

Findings from the ESAP2 programme: Agriculture sector interventions, March 2016

1. Introduction

One year before the deadline, in November 2014, it was officially confirmed that Ethiopia had achieved Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Goal 1: to reduce hunger and halve extreme poverty.¹ The 2014 MDG report cites the number of development-related investments, in particular agricultural efficiency and social protection schemes such as the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), as the main reasons for reaching this goal.

Agriculture accounts for 40% of Ethiopia's GDP, and remains a major source of inclusive economic growth. Despite Ethiopia's achievement of a number of the key MDG targets and sub-targets, and its much stronger developmental position in recent years, the country still faces a number of challenges: over 20 million people still live in absolute poverty, and 40% of children under five are stunted due to malnutrition (All Africa, 23 October 2015). Ethiopia's agricultural sector has been identified as the sector that has the potential to bring the greatest improvements to people's lives and to Ethiopia's economy in the coming decades.

Achieving Ethiopia's bold vision of becoming a middle-income economy by 2025 will need further investment and a joint effort from the Ethiopian Government, its donors, its civil society and its citizens. The evidence from ESAP2's agriculture sector interventions shows that social accountability can play a role in supporting the government to reach that target.

1.1 Why is agriculture so important?

Agricultural development is the driver of food security and rural economic growth. In places where farmers have been able to benefit from agriculture services, crop productivity has often increased, improving the food supply, lowering food prices, and helping reduce poverty rates in both rural and urban areas. Agriculture-led growth generates proportionately more income for farm households who make up the majority of the population in the current economy, and represent the bulk of the poor².

The Ethiopian Government's second Growth and Transformation Plan seeks to enhance smallholder productivity by scaling-up 'model farming practices', expanding small and medium scale irrigation, strengthening and extending rural all-weather roads and improving access to markets. The increase in productivity will spur industrialization and support exports, and is an important transformational step towards the country's aspiration to become a middle income country by 2025.

Agriculture has gender dimensions – 45% of Ethiopian farmers are women (FAO), and they have needs that differ from men, especially when a household is headed by a woman. Female farmers tend to participate less in growing crops that are labour-intensive and require complex management (for example, teff, groundnut, and onion). Instead, women are more involved in the production of homestead crops like rapeseed, taro, and enset. There are clear discrepancies by gender on the application of agronomic practices and access to crop extension services. The proportion of female farmers who used row planting, had access to

¹ See <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/270380/icode/>

² Xinshen Diao, IFPRI, (2010) Economic Importance of Agriculture for Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction: The Case Study of Ethiopia.

advisory services, and applied crop extension packages is lower by about 5, 13, and 9 percentage points, respectively, compared to male farmers.³

1.2 The Ethiopia Social Accountability Programme-Phase 2

The ESAP2 programme has been working on the improvement of basic services in Ethiopia since the programme's inception in 2012. Social Accountability is a process by which ordinary citizens - who are the users of basic public services – voice their needs and demands and create opportunities to hold policy makers and service providers accountable for their performance. The process aims to improve the quality of, and access to, basic public services. Working with 49 Social Accountability Implementing Partners (SAIPs)⁴, the program operates in 223 woredas in five key sectors: health, education, agriculture, rural roads and water and sanitation.

Table 1: Results of SA in agriculture and type of contribution, December 2014

Type of result	#	Type of contribution in Birr ⁵		
		Community (cash and in kind)	Government	Others (e.g. NGOs, private sector)
Additional agricultural extension agents recruited (#)	63	0.00	3,928,194.00	0.00
Demand driven distribution of improved agricultural inputs and supplies (quintals)	27,538	28,287,740.95	10,786,728.68	0.00
Demand driven supply of veterinary drugs	lump sum	394,111.00	1,175,700.00	65,000.00
Additional veterinary staff recruited (#)	24	258,835.00	267,328.00	0.00
Construction of Farmer Training Centers (FTC) and Development Agent (DA) residences (#)	49	310,219.00	197,955.00	0.00
Total Agriculture sector		29,250,905.95	16,355,905.68	65,000.00

³ IFPRI, (September 2015) Patterns of Agricultural Production among Male and Female Holders: Evidence from Agricultural Sample Surveys in Ethiopia

⁴ SAIPs facilitate the SA process, which provides information about the service standards, supports citizens and service providers to use SA tools to assess service performance, facilitate interface meetings between users and providers to discuss gaps and develop a reform agenda, monitor the implementation of the Joint Action plan.

⁵ Ethiopian Birr March 2015: 1 ETB is about 0.047 USD, 1 USD is about 21 ETB

In all, 27 SAIPs chose to engage themselves in the agriculture sector in 45 woredas. By December 2014, social accountability projects had contributed to a variety of results in the agriculture sector, which are presented in table 1.

This report will provide a brief overview of the key findings that have emerged from ESAPs' engagement in the agriculture sector. It shows the main trends that have emerged from the reports and monitoring visits to the SAIPs that are working in the agriculture sector.

2 Key findings

There are a number of key findings that stand out when it comes to agriculture sector social accountability interventions, which will be elaborated on below. Regardless of the types of solutions that were sought (for crop production, horticulture or livestock), these improvement features were identified in most cases:

- Agriculture service standard – best negotiated with farmers
- A variety of services can be improved at the same time
- Enabling environment – cooperatives, credit, rural roads, access to markets
- Productive relationships between Development Agents and farmers

SA-related improvements have contributed to increase in agricultural production and productivity in the ESAP2 intervention Kebeles, for instance in Degem Woreda, where Oromia television recorded the success.

2.1 Agriculture service standard – best negotiated with farmers

Compared to other basic service sectors, the standards by which the performance of agricultural extension can be measured are less obvious, as agricultural extension and other services depend on variables such as geography, soil and climate. A productive method and seed variety that works in one area, may not work in another. This adds complexity: in a number of cases, social accountability revealed the difficulties experienced by farmers who used improved methods or inputs that were not appropriate to the local conditions. This was an important reason why farmers were reluctant to take up certain new practices. Where Development Agents (DAs) became aware of this, they were usually able to provide alternatives.

SA helped DAs to listen to farmers' views and concerns, and this led to the provision of more responsive services. Important "generic standards" for farmers were identified: timely delivery, of the right input, of good quality, and appropriate to the local conditions, with regular follow-up services and advise during production.

Case 2.1.1 Head Agriculture compares targeted and non-targeted kebeles

Tilahun Lema, Agriculture Office Head in Dugda Dawa Woreda (AFD) explained that before SA got introduced, the community was not courageous enough to assess the performance of the Development Agents (DA). In the SA targeted kebeles, the number of farmers demanding improved agricultural inputs and supplies, such as fertilizers, improved seeds, pesticides, and improved variety of animal breeds, is much higher than the demand in the non-targeted kebeles.

Tilahun finds that SA facilitates the achievement of government development objectives, as

it enables good community mobilization that speeds up development. It also brought an attitudinal change, for instance farmers' expectations from government are more realistic these days. Farmers are enjoying the changes and service improvements, which became possible through a continuous capacity building and participatory dialogue. The DAs are now aware that they should be accountable to the people they serve.

Tilahun said that the woreda had a practice of planning for decades. However, he admitted, "the issue is: who designs and owns the plan? If you would have asked farmers about the agriculture sector plan, they would have told you it is a government plan not theirs, because DAs were developing it without consulting farmers. Since SA, the farmers sit together with the DA and agriculture experts to make a plan. There used to be no follow up mechanism before, but now farmers and DAs execute and follow up the activities together, which is by far better and different from how we used to do it."

The woreda administration and the agriculture office have planned to scale the SA approach to all 13 kebeles.

2.2 A variety of services can be improved at the same time

At the national level, 79 percent of the households cultivate land, 76 percent rear livestock, around 72 percent are engaged in both livestock and farming activities⁶ (CSA & World Bank 2015). It is thus important that a variety of crop production and livestock management services are offered to farmers. In virtually all cases, the SA process tackled the improvement of a number of services, which improve production and created employment opportunities in the agriculture sector. We saw more responsive services across the spectrum: inputs and extension for crop production, livestock and veterinary services, and environmental protection.

Case 2.2.1 A variety of service improvements facilitated by NEWA

Youth groups in Tenta and Borena have improved employment opportunities, through the provisions of credit access and different agricultural inputs such as fruit seedling, improved poultry, and beekeeping using modern hives. Women groups established in Tenta and Borena with 15 poor female members were economically empowered by preparing business plans and through the implementation of credit access (the provision of ETB 6,000-8,000 for each woman to engage in vegetable production and sheep fattening). Different agricultural inputs such as fertilizer, fruit seedlings, veterinary medicines, improved animal species and gabions were delivered timely to each kebele in the Borena and Tenta woredas. However, there was a problem in the supply of improved seed, which has not been delivered to the kebeles since June 10, 2015. Farmers and SAC members have reported this and are demanding that a new supply be delivered to the Agriculture office. An irrigation reservoir was built in Borena Woreda, Kebele 08, for the community which does not have any irrigation options. The Agriculture office provided 100 quintal of cement.

In Asagirt woreda a veterinary clinic was constructed in each kebele based on the demand of the community, which provided labour and materials for the construction. In addition, the Agriculture office provided geo-membrane plastic for water reservoirs to each kebele. In

⁶ CSA & World Bank (March 2015) Ethiopia Socioeconomic Survey (ESS) - 2013/14, Survey Report

total, in the four project areas of Asagirt woreda, 3,520 farmers were provided different agricultural inputs to increase their productivity, including 650 women farmers, who were provided with chickens.

Many of the improvements were related to the rehabilitation or construction of agricultural facilities, such as Farmer Training Schools (FTCs), veterinary clinics, and irrigation schemes. Farmers are also enjoying a better relationship with the DAs, and the numbers of DAs have been brought up to the standard: at least 63 DAs were recruited throughout the woredas where SA was implemented, after farmers requested the number of DAs they are entitled to at interface meetings. At least 13 animal technicians/veterinary experts were also hired (PADeT, MSCFSO, ADCS, MENA, EOC-SDCO). It remains challenging to keep DAs in their post, as RCWDO discovered during the project review meeting: although new DAs were assigned to SA targeted kebeles, the assigned individuals all went to college for further studies and have not been replaced.

Table 2: Agriculture services before and after SA, Gorche Woreda (PICDO)

Before	After
Equipment is not available in the Farmers Training Centre (FTC).	32 tables and chairs facilitated to FTC
Livestock veterinary services and supplies are limited, with a lack of improved poultry and livestock breeds, and no service for modern bee keeping. At the FTC demonstration field there is a limited focus on livestock problems.	The supply of breeding bulls (cow and sheep) has improved with 21 sheep bulls provided to 12 kebeles and 12 cow bulls provided to 12 kebeles. However the distribution of improved sheep bulls and poultry is not yet addressing the needs of the community. Additional veterinary recruited. Improved bee keeping services now available.
There is a shortage of forest seedlings and a lack of improved coffee seeds, and they find that the fertilizer price is high.	Forest seedlings have been supplied for 21 kebeles. Timely supply of improved seeds, and fertilizers, including alternatives and price reduction for the latter. Raw planting of barley supplied.
The needs of women and physically challenged were not considered.	Participation and empowerment of vulnerable groups has increased. For example, women and physically challenged are provided with an ox/cow. Vegetables seeds and equipment supplied free of charge to physically challenged and women.

2.3 Enabling environment – cooperatives, credit, rural roads, markets

Uptake of improved crop and animal production can be constrained when enabling conditions are not in place or accessible. SA uncovered a variety of reasons why farmers, including women and vulnerable groups, were unable to adopt new practices. Where DAs, sector officials and woreda administration became aware of such constraints, they worked together with farmers and local institutions to create more enabling conditions.

As a result of SA, locations of cooperatives, the rules for agricultural credit, and construction of farm roads have been changed, taking farmers' preferences into account. This has

contributed to an increase in adoption of improved production methods and use of inputs, it has led to an increase in production, and much better credit repayment rates.

On the down side, farmers raised problems with marketing of their products, but there were no solutions recorded by SAIPs. This is likely an effect of the GTP I policy which focussed on small holder production for food security, while GTP II will see a shift in focus towards small holder and large scale production and processing for domestic and export markets.

2.4 Productive relationships between Development Agents and farmers

Many Development Agents received training and instructions for the type of services that need to be delivered to farmers. In their attempt to meet their own job-specific targets (set by their superiors), DAs sometimes try too hard to convince farmers to adopt certain farming methods which are not popular with farmers, becoming impolite if such advice is ignored and undermining the relationship between the DAs and the community (e.g. MSCFSO). MFM, among others, reported that farmers expressed a feeling of being “forced” to adopt a method or take credit for an input that they were not convinced about.

On the other hand, when farmers did have a need, like a disease outbreak among cattle or crop failure (SOS Sahel) farmers felt the DAs were at a loss on how to respond. Farmers also complained about the lack of follow-up and practical guidance throughout the season. For instance RCWDO reported that DAs give advice during sowing, but not during harvesting.

SA contributed to a better understanding and improved relationships between farmers and DAs. Because DAs got an opportunity to hear farmers’ views, needs and concerns, they could better plan their interventions. As a result, farmers got more information and choice, with which they could better estimate the risk they would take when adopting a new method. Farmers now experience better services, and DAs and veterinarians have become more committed and accessible to farmers. For instance in Libo Kemkem, Bura Kebele, two additional DAs were recruited, and the agriculture extension process owner was stationed at kebele level, which facilitates follow-up to farmers’ demands. In addition to the constructions completed by end of 2014 (see table 1), in at least 2 cases, houses were constructed for the DAs in 2015, which clearly improves accessibility of DAs.

“We have many other forums where we discuss with the pastoralist to demand for services. These forums have also contributed to the service improvement results. However the SA process is better because there is scoring, group discussion and issues are identified with reasons. The SA process is unique and deep.”

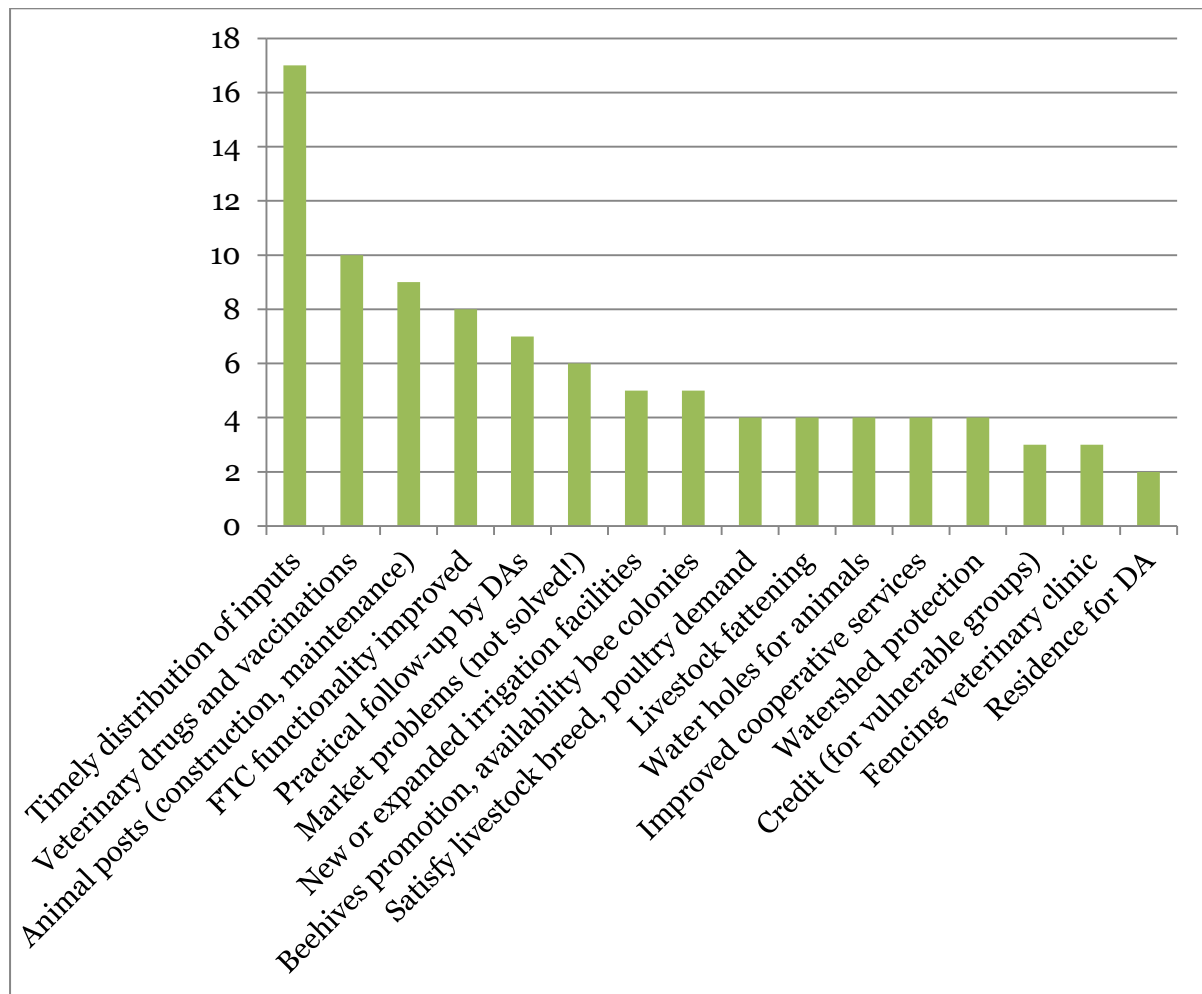
Ibrahmi Haji, Deputy
Administrator and Head of
Agriculture Office, Tenta woreda

3 The solutions patterns identified through ESAP2

Figure 1 gives an overview of the types of interventions that were included in the JAPs and were completed by the joint effort of the SACs, the communities, the local authorities with support from the SAIPs. In most woredas a mixture of interventions was implemented, based on the communities' priorities

When we look at the themes that emerge from the quarterly reports of SAIPs, the M&E reports of the MA, and case studies collected from the SAIPs that are active in the agriculture sector, we note the following trends:

Figure 1: Frequency of most common interventions in agriculture sector, as reported by SAIPs



3.1 Functioning Farmer Training Centres/Veterinary Clinics (local ownership)

The government has promoted Farmer Training Centres as the “college for farmers”, but at least 8 out of 26 SAIPs, reported that FTC functioning left much to be desired. Farmers felt there was nothing much to learn: at times the farmers’ own production was better than the production at the FTC, which may explain the low response to modern inputs on offer at the FTC (e.g. MSCFSO, TYA). There were reports about shortages of land for demonstration

plots (plot sizes not meeting the national standard). In one kebele a demonstration plot belonged to a male farmer and women were not welcome there. In this case, the women argued for another plot owned by government, so that women could participate in demonstrations. In some cases no demonstrations had been organised for some time, and the FTC served mostly for community meetings (e.g. MSCFSO), or served as a store (e.g. SOS-Sahel). Others reported shortage of equipment at the FTC, and LIA indicated a lack of support for animal breeding and irrigation activities.

Not all kebeles have an FTC, which limits women's benefit from the service (as they tend to stay within their kebele instead of traveling to access FTC services). Women have also been found to benefit much less from agricultural inputs and services than men: DAs do not invest as much time and effort in supporting female farmers compared to male farmers. This is especially problematic for female headed households. For example, women complained they wanted to be involved in horticulture, but the DA did not provide support for it.

SA has enabled DAs and model farmers to promote practices that trigger farmers' interest. FTCs have been established, reorganized, equipped with chairs and tables (e.g. PICDO), toilets (e.g. Bush Denba FTC – AFSR) and appropriate farming demonstration facilities (e.g. MENA). FTCs have become more functional overall, and more accessible, including to female farmers.

MSCFSO reported a case in which the FTC plots were rented out for very small amounts. After SA started, the plots were given to the youth of the community, and they have become models for the farmers. HUNDEE reported that training time has been reconsidered and adjusted to times when farmers are relatively free, to avoid overlap with the peak agricultural activities.

Case 3.1.1. FTC and livestock service improvements in Machakel Woreda

MSCFSO reported that much work was done in the 3 project kebeles, in Machakel Woreda. The FTCs became real models where other kebele farmers can come and learn:

- Communities fenced the FTCs in Amanual Zuria and Yewula kebeles, and communities of Debre Kelemo kebele contributed Birr 40 each for fencing. The FTC at Yewula kebele had no guard, but the communities now hire a craftsman from a socially excluded group. One of the FTCs was ploughed by the FTC committee.
- Deep water holes were constructed for FTCs in A/Zuria and Debre Kelemo kebeles.
- Selected seeds were distributed in each of the kebeles, especially maize (Limu and ph66o) ahead of sowing time.
- In Amanuel Zuria, a modern bee farming experiment has started and is attracting farmers to the FTC.
- In Amanuel Zuria and Yewula Kebeles, animal clinics were constructed by the community at an estimated cost of Birr 25,000 each. As agreed during the interface meeting, the government bought veterinary medicines for Birr 270,000 and recruited animal technicians, who are now providing adequate services.
- Yewula kebele has become a model for the remaining 23 kebeles in the woreda with a modern animal breeding site. Farmers of the other kebeles are visiting and taking this good practice to their localities.
- The Amanuel Zuria kebele animal fattening centre was almost out of service due to lack of maintenance and animal technicians. The community contributed required materials, money and labor to properly maintain and make it functional again. The Woreda assigned an additional animal technician. The service is now properly delivered - also for adjacent kebeles.



- An animal clinic was constructed in Amanuel area kebele by the community with estimated cost of Birr 25,000. Following the construction, government has assigned a veterinarian to provide services, and bought veterinary medicines for Birr 270,000.

3.2 Functional livestock and veterinary services

Issues with veterinary services and clinics were reported by 14 SAIPs out of 24: even more than issues with FTCs. Farmers complained about unavailability of veterinary drugs and vaccinations (10 SAIPs), the absence of animal posts and technicians (9 SAIPs), the demand for improved breeds not being met (6 SAIPs), and unavailability of breeding bulls and artificial insemination services (5 SAIPs). SOS Sahel reported that artificial insemination was applied but cows did not get pregnant. PICDO was among those reporting limited focus on livestock problems in the FTC, and MSCFSO reported that farmers working on dairy farming and animal fattening were not getting training and technical support.

Most of these issues were addressed by the end of the SA projects, through joint efforts of the community and the government. Five SAIPs reported that veterinary posts which serve several kebeles were constructed; drug supplies were made available, and animal technicians were recruited (9 SAIPs). Improved breeds were provided based on demand, such as poultry (3 SAIPs), bee colonies (4 SAIPs), hybrid cows and sheep (4 SAIPs). Animal fattening also gained attention, for instance in Alitena kebele, Irob Woreda (ADCS) two sheds were constructed in the FTC for dairy cow and small ruminants fattening, with a government budget of Birr 32,000. (Refer to case 3.1.1 for a detailed example on livestock services).

3.3 SA has helped to bring institutions together to overcome inefficiencies

Cooperatives play an important role in the provision of agricultural inputs and technologies. Many of the complaints regarding delay in provision of inputs (17 SAIPs) can be brought back to the poor functioning of cooperatives. By involving cooperatives in the SA process, the supply of agricultural inputs improved in many target woredas.

In Machakel Woreda, the Woreda Agriculture and the Cooperative Offices took charge of implementing the supply improvements that were agreed at the interface meeting. Two kebeles have been selected as distribution centres for all 24 kebeles of the Woreda: Amanuel area for seeds, and Yewula for technology spare parts.

Case 3.3.1 Involvement of cooperatives improves input supply

NEWA reported that the inclusion of agricultural cooperatives in the social accountability process created opportunities to improve agricultural services, especially for women farmers, and inputs distribution. In the four kebeles of Asagirt woreda, 3,520 farmers were provided various agricultural inputs like fertilizer and improved seeds from their cooperative organizations. SA contributed to similar results in Tenta and Borena Woredas. In response to farmer's request, the centres are now open 6 days a week. The enhanced cooperation of the farmers' cooperatives with the agriculture offices also helped to reach women farmers who were in need of improved agricultural services and supplies for their farms. Overall in these woredas, more farmers, especially women farmers, are benefitting from increased provision of different agricultural inputs and goods, due to the effort made to incorporate cooperatives in the service improvement processes of social accountability.

For many farmers, especially the more vulnerable groups and women, credit is crucial to purchase inputs such as seeds, fertiliser, animals for fattening or breeding, etc. SA facilitated credit services for those who were unable to purchase farming inputs from their own money (SOS Sahel, LIA), and also addressed inequitable credit services for farmers (MSCFSO). To enable destitute households to access agricultural inputs, HUNDEE organized vulnerable households in groups and linked them to micro-finance institutions. In this process, the money needed to buy agricultural inputs was made available up-front, and poor farmers thus accessed the inputs at the same time as the other farmers. A major problem was farmers' inability to pay fertilizer credit on time, "but this time 100% of them have paid back" (MSCFSO). This is likely due to a combination of factors: better access to information and services on the one hand, but also a better understanding of duties and responsibilities of farmers on the other hand.

Case 3.3.2 Credit ceiling raised in Yifag Kebele

Farmers, especially women, explained that the price of fertilizer is too high to buy adequate quantities – the women and men know the advantage of fertilizer, but they cannot afford it at the start of the agricultural season. Loans are only available to the very poor. The amount of loan provided for households was to the maximum Birr 2,500, but now it has been raised to Birr 10,000, which solves the issue according to farmers in Yifag Kebele.

Farmers also identified a need for market information and marketing services (6 SAIPS). For instance, ODA reported that in Adama and Fantalle woredas farmers mentioned they have harvested huge amounts of potatoes which they were not able to sell. There is only one report that SA contributed to solving marketing problems: in Kacha Bira Woreda sites were allocated to users to sell their products, eg "Fuga" for their pottery and farmers for their agricultural products. The lack of response to marketing problems is likely due to the fact that such services are yet to be developed.

3.4 Addressing quantity and quality issues with regards to inputs

Due to farmer assessment and monitoring of improvements, the quality of inputs like seeds and fertilizer has improved, and such inputs are now delivered in the right quantity, on time, and based on farmers' preferences. Table 3 shows the problems that were initially identified, and subsequently addressed through Joint Action Plans between the farmers and the local government. Through the SA process, farmer resistance to use improved production technologies also decreased. Some farmers started composting as an alternative to 'expensive' fertiliser (AFD). Woreda agriculture officer Demere Eresso explains: *"SA helped to increase the community's demand for fertilizers, inputs, and technologies. Even though availing agricultural inputs and fertilizer is our day-to-day responsibility, the constructive feedback, and implementation of the joint plan, truly improved service delivery in the 3 targeted kebeles, and these are becoming the models for Dugda Dawa Woreda."*

Table 3 Issues raised in the SA process related to agriculture inputs

Inputs	# of SAIPs	Examples
Seeds	17	Unavailable on time or shortage (12) e.g. wheat, corn and 'white bean', poor quality (3), high price (2).
Fertiliser	15	Unavailable on time (11), high price (4), only available at woreda level (1), poor quality of fertilizer due to storage problem (1).
Agro-chemicals	7	Unavailability of herbicides, insecticides and pesticides (including for rats).
Bags	2	Bags for crops are of not good quality.
Chicken	1	The white coloured chickens were easily visible for eagles from the sky (the breed was changed to red/orange coloured chickens).
Equipment / spare parts	3	Mostly not available. Poor quality of water pumps, shortage of spare parts and technicians.
Tree seedlings	2	Shortage of forest seedlings, and lack of improved coffee seeds.

HUNDEE was among the SAIPs reporting that input storage facilities were reorganized to ensure input could be stored safely and their quality could be preserved. This also facilitated better distribution of inputs. The following year, farmers demanded woreda officials to take back poor quality seeds distributed to them, and they received good quality seeds without additional costs.

SAIPs reported that farmers' awareness of appropriate farming equipment is increasing. In some cases the call for appropriate farming equipment has been met: in Enemay Woreda the Agriculture Development Office distributed rope pumps to farmers, and bought equipment from Bahir Dar for sowing teff in lines. However, some technology (e.g. for line sowing) remains hard to access. AEPA reported that equipment was available at the FTC, but not for sale to farmers.

As an outcome of one of the Gender Responsive Budget exercises, women demanded access to more appropriate farming technologies that cater to their needs, e.g. women cannot plough the land with oxen. It appears that Woredas have limited possibilities to respond to such requests for appropriate technologies.

Case 3.4.1 Spare parts now available

Farmers in Machakel Woreda brought up the absence of spare parts for farming equipment during the interface meeting. Yewula kebele is known for irrigated agriculture, and spare parts for water pumps are in high demand. These spare parts are sold at the Debre Markos Woreda union, but farmers felt that traveling this far to buy a spare part was wasting their time and resources. To overcome the distance and cost problems, the farmers came together with the Woreda Agriculture and Development Office and identified 12 spare parts which are frequently needed for the maintenance of motor pumps. These spare parts were bought and stored at Yewula kebele, which was chosen as the distribution centre for all other 23 kebeles. Farmers' demand is now met, as they can buy the spare parts they need closer to home.

3.5 Water resources, irrigation, waterholes and watersheds

GTP I focused on accelerating growth in the production of traditional crops. It has done so by promoting the adoption of improved technologies by smallholder farmers, and by increasing investment in rural infrastructure, particularly for irrigation and improved watershed management. These areas of service also came up in the some of the Social Accountability projects (5 SAIPs). In two cases (ADCS, and EOC-DICAC) irrigation development was addressed. Shallow water wells were drilled in Dugda Dawa Woreda (AFD), and small irrigation techniques were taken up by organized groups to produce vegetables and fruits (SNNPR, Hadya zone). In at least 4 cases water dams were constructed as waterholes for animals.

3.5.1 Earth dams and nature rehabilitation in Irob woreda

- In Alitena kebele a dam has been constructed to irrigate 15 hectares from which 35 households benefit (5,864,307.54 Birr budget from the regional government).
- In Agaralekoma kebele a dam has been constructed to irrigate 18 hectares from which 38 households benefit (7,729,255.63 Birr budget from the regional government).
- In Alitena and Endamosa kebeles, two old dams were maintained.
- To expand the irrigation capacity from the Assabol dams in Alitena kebele, the Irob Woreda Water Supply Office contributed 300,000 Birr for a transformer to pump water
- Soil erosions terracing and reforestation works were done in three kebeles, with government committing 150,000 Birr for each of the kebeles.

At least 4 SAIPs reported that communities felt that nature conservation work was not very effective. Communities reported a lack of expertise and did not have clarity on governance rules and regulations. Local governments responded with better services, after which communities planted different trees to prevent soil erosion and to maintain the ecosystem. One community signed a document, agreeing to protect the newly planted trees by hiring permanent guards. In Woyira kebele the community terraced 55 hectares of land in order to sustain the natural environment. Related to environmental protection, SOS Sahel reported that communities complained about a river that is polluted due to the waste from a coffee factory. Government intervened and the factory stopped discharging residuals.

Case 5.5.2 A nature conservation trip

The Amhara Region awarded Woredas that were effective in natural resource conservation. Since the inability to conserve natural resources was one of the issues raised in all 5 project Woredas, MSCFSO decided to organise an experience sharing trip to Gunde Woyin Woreda, which had won the conservation award. A total of 22 officials visited different kebeles of Gunde Woyin, and learned good practices which they are now implementing back home. For instance 23,431 community members of Gotera Kebele have actively participated in different agricultural practices in order to sustaining the natural resources of the area (estimated cost of Birr 585,775).

3.6 Agriculture for vulnerable households - PSNP

SA's focus on vulnerable groups has led to the inclusion and empowerment of excluded people, such as pottery workers, who are now included in the agricultural programs that are meaningful for them, including watershed management. In some cases, materials, land, credit and financial assistance has been made available to vulnerable groups (e.g. see case 3.7.1). MENA reports that guidelines were prepared to subsidize the cost of fertilizer for poor people, and SOS Sahel facilitated timely distribution of fertilizers and inputs, and priority credit service for people with a physical disability.

Case 3.6.1 Poor women get access to improved chicken breeds

Tenta Woreda has a remarkable experience with making agriculture services work better for poor women. The women wanted to have improved eggs to raise better chickens, but they could not afford to buy them. Through SA, the local government realized that a special scheme needed to be developed. They now allow poor women to buy the eggs at a reduced price, and to pay for them with small instalments, over a period of time.

Towards the end of the SA intervention, EOC-DICAC reported that communities in the target kebeles had been raising problems associated with the drought they were facing: i.e. lack of potable water supply, insufficient food assistance, supplementary food for children and women, lack of feed for livestock, and support for agricultural inputs. As the projects have now been phased out, we remain uncertain if SA had any influence on the local governments' capacity to respond to needs relate to drought.

From the SA-PSNP pilot we do know that SA has had a positive effect on the quality of services to PSNP beneficiaries and their food security. In many of the pilot woredas, officials expressed positive views about SA in the PSNP context: *"PSNP is an area where the active participation and voice of the community needs to be heard. I was wondering why it was not adopted in the PSNP so far. I have the view that SA tools are tools that improve the relationship between the Providers and Users, thereby sustaining PSNP governance. It also helps the vulnerable to voice their concerns. Everybody has the right to voice his or her concerns. We are very much willing to support this program"*. Ato Leta Leggese, Shebadino Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office head, Shebadino.

With the right support from SAIPs, such as posting of selection criteria at kebele level and explaining graduation criteria, PSNP Service Users were eager to engage in identifying issues and service gaps in PSNP. In all pilot kebeles, they were enthusiastic to see the PSNP service delivery improved through the SA process. A PSNP Service User explained: *"So far no one has ever listened to us this way. We were seen as people subjected to handouts only. Today we have seen a new chapter. Our officials accepted their mistakes. For us this is great sense of honour. We have a hope that we can solve any problem ahead"* Qaxala Abdisa, Wuye Gose Kebele, Kuyu Woreda.

Case 3.6.2 Inspiring PSNP service improvements

When PSNP beneficiaries were adequately informed about their entitlements, they raised a number of areas for improvement (HUNDEE): Targeting and graduation of PSNP beneficiaries from the program were not in compliance with the criteria. Payments were excessively delayed and had to be used to buy fertilizers while the beneficiaries were going hungry⁷. The program was not transparent and complaints were not addressed positively. Contrary to the program's principles, all kinds of public works were compulsory. Due to the inadequate implementation of the program, the beneficiaries could not build their assets and become self-reliant before they were forced to graduate from the program.

Engagement of PSNP beneficiaries in the SA process has ensured the timely release of monthly payments to the beneficiaries, so that it could improve their livelihoods. With the active engagement of Kebele SAC members, PSNP beneficiaries have been paid long delayed payment increments that were withheld illegally. Public works are now implemented based on pre-set criteria, and PSNP beneficiaries are exempted from work if it is too hard for them. The monthly payments are now made to all beneficiaries, regardless of their participation in public works. Quota based and forceful beneficiary graduation has been changed to criteria based graduation, relative to the household assets.

⁷ Two other SAIPs also reported that PSNP beneficiaries were forced to use their PSNP payment to buy fertilizers and seeds (SoS Sahel), and were threatened with exclusion from the program if they didn't (TYA).

Conclusions

Social Accountability interventions in the agriculture sector have contributed to a significant amount of improvements in FTCs and animal posts, in the provision of quality inputs, and in the relationships between the DAs, the farmers, and their cooperatives. As this report has shown, SAIPs have witnessed that in many kebeles the facilities and extension quality has been upgraded. Evidence suggests that there are many more agriculture facilities and DAs throughout the country that could benefit from SA. ESAP2 has seen reports of DA's continuing to solicit organised input and feedback from farmers, and of Woreda officials who have already started to extend SA practices to other kebeles in the Woreda.

One key factor that has contributed to so many successful improvements has been a greater awareness of the 'standard', which can be complex in the agriculture sector as climate, soils and other conditions vary across the country. The Government of Ethiopia has set ambitious goals for agriculture development, and 'knowing the services and standards' has helped many farmers, cooperatives, DAs and local officials to set realistic targets that respond to local needs, while at the same time meeting these goals.

Many SAIPs have reported a keener interest among male and female farmers alike, to take up improved farming methods as the concerns they may initially have had were responded to in the appropriate way. In several cases farmers have now paid back agriculture credits where this used to be problematic. Cooperatives have collaborated with the Woreda officials to improve the quantity and quality of inputs, and make these available based on farmer's (growing!) demand. Case studies have shown that the SA process has been beneficial in creating a more conducive learning environment in places where communication between DA's and farmers had broken down. The recruitment of many additional DAs and animal technicians to comply with the staffing standard for kebeles has also improved farmers' access to extension services. PSNP beneficiary households have had their complaints responded to in an appropriate manner, and PSNP officials have learned to better comply with the intensions of the program, so that food-insecure households can built up their assets.

SA has also brought the needs of female farmers to the fore. New demonstration plots that are more easily accessible to women, and special credit lines for poor women, are evidence that communities and authorities can work positively together to ensure that all farming households can move forward in the agricultural transformation process.

Agriculture transformation is just starting, and it has been noted that farmers are eager for the government to make equipment more widely available, and to provide information about markets and prices. Contrary to some of the other sectors, linkages with NGOs and UN agencies working with government on agricultural transformation have not readily emerged. In future, such links could potentially be facilitated across the board, so that more farmers in need of services, equipment and information can be linked to agencies that have dedicated themselves to support in this area.

Annex 1: Agriculture sector research – frequency tables for typical problem-solution patterns

Typical problem-solution pattern:	Documented by the following SAIP:	Frequency
Timely distribution of inputs	SOS Sahel, AFD, RCWDO, TYA, AEPA, ODA, AFSR, MSCFSO, ADCS, PICDO, HUNDEE, IWCIDA, MENA, HFC, ECC-DICAC, ECC-SDCO, PAD	17
Credit (for vulnerable groups)	SOS Sahel, MSCFSO, LIA	3
Practical follow-up by DAs	HFC, AFD, ODA, RCWDO, AEPA, EOC-DICAC, TYA	7
Satisfy livestock breed, poultry demand	AFD, PICDO, IWCIDA, MSCFSP	4
Fencing veterinary clinic	AFD, ADCS, MSCFSO	3
Residence for DA	AFSR, ECC-SDCO,	2
Animal posts (construction, maintenance)	SOS Sahel, AFSR, IWCIDA, PAD, PICDO, MSCFSO, ADCS, ECC-SDCO, NEWA	9
FTC functionality improved	SOS Sahel, IWCIDA, TYA, PICDO, MSCFSO, LIA, ADCS, ECC-DICAC	8
New or expanded irrigation facilities	AFSR, ADCS, ODA, EOC-DICAC, LIA	5
Veterinary drugs and vaccinations	SOS Sahel, AFSR, IWCIDA, RCWDO, MENA, PICDO, PAD, MSCFSO, ODA, AEPA	10
Beehives promotion, availability bee colonies	MSCFSO, EOC-DICAC, LIA, ADCS, PICDO	5
Livestock fattening	PICDO, MSCFSO, ADCS, RCWDO	4
Water holes for animals	AFD, RCWDO, NEWA, RCDE	4
Improved cooperative services	SOS Sahel, NEWA, MSCFSO, ADCS	4
Market problems (not solved!)	SOS Sahel, IWCIDA, PAD, ODA, LIA, ECC-SDCO	6
Watershed protection	SOS Sahel, MSCFSO, ODA, ADCS	4