

ESAP FLASH

Issue 1 October, 2013

Dear Reader,

The Ethiopia Social Accountability Program (ESAP2) being part of the Protection of Basic Services (PBS) program, is implemented by the Government at regional, woreda and kebele levels. Financed through a World Bank managed multi-donor trust fund, ESAP2 is guided and supervised by a steering committee which includes representatives of the Government, the civil society and development partners. A Management Agency (MA) has been established to ensure efficient implementation of ESAP2. The overall objective of ESAP2 is to strengthen the capacities of citizen groups and the Government to work together in order to enhance the quality of basic public services delivered to the citizens of Ethiopia.

As MA, we are excited to publish our first ESAP NEWSFLASH to meet your distinct information needs. In the past weeks and months we received a multitude of requests for clarification and genuine information demand on what is happening at the MA level, and what we have achieved to date. This FLASH, which will ideally become a quarterly publication, shall answer some of your questions and hopefully provides you with useful background information on the status of Social Accountability (SA) in Ethiopia. We also would like to refer to our Facebook and Website where more in depth information and additional links are provided.

Please let us know your feedback.

Happy reading and a very happy 2006 to all of you!

Rolf Hunink, ESAP2 Team Leader

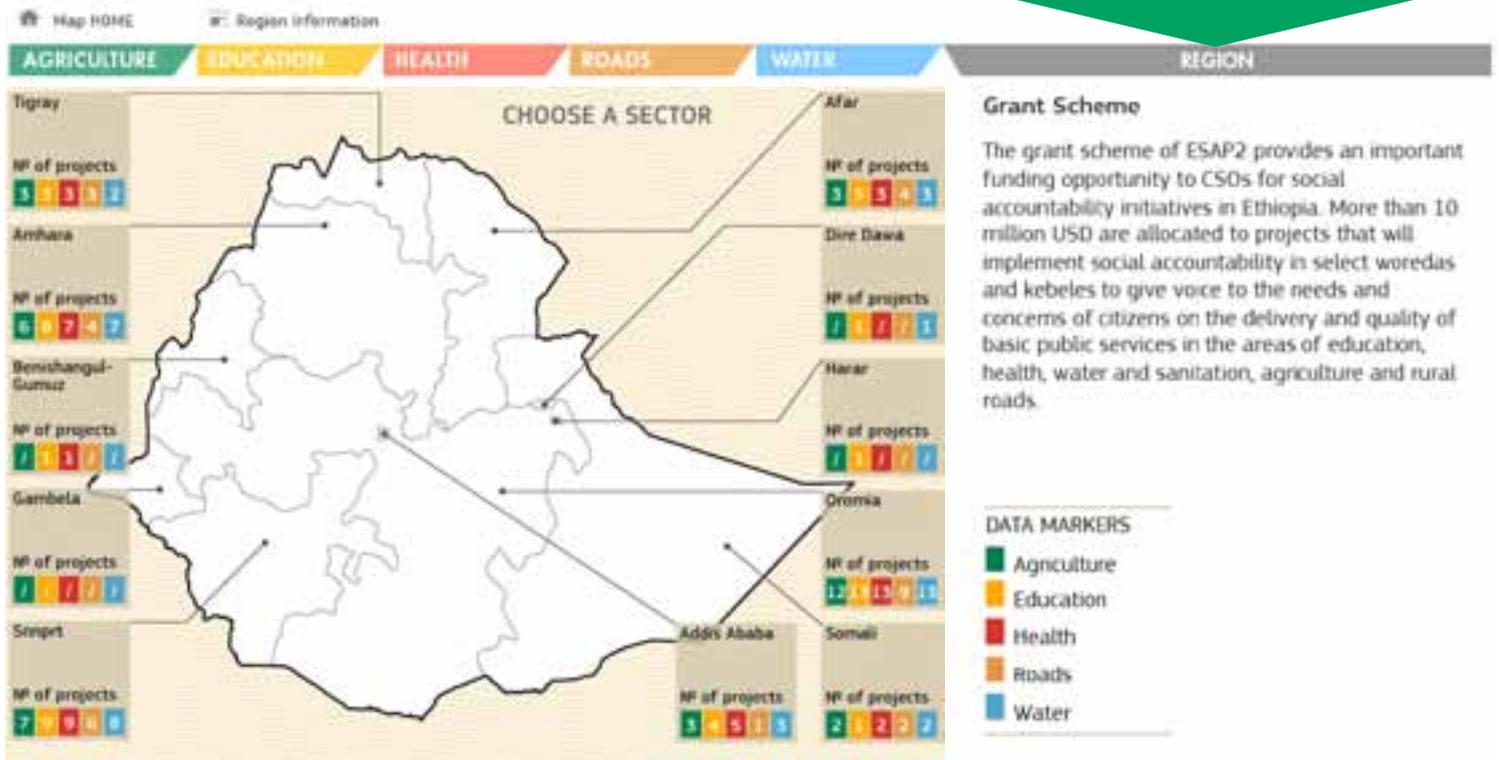
ESAP2 on the map

ESAP2 is supporting more than 50 Civil Society Organisations in all regions of Ethiopia and to make the information about CSOs' location, activities and sectors covered visually accessible, we designed an interactive map that is available on our website.

The map provides general information on Ethiopian regions, ESAP2 sectors and brief information about the CSOs who are implementing their Social Accountability activities in ethiopian woredas.

Currently we are preparing a redesigned map with more focus on woredas and providing more detailed information about CSOs, possibly through design of microsites that would allow even more interactivity.

Keep visiting the ESAP2 website and stay tuned for the new redesigned map!



Disbursement update

To date, ESAP2 has disbursed over USD 2.0 million to 30 Social Accountability Implementing Partners (SAIPs) for the implementation of the first and second year plan of the SA program in 142 woredas. The first disbursement helped our SAIPs set-up their offices, recruit and pay staff salaries and hold project launch events. The MA has received further grant disbursement requests together with financial and technical reports for the first two quarters from all SAIPs. In the coming weeks an additional advance will be transferred to the SAIPs which will add substance to the project by enabling SAIPs to conduct baseline surveys, hold sensitization workshops and conduct SA tools training to citizens, service providers and government officials. So keep looking forward to our next issue. There will be very exciting Grant updates.

Grant negotiation update

The MA has finalized negotiations with an additional 19 SAIPs and currently, the SAIPs are in the process of sending their revised proposals. The MA has started reviewing the proposals to make sure that the comments raised during the negotiations have been addressed in such a way that agreements will be prepared soon for signing, after which pre-disbursement training will be organized for SAIP staff to prepare them accurately for the actual implementation of activities in the field.

News

PBS-Social Accountability Steering Committee conducts monitoring visit

PBS Social Accountability Steering Committee members which comprises representatives of the Ethiopian government, the donor community and the World Bank conducted monitoring field visits to Fogera, Debre Tabor and Machakel woredas in the Amhara region and Guba wereda in Benishangul Gumuz Region in June, 2013. The team met with community groups which included the elderly, women, people with disabilities and HIV- infected people. In addition, they met with representatives of Social Accountability Committees (SACs), comprising of local government officials, service providers and community members. The team was impressed with the progress SAIPs made in such a short period of time. SAIPs had launched the programs, conducted training and set up SACs. Participants were open and keen to be engaged in the program, problem-solving and the development of their localities. Likewise, service providers were interested in hearing community problems and ready to find ways to respond adequately and felt that the program increases community ownership in services to be provided. In Fogera wereda for instance, citizens identified a shortage of medicine, lack of building facilities and absence of health workers especially at night for delivery as challenging topics to be addressed. They said, “we understand that the Government may not be able to solve all our problems but we are willing to contribute our labor, time and even finances to solve some of our problems.” The team emphasized the need for more training for facilitators and sharing of experiences among SAIPs to promote a better understanding of the SA concept as well as SA tools. There will be similar visits for steering committee members organized in subsequent months.



ESAP2 received positive feedback

ESAP2 presented updates on May 9, 2013 at the Joint Review and Implementation Support (JRIS) meeting which comprises the Ethiopian government, the World Bank and donors. On behalf of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), Dr. Abraham Tekeste who chaired the presentation called for more commitment to and ownership of ESAP2. He reiterated that ESAP2 is a government program. Although it is being implemented in almost 150 woredas in all regions, the final aim is to have SA spread over all 900 woredas of Ethiopia.

Steering Committee approves budget until 2015

The Steering Committee (SC) approved in May, 2013 an increase of the overall ESAP2 budget from USD 14,000,000 to USD 21,088,000. Mr. Rolf Swart, Project Director at VNG headquarters, who attended the meeting stated that he was happy that an expansion of the funds for the ESAP2 project was approved allowing the project to run until 2015. The availability of additional resources will enable the MA to fund SA activities of another 19 SAIPs active in Ethiopia. Mr. Swart especially appreciated the constructive feedback and guidance that was received from the Steering Committee and underlined the importance of making SA a success as was addressed by the State Minister, Dr. Abraham Tekeste.

ESAP2 conducts comprehensive refresher

ESAP2 conducted a comprehensive refresher training for SAIPs' staff on May 21 and 22, 2013 on Social Accountability, Finance and Grants, Monitoring and Evaluation and Communications. The half-day refresher training, a follow up of the pre-disbursement training conducted in January and February 2013 was aimed at making SAIPs have a common understanding particularly on the implementation of SA as they entered into the stage of implementation. Participants said it enabled them to have more clarity on the implementation modality. About 90 representatives from all 30 SAIPs, the first group of SAIPs benefiting under the ESAP2 program, attended the refresher training.



Social Accountability (SA) Tools

“I want to know if my children are getting quality education” is an example of the questions asked by citizens regarding the quality and accessibility of local service provision. SA tools enable answering such demands of citizens by first collecting information from a variety of sources and using this information for holding government officials accountable for their commitment to the public they serve.

Under ESAP2, seven SA tools are introduced, trained and monitored by the MA to be effectively applied by the respective SAIPs at woreda level. The tools are: Community Score Card (CSC), Citizen Report Cards (CRC), Community Mapping, Participatory Planning and Budgeting, Gender Responsive Budgeting, Social Auditing and Public Expenditure Tracking (PET).

One of the tools, the CSC will help citizens analyze any particular service they receive based on personal feelings, to express dissatisfaction, to encourage when good work is done and to suggest additional measures to be taken if reported issues remain unresolved. Citizens can use this tool when they are afraid to tell for instance the health administrator in the local health center their feelings when they are maltreated by a nurse asking her for advice on their health status or medication needs. When a citizen wants to encourage the teacher who has made a positive change on his/her child but does not know how, he/she can also use CSC. With this tool in hand citizens can monitor the quality, access, efficiency and effectiveness of community-based public services. As any other SA tool, CSC’s ultimate purpose is to improve the quality and accessibility of service delivery.

Vulnerable profile

One of the important features of ESAP2 is the commitment to vulnerable groups and to ensure that people with HIV, people with disabilities, elderly, youth and women are fully engaged in the roll-out of the program in all 9 regions of the country. The MA is tasked with safeguarding the participation of vulnerable people in the Woredas where our implementing partners are rolling out the SA program.

Dereje Abayneh is 39- years- old, and lives in one of the southern regions. We met him recently at the launch of the program in one of the 142 weredas ESAP2 is currently operating. He told us he is happy with the program, but that he still wants to learn more about SA. He is HIV positive and on ARVs (HIV medicine) since 2009. These drugs keep him alive, and on the job too. As a father of a 3- year -old child, he is able to continue to take care of his family. He is sometimes concerned with the stock-out of ARV drugs in his neighborhood clinic. If HIV treatment is interrupted, one can become resistant to the drugs and ultimately die. Dereje is committed to help improving and ensuring the continuous availability of ARVs for him and his association of people with HIV.



ESAP2 GOES DIGITAL

With the objective of giving a voice to Social Accountability also in the digital world, we established ESAP2 social media accounts: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Youtube.

Our Facebook profile is being regularly updated with informative content that continuously increases the interaction between the Management Agency, CSOs members and other relevant stakeholders, thus encouraging them to enter the dialogue about social accountability.

We are constantly advancing communication through activations such as Slogan Contest, inviting friends and fans to share their thoughts, ideas and proposals for advancing the joint idea.

In the next months we are planning to promote the ESAP2 profile even more, to help CSOs establish and maintain their own profiles and to strengthen the synchronicity between social media channels.

The main vision of ESAP2’s social media presence is to become a hub for Social Accountability in Ethiopia.

We invite you to engage in communication at @esap2

Acronyms

- PBS**-Protection of Basic Services
- ESAP**-Ethiopia Social Accountability Program
- MA**-Management Agency
- SA**-Social Accountability
- SAIPs**-Social Accountability Implementing Partners

COLOPHON

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MANAGEMENT AGENCY



Tel. +251-11-6634661, 6634601
 Cape Verde st. | P. O. Box 28024/1000
 WMA Sets Bldg, 2nd Floor | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
info@esap2.org.et | Facebook: ESAP2

