

Field report on supportive supervision mission to Benishangul-Gumuz Region on 11-16.1.2016



Challenging road to Bello Woreda

Supervision report in BSGR, January 2016

Mission conducted by the following COWASH FTAT members:

Arto Suominen, CTA

Mussie Hailegeorgis, Crosscutting specialist and BGRS focal person

Benti Ejeta, Communication specialist

Oona Rautiainen, Junior Expert

1 MEETINGS HELD AND PLACES VISITED:

Bello woreda on 12.1.2016:

- Meeting with woreda WASH team and technical team
- Meeting with Say Dalecha kebele WASH team
- Meeting with the community at Tankarra gott

Oda woreda on 13.1.2016:

- Meeting with woreda WASH team and technical team
- Meeting with Tuli gott community in Tuli Kebele
- Visiting the HDW site in Tuli gott, and spring development site in Haile and Agecho gott

Bambasi Woreda on 14.1.2016:

- Meeting with CMP supervisor and the water office head

Assosa zone on 14.1.2016:

- Meeting with zonal CMP supervisor and party office head

Region on 14-15.1.2016:

- Meeting with RSU and COWASH coordinator
- BoFED and water bureau heads were not available for any discussions

2 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

2.1 START OF CONSTRUCTION:

- Bello and Agalometi woredas have not yet started construction because the procurement of artisan tools and hand pumps could not be done timely. None of the projects in these two woredas have not yet been field appraised neither approved. In addition artisan training is delayed because of the lack of artisan tools.
- Oda and Bambasi are ready to start the construction as the projects have already been field appraised and approved by the WWT, but the financing agreements with WASHCOs have not been signed.
- Furthermore the regional Finance Bureau has transferred 4,975,000 birr for the investments to Water Bureau to be further transferred to four woredas for implementation in the week

starting of Jan 18. This transfer was evidenced by the copy of transfer letter from BoFED to Water Bureau. Artisan tool procurement in Oda and Bambasi are in final stage.

2.2 PROCUREMENT AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:

- Procurement and financial management training from BoFED to woredas was planned for EFY 2007 but was not given. The activity was rolled over to EFY 2008 and so far BoFED has failed to give the training. This has caused a problem in procurement and it is becoming one of the major bottlenecks for the successful implementation of the project. The lack of this training is also reflected in the poor and delayed financial reporting of the woredas and due to this reason the combined federal level financial report has been delayed.
- The procurement at all levels is very inefficient.
- It was found out at the woreda level that they lack the capacity to carry out efficient procurement and financial reporting. Therefore the RSU financial specialist has to travel to woredas to compile the woreda financial reports by himself.
- There is a lack of accountability by the BoFED to request and collect the financial reports from woredas on time.



Transport of office equipment in Oda woreda

2.3 AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF COWASH PROJECT:

- The mission found out that there is still confusion regarding the COWASH project and its implementation modality. It was found out that in Bello woreda the COWASH activities are considered as “additional” work which clearly reflects the poor understanding of COWASH status as a government project. This lack of proper awareness has been caused due to frequent staff turnover. Also awareness training was not given for the new staff members as it was cancelled by the water bureau.

2.4 CAPACITY BUILDING:

- It was found out that many capacity building activities planned and approved in EFY 2008 plan have been cancelled by the water bureau. So this has put the project outcomes on danger regarding sustainability. The cancellation of the training could not be clarified as the deputy head of water bureau was not available.
- Climate Resilient Water Safety Planning (CR-WSP) training organized by the federal COWASH to capacitate the RSU to facilitate the implementation of sustainable water service delivery was conducted in November. However the water bureau in BGRS did not allow the RSU staff to participate to the training. Climate and Environmental Risk Screening training, and CR-WSP are both meant to be cascaded to Woreda and Kebele level. As WASH services are highly vulnerable to the impact of climate change and environmental degradation, cancellations of the mentioned capacity building activities is leaving the sustainability of WASH services in the region under question.

2.5 DELAY IN THE FUND TRANSFERS:

- The mission was informed that there are been a delay in the transfer of funds from BoFED to sector bureaus, Zones and Woredas. Therefore sector bureaus, Zones and Woredas are not implementing their activities on time and many processes are delayed.

2.6 AUDIT:

- The mission found out that BoFED has not started any actions to implement the EFY 2007 audit for COWASH. The lack of audit will prevent the transfer of 4th quarter funds from Finland.

2.7 OWNERSHIP OF THE COWASH PROJECT:

- The mission found out that the ownership of the COWASH project in BoFED and in water bureau is weak. BoFED COWASH focal person has not given due attention for the COWASH implementation as he was only acting but not fully nominated for COWASH. The mission found out that new focal person has been assigned but the transfer of files to the new focal person has not yet been done. There is a great need to give appropriate attention that the new focal person will take the full responsibility of the project. However that person needs to be trained for COWASH.

2.8 FINDINGS ON THE RSU:

- The cashier approved to be part of RSU has not been employed and therefore the financial specialist is overloaded with routine work instead of supporting the project in strategic way.

2.9 VEHICLE USE:

- The mission was informed that the four project vehicles procured from GoF funds for the four woredas were handed over to the Woreda Administrators by the Water Bureau without clear guidelines and instructions for their use in COWASH. It was understood that this handing over was the main reason for the confusion on the car usage in the woredas. This issue could not be discussed at the region level as the water bureau deputy head was not available.
- In Bello woreda the project car provided to the woreda is not used by the concerned sector offices at all. The mission was informed that it is mainly used for none WASH related sectors including security purpose and the water office has no control over the car.
- In Bello woreda the car has no assigned driver and it is driven by different driver each time. This is clear mismanagement of the resources provided to the woreda for COWASH implementation.
- In Bello woreda also the allocation of motor bikes was a problem. Out of two motorbikes provided for the water office only one is properly utilized for the project implementation. The other bike could not be found by the mission.



Bello woreda Water Office Motorbike

- The mission was informed that in Agalometi woreda the project car provided to the woreda is not used by the concerned sector offices at all. The mission was also informed that the car has already been crashed. The car was removed from the crash site before the police report was prepared and therefore the insurance cannot cover the repair of the car. The mission proposed BoFED to find means to finance the maintenance of the car and strongly requests BoFED to give instructions to Bello and Agalometi woreda that the car shall be given for the COWASH project work administered by the woreda water office.
- In Bambasi and Oda woredas the car is efficiently used for project purposes by all the five WASH sector offices. The car use is administered by the woreda water office and car has assigned official driver from water bureau.
- The car utilization problem was created by handing over the vehicles to woreda administrator without clearly instructing the purpose of the car.
- It was also found out that COWASH work has been delayed due to the use of RSU car for other duties at the regional level. The car has not always been made available for RSU when needed at the regional level. For example, first quarter report was delayed as the RSU could not get the car to collect financial reports from Woredas.

2.10 TRAINERS' FEE:

- The mission found out that MoFED has issued the directive to BoFEDs to implement the payment of trainers' fees in Channel one projects. The trainers' fee issue has not been harmonized to bilateral projects and it is affecting negatively the bilateral project implementation. There is a need to harmonize and align the trainers' fee payment by BoFED also to be implemented in COWASH. The trainer's fee need to be approved in the next Steering Committee meeting so that BoFED can provide directive for its use in COWASH.

2.11 SECTOR COORDINATION:

- It was found out that regional WASH technical team is not functional. Also the establishment of the RWCO has not been given any attention.

2.12 FINLAND COUNTRY STRATEGY EVALUATION:

- The team could not inform BoFED and water bureau heads on the upcoming country strategy evaluation team visit to Benishangul-Gumuz region due to unavailability of the bureau heads.

2.13 WASHCO LEGALIZATION:

- The team could not find any evidence on the leadership in WASHCO legalization in the region. The legalization is only taking place at project level especially in Metekel Zone. It was found out that there is confusion in the legalization process as sometimes some schemes have been legalized on its own and sometimes the legalized entity is the woreda level association. The team advised Benishangul-Gumuz region to organize an experience sharing visit to Southern region to learn about systematic and decentralized legalization process.

2.14 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING:

- The team strongly recommends to have a COWASH steering committee meeting in Benishangul-Gumuz as soon as possible where all these issues should be discussed.

3 METEKEL ZONE SITUATION:

- The planned work is progressing well in Metekel zone. The planned trainings have been given to Pawe woreda. The remaining trainings for the four other woredas are financial management and O&M trainings. Also the training on the establishment of WUA will be given in Dibate woreda in the near future.
- The mission was informed that the remaining payments for Ali Spring rehabilitation and the upstream catchment protection in Pawe woreda has been paid which includes the 2,5 million birr from GoE and 1,1 million birr from GoF.
- The BoFED has not yet transferred the ownership of the cars to the government and the cars are still driven under the Finland aid plate number 23.

4 SPECIFIC FINDINGS FROM THE WOREDA AND KEBELE VISITS:

4.1 MISUNDERSTANDING IN PROJECT APPLICATION/50 HH ISSUE:

It was found out that at the kebele level to include 50HH for one project application was understood literally (Bello Woreda, Say Dalecha Kebele, Tankara gott). Because of this failure in understanding some households were excluded from the applications. This indicates there is a need for more awareness creation at the kebele level for the promotion of the water supply.

4.2 WOMEN RATIO IN THE WASHCOS.

Although the guideline clearly specifies that more than 50% of WASHCO members should be women it was found out that this is not yet applied in practice. The reasons not to apply this rule in practice are hypothetical such as excuses related to lack of education of women, women are shy, processes taken in a hurry etc.

4.3 LIMITATION OF NO OF APPLICATIONS:

It was found out in the kebele visited by the team that the understanding of the kebele was to limit the number of applications to only one community application and one institutional application. But it was reported that the situation is not the same in other kebeles.

4.4 COWASH COORDINATION IN THE WOREDAS:

In Bello woreda the woreda WASH team was very weak to provide support for COWASH implementation, decision making, resource allocation and providing directions to kebeles. The assignments were given solely to CMP supervisor and technical team. The CMP supervisor and

other sector focal persons are implementing the project independently. WWT and Woreda technical team have nor regular meetings.

In Oda woreda the COWASH coordination was strong, resource utilization was efficient and awareness of COWASH was good. The woreda had established a system of regular meetings including technical meetings on Tuesday, WWT meeting on Wednesday.

Both in Bello and in Oda woreda it was found out the COWASH funding was the only source of funding for the WASH implementation. But still the COWASH work was considered as "additional" work in Bello woreda

4.5 SANITATION:

In Bello woreda in the project site visited it was observed that only 50% of the households were having a toilet and out of the households having a toilet many were not using it properly.

In Oda woreda it was found out that the sanitation situation was much better. In the visited site all the households were having a toilet and they were confirming they are using them. Furthermore the woreda health office has a plan to declare all 8 COWASH kebeles ODF during 2008.

4.6 SUPPORT FROM ZONE AND REGION:

In Bello woreda the WWT was not satisfied to the support given from the zone and woreda. Anyhow this situation changed during the mission as the RSU team members went to Bello woreda for supportive supervision and capacity building. This was also recognized by the region. The visits of zonal and regional experts were reported to be really short, only limited to data collection and discussions were limited to technical experts. No proper technical supervision and capacity building has been given. In Oda woreda the situation was better but still needs continuous visits and follow up.

The team found out that both woredas are planning to execute spring protections and in both cases the spring developments are technically challenging. In Bello there is a river at the side of the spring, and in Oda it is on a black cotton soil. In these cases the RSU or the zone should provide technical support to the woreda in the design and supervision of these projects.

4.7 PROCUREMENT OF CONSTRUCTION TOOLS:

The team gave an assignment for the RSU to clarify if the procurement of the hand tools in Oda woreda has been following the CMP manual. It was reported from the woreda that woreda has been in process of procuring construction hand tools using the woreda capacity building budget that in reality should be procured by using the investment funds by the WASHCO. RSU will clarify the issue in Oda woreda.

4.8 COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION AND OWNERSHIP:

The team found out that in Bello and Oda woreda, the community payment for upfront cash contribution has been well executed and the community confirmed that they are ready to continue the contribution also after the implementation of the water point in the form of a tariff. In Oda woreda the community already contributed the sand and stones for the sites and

in Bello woreda the community confirmed they are ready to contribute the same. In both woredas the community's ownership seemed strong.

4.9 HDW VS SD:

In Bello woreda the approved plan includes only HDWs but it was found out that potential for spring development exists. Bello woreda needs technical support on how to change the plan to include also spring protections.



Potential Spring found in Bello woreda

4.10 DRILLING PROGRAM IN ODA WOREDA:

In Oda woreda 4 shallow wells funded by COWASH and 8 shallow wells funded from the SDG fund have been tendered and agreed. At the moment the site selection is on-going.

4.11 LAND OWNERSHIP

In Oda woreda, Tuli Gott it was found out that the land where HDW is to be constructed is on private/farmer land. The farmer is willing to give the land to the use of the community for free. However there was no written agreement between the land owner and the WASHCO/Community. The lack of documentation on land use is a common problem for all the water points. A legal binding document should be placed to woreda water office, Kebele, WASHCO and a land owner to avoid future disputes.

4.12 ARTISAN CONTRACTING

In Oda woreda, Tuli Kebele, Haile and Agecho spring development, it was found that the artisan was already working at the site without any agreement with the WASHCO. This has to be corrected as it violates the CMP approach.



Spring development work going on in Oda woreda