

PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT IN COWASH: THE CASE OF ARTISANS IN WASH.

Private sector development is one of the key focus areas of COWASH project.

In COWASH, Artisans training is part and parcel of the CMP project for many reasons. First and foremost to create job opportunity in WASH sector with involvement of the private sector. Secondly to ensure sustainability of COWASH constructed water schemes through a local capacity available at the community level. Now, there are different

types of private sectors involvement in Community-Led Accelerated WASH (COWASH) project. One of the approaches is the use of artisans in the construction of water schemes and institutional latrines. There are very few artisans trained by other WASH projects in Ethiopia. However, in COWASH, Artisans training is one of the key deliverables to meet the project objectives.

The purpose of training individual artisans for COWASH is simple. Most of COWASH projects are small construction projects led by the community. Artisans provide only their skills and materials are procured by the community. This is called labour contracting.

Artisans trained in COWASH use mainly the labour contract model.

Employing an artisan to provide technical skills for the construction work is much simpler than tendering high-level contractors. Second benefit of having small artisans working with the community is that most of the artisans are trained from the same community where the work is done. Therefore, artisans will remain in the locality after the construction and can easily provide maintenance service for the community when need arises. Normally the construction time is from January to May. Artisans can therefore do other small construction works for the community during the other half of the year when construction ceases during rainy season.

Artisans are trained by the Woreda Water Office

A total of 3,124 new artisans (15% female) have been trained by COWASH in its 76 intervention woredas for the construction and maintenance/rehabilitation of springs and hand dug wells fitted with

hand pump. Out of all the trained artisans 998 of them are trained in COWASH phase III. Artisan trainees are selected by the woreda WASH team (WWT) based on a set of selection criterion. Practical training of the new artisans is given by the woreda water office and they also organize artisans into Water Works Construction Enterprises with the Enterprise Development Office.

Artisans are trained both in theory and in practical construction of hand dug wells and springs. Training takes nearly 60 working days. In addition to the training of new artisans, refresher training is also given to previously trained artisans to build capacity and share new leaning and insights. A number of artisans have also been trained in the construction of institutional latrines for schools and health facilities. Further to the technical trainings in construction, artisans are also trained in entrepreneurship, CMP procedures, and construction progress recording and reporting.

Artisans construct water and latrine facilities.

Artisans are organized into Water Work Construction Enterprises

Trained artisans are working in the construction of the WASH facilities individually or in groups organized into Water Works Construction Enterprises. There are variations in the number of

trained artisans working in woredas as the turnover of artisans is also high. The reasons for the variations in the number of artisans working in the woredas includes illness, death, upgrade to higher level construction grades and move to work in bigger sized projects while some are employed in the government offices and by private sector in construction and non-construction related works. Others leave the enterprises due to disagreements among the members. In the future, COWASH will do an assessment on existing challenges and will develop remedial solutions in making the sector lucrative to keep Artisans interested and engaged.



Typical artisan work is ring construction, digging, ring installation/Photo Credit.