

COWASH Experience in Disability Inclusion in WASH in Ethiopia

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PRESENTED BY

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BACKGROUND

- Community led Accelerated WASH (COWASH), is a **bilateral project** funded by GoE and GoF, **three phases** completed dated from July 2011 to March 2021
- **COWASH IV**, with four years implementation period, **has started in April 2021 – Dec. 2024**
- **Outcome of the project:** *“Increased and sustained coverage of safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene in rural areas of selected woredas.”*
- COWASH IV will contribute to **the realization of human rights, gender equality, & non-discrimination** through its activities and design.



Regional officials who attended COWASH IV launching on 27 May 2021

BACKGROUND

Specific outcome and output are dedicated in COWASH IV for this purpose:

Outcome 4:

"Sustainability and inclusivity of achieved WASH outcomes enhanced"

Output 4.3:

"Women empowerment and disability inclusion in WASH management enhanced"



RATIONALE TO FOCUS ON DISABILITY INCLUSION



- COWASH IV strives to achieve SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation for all). i.e. “**Leave no one behind**” – reflects importance of prioritizing actions that benefit & empower the most marginalized people in communities.

At National level, OWNPN acknowledges that equity and inclusion are

- one of the **cross-cutting issues**
- part of a **human rights-based approach** to programming that recognizes people are different and need different support and resources to ensure their rights are realized in the provision of WASH facilities and services, including participation by all.

RATIONALE TO FOCUS ON DISABILITY INCLUSION

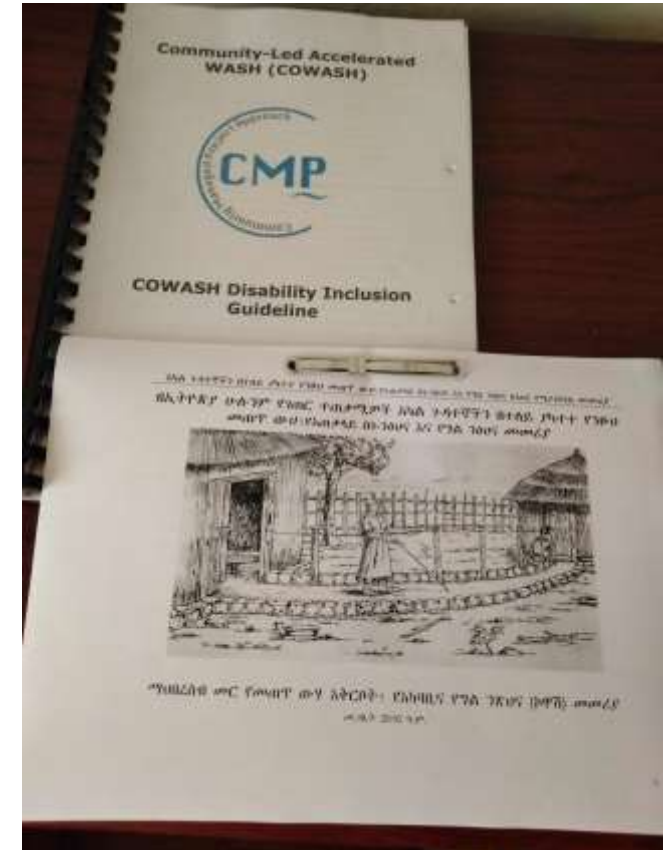
- COWASH also recognizes the need to ensure **WASH facilities** constructed and rehabilitated both at household, community and institutional level are **accessible for all** and due involvement of **all in decision-making process** is secured.



Rehabilitated and accessible hand dug well in Bahir Dar Zuria woreda, Amhara region.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM COWASH III

- COWASH added issue of disability inclusion as a new component in its third phase and employed a full-time disability inclusion specialist in its FTAT
- Prepared and disseminated disability inclusion focused materials that are translated into regional working languages (Amharic, Affan Oromo and Tigrigna).
 - 1/ COWASH Disability Inclusion Guideline
 - 2/ COWASH Community Level Disability Inclusion Guidebook
- Disability inclusion trainings were given at regional level and cascaded down to zones and woredas as well as to kebele WASH team members.



Disability Inclusion in WASH Documents prepared by COWASH III

ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM COWASH III

- An improved and accessible design for a water point with a hand pump (hand dug well or shallow well) and a design for an accessible community tap stand (for RPS and spring protections) prepared by COWASH FTAT and disseminated. MOE and MoH designs have been in use by COWASH for Institutional WASH.
- Collaborated with Ethiopian Center for Disability and Dev't, & other PWDs for trainings to use them as resource persons & worked closely with the Social Affairs Bureau and Offices at different levels.
- At regional and woreda level trainings, PWDs were invited to make visible the practical problems they faced in their daily lives, to share their experiences and to show positive role models for wider audiences.
- Disability inclusion, as a cross cutting issue, included in most other trainings at different levels.



Dr Abebe Yehualawork leading disability inclusion training in SNNPR in Shashemane



Mulatu Ferede (COWASH Amhara), Bethel Shiferaw (ECDD), Hanna Bekele (ENDAN) delivering the disability inclusion in WASH training in Injebara, Amhara



Amie Genta, Training Team/April 2018



COWASH Focal person Guade Demeke delivering a disability inclusion in WASH training for Dembia woreda stakeholders in Amhara

ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM COWASH III

- Awareness raising for [WASH Ministries and federal level stakeholders](#) and advocacy work was conducted at the federal level in collaboration with other sector stakeholders (WaterAid, Gender Equity and Disability Inclusion taskforce) to advance rights for persons with disabilities.
- Used [Regional COWASH Communication Network](#) actively [as a tool to](#) create awareness on disability inclusion in WASH.
- The guidelines, monitoring reports, advocacy events, photos, case stories and social media posts [to raise](#) awareness on the importance of inclusion and share successes achieved and challenges.
- In the CMP cycle, data collection [formats updated to include](#) information about community members with disabilities when making a application for support and investment.
- This was checked during the desk and field appraisal by the woreda. Access to water points and latrines was also checked at that time.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM COWASH III

- Disability issues in the project M&E system were included. All the indicators that it was possible to disaggregate by gender, were also disaggregated by disability
- As result of COWASH III disability inclusion activities, accessibility of water points constructed improved in all five regions. For instance, In 2012 EFY, as a proportion of the total built, half of the water points (47%) & (66%) of institutional latrines were accessible compare with the previous situation. **Level of usage by PWDs and their satisfaction needs to be assessed in the present phase.**
- Accessibility of HH level sanitation- Some households adopted the low-cost technical solutions demonstrated as part of the trainings Wider outreach is needed to promote further household level uptake.
- Commitment of CMP supervisors and sector focal persons in the woredas worth to be mentioned as key for success of DI at the community level.



In Abichu Gnea, Oromia, a moveable toilet seat made out of wood and metal greatly helps a lady injured in a traffic accident. She is happy about being able to use the toilet without having to depend on her family.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM COWASH III

- Disability inclusion was part of planning, managing and implementation of community WASH projects.
- COWASH III recommended that in each new WASHCO there should be at least one person with a disability WASHCO member whenever PWD in the locality exist as water point user(s) and one member in each enterprise to be with disability. (In practice, 5% in 2012 EFY; one third of enterprises were having PWD member).
- Tool to collect data on PWDs in trainings at all levels developed and used to report COWASH human capacity building interventions in disaggregated manner.
- Attitudes towards PWDs in the community are becoming more positive and this proved how WASH can be an entry point to improving the situation of PWDs.



Aberash Reta, Entrepreneur from Jidda Woreda, Oromia Region (Physically impaired) attending liquid soap production training organized by COWASH.

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED IN COWASH IV DISABILITY INCLUSION / SOCIAL INCLUSION RELATED

- Despite extensive trainings that were given for water technicians /artisans of target woredas to apply inclusive design for WASH facilities construction, there is some misunderstanding on how an accessible water point/latrine might look & why it is important.
- Performance differences exist among COWASH woredas. Some have constructed all the water points with the new design, some few and some none.
- Some woredas have only used the new designs for new constructions, while some have made all rehabilitated water points accessible as well.



Field Assessment Report, Tigray Photo, May 2019

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED IN COWASH IV DISABILITY INCLUSION / SOCIAL INCLUSION RELATED



- Lack of monitoring of implementation (for construction of institutional latrines using inclusive design) - students/teachers and patients with disabilities may experience any form of difficulty in the process of relieving themselves.
- Due to attitudinal barriers at different levels, both many women and many persons with disabilities themselves have fear of rejection / unacceptance /discrimination to take up leadership positions in WASH management.
- COWASH III has been working with people with disabilities and disabled people's organizations intensively but not much with other disadvantaged groups like the children, elderly people, and unemployed youth.

FOCUS AREAS OF DISABILITY INCLUSION IN COWASH IV; CONSIDERING LESSONS FROM COWASH III

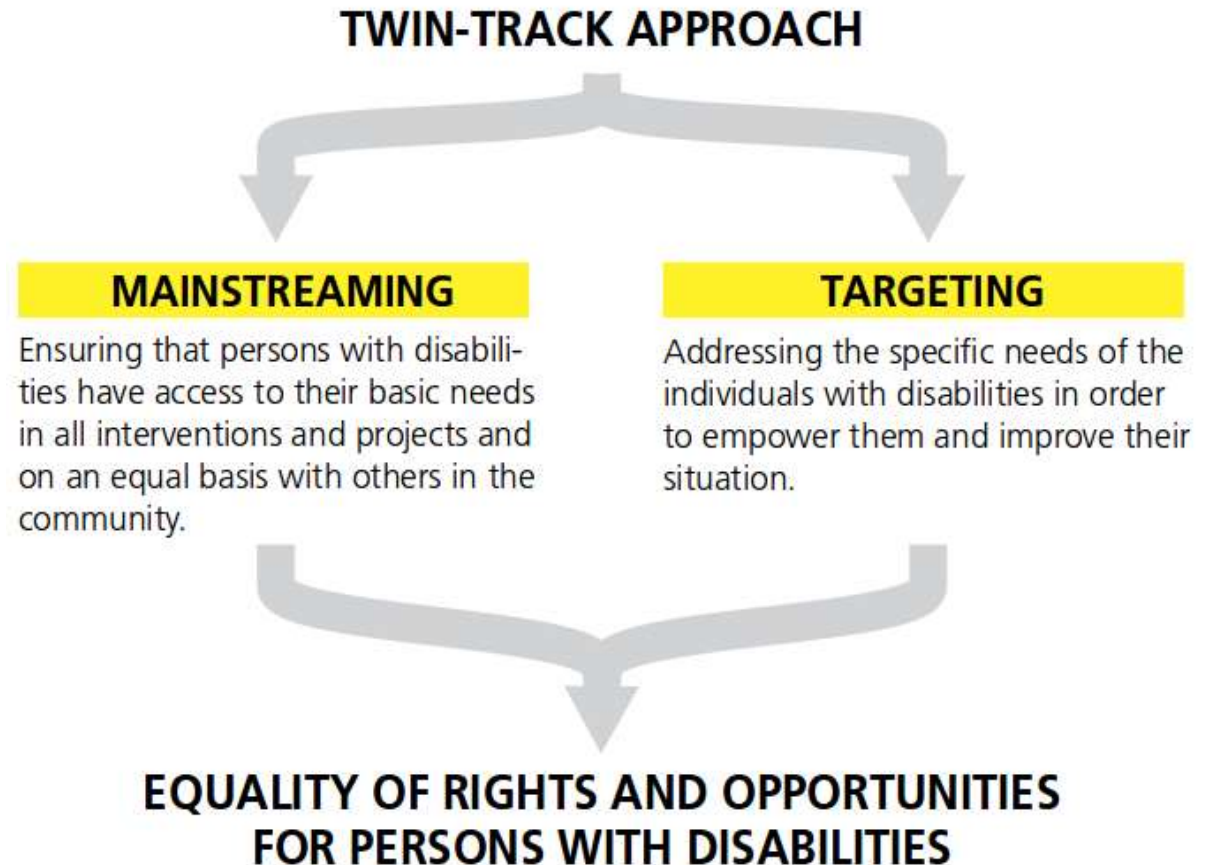
- PWDs face barriers to accessing WASH services and facilities that fully meet their needs. Women and girls with disabilities experience double discrimination, and placing them at higher risk of violence, exclusion, and exploitation.
- COWASH IV continue to work on disability inclusion in WASH i.e. everyone gets access to safe WASH facilities and the needs of all members of a given community are fully addressed in the design, planning and implementation of WASH services. Everyone benefits from inclusive WASH.



Letteselassie with her daughter in front of the toilet block, Tigray Region

FOCUS AREAS OF DISABILITY INCLUSION IN COWASH IV; CONSIDERING LESSONS FROM COWASH III

- COWASH IV adopts a twin track approach (Lobby for the targeting part)
- COWASH IV targets other marginalized groups (elderly people, small children, pregnant women, people living with long term illness including HIV/AIDS in the provision of WASH facilities and services to make them benefit equally and make their voices heard in the planning, implementation and post construction period.



IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

1/Staff assignment and sharing of responsibilities

- **Gender and Inclusion Specialist (GIS)** full time staff or focal person as part of the regional support unit team.
- Besides, each COWASH staff and **RSU member consider** gender and disability responsibilities in his/her respective area of work
- Work closely with local people with disabilities and disabled people organizations(DPOs) /associations exist at different tiers.

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

2/ Equity and inclusion in decision making of WASH implementation & WASH services management

- The CMP approach stimulates demand among the communities to have water facility and then **both men and women members** take part in electing WASHCOs democratically.
- The role of women and marginalized groups is promoted **by the project as decision makers beyond mere service recipients**.
- Thus, in each WASHCO, **one PWD as a WASHCO member** (minimum) has to be elected and **at least one or two of the three leadership** (chairperson, treasurer and secretary) positions shall be hold by women, one man/woman with disability.
- Beyond quota system for representation of women and PWD in WASHCOs, strengthened and coordinated effort is needed to **build their leadership capacity**.
- WASH related **community meetings** need to be organized **at convenient venue and time** for most members of the community including **women, PWDs and other marginalized groups**.

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

- Make woreda technicians (both men and women professionals) who are responsible for site selection of water wells aware to involve women and PWD (or their parents) in site selection and deciding the water point design. Besides, **number of women / PWD participated** in the site selection process has to be included in COWASH CMP reporting format.
- Two sets of checklists have to be in use to ensure mainstreaming of gender and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the implementation process of CMP approach, i.e.
 - (i) Gender and Disability Inclusion Checklist in Key Steps of the Community Managed Project Approach; and
 - (ii) Disability Inclusion Checklist (to ensure that the needs of PWDs are addressed)

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

3/ Capacity development / strengthening

3.1/ Regional Support Unit Staff/ Government partners

- Continue to **increase the awareness, understanding and capacity of WASH stakeholders** in the COWASH regions at all levels on disability inclusion through
 - formal awareness raising training using training materials prepared by COWASH;
 - sharing related materials electronically or printed materials,
 - Sharing posters and leaflets on gender and disability inclusion (could be COWASH Social and Behavioural Change materials
 - Facilitate cross learning and experience sharing, site visits and discussion with user communities

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

- Gain and sustain **commitment of high-level officials** - organize awareness raising in disability inclusion to regional, zonal and woreda office heads (officials turn over is an issue)
- **Cascade the training** to technical experts up to kebele WASH teams and WASHCOs.
- All trainings in COWASH need to **include PWDs as trainers and trainees** and shall be reported in a disaggregated form.
- **Accessibility of training venues** / training halls need special attention to ensure participation of PWDs as attendees or trainers at all levels.
- Accessibility has to be a **mandatory requirement in the procurement process** in COWASH organized trainings. Maximum effort has to be done to find accessible training centers though there is a challenge to find accessible venues even in the regional capitals at times

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

- Training reports need to have **disaggregated data of participants** by sex and disability status.
- In all trainings **collect disability data** using the format prepared by COWASH (i.e. Tool to collect data on PWDs in trainings at Regional, zone and woreda levels).

3.2/ Target /User Communities –

- WASHCOs, their **partners and the wider user communities** are targeted for gender and disability inclusion awareness training.
- Leadership training shall also be **given to WASHCO members** to bring women and PWD in leadership position (chairperson, treasurer and secretary position).
- **Capacitating women and PWD leaders and their partners/care takers** in leadership skill is important to build their confidence and discharge their responsibilities at the required level.

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

4/ Equal access to and control over WASH services

4.1/ Promoting Accessible WASH Facilities -COWASH shall aggressively work to institutionalize the implementation of accessible water points, water carriers, latrines, and handwashing facilities at community, household and institutional level

To facilitate implementation of accessible water points (including the path leading to the WASH facilities) use COWASH inclusive hand dug well design and inclusive public tap design to be adopted in all target regions in phase IV as well.

4.2 Promoting Improved Sanitation & Hygiene

Men and women including PWD shall be targeted for hygiene education.

Conduct intensive and targeted promotion to scale up the experience of using technical solutions in all HHs with family members having disabilities.



IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

Households with a disabled family member/**family members** need to be **identified during project application**, and as budget /financial resources allow, the households shall **get priority for water service connection in their yard**.

- Work on capacity development of woreda WASH experts and kebele WASH team to expedite implementation of hygiene and sanitation related activities, so that HEWs get technical and facilitation support from woreda and kebele WASH teams respectively.
- COWASH IV has included **behavioral change interventions** to accelerate adoption of improved hygiene and sanitation practices in the target woredas.
- Separate strategy for Social Behavior Change has been prepared by the respective specialist of FTAT. Presently, SBCC materials are under preparation.

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

5/ Promote Menstrual Hygiene Management/Menstrual Health and Hygiene

Focus areas of COWASH IV on MHM/MHH include

- (i) Enhancing knowledge of adolescent girls and women (including women and girl students with disabilities) that exist in and out of school system on MHM/MHH;
- (ii) Support the construction of MHM rooms in schools as per the design of MOE, along with construction of separate toilets for boys and girls; The MHM rooms and the path leads to the MHM rooms should also be accessible for women and girls with disabilities;
- (iii) Promote enabling environment for local manufacturing (reusable pads) and distribution of menstrual hygiene products (including the supply chain to ensure sustainability);
- (iv) Prepare home-made reusable sanitary pad production manual and train school girls from selected schools. The manual shall be used for training purpose and for subsequent use of trained school girls as a reference material.

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

- (iv) Support awareness raising training for regional, zonal and woreda staff, teachers, school supervisors, directors, school gender and WASH club leaders in order to make menstrual hygiene as an issue of everyone in the school.

Trained school community shall cascade the training to all teachers and students in the selected schools (particularly in schools MHM rooms are constructed); and

- (V) Promote awareness raising to the communities to address societal beliefs, taboos and stigmas surrounding the issue.

The target population for MHM/MHH interventions in COWASH IV include adolescent school girls and that of adolescent girls and women out of school system in rural kebeles of the target woredas, including girls/women with disabilities.

COWASH also works aggressively in establishing/strengthening of school girls'/gender and WASH clubs in schools that MHM facilities are constructed

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

6/ Partnership, networking and advocacy

- **At federal level**, work closely with the NWCO and with the established gender equity and disability inclusion taskforce,
- Strengthen partnership with DPOs at Federal, regional and woreda levels.
- **At regional and woreda level**, work closely with Women and Social Affairs Bureau and Women and Social Affairs Office respectively
- **At kebele level**, work with kebele WASH team, WASHCOs and community-based organizations.

7/ Research on Gender and Inclusion in WASH

- Research on disability inclusion shall be conducted to respond better to women's, men's and people with disabilities needs for improved WASH services in COWASH regions and beyond.
- Qualitative and quantitative research undertakings of any subject in COWASH IV shall include analysis from gender and marginalized groups', including disability inclusion, point of view.
- Findings of the research shall be disseminated to WASH+ sector partners in every way possible.

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

8/ Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

- COWASH experience in integrating **gender equity and disability** inclusion in its **M&E framework** shall be continued in strengthened manner. Data to be collected in disaggregated manner by regions, sex and disabilities are identified.
- Equity and inclusion indicators in **baseline data collection**, outcome surveys and sustainability studies shall be included to measure progress in implementing COWASH IV
- COWASH **annual progress reports need to analyze impacts** of the project in changing the livelihoods of boys and girls, men and women, PWDs and other marginalized groups.
- **Intensive supportive supervision** and practical demonstrations on site shall be conducted at various levels to ensure the principles of accessibility are fully understood and put in practice by all stakeholders (meeting standards).
- Identify **& remove barriers to** the participation of PWDs in WASH data collection, monitoring & reporting
- Use **positive terminology** when talking to and reporting on persons with disabilities
- **Joint supervision** with the involvement of FTAT, RSU, regional, zonal & woreda WASH teams as well as discussion with DPOs, WASHCOs & other community level organizations need to be conducted on regular basis in each of COWASH regions



Thank
you!!