠቢያ ገንዳዎች፣ 354 የእጅ መታጠቢያዎችና 550 የቤተሰብ መጻዳጃዎችን ያጠቃልላል።

በቦርድ የሚተዳደረውና በጠቅላላ ጉባኤ የሚመራው የፎፋ ከተማ የሴቶች ውሀ ልማት ማህበር የውሀውን ስርጭት የሚያስተባብር ቢሮና አስተባባሪ አለው። የቦርድ አባላት ቀደም ብሎ በአክሽንኤይድ የየም ልዩ ወረዳ ማስተባበርያ ቢሮ አስተባባሪነት በስልጤ ዞን ወደሚገኘው የሌራ ቪኪ ውሀ ፕሮጀክት በመሄድ ልምድ ቀስመዋል። አክሽንኤይድ በሚደግፋቸው የውሀ ፕሮጀክቶች ሴቶች እንዲመሩ በማስተባበርና አቅማቸውን በማጎልበት የአመራር ክህሎታቸውን እያሳደገ ነው። ይህም ማህበረሰቡ ለሴቶች አመራር ያለውን የተሳሳተ አመለካከት እንዲለወጥ እያገዘ ነው።

በሌላ በኩል በአክሽንኤይድ እና በወረዳው ድጋፍ የተሰራው የት/ቤት ማስፋፊያ ስራ የሳጃ አንደኛ ደረጃ መሰናዶ ት/ቤት ተጨማሪ 248 ተማሪዎችን መቀበል አስችሎታል። ድጋፉ 1-4ኛ ክፍል የነበረውን ት/ቤት እስከ 8ኛ ክፍል ትምህርት እንዲሰጥ ያስቻለ ነው። አክሽንኤይድ ለዚህ የሚሆነውን የግንባታ ወጪ፣ የተማሪዎች መቀመጫዎች፣ ጠረጴዛዎችና የመጽሐፍት መደርደሪያዎች ግዢ ሸፍኗል።

የውሀ ፕሮጀክቱና የየም ሴቶች

የውሀ ፕሮጀክቱ ለሰማይነሽ ገ/ዓዲቅና ለመሰሎችዋ ከመጠጥ ውሀ ያለፈ ትርጉም አለው። "የአስተዳደርን ስራ እንድንማርና እንድንተገብር ትልቅ እድል የፈጠረለን ነው" ትላለች የሶስት ልጆች እናት የሆነችው ሰማይነሽ ።

ውሀው ከብዙ ችግር ነው ሴቶችን የታደገው። በፊት ውሀ ፍለጋ ረጅም መንገድ ሄደን ተሸክመን እንመጣ ነበር። ብዙ ጊዜ በሌሊት ውሀ ፍለጋ ስለምንሄድ አውራ እንዳያገኘን ተጠባብቀን በቡድን ነበር የምንሄደው" ውሀው ያለበት ስንደርስ ጅብ እንዳይመጣብን እሳት እያነደድን የሁላችንም ጀሪካኖች እስኪሞሉ እንጠባበቅ ነበር። አሁን በሌሊት መንገም ሆነ ከሩቅ ተሸክሞ ማምጣት ቀርቶልናል" ብላለች።

ሰማይነሽ አክሽንኤይድ የገንዘብና የቴክኒክ ድጋፍ ከሚያደርግለት የየም ሴቶች የውሀ ልማት ማህበር 60 አባላት አንዷ ናት።

አባላቱ በተለያዩ ኮሚቴዎች በመዋቀር ውሃውን ያስተዳድራሉ። ሰማይነሽ ያለችበት ቡድን የውሀ ኪዎስኮችንና የአካባቢውን ንጽህና የመጠበቅ ሃላፊነት አለው።

ሴቶቹ በውሀ አጠቃቀምና አመራር ሰጭነት ብሎም በጥገናና ለሌሎች ስራዎች ቀጥታ ተሳታፊ መሆናቸው በቤታቸውና በህብረተሰቡ ውስጥ የውሳኔ ሰጭነት ሚናን ለመጫወት እያበረታታቸው ነው።

የትብብር ጅምር

የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያና ሴቶች ፣ ወጣቶችና ህፃናት ጉዳይ ሚኒስትር በትብብር ለመስራት ተስማሙ።

የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ሃገራዊ ዳይሬክተር አቶ ጀማል አህመድ ከሴቶች ልማት አስተባባሪዋ ቤተል ተረፈና ከሰሜን ማስተባበሪያ ቢሮ ሃላፊው አቶ ጌታቸው አሊ ጋር በመሆን ከሚኒስትሯ ከወ/ሮ ዘነቡ ታደሰ ጋር በጋራ የትኩረት አቅጣጫዎችና አሰራሮች ላይ ተወያይተዋል።

ሚኒስትሯ መስሪያ ቤታቸው ባሁኑ ጊዜ በሴቶች ላይ ከሚሰሩ የተለያዩ ድርጅቶች ጋር የስራ ግንኙነት ለመፍጠር እየሰራ እንደሆነ አመልክተው ከአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ጋርም ለመስራት ያለውን ዝግጁነት ገልፀዋል።

አለም አቀፍ የሴቶች ቀን በአክሽንኤይድ

የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ አዲስ አበባ ቢሮ ሰራተኞች በአሉን ያከበሩት ሴቶችን የሚጎዱ ልማዳዊ አመለካከቶችና ድርጊቶች ተለውጠዋል ወይስ አልተለወጡም በሚል ክርክር ነበር። ክርክሩ ሰራተኞች ወደራሳቸው በመመልከት የእኛስ አመለካከትና ተግባር ተለውጧል አልተለወጠም በሚል ውስጣቸውን እንዲፈትሹ አነሳስቷቸዋል።

ከክርክሩ በኋላ የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ሃገራዊ ዳይሬክተር አቶ ጀማል አህመድ ሲናገሩ ዋናው የማርች 8 ወይም የስርአተ ያታ ጉዳይ ከሰዎች የስልጣን አያያዝና አጠቃቀም ጋር የተያያዘ መሆኑን ገልጿል።

«እንደ አክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ማህበረሰብ ቀድሞ የኛን አመለካከትና ድርጊት ልንፈትሽና እርስ በእርስ ከህብረተሰቡ ጋር ባለን ግንኙነት ምሳሌ ሆነን መገኘት ይገባል» ብለዋል።



የልምድ ልውውጥ

አክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ በሚሰራባቸው የልማት አካባቢዎች ሚደግፋቸው የሴቶች የውሃ ልማት ማህበራት መሪዎች ታህሳስ 9-12 ቀን በዳሎቻና አዘርነት (ደቡብ ህዝቦች ክልል) የልምድ ልውውጥ አደረጉ።

ቡድኑ በሰሜን ፣ ደቡብ ፣ ምዕራብ ክልሎች አክሽንኤይድ ከሚሰራባቸው አካባቢዎች የተውጣጡ ሴት የውሃ ልማት ማህበራት መሪዎችና ከማህበራቱ ጋር ቀጥተኛ የስራ ግንኙነት ያላቸው የመንግስት መስሪያ ቤቶች ተወካዮችን ያካተተ ነበር። የቡድኑ አባላት በዳሎቻና አዘርነት ያሉት ማህበራት የቦርድ አወቃቀር ፣ አሰራርና ተዛማጅ ጉዳዮች ላይ ጥልቅ ውይይት በማድረግ ግንዛቤ ቀስመዋል። አንጋፋ የሆኑት የዳሎቻና የአዘርነት ውሃ ተቋማት ቦርድ አመራር አባላትና አስተባባሪዎችን ገለጸና የመስክ ጉብኝቱን ተከትሎ ቡድኑ በቡታጅራ የአንድ ቀን ውይይት አድርጓል።

በውይይቱ ወቅት፣ ሴቶቹ የአክሽንኤይድ ስልጠናና ትምህርት አቅማቸውን በማጎልበት በቀበሌና ወረዳ የመንግስት መዋቅር ገብተው በአመራር መሳተፍ እንዳስቻላቸው ገልጸዋል። ቀድሞ ከባህል ተፅዕኖና ጊዜ ከማጣት የተነሳ ከቤት ውጭ ተሳትፎ ያልነበራቸው የዳሎቻ ሴቶች እስከ ወረዳ ካቢኔ ተመርጠው ማገልገል ችለዋል። ሴቶቹ «ራዕያችን በመላ ሀገሪቱ ገጠሮች መሰል የውሃ ተቋማት እንዲፈጠሩና እንዲያደጉ ነው። ለዚህም እውቀትና ልምዳችንን እናካፍላለን።» ብለዋል። የልምድ ልውውጡ አይናቸውን እንደከፈተላቸውና ተመልሰው ለየማህበራቸው እድገት ይበልጥ እንደሚያበረክቱም ተሳታፊዎቹ ተናግረዋል።

እስካሁን በአክሽንኤይድ ድጋፍ የተቋቋሙ የውሃ ማህበራት፡-

- የዳሎቻ ሴቶች ውሃ ልማት ማህበር፣ (ለ108,000 ሕዝብ አገልግሎት የሚሰጠውን የውሃ ተቋም የሚመራ) ደቡብ ክልል ስልጤ ዞን
- የቪ.ኪ. ሌራ ሴቶች የውሃ ልማት ማህበር፣ (ለ29,000 ሕዝብ አገልግሎት የሚሰጠውን የውሃ ተቋም የሚመራ) ደቡብ ክልል ስልጤ ዞን
- የፎፋ ሴቶች የውሃ ልማት ማህበር ፣ (ለ6,445 ሕዝብ አገልግሎት የሚሰጠውን ተቋም የሚመራ) ደቡብ ክልል የም ልዩ ወረዳ
- የሳጃ ሴቶች ውሃ ልማት ማህበር፣ (ለ3,000 ሕዝብ አገልግሎት የሚሰጠውን ተቋም የሚመራ) ደቡብ ክልል የም ልዩ ወረዳ
- የጃናሞራ ሴቶች የውሃ ልማት ማህበር፣ (ለ12,234 ሕዝብ አገልግሎት የሚሰጠውን ተቋም የሚመራ) አማራ ክልል ሰሜን ጎንደር
- የጣይቱ ሴቶች ውሃ ልማት ማህበር፣ (ለ11,900 ሕዝብ አገልግሎት የሚሰጠውን ተቋም የሚመራ) አማራ ክልል አንኮበር ወረዳ
- የጎፈር ጊባ ሴቶች የውሃ ልማት ማህበር፣ (ለ9,000 ሕዝብ አገልግሎት የሚሰጠው ተቋም የሚመራ) ኦሮሚያ ክልል አርሲ ዞን



ከተረጅነት ወደ ባለ ሀብትነት

አክሽንኤይድ በ6 አመታት የአፍላ ወረዳ ቆይታው ካከናወናቸው ስራዎች አንዱ በድህነት የኖሩና አማራጭ አጥተው በስራ አጥነት የተቸገሩ ብዙ ሴቶች የገቢ ማስገኛ ስራ እንዲጀምሩና የተሻለ አኗኗር እንዲመሩ ማገዝ ነው።

በአክሽንኤይድ አፍላ ማስተባበርያ ቢሮ ስልጠናና የብድር አገልግሎት እንዲሁም ምክርና ማበረታቻ ከከፋ ድህነት ወደ ባለ ንብረትነት የተሸጋገሩ ሴቶች ቁጥር ከ 1600 በላይ ነው። የብርሀን አለም የህይወት ለውጥ ግን ከብዙዎቹም የላቅ ነው።

ከ 7 አመት በፊት ብርሀን እራስዋንና ቤተሰብዋን ለመመገብ የሚበቃ ነገር አልነበራትም። ያላትን አንድ ልጅ ማስተማር ባለመቻልዋ የክርስትና አባቱ ለማስተማርና ለመንከባከብ ወሰደው። የእለት ጉርስዋን ለማግኘት የሴቶችን ጸጉር ሹርባ ትሰራ ነበር። ባሏም የቀን ስራ ይሰራ ነበር።

ብርሀን የህይወት ለውጥዋን እንደሚከተለው ታብራራለች፤

አክሽንኤይድ የመጣ ጊዜ ከጎረቤቱ በተበደርኩት ስምንት ብር ስንዴ ገዝቼ አንባሻ መነገድ ጀምራ ነበር።

ቀደም ብሎ ቀበሌው ከመዘገባቸው በአስከፊ ድህነት የሚገኙ ሴቶች አንድዋ ነበርኩ። ቀበሌው ለችግረኛ ሴቶች ስልጠናና ብድር ስለሚሰጥ ነይ ብለው ሲጠሩኝ ግን ፈቃደኛ አልነበርኩም።

ምክንያቱም በኋላ ብድሩን መክፈል ያቅተኛል በሚል ስለፈራሁ ነበር። ደግመው ሲጠሩኝ ግን ሄድኩ። ብድሩን ወስጄ የንብ ስራ ላይ ለመሰማራት ስስማማ የአክሽንኤይድ ሰዎች የንብ ቀፎና ሁለት መቶ ብር፣ የንብ ማንባት ስልጠናም ሰጡኝ። ሊከታተሉኝና ሊያግዙኝ ከሚችሉ ባለሙያዎች ጋርም አስተዋወቁኝ።

ቆየት ብሎም አክሽንኤይድ 3,000ብር ሰጠኝ። የንብ ስራ በጀመርኩ በ 6 ወሩ 12 ኪሎ ማር ማምረት ቻልኩኝ፤ ስራውን በጀመርኩ ባመቱ ደግሞ 48 ኪሎ ማር ሸጥኩ። ይኸ ደግሞ 50,050 ብር አወጣልኝ። ባገኘሁት ብር 8 ባህላዊና 17 ዘመናዊ የንብ ቀፎችን ገዝቼ ስራዬን በሰፊው ተያያዝኩት። አሁን በጥቅሉ 34 ቀፎዎች አሉኝ።

በሌላ በኩል ድሮ ለሰው በኪራይ የሰጠሁትን መሬቱን አስመልሽ እየሰራሁ በየአመቱ 20 ኩንታል እህል አመርታለሁ። በተጨማሪም አሁን እኔና ቤተሰቤ 20 ፍየሎች ፤10 በጎችና ሁለት አህዮች አሉን። የተሟላ የቤት ቁሳቁስና ንብረትም አፍርተናል።

የኔን መለወጥ ያዩና እኔ የገፋፋኋቸው አንድ ጎረቤቱ እና ሁለት ወንድሞቼ ወደ ንብ ስራ ገብተው ጥሩ ትርፍ ማግኘት ጀምረዋል።

ብርሃን ንግዲን ማስፋፋቷን እንደምትቀጥልም ተናግራለች።

አለም አቀፍ የሴት ልጅ ቀን

የአክሽንኤይድ ሰራተኞች ጥቅምት 1/2005 ዓ.ም አለም አቀፍ የሴት ልጅ ቀንን በሚመለከቱ ያለ ዕድሜ ጋብቻን የሚያመለክቱ የአገሪቱ ህጎች ላይ ውይይት አደረገዋል።

በወቅቱ ተሰብሳቢዎች አክሽንኤይድ ጎጆ ልማዳዊ ድርጊቶችን ለመከላከልና የሴት ልጆችን ትምህርት ለማስፋፋት የሚሰራቸው ስራዎችና የተገኙ ውጤቶች ላይ በመወያየት ይህንን አጠናክረው ለመቀጠል ተስማምተዋል።

ወንጀለኛ ሳይቀጣ ላይታለፍ

በደቡብ ክልል በየም ልዩ ወረዳ በአክሽንኤይድ ድጋፍ የተቋቋሙ ጸረ-ጾታዊ ጥቃት ተከላካይ ቡድኖች ጥቃት የሚፈፀሙ ወንጀለኞች ያለቅጣት እንዳይታለፉ እያደረጉ ነው።

ለዚህ ምሳሌ የሚሆነው በአካባቢው ነዋሪ የሆነችው የ8ኛ ክፍል ተማሪ ታሪክ ነው። ወጣትዋ ባለፈው ጥቅምት ወር እንጨት ለቀማ በሄደችበት ሊደፍራት የሞከረውን ሰው አምልጣ ነገሩን ለቤተሰቦቿ ትናገራለች። ወንጀለኛው መጀመሪያ ቤተሰቦቿ ሲጠይቁት ጉዳዩን ቢክድም በአገር ሽማግሌዎች ሲጠየቅ ግን ወንጀሉን አምኗል። ስለሆነም ሰውየው በሁለት በኩል እንዲቀጣ ተደርጓል። ይህም የአካባቢው ሽማግሌዎች ቀደም ብሎ እንደዚህ ባለ ወንጀል ላይ ተወያይተው በወሰኑት መሰረት ለእድሩ 700 ብር ከፍሏል ፤ በሌላ በኩል የጥቃት ተከላካይ ቡድኑ በአካባቢው የሴቶችና ህጻናት ባለሙያ ምክር ወንጀሉን ወደ ህግ በማቅረብ ሰውየው በእስር እንዲቆይ ተደርጓል።

የህብረት ስራ ማህበራት ዩኒየን

አክሽንኤይድ የሚደግፋቸው በደቡብ ህዝቦች ክልል በከምባ ወረዳ የሚገኙ መሰረታዊ የህብረት ስራ ማህበራት ተደራጅተው ቁጠባና ብድር ህብረት ስራ ማህበራት ዩኒየን መሠረቱ።

ህዳር 3 ቀን 2005 ዓ.ም የተቋቋመው ይህው ዩኒየን አክሽንኤይድ በድህነት የሚኖሩ ሰዎችን አቅም በማጎልበት ሂደት እያመጣ ያለውን ውጤት ወደላቀ ደረጃ ያሸጋገረ ነው።

ዩኒየኑ 1,167 አባላት ያሉባቸው 11 መሠረታዊ የቁጠባና ብድር ህብረት ስራ ማህበራትን ያጠቃልላል። ከነዚህም ሰባቱ የአክሽንኤይድ የከምባ ማስተባበሪያ ቢሮ ያቋቋማቸው ሲሆኑ ከሰባቱ አምስቱ ደግሞ የሴቶች ተቋማት ናቸው።

በዩኒየኑ ምስረታ ወቅት በደቡብ ብሔር ብሔረሰቦችና ህዝቦች ብሔራዊ ክልል ጋሙጎፋ ዞን በከምባ ወረዳ የሚገኙ የመንግስት ተወካዮችና የዩኒየኑ ጠቅላላ አባላት እንዲሁም የአክሽንኤይድ ተወካዮች ተገኝተዋል።

የክልሉ ህብረት ስራ ማህበራት ኤጀንሲ ተወካይ በወቅቱ ባደረጉት ንግግር አክሽንኤይድ በአገሪቱ በአይነቱ የመጀመርያ የሆነውን የዲቻ ዳውሮ ቁጠባና ብድር ህብረት ስራ ማህበር ዩኒየን ከዘጠኝ አመት በፊት ማቋቋሙን አስታውሰዋል።

ሌሎች የክልልና የዞን መንግስታት አካላትና የህብረተሰብ ተወካዮችም አክሽንኤይድ ሴቶች በነዚህ ማህበራት ውስጥ እንዲሳተፉ ከማድረጉም በላይ ቁጥራቸው ከማህበራቱ አጠቃላይ አባላት 44.6% እንዲሆን ፍሬአማ ጥረት በማድረጉ አድናቆታቸውን ገልጸዋል።

አክሽንኤይድ በቅርቡ በዚህ ክልል በምእራብ አዘርነት ወረዳ ተመሳሳይ ዩኒየን እንዲመሰረት ማገዙ ይታወሳል። በተመሳሳይ መልኩ አክሽንኤይድ የሚደግፋቸውና በደቡብ ክልል በየም፤በጌናቦሳ፤በአዘርነትና በከምባ ወረዳዎች የሚገኙ ማህበራት ወደ ዩኒየንነት ተሸጋግረዋል። በሌላ በኩል በአማራ ክልል ፤ጃን አሞራ ወረዳ፤አክሽንኤይድ የሚደግፋቸው መሰል ተቋማት በቅርቡ ህጋዊ ሰውነት አግኝተዋል።

የእንግሊዝ ፓርላማ አባላት

የእንግሊዝ ፓርላማ አባላት ከአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ጋር የሚሰሩ የማህበረሰብ አባላት ጋር ተወያዩ።

በውይይቱ ወቅት በደቡብ ህዝቦች ክልል ከሚገኘው አዘርነት ወረዳና ከሴሩ (ኦሮሚያ) የመጡት ተሳታፊዎች በየማህበረሰባቸው ጠለፋን፣ ግርዛትን፣ ያለ ዕድሜ ጋብቻን ፣ በጋብቻ ላይ ጋብቻንና የውርስ ጋብቻን ለመቀነስ ያደረጉትን አስተዋዕቆ በዝርዝር አስረድተዋል።

እንግዶቹ የጾታዊ ጥቃት ተከላካይ ቡድኑ አባላት፤ ያገር ሽማግሌዎችና የሃይማኖት መሪዎች ገለባ የአክሽንኤይድ ስራ በገጠሩ ማህበረሰብ ህይወት ተጨባጭ ለውጥ እያመጣ መሆኑን እንዳስገነዘባቸው ግልፅዋል። በተጨማሪ የፖሊስ አገራቸው ሲመለሱ እየመጣ ያለውን ለውጥ የአክሽንኤይድን ስራ በገንዘብ ሲደግፍ ለቆየው ህዝባቸው እንደሚገልፁ ቃል ገብተዋል።

አመታዊ የክንውንና እቅድ ግምገማ

የአክሽንኤይድና የአጋሮቹ አመታዊ የጋራ የ2012 (እኤአ) ክንውንና የ2013 እቅድ ግምገማ ጥር 13 እና 14 ቀን 2005 ዓ. ም ተካሂዷል። አክሽንኤይድ ከሚሰራባቸው አካባቢዎች የተውጣጡ የህብረተሰብና የህብረተሰብ ተቋማት ተወካዮች እንዲሁም ሌሎች የልማት አጋሮች የተገኙበት ይህ ስብሰባ በአክሽንኤይድ ስራዎች ዘላቂነት ላይ ተወያይተዋል።

በወቅቱ የአክሽንኤይድ ክንውንና እቅድ ግምገማን የመሰሉ አሰራሮች ድርጅቱ በሚሰራባቸው አካባቢ ህብረተሰብና የመንግስት ተቋማት አሰራር ውስጥ ሰርጸዋል ወይ በሚለው ጥያቄ ላይ ውይይት ተደርገል።

«በኛ አካባቢ አክሽንኤይድ ከመምጣቱ በፊት በቆላ ዝንብ ምክንያት ከብት ማርባት አይቻልም ነበር። አክሽንኤይድ ምስጋና ይግባውና አደራጅቶ እንዴት እንደምንከላከል አስተማረን። በተጨማሪም የከብቶች ጤና ተቋም እንድንከፍት አገዘን። ብሎም አስፈላጊ ቁሳቁሶችን አሟላልን። ዛሬ እያንዳንዱ ቤተሰብ ባለብዙ ከብት ፤ በግና፤ ፍየሎች ሆኗል።» ያሉት የየም ህብረተሰብ ተወካይ ናቸው። በኢታንግ የሚሰራው አጋር ድርጅት ተወካይ ደግሞ ያካባቢው መንግስትና ህዝብ ከአክሽንኤይድ ተሞክሮ በመማር የክንውንና እቅድ ግምገማ ስልቱን በየድርጅቶቻቸው እየተጠቀሙበት መሆኑን አብራርተዋል።

ለዚህ ስብሰባ ከኦሮሚያ ክልል ኮምቦልቻ ወረዳ የመጣችው ሴት አርሶ አደር ቀመሮ ኡስማን «በአክሽንኤይድ የሚሰሩ ሴቶች ቁጥር ለምን አነሰ?» ስትል በመጠየቅ ድርጅቱ የሴቶችን ንቃተ ህሊና ስለማጎልበቱ ማሳያ ሆናለች። ቀመሮ በምትኖርበት ከሐረር ከተማ ወጣ ብሎ በሚገኘው የገጠር መንደር አክሽንኤይድ የሴቶችን አቅም በስልጠናና በገንዘብ ድጋፍ በማጎልበት ቀዳሚ ሚና የሚጫወት መሆኑን በመግለፅ እንዴት በድርጅቱ የሚሰሩ ሴቶች ቁጥር ከወንዶቹ በጣም ሊንስ ቻለ ስትል ጠይቃለች። ቀመሮ የአክሽንኤይድ ኢትዮጵያ ባካባቢው ከሚደግፋቸው ጸረ ጾታዊ ጥቃት ተከላካይ ማህበራት የአንዱ መሪ ስትሆን ድርጅቱ በአካባቢው ለሴቶች የሚያደርገው ድጋፍ ብዙዎቹን ሴቶች በልማትና በማህበረሰብ እድገት እንዲሳተፉ እንዳስቻለ ተናገራለች።

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