

## SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISION REPORT ON PROGRESS IN DISABILITY INCLUSION IN FOUR WOREDAS IN TIGRAY REGION

**Woredas visited:** Degua Temben, Medebay Zana, Tahtay Maychew and Nader Adet

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### PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND OF THE VISIT

The purpose of the supportive supervision visit was to assess the current status of disability inclusion in practice at the woreda level. Similar monitoring visits have been conducted in other COWASH regions during 2011 and 2012 EFY. The visit was also a follow-up to an earlier similar visit conducted in 4 woredas in the region in May 2011 EFY. During that visit one woreda (Degua Temben) was the same, but the other three were different.

In all woredas WASH facilities were visited to assess their physical accessibility and also to check the awareness level of the community on disability issues. Discussions were also held at the water office and social affairs office to discuss how the woreda has been in practice implementing the disability inclusion activities so far as well as their plans for 2012 EFY.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

It is very positive to see how all the four woredas have made good progress towards the inclusion of persons with disabilities and accessibility of WASH facilities. All four woredas are doing well in identifying persons with disabilities, improving the level of awareness among the communities about disability and accessibility, and including persons with disabilities into WASHCOs. All woredas' water offices work well with the social affairs offices at the woreda and kebele levels, which has started since the beginning of the Phase III of the project. The relatively good level of awareness about disability in the woredas is not only due to the project, but long term efforts of different actors, and especially the work of the CCC (community care coalition) established at the kebele level.

All woredas have also put in efforts to improve the accessibility of WASH facilities, but there is still some work to be done to improve on it. For example, D/Temben and N/adet woredas are not yet using the accessible water point design for the shallow wells. M/Zana and T/Maychew woredas are using the accessible design for the shallow wells, but not implementing it (or the accessibility principles) for hand dug wells. For the most part it is only a matter of very small and inexpensive concrete changes (or a change in the way of thinking), but that makes a big difference in terms of the practical accessibility for some persons with disabilities. The woredas would have benefitted from closer and more frequent monitoring and support from the RSU to avert from these mistakes in the construction phase.

It was concerning to find that in both M/Zana and T/Maychew woredas shallow wells completed in 2011 EFY were found to be practically abandoned or never having been used by the community (despite being reported as completed and functional). In addition, the RSU and in the case of T/Maychew even the woreda CMP supervisor were not aware of the situation. It shows a problem in the CMP process, from the community participation and ownership and the site selection, to the project monitoring and reporting.

## VISIT FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS IN DEGUA TEMBEN WOREDA

In Degua Temben woreda first a shallow well completed in 2011 EFY was visited. The challenge which was observed during the last field visit in May 2011 EFY was also observed in this site. The CMP supervisor had somewhat tried to improve the accessibility (which was true compared with the previous field visit in May 2011 EFY), but still as the generic design coming from the region level is used in the construction of shallow wells, the site was not fully accessible. Still it was not clear to the woreda staff why the site was not accessible before clarifications were given.



The entrance was flat and smooth, and the entrance of the fence was in the correct location, not blocking the ramp. It was also possible to reach the jerry can. However, still it was not possible to reach the pump handle due to physical obstacles in the way.

Some WASHCO members were met at the site. They had received some information about disability during the CMP management training, but mainly about accessibility. They were for example able to explain for example what the accessible features in this water point and how it could be easily improved to make it more accessible. Among the 60 user households they were able to identify one woman with a mental disability as well as several elderly people who were not able to access the water point.

Similarly to other woredas in Tigray, it was very good to see close cooperation between the water and social affairs offices both at the kebele and the woreda level. In the same kebele (Debre Nazret) as the shallow well, the team also met with the Kebele social affairs focal person, who is also the deputy chairperson Tadesse of a local level DPO for people with leprosy with over 20 members (in the picture on the next page together with the RSU G&MSES). He has a physical impairment himself due to leprosy. He also explained that there is a second DPO with different types of disabilities represented with also around 20 members. He explained the DPOs have had a big role in advocacy and claiming for the rights of persons with disabilities in the kebele. In 2010 EFY Tadesse took part in the kebele level disability inclusion training. He said he learnt mainly about the accessibility of WASH facilities. In his opinion the communities have accepted



that all should have the same access to water and that the general attitudes towards persons with disabilities have improved after the training.



At the woreda level, the social affairs and water offices share and cross-check data on persons with disabilities among the new construction beneficiaries. So far the data is similar. They also visit water points and communities together. All this started since the region level training given by COWASH. The focal persons agreed that the cooperation is beneficial, as their aims complement each other, especially in changing the attitudes in the communities and improving accessibility.

In 2011 EFY the woreda constructed 24 water points, out of which 20 have a ramp (but may not be fully accessible), and 2 latrines as per the accessible design (but this was not seen during the visit). There are also 2 WASHCO members with disabilities among the new constructions, both male, one with physical and one with visual impairment. According to the CMP supervisor, other programmes active in the woreda have also improved on the accessibility of their constructions.

## **VISIT FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS IN MEDEBAY ZANA WOREDA**

In M/Zana woreda first a shallow was visited in Wolka kebele. The water point was completed in May 2011 and there are 65 beneficiary households. It is well constructed, and accessible with a flat structure and enough space to access both the pump handle and the jerry can. (The site is pictured below on the next page.) There are 5 other shallow wells (out of a total of 8) constructed with this same design in the woreda in 2011 EFY, which is very good.

The beneficiary community had a good understanding of disability issues, mainly due to an active CCC (community care coalition) in the woreda and kebele. The CCC has identified many vulnerable community members, including persons with disabilities and support them in various ways. The kebele social affairs focal person has 24 extreme poor and disadvantaged persons in 20 households in her area that she is responsible for.

The COWASH intervention has increased understanding of the importance of inclusive and accessible WASH, which was very good to hear from the community and the persons with disabilities themselves. Among the user community there are 6 persons with disabilities



identified, with hearing, visual, physical and mental impairments. Their access to water has improved, but there are of course many other concerns that cannot be addressed by a WASH project such as COWASH.



The team briefly visited another shallow well on the way to the next site constructed in late 2011 EFY (picture below). It was of a similar design and was of good quality and also accessible, which was positive. Unfortunately the water point was not in use due to several reasons. The Kebele WASH focal person had kept the site/pump locked as the community was refusing to construct the fence around the water point. It had never been in use and it was located very near to another existing water point which was used by the community during the visit. The area has a lack of access to water which then puts the question of why really the resource is not in use,





whether it is a question of site selection, community commitment, monitoring or what. The water point itself had several faeces in it, therefore clearly also showing a lack of ownership from the community's side. Concerning was also to hear that the water point was reported as completed and in use by the community, despite of it never being used and also that the RSU was not aware of this. The woreda took as their assignment to make sure the issue is resolved as soon as possible together with the community.

Next the team visited a hand dug well just recently completed as it was taken into use by the community in October 2012 EFY (pictured below). The structure was somewhat accessible, as it had a flat entrance and ramp, and there was enough space to get to the jerry can and the pump, but for some reason the structure was not made flat, but somehow curved, making it impossible for a wheelchair user to use it for example. The WASHCO chairperson was able to explain that disability issues had been part of the CMP management training they received.



The woreda is doing well in the social inclusion part, in improving the awareness of the community through the WASHCO and in identifying the beneficiaries with disabilities. They are also using well the new application and appraisal formats.

## VISIT FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS IN TAHTAY MAYCHEW WOREDA

One hand dug well (Kumal water point, in Hawasta kebele) completed in 2011 EFY was visited first in the woreda. It serves 35 households, who are now very happy as they used to use the dirty river water nearby together with the animals. The WASHCO was very well aware of disability issues, its meaning, types as well as the importance of accessibility. They even raised a complaint that the water point was not fully accessible, and also the path from the village was not convenient. The WASHCO secretary is the father of one child with a physical disability, who is not able to come to the water point due to the challenging topography. The good awareness about disability is mainly due to the active CCC (as in many other Tigray woredas) that has worked there over several years now supporting the most vulnerable people in the community. The water point itself had an effort towards accessibility, but it showed the new accessible design and the purpose of the accessible features had not been understood properly. There was a ramp



from the fence door, but it didn't lead to the pump handle. In order to pump the water you had to step down from the structure. Also there was not enough space without steps to get to the jerry can. The doorframe was also creating an extra step on the ramp. The pictures below show the water point and the WASHCO members.



Next, a shallow well in Hadenet high school was visited. It was well constructed and accessible as per the design, which was very good to see. However, it was disappointing to see its state otherwise. It had never been used, even though it was reported as completed and functional in 2011 EFY annual report, with even the CMP supervisor not aware of the situation. The water point was completely over grown with grass (in the picture on the right after the team cleaned it up). The school





currently gets their water from a community water point very nearby to this one, perhaps meaning that they do not have much interest in looking after and using this new water point. The community members explained that there was an issue with the land owner as he claims he did not get compensation for the land he lost, restricting the use of the water point while crops were grown. This was confusing, as the water point should have been constructed on the school premises. The community also thought there was an issue with the water quality and safety as the water point was for them too close to the latrines (but it was at a safe distance in reality) and they said that the water had not been treated with chlorine. There was clearly an issue with the community ownership of the facility, site selection as well as monitoring and follow up by the woreda and the RSU.

On the way back from the school the team passed by another shallow well that had been constructed in 2011 EFY. It was a good example of a well-constructed water point which was made nicely accessible. The CMP supervisor assured all 18 shallow wells and 4 hand dug wells constructed in 2011 EFY have been made with the same accessible designs, which is great. The facility is pictured below.



## VISIT FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS IN NADER ADET WOREDA

In Nader Adet woreda the team visited one shallow well (Jira 01) completed in May 2010 EFY. After the completion of the construction, the WASHCO got a training about disability and accessibility as part of the CMP management training in June. As the WASHCO (led by 3 very strong women) was very convinced about the issue and there are several persons with disabilities in the community, they convinced the community, and decided to collect extra money from the users to make their water point accessible. This was very impressive to see. The chairperson explained that she knew about disability before, but not about accessibility. At first it was difficult to convince people, but as they WASHCO stood strong together, they managed to get together 3'215 ETB. Unfortunately, the actual execution of making the water point accessible was not 100% perfect as there is not enough space to move around, and it would have been good for them to get more support from the woreda to execute it, but it was still a very good effort. Currently out of the 8 persons with disabilities in the community (with visual, physical and



intellectual impairments) 3 are not able to use the water point because of the inaccessibility of the way to it. As the area is flat and the community lives close to each other and near to the water point, it would be too difficult to make the path also accessible. The WASHCO agreed to do this once the main road construction in the village centre would be completed.



The team also visited two of the beneficiaries with disabilities. The first was a woman, Abadit, who is blind. She is not able to go to the water point and has no latrine. She lives alone and depends on other people to help her for everything. As her house yard was full of stones and other things she is not even able to leave her house. It was agreed that the WASHCO will get the community together and clear up her house and yard, so she can at least move around there independently. They will also try to construct a latrine for her so she can use it independently too.

The second person was a young lady, Mahlet, using a wheelchair. She is in Grade 7 in the nearby school. Although she has the wheelchair, she cannot really use it to move around independently. Someone has to push her around, and there is a big step just at her home's door, which means she cannot even get in or out with the chair.





In the woreda 10 shallow wells were constructed during 2011 EFY, but none of them have been made accessible, as the woreda says that the standard design is coming from the region and it cannot be changed. This has been a challenge previously in other woredas in Tigray too, but it has now been solved in most woredas (e.g. neighbouring T/Maychew woreda). We did not have time to visit any latrines, but the CMP supervisor assured that he was aware of the accessibility requirements and was able to describe them. He assured that the 2012 EFY constructions will be made accessible.

Although not met during this visit, the woreda has done very well in including persons with disabilities in the WASHCOs (6 out of the 10 established in 2011 EFY). During discussions with the woreda water office head and woreda social affairs focal person they assured the team that having met with these WASHCOs, they are definitely active members and the community has purposefully elected them. Some of the persons with disabilities are previous fighters in the war, which means they have the confidence to lead others and also are looked up by the others. 4 of them are male, but 2 are female. This was very positive to hear and it would be important to document some of these cases.

The woreda water and social affairs offices now work closely together due to COWASH. They both agreed they benefit a lot from working together. They do joint field visits, trainings, reviews meetings. Both benefit from the data and information sharing, as well as the improved awareness levels in the communities. The woreda also ensured that as they valued very much the issue, they gave the disability inclusion training not only to COWASH kebeles (16), but to all the kebele WASH teams in the woreda.