



**Jerusalem Children and Community Development
Organization (JeCCDO)**

A Revelatory Citizens' Voices

**A Success Story Document Prepared for:
“Most Significant Change (MSC) Competition 2015”**

Author

Anteneh Berhanu (M and E Manager)

Submitted to:

Management Agency (MA)

Addis Ababa

August 2015

I. Background Information

I.1. About the SAIPs

JeCCDO is one of the organizations privileged to implement ESAP in both rounds. It is implementing the program in five Woredas in partnership with Center for Development Initiatives (CDI), Dire Dawa Community Action (DDCA), Bahir Dar, and Bishoftu JeCCDO Community Development Program Offices (CDPOs) in education and WATSAN.

This story narrates the extraordinary change galvanized by community voice in ensuring quality education in Kera Hora Primary School of Bishoftu Town under ESAP II.

I.2. About the Interviewees

The following were the people interviewed during documentation of the success story.

No	Interviewees' Full Name	Organization	Capacity	Role in SA	Remark
1	Ato Gonfa Deressa	Bishoftu Town Education Office	Office Head	Service Provider	<i>Photo Attached</i>
2	Ato Dechasa Abera	Bishoftu Town Finance and Economic Development Office	FTA Focal Person	Service Provider	
3	Major Tesfa Degu	Kebele 09 Council	House Speaker	Service Provider	
4	Simegn Wondosen	Kera Hora Primary School	Student	Service User	<i>Photo Attached</i>
5	Ato Dinka Geleta	N/A	Resident	Service User	
6	W/o Tiruwork Teferi	N/A	Resident	Service User	Vulnerable Group/ PLWHA
7	Ato Dawit Bedanie	SAC	Chairperson	Facilitator (SAC)	
8	Ato Tesfaye Degefu	JeCCDO	ESAP II Wereda Coordinator	Facilitator (SAIP)	<i>Photo Attached</i>

I.3. The Baseline Situation

Kera Hora Primary School is found in Bishoftu Town. The school is one of the 4 schools targeted by JeCCDO under ESAP II. There are about 1569 students attending education in the school. The school was known for its poor quality of education and extremely deteriorated teaching-learning facilities and unfavorable school environment when JeCCDO started implementation of ESAP II.

The school was established 50 years ago inside private residence and was confiscated by the previous regime. Hence, it shares borders with private houses, and some of these are even part of the school compound. Its classrooms were old enough and were not disability friendly. Both

girls and boys shared the same dilapidated toilet, and were repugnant for females. Furthermore, the school had no adequate play grounds and sport field. Its internal services standard was even worse. The class size in the schools reached 70, while the standard being 1:50 students for grades 1-4 and 1:40 students for grades 5-8; an average of 4-5 students shared same desk while it should have been for two students only; and student-text book ratio was 1 to 5 while the standard being one to one. Above all, the community had no involvement in the school's affair, and they expected the government to come and solve whatever problem manifested in the school. The local government; on its part, couldn't go beyond appreciating the problem due to its limited capacity. In general, the school was not conducive for teaching-learning process.

2. The 'Most Significant Change' Story

2.1. What the Change is about?

The most significant change is that students and their parents have voiced for their rights and entitlements against education service delivery in Kera Hora Primary School which then revitalized the quality of education. Accordingly, improvement was made in the school's class size, student-textbook ratio, gender and disability sensitiveness of school facilities, space for out-door games, on students' academic achievement, and above all in the ownership and responsibility of all stakeholders in the school matters.

Ato Dinka Geleta; a father of 3, lives in Kebele 09 of Bishoftu Town. Two of his children attend education in Kera Hora Primary School. He is serving as secretary of the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA). He knows well the change the school has brought in recent years both as a father and PTA member.



*Ato Dinka Geleta,
Representative of the
Community in PTA with the
newly built class rooms*

He remembers the school and its services were by far less than the standard set by the government. 'But things are now significantly improved', he says. He showed me the 2 new blocks with 8 standard classrooms, 2 separate boys and girls toilet built in collaboration with parents, government and an NGO. 'In addition, lack of space in the compound had prevented further construction. But through ESAP II, the neighboring households are now convinced to voluntarily leave the land for the school and the local government in return promised them to give alternative homes/ lands. This enables the school to secure an extra 2800 Square meter land which is adequate for the most sought sport field as well.' he added.

Simegn Wondosen, student of Kera Hora Primary School remembers that they had been taught in a suffocated and dusty classroom with up to 5 students in a desk. She says 'we had been using toilets in queue, and were very much ashamed that boys used to see us through holes'. But now she added 'thanks to ESAP II that we are being taught in new classroom with only two students in a desk; use one text book alone; and use toilets separate. Besides, ramps were constructed for the classrooms and toilets, and toilet seats are fitted in to the new toilets. This has made disabled students to access the classrooms and the toilets comfortably'.



*Simegn
Wendesen, a
Student in
Kera Hora
primary
School (2nd
from left)*

Ato Gonfa Deressa ; Head of Bishoftu Town Education Office had much to tell about the change in the school. According to him, the most significant contribution of the ESAPII is its scientific method of collecting and analyzing the voices of the school community. He reiterated

that Kera Hora Primary School was one of least comfortable school in the Town. 'But this has become history in that the school and its services are now up to the standard, and the quality of education given to the students has significantly improved'. He added the ESAPII practice in the School triggered the Education office to improve its services in other schools. Accordingly, the Office allocated 8 million Birr to construct new classrooms and also purchased vehicle to properly monitor improved services.



*Ato Gonfa
Deressa, Head of
Bishoftu Town
Education Office*

2.2. How Did the Change Happen and Who Was Involved?

The change started with community mobilization by JeCCDO and the SAC. A total of 800 people comprising of all segments of the community were selected and oriented on SA. This was followed by a serious of community dialogue whereby the community identified, rated and prioritized their challenges concerning education and WATSAN in line with government standards through Community Score Card (CSC) and Participatory Planning and Budgeting (PPB).

Then JeCCDO arranged an interface meeting wherein the service providers including Mayor of the Town, heads of Sector Offices and the community came together. This was the first of its kind after the pilot project (ESAP I) for both sides to get face to face, and reached consensus to address the identified community problems jointly. The interface meeting has paved the way for

a joint action plan where the Town's Education Office recruited 23 new teachers (for the 4 target schools), supplied more text books, and allocated one million birr for the construction of 2 new blocks in Kera Hora Primary School. The community; on their side, mobilized 105,000 Birr (for one year only) and 69,000 birr from one NGO to renovate the old classrooms and construct separate toilets for girls and boys, according to Ato Dawit chairperson of the SAC.

In order to facilitate the above processes, JeCCDO has organized successive trainings on SA for SAC members, provided them with SA tools like CSC, PPB and facilitated the application of the tools. Besides, community dialogues have been facilitated 3 times a year in each school. In recognition to the community contribution, an award ceremony has also been regularly held in partnership with the PTA at the end of every year.

2.3. Why the Change Is So Significant?

Given the impoverished baseline situation stated previously, the target school was labeled as the 'school for the destitute', and it was those families who don't have other alternatives who were sending their children to the school. Ato Dinka remembers this situation as saying 'Our children in the school were merely counting grades, and the school was not said to be as such 'School'. However, the image of the school is now changed', he added.

As also witnessed by W/o Tiruwork; representing People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), 'our children now get better education in the new facilities and enjoy standard services. Ato Gonfa pointed out that the average mark of grade 8 student last year in the school was among the top in the town. He also signifies the change in saying 'the school is now a benchmark for government – community partnership on education, and is of first choice by families and children.



The old classroom used for teaching – learning process prior to ESAP II

2.4. Who Benefits and in What Way?

From the intervention made in Kera Hora Primary School, a total of 1569 students have benefited directly, including girls and children with disabilities. Girls especially relieved from the trauma of sharing toilets with boys. Disabled students have also benefited from the ramps constructed with the new classrooms and toilets, and toilet seats. ‘We are now getting quality education and enjoying learning more than our counterparts in other schools’ testifies student Simegn. Besides, 34 teachers have benefited in that they are teaching their students in more conducive classrooms and school environment. They are also happy that their efforts have been bearing fruits in that their students are scoring better. This is evidenced by the fact that only one regular and 3 night shift students failed to promote in the national grade 8th examination last year, according to Ato Gonfa.

Above all, a total of 15,000 residents of the Kebele and families of students have indirectly benefited from the work of ESAP II. ‘No one will hesitate to send his/her children to the school any more’, said Ato Dinka. On the other hand, the local government is benefitting from the success that the school has become the center of excellence in sharing SA practices for other schools from and outside of Bishoftu. According to Ato Gonfa, the real benefit of the government is that joint planning and budgeting has now become the norm, and this has

enabled the government to address prioritized community needs efficiently and transparently, he reaffirms.



Toilets newly built for girls and boys separately

2.5. The Lasting Impact and Sustainability of the Change

The real essence of the ‘most significance’ of the change is its lasting impact and sustainability, and this is emanated from the level of community ownership and academic records of the students, according to all interviewees. For Ato Dinka, the main reason behind is the change in the attitude and practice of the community on social accountability. In his own words, ‘Our community was accustomed to ask instead of being asked, and blame others instead of being blamed. But now everybody is questioning his/her contribution’. Owing to this, he added ‘the community is voicing its needs and entitlements and at the same time is contributing its part in terms of money, labor and time.

Ato Gonfa; on behalf of the education office has also confirmed this fact, and mentioned the increment in student’s academic achievement and the ensuing broader career choice for them as the other lasting impact of the change. According to him, the school is now one of the best schools in the town in the ratings of the Woreda Education Office. Given this fact; his Office has replicated the SA practice to 8 more schools in the Town through joint planning and working through PTA. Thus far, two G+2 blocks, one ground block have been constructed in non ESAP target schools, and will continue to scale it up further, he confirms.

The view of Major Tesfa Degu is also indifferent. For him, community participation and ownership is the key pillar of the government's development agenda, and social accountability is all about operationalizing this agenda. I can say Kera Hora primary School is now in the safe hands of the community. So, what else could guarantee the sustainability of the change', he questions.



*Ato Tesfaye Degefu ESAP II Wereda
Coordinator*