



Artisans' in COWASH; The case of Arbaminch Zuria Woreda, Conversation with Dilu Getachew, Water Supply Design Engineer in Arbaminch Zuria Woreda Water, Mines and Energy Office,



Ato Dilu Getachew is Water Supply Design Engineer in Arbaminch Zuria Woreda Water, Mines and Energy Office. **Ato Dilu** is a water supply & sanitation engineer by profession and has been working in the water office for nearly 10 years in different positions. **Ato Dilu** has been working as a COWASH CMP supervisor since 2009 EFY (2016/17). **Ato Dilu** was a main trainer for two batches of artisans trained with the support of COWASH in the construction of hand dug wells and springs.

Question: Can you briefly tell us about COWASH project's in Arba Minch Zuria Woreda?

Ato Dilu: Arbaminch Zuria Woreda is located in Gamo zone in Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State. As of June 2018, it has 29 kebeles; all of them are rural kebeles, and a population of 205,000. In June 2018 the total water schemes reached 331 of which 197 (60%) are financed by COWASH. Out of the schemes 70% are springs, and the rest are hand dug wells, shallow drilled wells and deep wells. Thanks to COWASH and other projects, the rural water supply access coverage of the woreda as of June 2018 reached to 67.0 %. The woreda capital is named Arbaminch; a town located 515 Kms from Addis Ababa and one of the tourist attractions towns in Ethiopia with beautiful scenery to Lake Abaya and Chamo. The town is also very close to the "Nech Sar "National Park and a "Crocodile Farm" which attracted many local and international tourists. The means of earning of the people in the woreda are agriculture, petty trade and hand crafts. The people are known as architects and producers of the beautiful Ethiopian traditional cloth named "Tibeb" in Amharic and we can say that they have a big contribution in promoting Ethiopia to the international community. Currently, for provision of better services to the people, the Woreda dissected in to two woredas as Arbaminch Zuria with 16 kebeles and Gacho Baba with 13 kebeles.

Question: How many artisans are trained by COWASH in the woreda?

Ato Dilu: COWASH started in the woreda in the 2004 EFY (2011/12) and a total of 54 new artisans of which 1 female have been trained in the construction and maintenance of hand dug wells and springs. We trained the artisans in 5

COWASH is the only project which trained artisans in the woreda.

batches in 2004 EFY to 2010 EFY budget years. We have provided also refresher trainings for some of the previously trained artisans to fill gaps observed during construction of the water schemes.

Question: How is the selection process of the artisans?

Ato Dilu: Before we start the selection process of artisans, we prepare the annual plan of the project and the number of artisans the woreda needs to be trained in a fiscal year is estimated. Once the plan is approved by the Regional WASH Steering Committee (RWSC), the WWT sets the criteria for selecting the artisans and the rural job creation process owner at the woreda youth and sport office sends the criteria to the rural kebeles in the woreda so that kebeles can register applicants and send their list and documents to the office. The kebele administration nominates the potential applicants and sends their names and documents to the youth and sport office. The rural job creation process experts together with us review documents and interview applicants nominated by the kebele administrations. Based on the document review and interview test result, we submit the list of qualified applicants to the WWT for approval. Once the selected trainees are approved by the WWT, we train the artisans and the rural job creation process organizes the artisans into Water Works Construction Enterprises while they are taking the construction training.

"We train artisans also for 3 days in CMP management together with WASHCOs so as to make them aware of the contracting and procurement in the CMP approach for the effective implementation of the schemes".

Question: What are the contents and durations of the trainings given to artisans?

Ato Dilu: We train artisans both in theory and practice for 45 working days including Saturdays. The theoretical training includes occurrence of hand dug wells and springs, components and construction procedures of hand dug wells and springs, the importance of community participation, construction material quality, and construction progress recording and reporting. The practical training gives more focus on spring construction and maintenance/rehabilitation as it is the most abundant water source in the woreda and during the training, trainees construct one spring with collection chamber fully. Except in the first two batches which were trained also in practice in hand dug well construction, we trained other batches more on theory and showed them a finished hand dug well. We did not train and involve artisans in institutional latrines construction as there are licensed building contractors working in the area.

Question: How many of the artisans trained by COWASH are available for the work in the woreda in the 2011EFY?

Ato Dilu: We have organized all the 54 trained artisans into 7 different Water Supply Construction Enterprises. But only 5 of the enterprises having a total of 29 members of which 1 female, are available for the Woreda as of to date. The number of artisans and enterprises available for the woreda decreased. One reason is that the majority of the recently trained artisans are TVET graduates, water supply engineers and hydraulic engineers so they upgraded themselves to higher grade private contractors and are involved in bigger sized construction works. The other reason is that some artisans changed their work and involved in other non-construction works.

Question: Who is contracting and paying artisans?

Ato Dilu: We have prepared artisans' payment guideline for the construction of a hand dug well and a spring having unit price for each activity. Based on the number of water schemes the WWT approves and & the chairperson of each WASHCO and chairpersons of each enterprise will discuss and arrangement. Once we agree on the sharing of the sites, each WASHCO chairperson signs labour contract agreement with each enterprise. We assist WASHCOs in the preparation of the contract agreement. When the work reaches a progress when payment is to be paid to the enterprise, the WASHCO uses the designed payment procedure and effect the payment to the enterprise.

WASHCO is the sole responsible body for contracting of works and effecting payment to artisans.

Question: How many WASH facilities constructed/rehabilitated in the woreda by the trained artisans?

Ato Dilu: As of June 2018, a total of 197 water schemes (142 on spot springs, 43 springs with distribution and 12 hand dug wells fitted with hand pump) have been constructed by trained artisans. 192 of these have been constructed for communities and 5 for institutions (3 for schools and 2 for health institutions). This account about 60 % of the total 331 rural water schemes in the woreda at the end of 2010 budget year. We did not involve artisans in institutional latrines construction as there are licensed building contractors working in the area.

The recent assessment result shows 96% of the COWASH financed water schemes constructed by the artisans are well functioning.

Question: What is the assistance of the woreda when WASHCOs are affecting payment to artisans?

Ato Dilu: We have a well-established technical assistance system for WASHCOs which originates from the CMP guideline and starting from project application, preparation and extended to advising when making negotiation and signing construction contract with the enterprise. For the purpose of construction progress follow up, quality assurance and effecting payment we assign an expert from our office for each WASHCO. The support we provide during payment preparation is that as there is a capacity limitation in most of the enterprises in preparing payment certificate. We prepare the payment certificate with all the necessary annexes basing the daily construction progress recorded and signed jointly by the artisan(s) and the WASHCO. In case where the enterprise has capacity of preparing the payment, we check the payment prepared and explain to the WASHCO chairperson and s/he approves. After the certificate is approved, the WASHCO pays the money to the enterprise using the designed payment procedures.

Question: What advantages did the woreda gain in using artisans for construction?

Ato Dilu: We have gained a number of advantages in the use of artisans for the construction of water schemes. Some of the advantages can be summarized as follows:

- **Timely completion and improved quality of construction.** As artisans are selected from the community, they show good social responsibility in constructing the schemes timely with good quality of construction.
- **Increased ownership.** As artisans are working and living in the community, they easily promote and convince communities to own and care for the schemes.
- **Cost efficient.** The cost data at the water office showed that water supply schemes constructed by artisans are found to be 50% cheaper than the water schemes constructed by other private contractors.
- **Increased functionality of schemes.** As artisans are from the community, they conduct maintenances on voluntary basis and if it is also on payment basis the prices, they request from the community is minimal and also give immediate responses for maintenance request from the community.
- **Job creation.** The use of artisans created job opportunity for the rural jobless youth”.

“We have realized that the use of artisans is an effective and economical way for the construction of hand dug wells and springs.”

Question: What are the challenges in the training and management of artisans in construction?

Ato Dilu: The major challenge we faced in the management of artisans is that artisans organized in an enterprise do not have equal interest, capacity and motivation for the work. Due to this reason, disagreements are created among artisans and it is really a tremendous challenge for the office to advice and settle such issues in the enterprises; otherwise it can have a negative impact on the work. This is one of the reasons for the decrement in the number of artisans available in the woreda for the work from time to time. In the future, we will build capacity of the Artisans and create more opportunities for the Artisans to stay in the sector.