



Monitoring Report

Monitoring reference MR-135982.01
Report date 23/09/2010
Project title Improved food production for home and market in Arba Minch Zuria Woreda and Chencha Woreda in SNNPR Region of Ethiopia

I. Intervention data

Status	FINAL
Monitoring Report Type	Ongoing
Aid Modality	Project approach
Project	Single Country / National Project
Project Management	Project managed by the Delegation (devolved)
Financed via a thematic budget line	Yes
CRIS Number	C-212823
Project Title according to Financing Agreement/Financing Decision	Improved food productivity for home and market in Arba Minch Zuria Woreda and Chencha Woreda in SNNP Region of Ethiopia
Domain	Development - Food Security
DAC - CRS Sector	52010 - Food aid/Food security programmes
Additional DAC - CRS code	52010 - Food aid/Food security programmes
Geographical zone	Ethiopia
Keyword (for innovative interventions)	Poverty Reduction
Date Financing Agreement/Financing Decision/Contract signed	26/11/2009
Person responsible at HQ	STEFANESCU Bogdan
Person responsible at Delegation	ABERA Asnake
Monitor	Agata Zamlynska
Project Authority	VITA
Type of implementing partner	International NGO/CSOs/Universities (at EU and international level)
Start date - planned	26/11/2009
End date - planned	26/10/2011
Start date - actual	17/12/2009
End date - likely	26/10/2011
Monitoring visit date	from 30/08/2010 to 05/09/2010

II. Financial data

Primary commitment (EC funding)	1,091,463
Budget allocated for TA	0
Secondary commitment (funds contracted of EC contribution)	1,091,463
Other funding (government and/or other donors)	121,273
Total budget of operation	1,212,736
Total EC funds disbursed	854,842
Financial data on	23/09/2010

III. Grading

Relevance and quality of design	B
Efficiency of Implementation to date	A
Effectiveness to date	B
Impact prospects	B
Potential sustainability	A

IV. Summary of conclusions

Relevance and quality of design

The project provides a coherent response to existing Government policies as regards agricultural growth and rural development, which includes primarily the Food Security Programme 2010-2015 and the Productive Safety Nets Programme. The project is consistent with EC development strategies and the Food Facility Instrument (FFI). The project is contributing to the 1st Millennium Development Goal, leading in long-term to sustainable food security in the region and is in line with the Paris Declaration through emphasis on mutual accountability and involvement of different stakeholders. The VITA project aims at sustainable improvement of Food Security in two Woredas through increase in farm production and improved access to market, and highly responds to the target groups needs. The Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) clearly defines the Overall Objectives (OO), Project Purpose (PP), Results and Activities; nevertheless it needs to be reformulated in a more concise way. The design of Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs) is generally appropriate and the targets achievable. The proposed PP may be achievable within the project frameworks. Risks and assumptions are realistic and unlike to change during the implementation period. The risk management arrangements and mitigation measures are well described in the Description of the Action (DoA). The project has been designed with wide range of stakeholders and partners, including the Zone Administration, the Cooperatives Union, primary cooperatives and beneficiaries. The series of sessions organised during the design phase enabled the familiarisation of the actors with the project idea and the discussion of the primary needs. Coordination, responsibilities and management arrangements are clearly defined. Gender, environment and AIDS have been adequately mainstreamed within the project proposal.

Efficiency of Implementation to date

The project started as planned. All staff has been recruited, and the contractors for construction works have been selected. Inputs are provided at planned cost. Office equipment and computers has been procured for the VITA office and the partner, the Cooperatives Union Office. Planned procurement of the vehicle is delayed due to price escalation and the required amendment to the budget. The vehicle and six motorbikes procurement is in its final stage. Other activities are implemented as scheduled and a delay was noticed only with the storage construction, which at the time of monitoring visit was almost completed. In the meantime the Zone Administration facilitated the use of temporary storage rooms and school classrooms. The other outputs, i.e. distribution of seeds, fertilisers, trainings, and rehabilitation of irrigation system are delivered according to schedule. Monitoring, based on a particular project manual "Monitoring Evaluation System" elaborated for this project, is organised from the lowest, Kebele level, to the VITA Headquarters Office in Ireland, indicating clear responsibilities for the management, i.e. the Country Director, the Project Manager, and the Monitoring and Reporting Officer. The project is regularly visited by Country Office staff and monitored and managed on a continual basis by the Project Manager, based in the field. There is also a VITA system of regular reporting / monitoring for all field staff. The results-oriented activity schedule, based on the LFM is regularly updated and prepared in detail for each period and each activity. To allow efficient project implementation, the Zone Steering Committee and the Implementing Team in each Woreda have been established. These structures incorporate, among others, representatives from the Zone Administration, the Office of Agriculture and Rural Development at Woreda and Zone levels, representatives from the Cooperatives Union, primary cooperatives, VITA and the Women's Affair Office. Regular meetings and communication between both structures facilitate receiving and providing feedback, involving stakeholders in discussing, decision-making, and solving problems. Both the Zone Steering Committee and the Implementing Teams are involved in the implementation of the project, the selection of beneficiaries, and the monitoring of activities and finances of the Cooperatives Union, strengthening the level of ownership. This system is recognised by the Zone Administration and the EU Delegation as an excellent example of cooperation with the local authorities. The EC visibility is efficiently implemented in the field, with the proper signboards on project

sites and media coverage of the main activities. Nevertheless the VITA website requires an update on project implementation.

Effectiveness to date

To date, the project achieved first results of increased production of maize and potatoes, after using improved seeds and fertilisers. The potatoes have been already sold to the Cooperatives Union at prices that were 30 percent higher than those at the market. The rehabilitation of 10 irrigation systems, which is about to be completed, will allow further increase of production. The Planning Workshop was conducted efficiently, establishing the active inter-institutional structures, which allow the smooth implementation of the project, i.e. the Zone Steering Committee and the Woreda Implementation Teams. Trainings delivered to farmers and development agents were of high quality. At this stage the PP is very likely to be achieved. However, on the basis of the results achieved to date, some OVI and targets would have to be reviewed and revised (in some cases upwards) to better capture what is realistically feasible. The organised structures and the VITA management system allow the adaptation to changing external conditions, and the mitigation of risks.

Impact prospects

The present results of increased production of maize and potatoes already have an impact for a more sustainable enhanced production capacity. This is encouraging beneficiaries and other farmers to participate in further actions (planting vegetables, wheat, and teff) as well as planting potatoes and maize in the following seasons. As the beneficiaries need to contribute financially with a down payment, the achieved results encouraged those hesitating or unwilling to invest their money. The capacity building activities for the Cooperatives Union, and the irrigation system rehabilitation support the access to the market, and the bank seeds will contribute to the stabilisation of food prices and the sustainable improvement of food security in the area. The positive results had an impact on villagers from other Kebeles, not covered with the project, who are asking for similar intervention in their areas. Also the irrigation system is of big interest to other potential beneficiaries.

Potential sustainability

The project idea is to establish self-responding and generating action, which will not require external funding in the future. As the Cooperatives Union and primary cooperatives are the structures, designed by the Government for distribution of seeds and harvest collection, the project focuses on strengthening and capacity building of the partner GGFFVMCU, the Cooperatives Union, which will be able to operate individually after the project completion. The services provided by the project will be affordable for the target groups, as they already contribute financially, with down payments for seeds and fertilisers. The storages/seeds banks, though owned by primary cooperatives, will be also accessible by individual farmers. From the centralised into the decentralised levels, the project has the total support of administrative institutions. The elaborated system introduced by the project for strengthening the ownership level of beneficiaries, the capacity building, the community mobilisation and for enhancing the cooperation and involvement of the administration will ensure the follow-up and scale-up of the project after completion.

Key observations and recommendations

The active participation of public sector and financial and managerial strengthening of local farmer structures will contribute to a more stable development of the agricultural sector in the target areas. The organised structures of cooperation with the Zone Administration facilitate the proper project implementation and allow the achievement of improved and sustainable food security for beneficiaries. The following recommendations should be considered by the project stakeholders. VITA Project Management: 1) Revise the LFM by reformulating activities in a more consistent way; 2) Revise the quantitative indicators by taking into account the reported results; 3) Update the website with proper project information; and, 4) Monitor the third OVI at the OO level and revise it if necessary. EU Delegation: 1) The cooperation structure of the different stakeholders employed by the project, as well as the manual and system developed by VITA management for planning and reporting purposes ("Monitoring Evaluation System"), is recommended as a good practise for other operations.