

## **CASE STUDY & STORIES: On Rural Road Service under ESAP2 Project**

- a) Project Title and Period:** Enhancing Social Accountability Practices in Rural Road Sector in SNNPRS Anderacha Woreda, from January 2013 up to June 2015.
- b) Methodology:** Community Score Card (CSC) was used to monitor and to improve the rural road situation.
- c) Implementing Sub-partner:** God for People Relief and Development Organization (GPRDO) with the principal partner Ogaden Welfare Development Association (OWDA)
- d) Project Location:** SNNPRS; Sheka Zone; Anderacha Woreda and Target Kebeles are: Modi, Chegecha and Chicha,
- e) Total Direct Beneficiaries:** 5,650 (M= 2,425 F= 3,225) and Total Indirect Beneficiaries are 29,558 (M=14,842 F=14,716)
- f) Overall Objective:** To strengthen the use of Social Accountability Tools, approaches and mechanisms to make rural road service delivery in Anderacha Woreda more accessible, effective, efficient, fair, responsive, transparent and accountable.

**g) Major Issues Identified by Citizens during SA Implementation Process:**

- ❖ Citizens and citizens groups have no access to development information regarding service standard, entitlement, budget allocation, construction projects;
- ❖ Low budget allocation (including recurrent budget) for rural road sector and absence of capital budget;
- ❖ Insufficient, qualified and skilled manpower in road sector;
- ❖ Poor quality and accessibility of access road;
- ❖ Low responsiveness of services providers and Woreda officials to citizens' complaints/problems;
- ❖ Absence of office, office furniture and equipment for the sector;
- ❖ Lack of simple construction materials and machineries;
- ❖ Low community participation and low involvement in improving and ensuring access to quality access road.

**h) Project Results/Success:**

- ↗ Citizens and citizen groups have developed their knowledge and skills to hold the service providers to be transparent and accountable in their rural road service delivery;
- ↗ Citizens and citizen groups along with service providers and government officials have been involved in the processes of planning, budgeting, implementing and monitoring of service delivery;
- ↗ Citizens became aware of and familiar with their rights and responsibilities in the process of basic public service delivery. Hence, they willingly contributed their free labor, money and local materials during the construction of access roads;
- ↗ Citizens increased their knowledge on how to voice their needs and preferences to service providers based on priorities;
- ↗ Both service providers and service users have obtained knowledge on how to develop performance indicators, and prepare a joint action plan to improve the rural road service delivery.

**i) Significant Improvement against identified issues by CSC**

- ✚ The Woreda Administration delivered permanent office for the SAC;
- ✚ Additional two technical staff was assigned for the Woreda Rural Road Office;
- ✚ Procured new contractor who have capacity to effectively undertake quality road construction. The former URRAP contractor who undertook access road construction was made to leave due to quality problems raised by citizens and SAC.
- ✚ Additional budget was allocated for construction and rural road maintenance works;

- ✦ Community contributed resources (labour and money in a more coordinated and accountable system) required for the construction of a new all-weather rural road;
- ✦ The construction work which was previously stopped due to low capacity of the contractor has restarted (Chegacha 5.7kms).
- ✦ Access has been given to development information and standards for communities. SAC now takes community issues to the service provider, and brings important information from service providers to the community.
- ✦ Smooth and healthy working cooperation between citizens, service providers and government authorities is created to resolve minor rural road issues by themselves.



*Chegecha Kebele SAC standing on the poorly constructed road while collecting facility evidence that was used to present community complaints to the concerned government officials. The second photo shows how the community raised complaints on poor materials: the pipe and reinforcement bar utilized for culverts by contractor had to be pulled out and were replaced by new one. The third photo shows the constructed 5.7 Kms access road after the social accountability intervention.*

### **Observed Challenges:**

- ✦ Lack of simple rural road construction instruments at local government level, and insufficient information and openness (service standards) from supply side;
- ✦ Limited responsibility and capacity of the Woreda Rural Road Office (checking the quality of construction was given to Zonal and Regional experts);
- ✦ Failure to conduct regular meeting of SAC members as per action plan (duty overlap, traditional taboos, etc.) and SAC lacks necessary supplies and materials for their proper functioning;
- ✦ Delay or interruption of construction works due to heavy rain in the project areas, which affected the timeframe of joint action plan implementation and monitoring of service improvement;
- ✦ Low commitment from services providers and government officials, who treat rural roads issues as beyond Woreda capacity rather than taking further actions being with higher government offices.

### **Case Stories from the Grassroots**

#### ***Case Story 1: Ato Gezehagn Adiraro, Anderacha Woreda Rural Road Chairman and Leader of Woreda SAC***

*Woreda service providers and SAC asked the contractor selected by the region to submit a road project which shows the construction standard, design and specifications, and also to sign an agreement at Woreda level with service providers in the presence of community representatives which was not the case previously. Initially, the contractor was confused with the new approach and tried to refute. Eventually, he understood the stand of the SAC and service providers, and went back to talk about the issues with the regional concerned government office.*

*In former construction works, contractors receive payment only by the recommendation written by a regional expert without consent of the community and Woreda rural service providers. As a result, the community and Woreda service providers had no information regarding who checks the construction and how payment was made to the contractor by the regional office. With the influence of SAC, and as per agreement in the SA reform agenda, the responsibility to check whether construction works proceed as per*

*the standard, and writing a recommendation letter for the contractor's payment of volume of work done was given to Woreda service providers and SAC. This has improved the relationship between Woreda (where construction is conducted) and region (where resource in terms of finance come from) in addition to creating a sense of ownership and strengthening the power of Woreda service providers."*

***Case Story 2: W/ro Birhanie Geremew, 37 years old, resident of Chegecha Kebele of Anderacha Woreda, Woreda SAC member, representing service receiver groups.***

*Since introduction of SA, she organises her own coffee ceremony program to play her role as a SAC member. She has been teaching women who have a low voice in the community about their potential capacity to influence the development plan of their Woreda, and on the ways they can become decision makers on the issues that negatively affect their livelihoods status. According to Birhanie, the SA Project has ensured the participation and representation of all community members; and has especially empowered the deprived community class.*

*Furthermore, she adds that, "Apart from realizing their right to quality services, community groups were also more aware of their responsibilities to improve services delivery. As a result we (SAC) are mobilizing community resources (free labor, local materials and money) for the construction of access roads in the three target Kebeles". According to Birhanie, before the inception of the ESAP2 Project in Anderacha Woreda, the delivery as well as the improvement of basic public services was seen as the sole responsibility of the government, therefore, there was low shared responsibility between citizens and the government. Above all demanding improvements and requesting responsiveness have shown significant progress more than ever before.*

*"During the course of my involvement in ESAP2 Project in the rural road sector, which has been implemented by GPRDO, I have realised that SA practices can be extended to other sectors."*

***Case Story 3: Mejjito, a 65 years old citizen***

*Previously service delivery was only considered as the duty of government, and hence the community was not asking even what was given to them. However, due to SA introduction to the Woreda and Kebele he got the opportunity to discuss with services providers and government officials. This has enabled community members to know the condition of the sector, and encouraged them to take part in contributing resources for the construction of access roads.*

*Furthermore, he mentioned that through information obtained from a SAC member who participates in regular Woreda meetings, the community knows what services providers and government authority are doing with regard to basic services delivery. Ato Mejjito underlined that ESAP2 and SA have created a mechanism for community monitoring of services delivery, from the grassroots as opposed to service provider's evaluation which was traditionally conducted by the higher officials. He concluded his story in this way: "not only money but also suggestions from community can serve as an input for road construction."*



*GPRDO Executive Director addressing community gathering at an ongoing sensitization meeting*