



**ABDISHE/Linking Initiatives, Stakeholders to
Achieve Gender-Sensitive Livelihood Security
(LINKAGES) Project**

**End line Evaluation Report
[Final Draft]**

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Abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
BDSP	Business Development Service Providers
CAD	Canadian Dollar
CBLAs	Community Based Legal Advisors
CFIW	Chronically Food Insecure Women
CFs	Community Facilitators
CS	Copping Strategies
CSI	Coping strategy Index
CSs	Cases Study
DAC	Development Assistant Committee
DFATD	Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development
DFID	Department for International Development
ECX	Ethiopian Commodity Exchange
EFY	Ethiopian Fiscal Year
ER	Expected Result
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FHHs	Female Headed Households
FSP	Food Security Programs
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
HDSS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
HHs	Households
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
KIIs	Key Informants Interviews
LINKAGES	Linking Initiatives, Stakeholders and Knowledge to Achieve Gender-Sensitive Livelihood Security
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MGD	Millennium Development Goal
MHHs	Male Headed Households
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MSC	Most Significant Change
MSP	Multi-stakeholder Platform
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PPS	Population Proportion to Size
PSNP	Productive Safety-Net Program
SAA	Social Analysis and Action

SME	Small and Micro Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TOR	Terms of Reference
TZBMC	Teruneh Zenna Business and Management Consultancy
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VC	Value Chain
VSLA	Village Saving and Loan Association
WFP	World Food Program

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Executive summary

Background

As part of CARE Canada's global program—Linking Initiatives, Stakeholders and Knowledge to Achieve Gender Sensitive Livelihood Security (LINKAGES), CARE Ethiopia has been engaged in implementation of the ABDISHE project meaning (*“ber hope” in Afaan Oromoo—the local language*) since 2013. The project was planned and implemented with major result areas of increased quantity and quality of food production and consumption by women and men. The project was implemented in 11 *Kebeles* of Fedis Wereda in Eastern Harerghe Zone, Oromia Regional State. It targeted 6,400 chronically food insecure women and their households.

This end-line evaluation was conducted to assess its achievements and find out lessons to be learnt from the intervention. This final evaluation study was conducted by Terunch Zenna Business and Management Consultancy (TZBMC) and provides the outcomes of the project intervention focusing on the major result areas indicated above. The study critically reviewed relevant project documents used the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, and CARE's women empowerment framework.

Objectives

The purpose of this final evaluation was to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the ABDISHE project. Moreover, among others, it set out to assess to what extent the project achieved its intermediate and ultimate outcomes.

Evaluation methodology

The end line evaluation used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology. The quantitative methodology employed a household survey that collected data through a structured questionnaire administered to beneficiary households. The qualitative study used focus group discussions and key informant interviews that were conducted with beneficiary women and their husbands/partners, collaborating local government agencies and other implementing partners. A two stage sampling was used to select the final sample of study units (beneficiary households) for the structured household survey. By using probability sampling technique, a total of sample size of 381 households were considered. The data were analyzed using both SPSS and STATA software interchangeably. These data were presented in different statistical forms, including, descriptive statistics (mean, maximum, minimum, and standard deviation), frequency tables and figures, chi-square test, two sample t-test, computation of household dietary diversity score (DDI), coping strategy index (CSI), and multiple scores/indices among others.

Findings of the evaluation

Evaluation results against OECD-DAC criteria

Relevance: the project was assessed on the basis of its significance to improve the livelihood of the target communities and its adequacy in responding to the livelihood problems of chronically food insecure women and men. Moreover, its consistency with the broader policies and local level implementation capacities was explored. To this end, the study has shown that the project components have suited the needs of the target communities providing them with opportunities of owning productive assets, which helped them to be resilient in a drought situation of the current period. Its relevance to the government's policy of gender equality and economic empowerment of women were found to be undisputed so were its goals and strategies.

Effectiveness: the study has indicated that the project was implemented based on the original goals, targets and implementation strategies. It has been effective in providing actual benefits to women in terms of changes in access to and control over productive resources. The project's effectiveness is also evident in changing the deep-rooted gender norms that have been detrimental to women's participation and involvement in socio-economic activities, particularly in decision-making. It has been instrumental in bridging the gap between male and female in mobilizing their collective efforts towards combating poverty. Women's role has been enhanced to the level that they will graduate from the food insecure situation. Respondents in urban *Kebeles* of the study have also added their impression with regard to the project's effectiveness as they have witnessed significant reduction of migration from rural areas to the nearby town, which had been rampant in similar periods of food shortage they are facing this year due to the drought that has been hitting hard wide areas of the nation.¹

Efficiency: the study has found out that the project was implemented within the limits of planned financial, human and material resources. Moreover, its implementation was as per the time plan in which the project targets were attained within the proposed timeline. The resources allocated for the project have been efficiently utilized in the way that promotes saving culture and economic use of resources. The special approach and strategies of mobilizing local human resources, institutions and/or creating strong partnership among implementing agencies have been the particular contributing aspects of the project for its efficiency.

Impact: The project has been addressing some key priority areas towards mitigating the social marginalization and stigma of women, which has been significantly reduced over the last three years. Significance of women's role in community's development has been recognized by men and women and thus, paved ways for women engagement. Such recognition by both parties has boosted

¹ The country is experiencing one of the worst droughts in its history caused by the failure of the two main rainy seasons in 2015 due to El Niño effects. As a result, the food insecure people were 4.5 million in August 2015; more than double in December 2015; and about 15 million in March 2016 (FAO, 2016; WFP, 2016). Fedis *wereda* is one of the most vulnerable and food insecure identified as a hot spot *Wereda* by the Government of Ethiopia and Humanitarian organizations (Joint Government and Humanitarian Partners' Document [JGHPD], 2016).

women's self-esteem and confidence contributing for further empowerment. Women were provided with access to different resources and exercising the right of controlling those resources, which is manifested by meaningful decision making both at household and community levels. Women's representation both at formal and informal institutions has been enhanced following the project intervention. The project impact is more vivid in decision making at household level where women have progressively been engaged in taking active part in decisions that matter a lot. There are also changes in rates of immunization, feeding and hygiene of children and family planning practices. Early marriage has shown sharp decrease and the status of girl's retention in education has also been increasing from year to year. Women's participation in the VSLA and other networks has boosted their confidence of discussing, debating, expressing their feelings, and convincing their male counterparts. In general, evidences suggest that the project has significantly contributed to the food security of the beneficiary households (i.e. 65.5 % of the beneficiaries have moved from food support).

Sustainability: Preconditions for project sustainability are already in place. Through a series of capacity building measures, the level of local capacity to maintain the project benefits has significantly improved. The beneficiary communities have developed skills as to how they could discuss, monitor the progress, evaluate the outcomes. Above all, they benefited from the new culture of egalitarianism that embraces and puts women in the center of their development endeavor. The local communities and their leaders have developed a strong sense of ownership. The *Wereda* government institutions have also developed a strong sense of ownership through coordinated planning, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the project activities and have got extra motivation because of the success of the project within a couple of years. Capacity development trainings provided to beneficiaries in the areas such as beekeeping, improved seed multiplication, market linkages and value chain, VSLA, animal fattening, IGA, etc., have enhanced the local capacity which will be an asset to sustain and run their economic enterprises. Communities are confident enough that they can sustain those economic enterprises in the absence of the donor agency. However, there are fears that the recurrent droughts may affect their capacity.

Results in terms of CARE's Women empowerment framework of agency, structure and relations

Agency: There are changes in terms of changing role at household work assignment, in the pattern of decision making over household resources and management issues, and equitable access to resources. There was a significant change of culture in workload assignment at household level. Husbands began to share the household chores with their wives. Women have begun to exercise equal right of making sensible decisions over their common properties. Hence, they have got access to a pool of resources and endowed with control over these resources. Because of the joint decision making over the resources and other household matters, women have developed assertiveness and, more importantly, independence. Hence, the change in agency, as one of the project's philosophy, has been achieved.

Structure: The support from the *Wereda* institutions has been very good while the initial apathy to restrict gender issues to the women affair's sector has been changed. Synergetic planning and implementation of gender related issues have been evident among government offices. Hence, there was an enabling and supportive structure due to the project. There has been a change in the behavior of local formal and informal institutions in responding to women's issues. Women's voices are heard in these institutions more than ever. There is a growing recognition of women's role and decisiveness in local development and hence the role and representation of women in those institutions has improved due to the project.

Relations: The socio-economic relations in terms of gender have undergone significant change. At household level, because of joint decision making that has been exercised with mutual consent between the husband and wife, the usual household dispute and row over resource use has significantly reduced contributing to the tranquility and stability of the entire family. This has also helped the family to take proper care of their offspring, sending them to school, especially girls, and feed them properly. Relationships between the man and woman have improved with increased love and affection. With the growing status of women within the household and community, husbands became respectful, caring and affectionate to their wives, and so do the women. At community level, 'the old culture' of discrimination against women has been improved. Women's opinions were taken as important inputs for community decisions while the extension services have given special attention to women and encouraged them to be brave in combating the double faces of poverty being manifested by gender imbalance and food insecurity.

Findings from performance indicators

With regards to the Ultimate Outcome/goal of improving the livelihood security and the resilience for CFIW, the project has brought the following major changes. These include, the number of CFIW who reported to have moved out of food support has shown an increase compared to the overall target figures. Hence, 65.9 % (target 60%) of the respondents stated that their household is not currently receiving any food support. This result, when compared to the baseline that indicated 100 % (6,400) target represents about 4,218 beneficiaries. Thus, it shows that the project has surpassed its 60% target, which is particularly impressive considering the current El Niño induced drought that severely affected smallholders in many parts of the country including those in Fedis *Wereda* particularly during the last year of the project.

In terms of increasing women self-esteem, the project targeted to increase women's self-esteem from 2.67 (baseline) to 3.5 (out of a possible four score). The actual finding was that women's self-esteem had increased from 2.67 to 2.88. Thus, their self-esteem has risen by 0.21 points from where it was at the baseline. Although this score short falls short of the 3.5 mark that was indicated in the project's overall target, the end line score still indicates a positive outcome considering the current level of drought shock and its aftermath effects on vulnerable groups such as women.

Concerning the achievement on the increased quantity and quality of food production and consumption by women and men indicated by four measures, the following major results were found. These include:

Higher diversity of foods consumed: An increase in the number of food items consumed from four (baseline) to six types (end line) of food groups/items from the nine main food groups. These food items include *injera*, porridge, bread and soup made from sorghum, maize, barley, and wheat and eaten with stew made from haricot bean, meat, and dairy. In terms of Household Dietary Diversity Score, the dietary diversity of project beneficiaries was found to be 3.38, which indicates an improvement from the baseline dietary diversity of 3.

Number of meals consumed per day: This has increased from less than 2 meals per day at baseline to 2.31 meals/day with minimum of 1 and maximum of 3 meals at the end line. Moreover, 41% of households eat 3 meals per day. On the other hand, about 60.48 % of the respondents indicated that there is no difference between men and women consumption (i.e., no differences between men and women in eating the food items).

Number of food shortage months: The number of food shortage months has shown a decline from 8 (baseline figures) to an average of 3.66 months at the end line.

Proportion of HHs that could feed from own produces: On this indicator, the result is mixed. The target of the project was to improve the baseline situation where 85% of households were not able to feed themselves for 6 months (267 HHs, 44.5%) from own produces into a situation. Here, the results of the end line survey show that despite a great majority of respondents (91.37%) reporting that they can feed their household members for at least 1 month from own crop produced, 85.3 % of respondents stated that they couldn't be able to feed their household members for more than 6 months. This result largely reflects the effect of the recent drought that aggravated the size and magnitude of food insecurity across the country, putting more pressure on already capricious livelihood systems that were frequently devastated by natural disasters.

Concerning the improvement of beneficiaries' ability to manage and control their economic enterprises, the end line survey found that 63.66 % of women respondents and 71.43 % of male respondents reported to have engaged in off-farm activities. This result shows a major increase from the 35% target set for the project. The result therefore is an indication of the positive effect of the project on encouraging CFIW and their husbands to diversify their livelihood and look for options other than farming, which untimely contributes to enhance their resilience.

The project also aimed to register 40% increase in the income from all assets, which is about 2593 Birr/year. Overall, 20.5% of households were engaged in off-farm and non-farm activities prior to the project. In this regard, the end line survey results show that the aggregated average income of households from all sources reached 3348 Birr/year. This has a 755 Birr increment and represents a 51.6 % increase in the income of households. This result attests that the project has met and even exceeded its overall target significantly.

Moreover, the households on average had earned a monthly income of 303.50 *Birr* (which would be close to *Birr* 3642 per year) during the past 12 months before the end line evaluation. This figure, compared to the 1851.88 *Birr*/year at the baseline is an enormous improvement. The average monthly income for female beneficiaries by far exceeds the income reported by male beneficiaries. However, given the very few number of male respondents sampled in the survey, this result has to be interpreted with caution. The two-sample t-test between income and sex of respondents showed that the difference between the two groups is statistically significant ($\Pr (|T| > |t|) = 0.0252$).

The beneficiaries have an average current savings of *Birr* 830.03. This compared to the baseline figure of 61.45 *Birr* is a huge leap forward which also indicates the effectiveness of the project in terms of providing various supports to beneficiaries and establishment of VSLAs that could promote the saving culture in the *Wereda*.

The third intermediate outcome that focuses on the policy and regulatory environment to support poor women's and men's equal control of agricultural resources and market processes, evidences have shown that the support given to beneficiaries is increasing as evidenced by the growing trend in the *Wereda* administration having gender sensitive development activities vis-a-vis its sectoral mandates.

Conclusions and recommendations to CARE's future women empowerment program

The project has been highly relevant to the pressing needs of the poor households and chronically food insecure women as well as the broader policies and strategies of the country. It has also been effective in creating access to and control over resources by the poor women though confronting the deep rooted male-female relationship that has been detrimental to any development intervention and hence, this has been a commendable component of the project to be scaled up and replicated elsewhere in similar contexts. Besides, the project has established a long lasting platform for mobilizing, coordinating, synergetic planning and gender sensitivity among different stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental; formal and informal; local and higher levels. The country wide El Nino induced drought has in many ways challenged the benefits and outcomes of the project and this requires a cautious and strategic exit that is followed by a planned post project phase out support, which is the major recommendation of this end line evaluation study.

1. Background

1.1. Introduction to the study

This end line evaluation of CARE Ethiopia's ABDISHE project critically looked into the existing relevant documents of the project, used the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, and reviewed documents from FAO, CARE Canada, CARE Ethiopia, World Bank, and UN Women among others to develop the analytical frameworks, methodologies, and tools of data generation as well as analysis for the final evaluation.

This report presents the findings of the final evaluation study of the project. The report is organized into five sections. Section one provides background information about the project and the evaluation. Section 2 describes the evaluation methodology and limitations, while a brief household structure and socio-demographic profile of the project beneficiaries is presented in section 3. Section 4 presents the findings of the evaluation based on each of the standard evaluation criteria. The last section, section 5, covers conclusions and recommendations for CARE's future women empowerment programs, respectively.

1.2. Project background

The Ethiopian component of the broader overall LINKAGES project is named ABDISHE, (*"her hope" in Afaan Oromoo—the local language*) aims to Strengthening Women's Livelihoods through Markets, which contributes to the ultimate outcome of the LINKAGES program. ABDISHE is designed to provide alternative and accelerated pathways towards graduation from the Government of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), the largest social safety net program in Africa so far providing food and cash transfers up to 7.9 million beneficiaries (see Berhane et al., 2014; Porter & Goyal, 2015; World Bank, 2015).

The ABDISHE project was implemented in 11 *Kebeles* of Fedis *Wereda* in Eastern Harerghe Zone of the Oromia Regional State where chronic food insecurity is highly pronounced. The project reaches 6,400 CFIW and their households with a total budget of 1,962,995 Canadian Dollar (CAD). CARE Ethiopia has been implementing the project in partnership with the relevant government partners that include Agriculture Office, Cooperative Office and Women and Children Affairs Offices, and others. ABDISHE follows market-driven approaches and contributes to improving the livelihoods of CFIW mainly through assisting them to acquire assets through entry into viable markets and contextually relevant microfinance services. Thus, the project aligns with the efforts of the Government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to link PSNP beneficiaries to long-term development initiatives.

1.3. Objectives of study

The purpose of this final evaluation study is to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the ABDISHE project. The study assessed to what extent the project achieved its intermediate and ultimate outcomes; and how and why they were achieved to the extent they were. The specific objectives of the final evaluation include the following:

- i. Compare and assess end-line data to the baseline data to determine whether or not targets were met and why;
- ii. Capture intended and unintended changes in behaviors, actions, ownership, capacities, and relationship of the program stakeholders, especially as they relate to gender equality;
- iii. Determine the project's contribution to these changes, and the efficiency and effectiveness of that contribution, especially in promoting and supporting gender equality, changes among key stakeholders;
- iv. Analyze the relevance of the project's activities and strategies, according to the key actors and current context of the project, and with knowledge around the gender equality challenges in the project context;
- v. Assess the above points from an expert opinion as to whether the project results are sustainable, especially with regard to the gender equality change necessary in the project context, including consideration for the current institutional arrangements in the project context;
- vi. Enable the project stakeholders CARE Ethiopia and Canada, DFATD, local government, community, Haremaya University, and project team to reflect on change processes and progresses achieved;
- vii. Document stories about results and changes from stakeholders' perspectives and distill lessons learned that will feed into Country Office Programming.

1.4. Scope of the study

The final evaluation study addressed issues that are focused on, but not limited to, the following:

- ⇒ The extent of improved livelihood security and resilience of CFIW, girls, men and boys of target community;
- ⇒ The extent of increased quantity and quality of food production and consumption by women and men;
- ⇒ The degree of change on women and men on managing and controlling their economic enterprises;
- ⇒ The responsiveness of policies, institutions and regulatory environment to poor women's and men's to ensure a more equitable control of agricultural resources and market processes.

Besides the review of project interventions and strategies, the study also:

- ⇒ Explored the linkages of the project interventions with other relevant stakeholders;

⇒ Examined the project’s impact on different kinds of household conditions (FHHs, Female in MHHs, landless youth, married adolescent girls; and unmarried school age girls to see its impact on girls' education, reduction of dropout, enhancement of retention among others); and

⇒ Explored the above-mentioned areas across the components of the project (women capacity to demand their rights, increased bargaining powers and control over resources and/or livelihood activities, equitable norms and socio-economic equality).

The following evaluation questions and indicators pertaining to the evaluation questions are collected (see Table 1).

Table 1: Performance indicator and OECD-DAC criteria guided the study

Performance indicators	OECD-DAC criteria
1) Increased quantity and quality food production and consumption by women and men	A. Relevance
1.1 Increased women and men agricultural production and productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the project’s activities well- suited to the needs and priorities of the target groups?
1.2 Increased women and men equal consumption of food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the project complement work from other actors in the Fedis district?
1.3 Decreased gap between men’s and women’s control over resources necessary to ensure sustainable food production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are women involved in accessing productive resources due to ABDISHE so as to improve quantity and quality of food production (land credit, new technology, and agricultural extension information)?
2. Women and men are better able to manage and control their economic enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What special strategy put in place to enable women to better manage and control their economic enterprises?
2.1. Increased women and men equal access to the knowledge, skills and services needed to strengthen and diversify their economic activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How adequate the policy support was in the pathway of ensuring women control over agricultural resources?
2.2. Increased in women and men engagement on value chain (VC) activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What possible options are there for further improvements?
2.3. Collectives and Business Development Service Providers (BDSP) provided more equally relevant support to male and female owned enterprises	B. Effectiveness
3. The policy and regulatory environment supports poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent the project was effective in contributing to graduation of targeted CFIW/households from their food insecurity

<p>women's and men's more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes</p>	<p>situation in the project area?</p>
<p>3.1. Local value chain (VC) actors (women's groups, collectives, suppliers) have increased role in the formulation of policies and regulations that enhance men's and women's food, nutrition & income security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidences are there to demonstrate women's graduation from chronically food insecure situation?
<p>3.2. Improved capacity of local government structures to effectively and transparently engage women in development planning and implementation processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can this evidence help formulate and guide further efforts of women's graduation from CFI situation?
<p>3.3. Local value chain (VC) actors (women's groups, collectives, suppliers) have increased role in the formulation of policies and regulations that enhance men's and women's food, nutrition & income security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent the project was effective in contributing to graduation of targeted CFIW/households from their food insecurity situation in the project area?
<p>3.4. Improved capacity of local government structures to effectively and transparently engage women in development planning and implementation processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidences are there to demonstrate women's graduation from chronically food insecure situation?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can this evidence help formulate and guide further efforts of women's graduation from CFI situation?
	<p>C. Efficiency</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the ABDISHE project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the activities cost-efficient?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the objectives of ABDISHE achieved on time?
	<p>D. Impact</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the positive and negative changes on beneficiaries that directly or indirectly, intended or unintended registered due to the ABDISHE project's intervention? • What priority issues of CFIRW that the project was able to address that transformed the socio-economic needs and aspiration of women and girls? • What are the major attributions/contributions of ABDISHE/CARE to the graduation of the targeted CFIW/households from their food insecurity in the project area?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidences are there to demonstrate possibility of women graduation from chronically food insecure situation?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How this evidence could help formulate and guide further efforts of women graduation from CFIW situation?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What lessons could be transferred to other CARE's programs, further funding opportunities and policy influence?
	E. Sustainability
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the ownership sense of the community/government line departments on the project implementation process and outcome?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the ABDISHE's projectoutcomes/benefits likely to continue after the completion of CARE's funding?

4. Methodology

The end line evaluation used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology. The overall design was guided by a participatory and consultative approach that took into account the various stakeholders involved in the project.

2.1.1. Quantitative methodology

The quantitative methodology mainly involved household survey that collected data through a structured questionnaire administered to beneficiary households (i.e., FHH, woman from MHHs and MHHs). Female groups were the main respondents of the survey. The structured household questionnaire was adapted from both the baseline study and mid-term evaluation, and focused on the project intended outcomes and objectives.

2.1.2. Qualitative methodology

The qualitative assessment used focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) that were conducted with beneficiary women and their husbands/partners, collaborating local government agencies and other implementing partners, village savings and credit association members and leaders and care field staff Thus, a total of 18 KIIs were carried out with development agents, *Kebele* administrators, development agents, *Wereda* Cooperative Office Head, *Wereda* Oromia Credit and Saving Company Head, *Wereda* Agriculture & Rural Development Office Head, Women and Children Affair Office Head, Food Security/Livelihood Experts (Harmaya University,

Department of Rural Livelihoods), and *Zonal* level offices. Twelve FGDs were conducted, six with women and six with men. The FGDs integrated elements of Most Significant Change (MSC), which were used to elicit information on the project outcomes/impact through storytelling and appreciative enquiry. In addition, document reviews (DRs) were used to generate secondary data pertaining to project outcomes from relevant sources (i.e., project document, baseline survey, mid-term evaluation report, monitoring and progress reports and others).

2.2. Study population

The project's target population (beneficiaries) is 6,400 CFIW and their households in 11 *Kebeles* of Fedis *Wereda*, East Hararghe *Zone*.

2.3. Sampling

2.3.1. Sampling strategy

A two stage sampling strategy was followed to select the final sample of study units (households) for the structured household survey. In the first stage, out of 11 project targeted *Kebeles*, 6 *Kebeles* were selected for the evaluation, of which, four (i.e., Bedhatu, Tuta Kanissa, Bidi Bora, and Fechatu) were the same as baseline and mid-term evaluation surveys and two additional *Kebeles* namely Bereda and Boko were selected randomly. In the second stage, based on the Proportion to Size (PPS), the final sample of households was selected using a Systematic Random Sampling (SRS) from selected *Kebeles*.

2.3.2. Sample size

Households were considered as the key sampling units. Sample size is determined by applying the standard estimation procedure commonly used in circumstance where the purpose of the survey is to interpret the results in a variety of ways such as means/averages for applying various statistical tools. Probability sampling techniques were employed to generate the needed-sample size for the evaluation in the study site. The sample size was determined by using the sample size determination equation (Kothari, 2004).

$$n = \frac{z^2 * p * q * N}{e^2 (N - 1) + z^2 * p * q} \quad (Eq1)$$

Where, N = size of population (6400). I.e., Abdishe target beneficiaries.

n = sample size needed

e = acceptable error (the precision) 5% (0.05);

z = confidence level (95 %) where z=1.96;

p= sampling proportion (0.5) q= 1-p=0.5.

This yielded a sample size of 362 households and adding a 5 % contingency to account for non-responses, gave 381 households and questionnaire was administered to all household in a face to face manner by trained enumerators².

Table 2:Sample size by *Kebeles*³

Sampled <i>Kebeles</i>	<i>Kebele's</i> population (PPS)	Sample size	Percent
Bedhatu	670	77	20.21
Tuta Kenissa	840	97	25.46
Bida Bora	746	85	22.31
Bereda	796	92	24.15
Fechatu	126	15	3.94
Boko	120	15	3.94
Total	3298	381	100.00

2.4. Study Team

The study team was composed of 11 enumerators (four female and seven males) with a supervisor for household survey and four research assistants to the qualitative studies. However, the core evaluation team includes a team leader, a quantitative analyst, food security and livelihood resilience analyst, gender analyst, and policy and institution analyst with diverse educational backgrounds and experiences on the themes of the study.

2.5. Recruitment, training, and data collection process

To ensure the quality of data gathered, a number of procedures were implemented. In particular, specific attention was given to the selection and training of research assistants, translation of the questionnaire into local language, and pre-testing of the survey instrument were carried out in one of the *Kebeles*, reasonable corrections were made and the data collection were carried out in the subsequent days. Experienced research assistants were recruited and deployed from the consultant's office and supervisors and data collectors were locally recruited from the respective *Kebeles*. A survey team was established having six research assistants, one supervisor and 11 interviewers. This arrangement facilitated that each team in a *Wereda* could successfully communicate and monitor data collection. Training was given to the survey team in two stages; two days training was given to the research assistants in Addis Ababa, followed by one-day training for enumerators in each selected *Kebele* and piloted for a day. The training provided to the research assistants enabled them to have a

² We deployed 11 experienced enumerators, consisting of four females and seven males to administer the household survey questionnaire in six *Kebeles* with a closer supervision both from the Consultancy team and CARE staff.

³ The exact number of households in each *Kebele* was obtained from CARE field staff and the population proportion was done accordingly.

better understanding of the survey objective, capacity to train supervisors and interviewers, and to conduct FGDs and key informant interviews.

2.6. Data collection

Household demographic information and project outcomes related data were collected using household survey questionnaire. Qualitative information pertaining to OECD-DAC evaluation criteria (i.e., *project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability*) and information on CARE empowerment framework (i.e., *agency, structure and relation*) were collected using KIIs, FGD and DR.

2.7. Data quality assurance

To ensure reliability of the data, all filled questionnaires were checked by the supervisor on a daily basis. The supervisor was also in charge of checking all the filled questionnaires and interview results on spot at the field level. Therefore, a supervisor and research teams have examined its completeness, accuracy, and consistency of responses and made appropriate corrections before leaving the study site. With the preliminary quality control at the field level by a supervisor, rigorous data validity and consistency checks such as: editing, coding and the data cleaning exercises were employed as part of the data quality control exercises before starting the analytical work by the data manager at the office level.

2.9. Data entry and management

2.9.1. Data entry

A number of tools and guidelines are available to assist with data processing, and are best planned with technical expertise. In this regard, we followed the six steps of the World Food Program (WFP) for quantitative data analysis. These include, 1) assigning data entry personnel and setting a procedure to ensure the quality of data entry, 2) entering numerical variables in spread sheet or database, 3) entering continuous variable data on spread sheets, 4) coding and labelling variables, 5) dealing with missing values, and 6) data cleaning methods. Thus, all completed household questionnaires were submitted to the consultant's office for editing, coding and data entry. A senior statistician involved in the designing, instrument development has managed the data clerk's recruitment, entry, supervision processing and analysis. Quantitative data was entered and analyzed by SPSS® Version 21 and Stata® 14 statistical software interchangeably. On the other hand, the qualitative information was thematically analysed with a focus on description of information, classification, and making connections (i.e., three key qualitative analysis strategies) (Bazeley, 2009). In this case, key points were coded and organized into categories and subcategories that represent observed trends for further analysis.

2.9.2. Data cleaning

After the data entry, our data manager performed data cleaning and verification. To this end, the final cleaned data set was saved in a “READ ONLY” format for documentation and another copy was used to prepare this report. The qualitative data was also coded and organized and saved in a “READ ONLY” format.

2.9.3. Data processing and analysis

Analysis of the quantitative data was performed for the most part using SPSS and STATA softwares. The quantitative data were analyzed and presented in different statistical forms, including, descriptive statistics (mean, maximum, minimum, and standard deviation), frequency tables and figures, chi-square test, two sample t-test, computation of household dietary diversity score (DDI), coping strategy index (CSI), and multiple scores/indices among others.

The qualitative data generated from verbal and narrative responses from key informant interviews, commentaries from open ended part of questionnaires, and focus group discussions, were analyzed thematically. The qualitative analysis was used to strengthen the interpretation of the quantitative findings. Once the data collection, transcription, and verification processes were complete and data entered, the study team undertook the data analysis. In doing so, the evaluation team paid attention to variance between baseline, midline and end line evaluation results to engage in a more critical analysis of and reporting on project performance.

2.8. Ethical considerations (survey ethics, confidentiality, ethical approval, child protection, etc.)

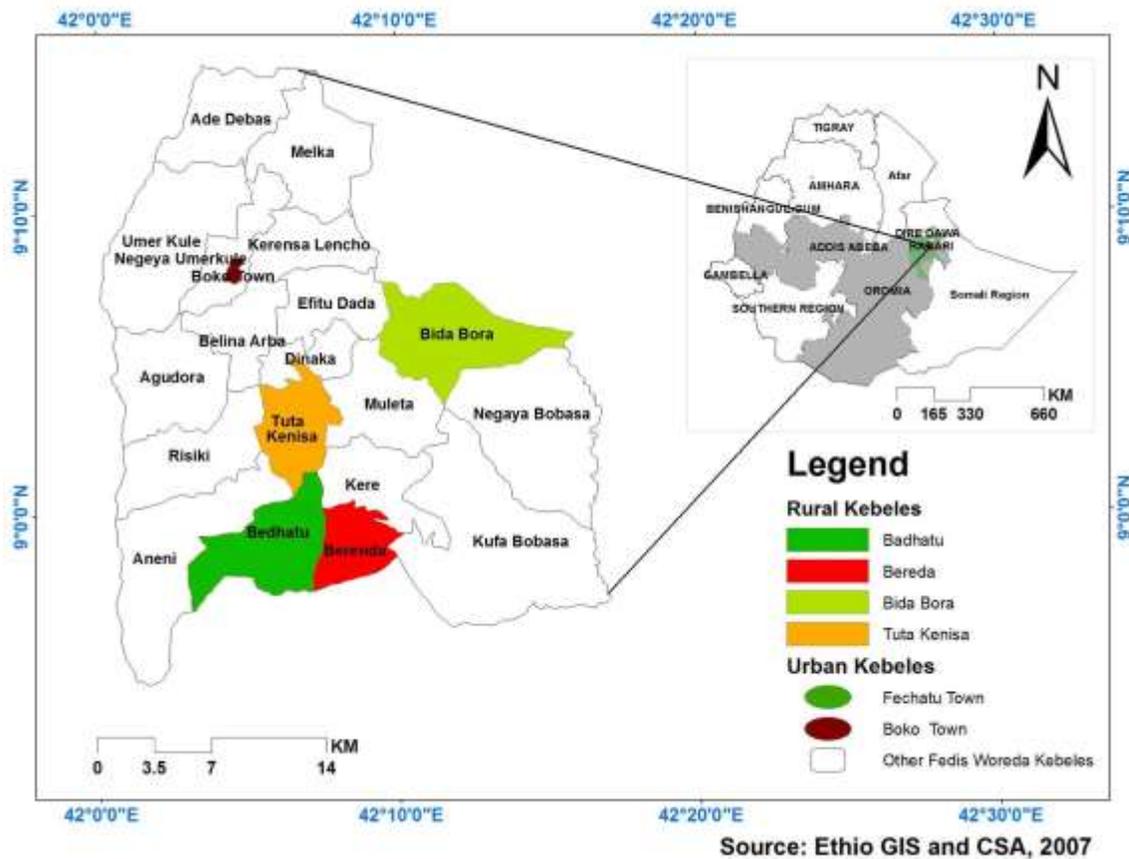
Before conducting interviews, focus group discussion and administer the survey questionnaires, the field supervisor and research assistants discussed with the concerned bodies to ensure that they were aware of the project and allow the data collection. Besides, before asking questions, the interviewers explained the purpose of the interview to every household member taking part in the evaluation survey. Thus, the interviews were conducted only after the respondents agreed to participate and support letters obtained from CARE Ethiopia were shown to the concerned bodies at all levels of administration.

2.9. Description of the Fedis *Wereda*

Fedis *Wereda* is located at a distance of 24 kms South from Harar and 539 kms East from Addis Ababa and lies between 8^o22` and 9^o14` N latitude and 42^o19` E longitude (Figure 1). It has a total area of 2047.09km² Agro- ecologically, 85 % is low land and the rest is mid-land. The average temperature ranges between 25-30 °C and annual rain fall averages from 650 to 750 mm. The topography of the *Wereda* is predominantly characterized by plains (consisting of few isolated hills)

few plateaus, mountains, hills and valleys as well as gorges. According to the recent CSA estimation, Fedis *Wereda* has a population of 135, 532 (68, 411 males and 67, 121 females) (CSA, 2013). Women account for 49.52 % of the total population. Fedis *Wereda* has 21 *Kebeles* (i.e., 19 rural and 2 urban *Kebeles*). Over 95 % of the *Wereda* has rural *Kebeles* and only 4.72 % (6402) urban inhabitants. The average amount of rainfall varies between 650mm-750mm and the average temperature of the district diverges between 25°C and 30°C. The altitude of the district ranges from 1,050 to 2100 m.a.s.l. Rendo (1687m), Daleti Afeta (1300m) and Hakim Gara (2118m) are the major mountains in the district⁴. In terms of livelihood, agriculture is the dominant economic activity. Fedis *Wereda* is one of the most vulnerable to shock and food insecure *Weredas* in East Hararghe and even at regional level, which resulted the high dependency on development partners, including CARE Ethiopia.

Figure 1: Location of the study area



⁴ The office of the President of Oromia Regional State (2011). Socio-economic Profile of Fedis Wereda. Retrieved on 25 May 2013 from <http://www.romiyaa.com/english/index>.

2.10. Limitations of the evaluation

Abdishe project's final evaluation was challenged in many ways. One of the critical challenges that hampered the evaluation study relates to the fact that it has been carried out in the aftermath of the recent El Nino induced shocks, which is the highest in record and devastated household's asset bases and livelihoods. As a result of this, many of the positive outcomes of the project were obscured by the shocks and much of the negative results as in reduced income from diverse income generating activities, including crop and livestock; agricultural productivity and food security situation were affected by the shocks. The second limitation of the study relates to the inconsistency in some of the indicators among the baseline, mid-term and final evaluation, which in turn, has created difficulty to organize the findings and produce the report. Even though this study had reviewed both baseline survey and mid-term evaluation, it adapted the baseline methodology (sources of data; over 90 % of the survey questions; and others tools) as suggested by CARE Ethiopia and Canada. This has contributed to some of the discrepancies in findings between the mid-term and the final evaluation in general, and among the datasets, in particular. The third challenge that may have limited the study was a serious time pressure encountered both during the data collection and more importantly in reporting of the findings. In spite of all these challenges, however, the evaluation teams exerted maximum efforts and addressed the problems to offset the potential limitations by employing alternatives mechanisms with a clear purpose of achieving the study objectives.

3. The study area profile and background of respondents

3.1. Profile of the study *Kebeles*

As shown in Table 3, the survey was carried out in four rural and two urban *Kebeles* (Figure 1). Using population proportion to size (PPS) technique, relatively the largest sample was drawn from Tuta Kenissa, 97 (25.46%), followed by Bereda, 92 (24.15%), Bida Bora, 85 (22.31%) and Bedhatu, 77 (20.21%). On the other hand, equal number of households were selected from Fechatu and Boko *Kebeles*, which together account to close to 8 % and the smallest in proportion. Although 95 % of *Kebeles* in Fedis *Wereda* fall under rural *Kebeles*, chronically food insecure households were selected as beneficiaries from both urban and rural *Kebeles*.

Table 3: Sampled *Kebeles*

Survey <i>Kebeles</i>	Freq.	Percent
Bedhatu	77	20.21
Tuta Kenissa	97	25.46
Bida Bora	85	22.31
Bereda	92	24.15
Fechatu*	15*	3.94
Boko*	15*	3.94
Total	381	100.00

Source: Field survey (April, 2016) * indicates the urban *Kebeles*

3.2. Agro-ecology of the study area

It is evident that much part of Fedis *Wereda* is in low land agro-ecology and the smaller portion is in a midland. As a result, out of the surveyed six *Kebeles*, four of them are located in lowland area, which accounts for 365 (95.80%) while the two *Kebeles*, namely (Boko and Bida Bora) are in a midland agro-ecology. Thus, this being a lowland agro-ecological *Zone* has its own adverse impact on beneficiary household livelihoods. In this regard, the household's geographic location significantly affects its livelihood and determines the vulnerability situation as well as resilience capacities. For example, studies carried out on vulnerability and resilience to climate induced shocks in North Shewa and rural household livelihood strategies: Options and determinants in Wolaita *Zone* have vividly indicated this association (Teso et al., 2012; Yisaq et al., 2014).

Table 4: Agro-ecology of the study area

Agro-ecology	Freq.	Percent
Midland	16	4.2
Lowland	365	95.8
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

3.3. Background of the respondents

3.3.1. Household head of the respondents

Ethiopia is largely composed of male dominated (patriarchal) communities, where the household in many parts of the country is led by males. From the field survey, it can be said that 291 (76.38%) of the beneficiary households' heads are males while 90 (23.62%) are females. From the survey data, close to a quarter of the beneficiary households are female headed. This figure signifies the strong focus and inclusion of female headed households into the project while equally promoting the participation of women from male headed households. Thus, the involvement of women both from female headed and male headed households is relevant to address the pressing needs of women, which as a result will trickle down to the household members, including the head of the household.

Table 1: Table 5: Household head by sex category

Household head	Freq.	Percent
Male	291	76.38
Female	90	23.62
Total	381	100.00

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

3.3.2. Age of the respondents

Age is one of the major demographic variables used when development intervention is designed and applied in various statistical analysis. Accordingly, from the descriptive statistics, the mean age of the surveyed respondents is 34.37 years while the median age is 34.00 years (n=373). As shown in Table 5, the maximum age limit of the surveyed respondents is 65 years while the minimum age limit is 20 years, with the range being 45 years. Though close to 60 % of the responders are below 35 years' age, almost 99.7 % of the surveyed beneficiaries or respondents are in the productive age group (16-64 years) (CSA, 2013). Many of the beneficiary households being in the productive age group has positively contributed towards the improvement households' food security situation in attempt archive livelihood security.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of age of respondents

Variable	Obs ⁵	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Age	373	34.37	7.91	20	65

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

3.3.3. Family size of respondents

Similar to age, total household size or family size is an important demographic indicator used in development project. For example, out of the total 379 observations, 6.81 is the average family size reported. Besides, 12 is the maximum family size while 3 is the minimum, with a range of 9 families. From this, it is evident to suggest that family size can be both an asset when properly used for productive purposes such as, working force or skilled labor to the improvement of household livelihoods. On contrary, it is a liability when misused as in unemployed and being dependent on the meagre family income and share the limited resources. The diverse awareness creation activities as part of capacity building schemes along with the wide-ranging trainings, including family size are among the positive contributions of the project to figure out the costs and benefits of larger and smaller family size to the beneficiary households.

Table 7: Total family size of respondents

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Total family size	379	6.81	1.85	3	12

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

⁵ This was only computed on 373 HHs, where there were 8 missing values and/or non-response on this item.

3.3.4. Marital status of respondents

As can be seen from Table 8, out of the surveyed beneficiaries in six *Kebeles*, most of single female beneficiary are women 13 (81.21%), against 3 (18.75%) who are male. For married interviewees, 280 (97.22%) are female beneficiaries, while male are only 8 (2.77%). Similarly, the largest proportion of divorced beneficiaries is comprised of female respondents. The number of male counterpart across the marital status is smaller figure, which is mainly due to the larger number of female beneficiary households involved in the household survey. Since the Abdishe project aims to empower the chronically food insecure and poor women, there is no question that the proportion of female group is larger across the demographic figures and the project targeting is of paramount importance to respond towards the women problems at grassroots level. This figure backs the qualitative findings on project relevance. In view of this, during the qualitative studies, respondents vividly indicated that the Abdishe project intervention brought many of women who were at home and now they started to contribute positively towards family wellbeing. They also suggested that the relevance of Abdishe project intervention to the households' food security and gender empowerment desires at micro level is widely acknowledge as in the case of women's participation in VSLA and IGAs while actively taking part in various decision making arenas both at household and community levels. Such participation has double benefits, one thing, it enhanced women's level of consciousness and second, it created an opportunity for women to exercise their rights freely.

Table 8: Respondent households by sex and marital status

Sex of household	Marital status of the household			
	Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed
Male	3 (18.75)	8 (2.77)	3 (4.10)	0
Female	13 (81.21)	280 (97.22)	70 (95.89)	4 (100)
Total	16	288	73	4

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

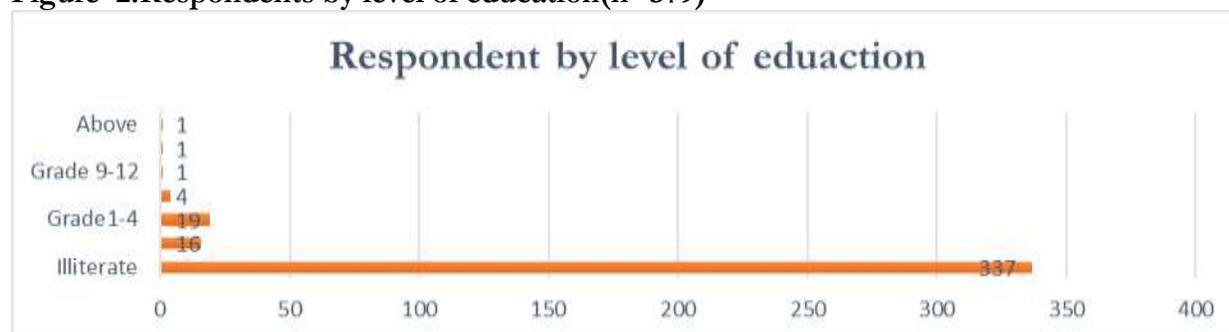
3.3.5. Education level of respondents

Unarguably, level of education is crucial for every development intervention endeavors by the government and NGOs. Countries level of development is often evaluated based on the level of literacy as in the case of Human Development Index (HDI)⁶ measurement. Based on the survey data, even though the Ministry of Education has been working towards the achievement MGDs and appreciated to meet 5 out of 7 goals, including, Universal primary education (UPE), 337 (88.92%) of the respondents are illiterate, followed by 19 (5.01%) (grade 1-4); and 16 (4.22%) can only read and write. On the other hand, very insignificant number of households is found in upper category of schooling. To this end, it can be noted that empowering the poor households through various skill trainings is timely response in order to create households' resilience capacity, one of this,

⁶ See Human Development Index (HDI).

households' preparedness to shocks via early warning information system, which can be delivered at farm training center in collaboration with locally developed NGOs working on related issues.

Figure 2: Respondents by level of education (n=379)



Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

3.3.6. Current employment of respondents

In a project evaluation, it is important to explore the current employment status of the beneficiary households in order to see the positive impacts of the project in the form of employment creation. According to the baseline survey result, only 20.5% of households were engaged in off-farm and non-farm activities. In the end line evaluation, 274 (82.03%) of the beneficiary households are engaged in agricultural activities under the private business category, 40 (11.97%) are involved in income generating business activities, which were created by the project support. Therefore, the Abdishe project apart from its support in the form of assets transfer, capacity building trainings, creating access to credit and saving resources, and promoting the market value chains, it also brought many of the unemployed and dependent women into the business circle.

Table 9: Employment current employment status (n=305)

Employment current employment status	Types of employment			Total ⁷
	Agriculture	Daily labor	Business activity	
Employed	27	7	0	34
Private business	274	20	40	334
Student	0	0	1	1
Unemployed	3	2	0	5
Others	1	0	0	1
Total	305	29	41	375

Sources: Filed survey (April, 2016)

⁷ This specific question had a non-response/missing values and thus, the actual figure was 375 HHs.

3.3.7. Land holding of the respondents

As can be seen from Table 10, 261 (70.54%) of households have land holding between 0.1-0.5 ha, followed by 81 (21.89%) owned land between 0.6-1.0 ha and very insignificant number of households have landholding above 1 hectare. The figure indicates that over 90 % of the beneficiary households are smallholder farmers⁸, and close to 70 % are “micro holders”⁹ (Dessaiegn, 2007). Being smallholder farmers limits the extensive form of agriculture and thus agricultural production and productivity remains small. In this case, the justification on agricultural productivity can be viewed from two perspectives. The low agricultural productivity emanates from being rained food production systems, which are very sensitive to climate change and variability; use of non-performing agricultural inputs such as improved seeds (drought tolerant/resistant, pest resistant, high yielding, etc.). On the other hand, increased agricultural productivity can be linked with fertilizers, best agronomic practices (soil management, efficient usages of agricultural water, etc.) than the “size of the farms” among others. In this regard, the landholding proportion figure agrees with both the regional and national averages, where the largest number of households are smallholders (CSA, 2007). In terms of ownership, it was reported that, 345 (96.91%) of the land is owned by adult male member of the household, which is also not uncommon across the region and the country, that being derived from the long existed patriarchal society perspectives on resources ownership by female counterpart. However, within this context, the project intervention has positively contributed its part for the poor and chronically food insecure women to have better access to and control over productive resources, which are relevant to improve their livelihoods and food security situation.

Table 10: Land holding by respondents (n=370)¹⁰

Land holding in ha	Freq.	Percent	Male	Female
0.1-0.5 ha	261	70.54	10 (2.70)	251 (67.83)
0.6-1.0 ha	81	21.89	3(0.81)	78 (21.80)
1.1-1.5 ha	15	4.05	-	15 (4.05)
Above 1.6 ha	13	3.51	1 (0.27)	12 (3.24)
Total	370	100.00	14 (3.78)	356 (96.21)

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

⁸ Households having less than 1 ha of land.

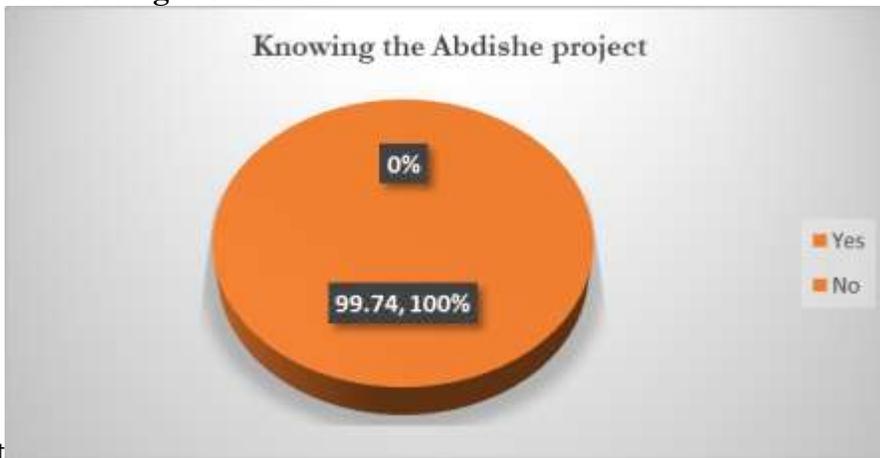
⁹ Households having less than 0.5 ha of land (see also Dessaiegn, 2007)

¹⁰ The rest is missing and/or non-response values. Thus, we only computed for those who answered this particular item.

3.3.8. Knowing the Abdishe project

For a question asked to check whether the project beneficiary households know the Abdishe project, or not, the respondents vividly noted that they are well aware of what the project is and the type of support it provides to the beneficiary households, which in turn, enabled them to improve their households' food security status and enhance livelihood security (Figure 3). Therefore, the strong familiarity of beneficiaries to the project objectives, activities, and its ultimate outcomes has not only helped CARE Ethiopia to efficiently implement the project but also created prospects for changes, challenged the dependency syndrome, enabled households to respond to shocks, and empowered women in multitude of ways, which otherwise would have costed much to the implementing agencies.

Figure 3: Knowing the Abdishe



project

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

3.4. Project evaluation against OECD-DAC criteria

3.4.1. Project relevance

Relevance is one of the five OECD/DAC criteria that helps to assess whether or not the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partner' and donor's policies. In relevance, one of the major questions asked was, are we doing the right things? What is the relevance or significance of the intervention regarding local and national requirements and priorities? Hence, the relevance of the ABDISHE project was rigorously assessed as to what extent it has been a right response to the socio-economic problems as well as short and long term development goals of the target communities, and consistent with the development policies being implemented so far. The participants responded that they were living in desperation under severe poverty and food insecurity while ABDISHE project was initiated. Hence,

the project was aimed at relieving those problems that their household has been suffering for long. The project's arrival has been meant that they have got means for the precarious situation of their livelihood. Therefore, the respondents have witnessed that it was a right and perhaps a timely response for their needs and future development aspirations.

The respondents affirmed that the project has components that have suited their pressing needs. It provided them with such opportunities as owning assets including bulls, goats and hens. They were provided with trainings that enhanced their capacity to do things that range from housekeeping to outdoor activities for income generation as well as community representations. Hence, as they reiterated, its relevance to their own needs and to the government's development policies can't be disputed. They further noted that it was the government's usual lamentation to achieve gender equality and economic empowerment of women and efforts have also been underway since long. But, the ABDISHE project come out with feasible strategies in terms of gender empowerment which they have witnessed tangible outcomes (See section 3.6). This response from the key informants is also consistent with the desk review findings. The review of various policy and plan documents from both government and CARE has shown that there is a harmony and consistency between the project goals, strategies and implementation approaches and that of the broader development policies as well as local level implementation plans. It is also evident that the project is palatable to implement as it was within the limits of the capacities of local implementing bodies and institutions.

3.4.2. Project effectiveness

Responses from the beneficiaries have indicated that the project has been effectively implemented based on the original goals, targets and implementation strategies. There are evidences of actual benefits to women beneficiaries in terms of change in access to and control over productive resources. It can be said effective because of its practical responses towards enhancing the livelihood status of women, in particular and their entire family, in general. Its effectiveness is also evident in changing the deep-rooted gender norms that have ever been detrimental to women's participation and involvement in socio economic activities, especially in decision-making. Both women and male FGD members expressed the similar response in that the project has been playing an instrumental role in bridging the gap between male and female in terms of mobilizing their collective efforts towards combating poverty. Women's role has been enhanced to the level that they will graduate from the food insecure situation. In acknowledging the project effectiveness, one of the women respondents has told the interview team the following:

“Abdishe project has made our husbands return back to home”. In explaining this she kept on to say, “as we women began to be recognized and got access to resources from Abdishe, their heart could not be as cruel as before. Their attitude towards wives has changed and began to treat us in a respectful manner. Those husbands who were counting their wives useless began to recognize their importance. As the project was providing the productive resources in the name of women in the household, husbands usually have to ask the willingness of their wives to use those resources. This was a huge victory for most women in our

Kebele. There was only one household head before the project, i.e. my husband. But today, there are two heads including me- the wife, thanks to Abdishe.”

As mentioned by male respondents, active engagement of women has partly contributed towards the graduation of the household from the government PSNP. Respondents in urban *Kebeles* of the study have also added their impression with regard to the project’s effectiveness as they have witnessed significant reduction of migration from rural areas to the nearby town, which had been rampant in similar periods of food shortage they are facing this year due to the drought that has been hitting hard wide areas of the nation.

3.4.3. Project efficiency

Efficiency of the project is assessed on the basis of the economic and wise use of human, material and financial resources. Moreover, its implementation as per the time plan in which the project targets are attained within the proposed timeline is another indicator for project efficiency. To this end, the qualitative information collected mainly from key informants has indicated that the project was carried out in accordance with the initial time frame, within the allocated budget and human resources. There has been satisfaction among the respondents that the resources allocated for the project have been efficiently utilized in the way that promotes saving culture and economic use of resources. The special approach that women were organized in VSLA and similar groups has contributed a lot to the efficiency of the project because it drew an active involvement, commitment, enthusiasm and passionate effort from the beneficiaries without which its efficiency could not have been achieved. Hence, the special approach and strategies of mobilizing local human resources, institutions and/or creating strong partnership among implementing agencies have been the peculiar aspects of the project for its efficiency.

3.4.4. Project impact

It was reported that the project has been addressing some key priority issues of the chronically food insecure women which have been contributing to their graduation. The respondents noted that one of the key priority issues addressed was the social recognition and self-esteem of the women. Due to the advocacy work conducted by the project, the social marginalization and stigma of women has been significantly eroded. Women’s role in effectively contributing to the community’s collective development has been recognized by men and women and thus, paved ways for women engagement. Such recognition by both parties has boosted women’s self-esteem and confidence contributing for further women empowerment. Besides addressing the issue of gender inclusive development, women have been provided with access to different resources and exercising the right of controlling those resources, which is manifested by meaningful decision making both at household and community level. As the KII and FGDs have reported, representation of women at local decision making venues has shown meaningful improvement. Women are represented both at formal and informal institutions following the project intervention. The project impact is more vivid in decision making at household level where women have progressively been engaged in taking active part in decisions those matter a lot. Their level of participation has significantly increased in

relation to income and expenditure, too. There are evident changes in the socio-economic aspects of women in terms of their dignity and acceptance within their household, in particular and community, in general. The way they manage their home affairs has been transformed whereby improvements in their child rearing has been significant. Female genital mutilation has been marginalized which was a common practice before the project and mothers have developed a tradition of giving birth at the nearby health centers. They are well aware of the benefits of immunization of their child and respond on timely basis to get their children vaccinated. There is a change in the way of feeding and hygiene of their children and family planning practices. There is a sharply decreasing trend in the rate of early marriage and the status of retention of girls in their education has also shown a significant improvement from year to year. Their participation in the VSLA and other networks has boosted their confidence of discussing, debating, expressing their feelings, and convincing their male counterparts. A husband, who took part in the male FGD interview session, has described the benefits that his wife has got from the project as follows:

“My wife has got many benefits from ABDISHE project. Her sense and feeling has dramatically changed, as she is not shy of expressing her self that she has an ownership over our common resources. Her ability and participation on decision making, managing and controlling over resources was increased. She does not simply submit in matters that she felt were against her right. She challenges me when I do something wrong. She has got good knowledge and became sensible which I liked because it has benefits in changing our family. Because of her active participation in the project, my family has got loan for further asset building. She has acquired a new knowledge and skills about use of technology and agricultural extension. Overall, I am very happy and my entire family, too”

Responses by women respondents also suggested that VSLA meetings haven't only been paving ways for accessing resources, but also a key platform to exercise leadership and decision making from which the beneficiary women have been furthering their skill of leadership at community or formal government institutions. Hence, women have developed confidence in taking part in political decisions such as electing or changing leaders based on their performance. The culture of submission has been significantly transformed and women have developed a feeling of importance with in their community. Respondents told the interview team that the project has had a significant contribution towards their graduation from the food insecure situation. As they noted, this is because they have accumulated productive assets that reduce the risk of their vulnerability to shocks like the one even happened this year. As they mentioned, the drought that took place this year has been the worst but thanks to the project that they were relatively resilient enough. They also reiterated that the damage due to this year's drought could have been worse, if it had not been for the support from the project. Though there has been crop failure and shortage of water as well as fodder for their animals, the support and assets acquired due to the project have significantly reduced their vulnerability. Hence, they labeled ABDISHE as **‘a friend in time of scarcity’**. While expressing the crucial nature of the project in assisting their lives during the time of difficulty, one of the male FGD members told the interviewers:

“If the project was not implemented before the current drought, you would not get me here or we all would have died. My family members and I have survived because of the support and intervention of this project. We used our livelihood assets both in kind and cash that we have gained from the project and

saved our lives during this difficult period in life. It is also a pity that the drought has affected the success of our vision as we could register further results if there were no droughts.”

There are concrete evidences that the project has significantly contributed to the food security of the beneficiary households. In explaining their current food security status, respondents have told the interview team that the diversity and size of their daily meal has been changed. Before the project, they were not able to feed their families even two times a day. They asserted, “Nowadays, we eat three times a day having varieties of food with good nutritious values.” In a more humorous way, a woman participant aged 30 said, “I spent over 27 years without food.” This was to mean that her life before the project was full of misery and suffered a lot to get adequate food. To this end, the recent (2015) performance report¹¹ of Abdishe project has vividly shown that, before the project 3 major crops were eaten. However, at least 6 different crop types are eaten at the end of the report period. The report has also noted that there was no significant difference between the number of meals taken by women and men in the household at the end of the report year, 2015. 64% of the households were found to eat three meals against the baseline data, which were 2 meals per day. Close to 97% the beneficiaries were found to be able to cover six month of families’ food consumption from their own income and savings. There were also official reports from *Wereda* health office that the level of malnutrition has been reduced in *Wereda* and they recognized the contribution of the project.

The Abdishe project had multiple packages to achieve its ultimate goals. One of these packages is the provision of different types of supports to the project beneficiaries. In this case, as indicated in Table 11., 221 (58.01%) have received assets in the form of goats/sheep; 45 (11.81%) were given various trainings and technical supports; 43 (11.29%) were provided with improved varieties of seeds; 25 (6.56%) were linked to market and benefited from market value chains. Moreover, it is evident that every beneficiary household have had the chance to get access to any of the listed benefit packages provided and some have got many and/or multiples supports were provided during the project implementation period. For example, according to Abdishe’s (2015) performance report on different supports provided to beneficiary households. This includes, more than 3500 households were provided with trainings and technical support in the broader areas of VSLA (i.e., VSLA methodology, appropriate feeding practices, nutrition, animal husbandry, and social norms and gender transformation); 85 kilograms of different kinds of vegetable seeds were given to 630 households for kitchen gardening; as part of asset building component, beneficiary 574 households received 1722 goats and facilitated transfer of 1826 offspring to 503 second level beneficiaries households; and it equipped 50 households with modern beehives, accessories and equipment for processing of honey, which were organized into three producing groups. Hence, it is these numerous supports that helped the beneficiary households to move out of food insecurity and develop resilience capacities that partly helped households to adapt the recent drought. In short, Abdishe’s project impacts have strong contribution to the beneficiary household’s capacity to respond to the recent the shocks, which

¹¹ Progress Report (2015). LINKAGES: Linking Initiatives, Stakeholders and Knowledge to Achieve Gender-Sensitive Livelihood Security (Semi-Annual Report (July 2015-Dec 2015), pp 1-53.

otherwise could have totally devastated the assets bases of households and lost many of lives. This therefore, complements the different types of support provided in the name of the project.

Table 11:Types of supports provided by Abdishe project

Types of project supports	Freq.	Percent
Ox or Cow	33	8.66
Goats/sheep	221	58.01
Improved variates (seeds)	43	11.29
Market value chain	25	6.56
Financial support	9	2.36
Training and technical	45	11.81
No support received	5	1.31
Total	381	100.00

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

Abdishe project apart from creating poor women to have access to and control over productive resources that enabled to improve their households' food security status and build resilience capacities to shocks, it provided multiple trainings to capacitated poor households, which they will argument on to sustain the benefits of the project in the absence of the donor agency. As shown in table 20, across the types of training provided, beneficiary households intensely reported that the provided trainings were real and so helpful to their livelihood improvements. In a nut shell, evidences have confirmed that the Project has immensely contributed to the graduation of chronically food insecure women in creating access to productive resources, loan and saving, IGAs and above all capacity to cope with adversaries.

Table 12:Types of trainings provided (multiple response item)¹²

Types of trainings provided	Response	Freq.	Percent
Crop production and productivity	Yes	341	91.67
	No	31	8.33
Income generating activities	Yes	358	96.76
	No	12	3.24
Family planning program	Yes	349	93.82
	No	23	6.18
Market value chain	Yes	349	94.07
	No	22	5.93
Natural resource management	Yes	311	84.05
	No	59	15.95

¹² The frequency value is above 381 and the % is above 100, being a multiple response item.

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

3.4.5. Project sustainability

Majority of the responses have shown that the preconditions for project sustainability are already in place. Through a series of capacity building measures, the level of local capacity to maintain the project benefits has significantly improved. As it could be inferred from the narratives of the respondents, they have developed a kind of skill as to how they could confer, discuss, monitor the progress, evaluate the outcomes, and above all take care of the new culture of egalitarianism that embraces and puts women in the center of their development endeavor. There is no blurred view among communities and their representatives in terms of understanding what the project is all about and what it takes to maintain its fruits. The local communities and their leaders have developed a strong sense of ownership. They told the interview team that *“Abdishe is no one else’s project, but it is our own project that is cherished by every one of us.”* The *Wereda* government institutions have also developed a strong sense of ownership through coordinated planning, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the project activities and have got extra motivation because of the success of the project with in a couple of years.

The local government institutions have immensely benefited from capacity building schemes and will be able to continue supporting the communities to sustain the project benefits. Capacity development trainings provided to beneficiaries in the areas such as beekeeping, improved seed multiplication, market linkages and value chain, VSLA, animal fattening, IGA, etc., have enhanced the local capacity which will be an asset to sustain and run their economic enterprises (Table 12). Beneficiaries and local government representatives describe with appreciation the type and amount of assets transferred to the women and local community members. Hence, they are confident that the funds will further revolve in order to maintain sustainability. Most women beneficiaries during the qualitative interview sessions have noted that they can sustain their economic enterprises in the absence of the donor agency. However, there are fears that the recurrent droughts may affect their capacity. Though there were supports in terms of providing improved seeds that could resist drought, there is still fear of the impacts of drought. The respondents also recommend that replicating the project experience can be instrumental in facilitating fast socio-economic changes if undertaken in a scaled fashion elsewhere in similar poverty contexts. Although the project significantly contributed towards the graduation of poor and chronically vulnerable women in Fedis *Wereda* as evidenced by the positive impacts and outcome indicators achieved, the recent El Nino induced shocks have hampered and deteriorated the households’ assets base. Therefore, this may be one of the critical challenges to sustain the benefits of the project if some urgent remedies are not taken promptly (See the field observation photo).



Some of the recent El Nino induced impacts in Fedis *Wereda* & challenges ahead

Source: Field observation by the study team (April 2016)

3.5. Results in terms of change in agency, structure and relations

On women empowerment, Maxwell and Gladwell (2008)¹³ noted that agency (*the capacity to define, analyze, take decisions and act upon them*); relations (*the institutions that establish agreed upon meanings, forms of domination, and agreed criteria for legitimizing the social order*); and structures (*is connecting with others, building relationships, and participating in joint efforts, coalitions and providing mutual support to enact agency and alter structure*) as major dimensions of empowerment. This is because each of the three elements are socially and culturally constructed and particular in their manifestation. Equally, each element is directly related to the way that people think, act, and organize social life. In order to achieve the sustainable empowerment of women, it is important to address all three dimensions.

3.5.1. Agency

The change in the lives of women is well evident, as both the KII and FGD responses confirmed. These changes are in terms of changing role at household work assignment, change in the pattern of decision making over household resources and management issues, and equitable access to resources. The FGD members in each *Kebele* shared the same view that there was a significant change of culture in workload assignment at household level. Male and female respondents have told the interview team that husbands began to share the household chores with their wives. If she undertakes cooking, he fetches water. In a similar fashion, women began undertaking those works previously designated to men. Thus, there has been a shift in the work assignment, which has eroded what they call “the old culture”. In terms of asset ownership, the ‘old culture’ dictates that decisions over the fate of any productive assets passed by the husband. However, thanks to *Abdishe*, women have begun to exercise equal right of making sensible decisions over their common properties.

¹³ See Maxwell and Gladwell (2008).

Hence, women have got access to a pool of resources and endowed with control over these resources. Male respondents have confirmed that the decision either to acquire or to sell livestock have been made with the full consent of the woman. They have a memory of the recent past that resources either from government or other donors were directly provided to men failing to recognize the role of women and hence the ultimate decisions over those resources were also made by males. However, this is not the case today, thanks to *Abdishe*.

Women were provided with trainings on fattening, breeding, crop production (improved varieties of wheat and maize), skills training on IGAs such as off farm activities like selling consumer goods, natural resource management, etc (See Table 19) and these trainings have significantly enhanced their capacity to be competitive, confident, creative and problem solvers. Because of the joint decision making over the resources and other household matters, women have developed assertiveness and, more importantly, independence. One of the women respondents has revealed:

“The project came out with different packages that improve our food security status. Even if we were caught by the drought, we had seed varieties that resist water scarcity. We have income diversification activities that lessen our vulnerability. We have developed a good skill of home management and child nutrition. Our involvement in the economic activity tremendously helped us to cope with the current drought. Thus there is a significant change in the status of our food security at house hold level.”

With regards change in agency, the project impacts look promising since working on oneself is a progressive achievement, which show that the project activities brought attitudinal change and enhanced the participation of women in IGAs, social and economic affairs and continue to work on themselves and their community.

has been achieved.

3.5.2. Structure

According to the *Wereda* office head for women and children affairs, the support from the *Wereda* institutions has been superb. The initial apathy to restrict gender issues to the women affair’s sector has been changed and currently, every sector office is well aware of their collective mandate that without synergetic effort in combating gender inequality, achievement of any sectoral development goals would not be possible. Hence, according to the office head, women issue is not only the sector’s headache, it is, rather the shared task of every sector office and they are actually owning it. Her praise to the project has been immense. When she was asked to mention the drawbacks of the project, if any; she had nothing to say but ‘*ABDISHE is simply the best friend of women!*’ Hence, change in the working behavior and synergy of local institutions has been witnessed due to the project and it can be concluded that there was an enabling and supportive structure due to the project. The respondents, including women FGD members, have also noted that there has been a change in the behavior of local formal and informal institutions in responding to women’s issues. Women’s voices are heard in these institutions more than ever. There is a growing recognition of women’s role and decisiveness in local development and hence the role and representation of women in those institutions has improved due to the project. A manifestation of the result of such a change is vividly

indicated in our document review that indicate the project intervention was able to use the already established structures for the successful implementation and sustainability of the project objectives. Moreover, it brought the establishment of some structures such as linking the VSLA members and OCSSCo, which was instrumental in accessing financial services.

3.5.3. Relations

The qualitative information has shown that the socio-economic relations in terms of gender have undergone significant change. At household level, because of joint decision making that has been exercised with mutual consent between the husband and wife, the usual household dispute and row over resource use has significantly reduced contributing to the tranquility and stability of the entire family. This has also helped the family to take proper care of their offspring, sending them to school, especially girls, and feed them properly. As the result of improved relationship between the man and woman, the respondents noted that, love and affection has also increased, which is not only the basis for family members but also for building strong and vibrant community. With the growing status of women within the household and community, husbands became respectful, caring and affectionate to their wives, and so do the women. Besides the change in household chore assignment, in which men have begun to indiscriminately undertake those tasks, which were previously assigned to women, the physical and mental status of women has also improved while mutual understanding and consultation have grown significantly. At community level, 'the old culture' of discrimination against women has deteriorated. They participate in community meeting and experienced speaking what they feel. Community decisions were not overridden by male counterparts. In some cases, as the respondents affirmed, women's special talents (such as "being wise and calm") have been appreciated and hence their opinions were taken as important inputs for community decisions. The extension services (both agricultural and health) have given special attention to women and encouraged them to be brave in combating the double faces of poverty being manifested by gender imbalance and food insecurity.

In explaining their current food security status, respondents have told the interview team that the diversity and size of their daily meal has been changed. Before the project, they were not able to feed their families even two times a day. They implored, "*Nowadays, we eat three times a day having varieties of food with good nutritious values.*" In a more humorous way, a woman participant aged 30 said, "I spent over 27 years without food." This was to mean that her life before the project was full of misery and suffered a lot to get adequate food (Section 3.3.4).

3.6. Findings on performance indicators

3.6.1. Goal/Ultimate Outcome: Improved Livelihood Security and resilience for CFI women, girls, men and boys in *Fedis Wereda*, Ethiopia

The ABDISHE project as part of the LINKAGES program set out to improve livelihood security and resilience for CFIW, girls, men and boys in *Fedis Wereda*. The achievement of this goal was meant to be measured by three impact level indicators including the number of CFIW who moved out of food support, positive Coping Strategies Index(CSI) employed by women and men, and improvements in women's self-esteem score. This end line evaluation study measured the project's achievements using the same indicators that were used in the baseline and midline assessments and compared results with both assessments. The table below presents the indicators selected to measure progress on the goal and results obtained vis-à-vis baseline study and midterm evaluation.

Table 13:Progress on project goal/ultimate outcome

Indicators	Baseline	Midline	End line	Overall project target
		N(%ge)	N (%ge)	N(%ge)
Number of CFIW who moved out of food support	6400	beneficiaries receiving food support decreased by 76%	Only 34.1 % of beneficiaries receive food support & 65.9 %. In terms of numbers, 4,218 beneficiaries moved out food insecurity.	3840 (60% of target beneficiaries)
Positive Coping Strategies (CSI) employed by women and men	CSI = 37.1 (36.9 for Men and 37.9 for women)	To be determined (TBD) by the end-term evaluation as specified in the M&E plan of the project	CSI= 38.6 using the “reduced” CSI. 40.1 for women and 38.7 for men beneficiaries.	CSI = 38 for men and 39 for women (one-point increase for both women and men)
Women's self-esteem improved	Women's self-esteem = 2.67 out of 4 scoring	Women’s self-esteem increased from 2.67 to 3.15 out of 4 scoring (improved by 0.48 points)	Women’s self-esteem increased from 2.67 to 2.88 out of 4 scoring (improved by 0.21 points)	Women's self-esteem = 3.50 out of 4 scoring

Source: Computed based on field survey (April, 2016)

The number of CFIW who reported to have moved out of food support has shown an increase compared to the overall target figures. This figure was obtained by asking respondents whether their households are currently receiving any food support. As presented in Table 13, 65.9 % of the respondents stated that their household is not currently receiving any food support. This result, when compared to the baseline that indicated 100 % (6,400) target women beneficiaries were

receiving food support before the implementation of the project, can be taken to show the projects effectiveness in helping women CFI move out of food insecurity. Indeed, this figure when extrapolated at the level of all project beneficiaries represents about 4,218 beneficiaries. This in turn shows that the project has surpassed its 60% target. Despite this, however, the vague definition of the phrase “moved from food support” may not mean that these households are food secure in the sense of no longer needing food support as many households, in qualitative interviews, have indicated otherwise. which implies households’ graduation from government PSNP. This is especially true against the backdrop of the current El Niño¹⁴ induced drought that severely affected smallholders in many parts of the country including those in Fedis *Wereda*¹⁵. In measuring the Coping Strategy Index (CSI), we have used the reduced CSI that has been developed to compare food security across different contexts. This reduced CSI is also employed for establishing the baseline of the project. The reduced CSI uses a standard set of five individual coping behaviors that can be employed by any household, anywhere. The five standard coping strategies and their severity weightings are:¹⁶

- eating less-preferred foods (1.0),
- borrowing food/money from friends and relatives (2.0),
- limiting portions at mealtime (1.0),
- limiting adult intake (3.0), and
- reducing the number of meals per day (1.0).

Studies have demonstrated that the “reduced” CSI reflects food insecurity nearly as well as the “full” or context-specific CSI. For this reason, it has been extensively used as a food security measure across different contexts (see CARE, 2008). In addition to the reduced CSI, we have used the context-specific CSI that is created by using location-specific behaviors and location-specific severity scores. As indicated in Table 14, the CSI score for both women and men beneficiaries is 38.6, which can be taken as an evidence of slight improvement among beneficiaries in terms of using positive coping strategies.

¹⁴ For example, Ethiopia faces a severe food insecurity problem, due to El Niño-induced severe drought, which is the highest on record. For example, in August 2015 alone, there were an estimated 4.5 million food insecure people. The figure was more than double in December, 2015; and 10.2 million food insecure people, and projected to be 15 million in March 2016 (FAO, 2016; WFP, 2016). Agricultural and pastoral production has dropped by 50 to 90 percent in some regions, and failed completely in eastern areas. Thus, malnutrition rates have spiked in August, severe acute malnutrition admissions of children reached the highest amount ever reported (including during the 2011 Horn of Africa crisis). Therefore, El Niño induced adverse impacts have tremendously obscured the positive impacts of the project intervention and thus we are forced to attribute some of the negative outcomes and persistency of the problems, which otherwise would have been positive following the project intervention to such shocks. In this case, it is possible to infer that had it not been to the strong contribution of the project intervention in building their resilience capacity, it would be so hard to expect livelihood to function at all and most of households to withstand the shocks.

¹⁵ This condition can also explain the discrepancy between the midline and end line results.

¹⁶ Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc. (CARE). (2008) CSI Field Methods Manual. The manual is prepared by Maxwell and Caldwell. However, the severity weights used by the baseline is different than the one indicated by Maxwell and Caldwell and in the interest of comparing baseline with the end line results, we were forced to maintain the baseline severity weights.

Table 14:Households CSI Index Score

Code	In the past 7 days, if there have been times when you did not have enough food or money to buy food, how often has your household had to:	Raw score	Severity weight	Weighted score
1	Eating less-preferred foods	3	1	3
2	Sending children to eat with neighbors	2	5	10
3	Limiting portions at mealtime	3.8	2	7.6
4	Limiting adult intake	2	3	6
5	Reducing the number of meals per day	3	4	12
Total				38.6

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

Another important indicator of project’s goal was increasing women self-esteem. In this regard, the project targeted to increase women’s self-esteem from 2.67 (baseline) to 2.88 (out of a possible four score) as measured by eight dimensions as presented in the table below. This indicates that woman’s self-esteem has risen by 0.21 points from where it was at the baseline. Here, it is clear that this score falls short of the 3.5 mark that was indicated in the project’s overall target. However, this self-esteem score may seem reasonably positive considering the current level of drought shock and its aftermath effects on vulnerable groups such as women. Such shock is expected to influence women’s feelings about themselves and their livelihood prospects and may increase feelings of vulnerability affecting their overall self-esteem (see Table 15). The self-esteem score obtained through quantitative survey need to be taken together with the qualitative evidence obtained through in-depth key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Accordingly, project beneficiary women have shared their experiences of how the project helped them to develop self-confidence assertiveness. Most frequent words used in the FGDs were “*we became our own bosses*” and “*we feel confident about our abilities*”.

Table 15:Women's self-esteem Score

	Base line		Mid line		End line	
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
I am strong enough to overcome life's struggles.	NA	3.03	381	2.90	380	4.22
At root, I am a weak person.	NA	2.04	382	3.26	380	1.74
I can handle the situations that life brings.	NA	3.1	381	3.16	380	3.57
I usually feel that I am an unsuccessful person.	NA	2.4	380	3.22	380	2.04

I often feel that there is nothing that I can do well.	NA	2.3	378	3.05	380	2.47
I feel competent to deal effectively with the real world.	NA	2.97	378	3.16	380	3.71
I often feel like a failure.	NA	2.18	378	3.13	380	1.47
I usually feel I can handle the typical problems that come up in life.	NA	3.12	374	3.24	380	3.81
Total		2.67		3.14		2.88

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

The self-esteem improvement in women project beneficiaries is also reflected in their increased participation in household decision making processes, which is captured by a decision making score. The score is similar to the one used in the baseline and gives a score that is an average of 11 types of decisions taken by women (see Table 16). As can be seen from the table, women's decision making has shown a marked improvement compared to what it has been before the project's intervention. In sum, the qualitative findings indicated in section 1 and quantitative data analysis provide evidence that the project has been effective in improving the livelihood security and empowerment of CFIW.

Table 16: Average score of women's decision making in their home (out of four points)

Type of decision	Baseline Score	End line Score
Buying small food items, groceries, toiletries	3.16	3.39
Buying clothing for yourself and your children	2.83	3.33
Spending money that you yourself have earned	2.72	3.24
Buying or selling major household assets (land, livestock, crops)	2.65	3.07
Buying or selling jewelry	2.74	3.41
Use of loans and savings	2.88	3.41
Expenses for your children's education	2.70	3.27
Expenses for your children's marriage	2.59	3.04
Medical expenses for yourself or your children	2.66	3.08
Family planning (contraceptives) service	2.72	3.13
To move to shelter during time of disaster	2.75	2.84
Average score	2.76	3.20

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

3.6.2. Objective/Intermediate Outcome 1: Increased quantity and quality of food production and consumption by women and men

Increasing the quantity and the quality of food production and consumption by women and men was the first objective or intermediate outcome of the project. There are four major indicators identified to measure changes in the quantity and the quality of food production and consumption. The results on each indicator are summarized (see Table 17). The survey findings also vividly complement the recent progress report of Abdishe project on such indicators. Therefore, it is possible to infer that the Abdishe project intervention has strongly contributed towards the improvement of chronically food insecure households' food security status and built their resilience capacities¹⁷ to shocks as evidenced in different parts of this report. Hence, as per the target set out, it can be said that it has achieved its goals.

Table 17: Progress on objective/intermediate outcome 1

Indicators	Baseline	Midline	End line	Overall project target
Diversity of food groups consumed by male and female beneficiaries,	Only 3 major crops consumed by most HHs (low dietary diversity)	6 types of food groups/items (Sorghum, Maize, Barley, Wheat, Meat and Dairy, and Haricot Bean)	HHs reported consuming at least 6 types of the 9 food crops. The overall HDDS score is 3.38	HHs consume 5 or more of the 9 food groups (better dietary diversity)
# of meals consumed per day	less than 2 meals per day	2.58 meals/day with minimum of 1 meal to maximum of four meals per day). 64% of households eat 3 meals while 30% of them eat 2 meals per day	2.31 meals/day with minimum of 1 and maximum of 3 41% of households eat 3 meals, while 50% of them eat 2 meals	3 meals per day
# of food shortage months,	8 food shortage months	In the month before the mid-term evaluation, 91.8% of the respondents had enough food to eat all day ¹⁸	64.21 % of respondents reported recalling a period of food shortage in the 12 months prior to the end line survey 3.66 months of food shortage months	Decreased length of food shortage season at least by 3 months

¹⁷ Smith et al. (2015) suggested that resilience is a set of capacities (i.e., adaptive, absorptive, and transformative), which help households and communities to successfully function when they face shocks and stress and still achieve a set of well-being outcomes (in this case food security).

¹⁸ Data needed to determine the number of months of food shortage in the year was not collected. The collected data was rather on number of days of food shortage.

Proportion of HHs that could feed from own produces	85% of HHs couldn't feed themselves for 6 months from own produces	Out of those that purchased food in the last 6 months, only 2.1% of them indicated that they pay for food from family/friend loan and only 0.8% of them bought with loan from money lender. This means that the remaining 97% respondents were able to pay for food from their own produces (saving, sold livestock, sold poultry, and sold peanut and chat)	91.37 % of respondents reported that they can feed their household members for at least 1 month from own crop produced. However, 85.3 % cannot be able to feed their household for more than 6 months.	75% of HHs feed themselves at least for 9 months
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Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

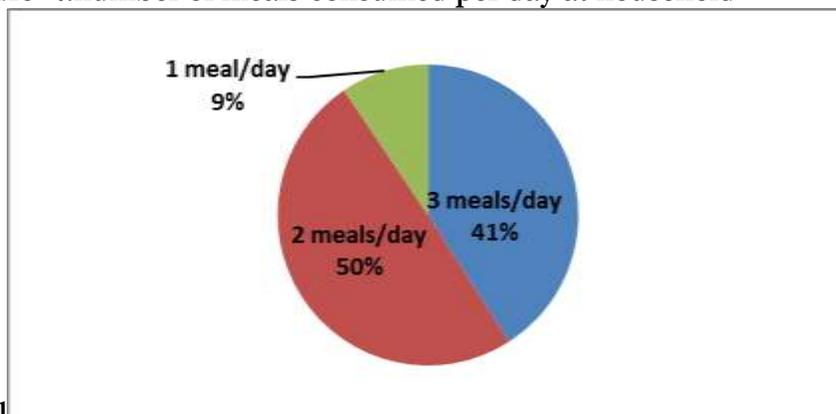
1) Diversity of foods consumed

The first indicator identified to measure progress on changes in the quality and quantity of food consumption was the diversity of food groups consumed by women and men beneficiaries. The results from the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data indicate that beneficiary households have managed to eat at least six types of food groups/items from the nine main food groups. These food items include *injera* (flattened and thin bread), porridge, bread and soup made from sorghum, maize, barley, wheat and eaten with stew made from haricot bean, meat, and dairy. Compared to the baseline situation, many beneficiaries who participated in the FGDs unambiguously reported improvement in their dietary diversity. In terms of quantitative measures that used the HDDS, the dietary diversity of project beneficiaries stands at 3.38, which indicates an improvement from the baseline.

2) Number of meals consumed per day at household level

The number of meals consumed per day was another indicator that was identified to measure the project's objective to increase quantity and quality of food production and consumption. The number of meals consumed per day increased from less than 2 meals per day at baseline to 2.31 meals/day with minimum of 1 and maximum of 3 meals. Moreover, 41% of households eat 3 meals (see Figure 4). 60.48 % of the respondents of the household questionnaire survey did not report any difference between men and women consumption (See also section 3.3.4).

Figure 4: number of meals consumed per day at household



level

Source: computed from Field survey (April, 2016)

3) Number of food shortage months

The reduction in the number of months of food shortage was taken to be one of the major indicators of food security improvements by the project. Accordingly, the number of food shortage months has shown a decline from 8 (baseline figures) to an average of 3.66 months at the end line. However, 64.21 % of respondents reported recalling a period of food shortage in the 12 months prior to the end line survey. These figures compared to the midline assessment show some reduction. A major problem that could be mentioned for such reductions is the recent drought that was caused by El Niño effects. This was also reflected in the group discussions and key informant interviews in which many participants frequently mentioned it as a major challenge for meeting food security related targets.

4) Proportion of HHs that could feed from own produces

The fourth indicator identified to measure progress on objective 1 of the project was the proportion of households that can feed themselves from their own production. The target of the project was to improve the baseline situation where 85% of households were not able to feed themselves for 6 months from own produces into a situation where 75% of households could feed themselves at least for 9 months. Here, the results of the end line survey show that despite a great majority of respondents (91.37%) reporting that they can feed their household members for at least 1 month from own crop produced, 85.3 % of respondents stated that they cannot be able to feed their household members for more than 6 months. This result also reflects the effect of the recent drought that aggravated the size and magnitude of food insecurity across the country, putting more

pressure on already capricious livelihood systems that were frequently devastated by natural disasters.

3.6.3. Objective/Intermediate Outcome 2: Women and men are better able to manage and control their economic enterprises

The second objective of the project was to ensure that women and men are better able to manage and control their economic enterprises. Using three indicators such as, women and men engaged in economic enterprises, average income, and savings of the household were used to measure project progress on this particular objective. Table 18 below provides a summary of results achieved on the indicators vis-à-vis the baseline and midline results.

Table 18: Progress on objective 2 indicators

Indicators	Baseline	Midline	End line	Overall project target
% of women and men engaged in economic enterprises	13.22% of women and 33.33% of men engaged in non-farm activities.	49.5% of the women are engaged in off-farm activities/micro enterprises	63.66 % of women respondents and 71.43 % of male respondents reported to have engaged in off-farm activities	35% of women and men engaged on non-farm activities
Average income of HHs increased	Average income from physical capital = 1851.88 Birr,	3,648 birr from micro-business alone	3348.15 birr from all assets	40% increase in the income from all assets
Increased average savings of HHs	Average saving = 61.45 Birr	1,680 birr	830.03 ¹⁹	Not set at the beginning

Source: Field survey (April, 2016)

With regards to the percentage of women and men engaged in economic enterprises, the end line survey found that 63.66 % of women respondents and 71.43 % of male respondents reported to have engaged in off-farm activities. This result shows a major increase from the 35% target set for the project. The result therefore is an indication of the positive effect of the project on encouraging CFIW and their husbands to diversify their livelihood and look for options other than farming,

¹⁹ This includes both VLSA savings and reports on private savings.

which untimely contributes to enhance their resilience. The second indicator relates to increasing average income of households. The project sought to register 40% increase in the income from all assets. Accordingly, the aggregated average income of households from all sources reached 3348 Birr/year. This has a 755 Birr increment and represents a 51.6 % increase in the income of households. This result attests that the project has met and even exceeded its overall target significantly. Moreover, the monthly average income of households from each major income is presented in Table 19 below. Here households on average had earned a monthly income of 303.50 Birr (which would be close to Birr 3642 per year) during the past 12 months before the end line evaluation. The average monthly income for female beneficiaries by far exceeds the income reported by male beneficiaries. However, given the very few number of male respondents sampled in the survey, this result has to be interpreted with caution. Here, the two sample t-test between income and sex of respondents showed that the difference between the two groups is statistically significant ($\Pr (|T| > |t|) = 0.0252$).

Increased average household savings is another indicator used to measure the progress outcomes. Accordingly, the beneficiaries have an average current savings of Birr 830.03. This compared to the baseline figure of 61.45 Birr is a huge leap forward for the project beneficiaries. This also indicates the effectiveness of the project in terms of providing various supports to beneficiaries and establishment of VSLAs that could promote the saving culture in the *Wereda*. Considering that almost 96% of the sampled beneficiaries are members of VSLAs, which were established by the project also attests to this fact (see Table 20).

Table 19: Average monthly income disaggregated by sources of income (Multiple response items)²⁰

Income source	Number of respondents	Average monthly income during the past 12 months (i.e. over the last year)
Crop income	258	361.06
Livestock income	251	537.26
Off-farm income	148	306.62

²⁰ In this regard, respondents reported more than one source of income, as a result, the total number of respondents would be above 381. Disaggregating the figures by sex, will be a tiny case as women proportion is over 90 % in many of the indicators used, that is, we computed most of the indicators to the total respondents as opposed to the sex category.

Employment (skilled labor) income	4	389
Unskilled employment income	2	143.5
Other income sources	43	83.67
Average monthly income from all sources		303.50
For female respondents		292.06
For male respondents		110.95

Source: Computed from field survey (April, 2016)

Village saving and loan association is one of the project driven local level organization that significantly contributed for resources mobilizing based on social capitals and “the rule of the games”. In this regard, it was reported that 365 (95.8%) of the surveyed beneficiaries are members in VSLA. This figure suggests that the extent to which the project reached the target beneficiaries in multitude of ways (See also table 20).

Table 20:VSLA membership status of respondents

VSLA Membership?	Number of respondents			Percent
	Female	Male	Total	
Yes	351	14	365	95.80
No	16	0	16	4.20
Total	367	14	381	100

Source: Computed from field survey (April, 2016)

Objective/Intermediate Outcome 3: The policy and regulatory environment supports poor women’s and men’s more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes

The third objective of the project was ensuring that the policy and regulatory environment supports poor women’s and men’s more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes. The indicators identified to measure project achievements on this objective are presented in Table 21 below. The evaluation team was not able to determine progress on the other two indicators as they were not operationally defined and thus attempted to capture the progress through qualitative methods.

Table 21: Progress on Objective 3 indicators

Indicators	Baseline	Midline	End line ²¹	Overall project target
Women's decision making power in different aspects increased	Women's decision making score = 2.76 out of 4 scoring	2.97 at four of the key indicators that were used to measure women's decision making score at baseline ²²	3.20 out of the 4 scoring	Women's decision making power score = 3.25 out of 4 scoring
The proportion of target women who report supportive and gender relevant policy and regulatory environment for more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes	No assessment done	Explained qualitatively	Explained qualitatively ²³	Decrease in the proportion of target beneficiaries (women and men) who inform about the existing barrier policy and regulatory environment
% reduced barriers to equal control of agricultural resources and market processes among women and men	3 barriers identified to equal control of agricultural resources and market processes among women and men	Explained qualitatively	Explained qualitatively	10% decrease in the # of barriers to equal control of agricultural resources and market processes among women and men

As indicated in Table 16 under the discussion of ultimate outcome indicators, the decision making score has increased from 2.76 at the beginning of the project to 3.20 at the end of the project. This result can be taken as evidence on the project's contribution to enhancing women's decision making power in different aspects. The quantitative findings also revealed that the project has significantly increased women's decision making power.

Immediate Outcome 1.1. Increased women and men agricultural production and productivity

Increasing women and men agricultural production and productivity was one of the immediate outcomes identified for the project. The Table below presents progress made by the project on the first immediate outcome indicators comparing the results with both mid line and baseline assessments.

²¹ The comparison is among the three datasets (base line, mid-term, and end line) but not to the studied *Kebeles*.

²² Some the variables that were used to measure women's decision making score at baseline were not measured during the mid-term evaluation due to oversight. However, we have included and analyzed it.

²³ This is to indicate that some of the indicators have been captured and discussed qualitatively as quantitative data were not generated (see also the document reviews).

Table 22: Progress on Immediate Outcome 1 Indicators

Indicators	Baseline	Midline	End line	Overall project target
# of crops grown by women and men	Many families grow only 3 crops per year	Most beneficiary households (77%) of households grow Sorghum. 44% of the households also grow Peanut and Maize. Chat is grown by 34% of the households. 63% of the households grow 1 to 3 crops while only 21% of them grow 4 to 6 crops.	56.4% respondents indicated that they grow peanuts. 45.9 % of the respondents also grow sorghum. Maize is grown by 37 % of the respondents. Most households (71%) grow the 4 main crops and 39 % grow less than 3 crops. another major cash crop that is produced by respondents is Khat (58.5 %).	At least 6 types of crops grown
Annual income from agric. Increased	112.3 Birr average annual income from agriculture	N=219.5, Birr 317.20 ²⁴ which represents 44.5% increase from the cumulative expected growth in the past two years (Birr 219.5). Put differently, the income from agriculture grew by 182% from the baseline.	N= 263; Birr 449.16 from crop and livestock production. This is a significant increase from the baseline showing an almost 300 % increase.	40% increase in annual income from agriculture
Proportion of beneficiaries cropping with improved varieties of seeds increased ²⁵	Almost negligible proportion of farmers planted with improved varieties of seeds	100% of the target HHs for cereal and vegetable production are using improved seeds in recommended way ²⁶	29 % of the respondents (n=114) indicated that they have received improved seed in the 12 months prior to the end line survey. This is a significant increase from the baseline but less than what has been reported in the mid line assessment.	10% of target beneficiaries planted improved crop seeds

In terms of agricultural production, crop and animal husbandry dominates the livelihoods of respondents. Thus, almost an equal percentage of respondents (69.4% and 68.5 %) reported earning livelihoods from the two sources (see Table 23).

Table 23: Households major sources of livelihood²⁷

Households' sources of livelihood	Baseline Responses		End line Responses	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Crop production	147	62.8	264	69.47

²⁴ The figure is an average of agricultural income collected from 169 households only.

²⁵ The indicator was for both sexes, which was extracted from multiple response items.

²⁶ Source: project report for the period July-Dec 2014

²⁷ The largest proportion belong to women since over 90 % respondents were women beneficiaries, thus, it does not sex disaggregation.

Livestock production	35	15.0	261	68.50
Off farm /skilled/	15	6.4	147	38.58
Nonfarm /unskilled/	25	10.7	2	0.52
Nonfarm /skilled/	8	3.4	4	1.05
Remittance	4	1.7	49	12.86

Source: Computed from field survey (April, 2016)

Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data revealed that beneficiary households are currently growing different types of crops. The major crops include maize (corn), sorghum, and Peanuts. Other crops produced by the respondents include wheat, chickpeas and barely (see Table 24). The project planned to increase the number of crops grown by women and men to at least six types of crops. However, this indicator cannot capture wheatear the six crops will have to be produced by each of the project beneficiaries or not. The results of the quantitative data analysis shows that the number of crops grown²⁸ by households vary significantly and it was not possible to clearly discern the number of crops that is grown by each beneficiary household as the type of crops vary depending on the availability of rain and the influence of market forces. Accordingly, the recent drought may have caused a significant shift in the type of crops grown by households. Moreover, the production of *Khat* and peanuts by most respondents may also be taken as an indication of market integration and forces.

Table 24: The average amount of crops, oil crops, pulses and vegetables produced by households in the last one year (in quintal)

Crops	Baseline		End line	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Maize	52	2.13	141	1.80
Sorghum	58	2.93	174	5.97
Wheat	4	1.50	22	1.45
Barely	3	1.00	8	1
Oats	1	1.00	Flax (6)	2.16
Groundnuts	58	16.10	215	13.09
Haricot bean	3	3.33	Pea (5)	2.7
Horse bean	1	1.00	Chickpea (11)	1.36
Potato	4	1.75		
Cabbage-local	1	3.00		
Onion-	1	8.00	6	1.16
Sweet potato	1	1.00	3	2.33

Source: computed from field survey (April, 2016)

²⁸ Since over 95 % of respondents are from low-land agro-ecological zone (Table 4), therefore, disaggregation by agro-ecological zone is not relevant.

Immediate Outcome 1.2: Increased women and men equal consumption of food

For this indicator, the response for the question “is there any difference between male and female adults and children in terms of consumption in your household?” was analyzed. Accordingly, 60.48 % of the respondents indicated that there is no difference between male and female adults and children in terms of consumption. In terms of difference in the amount of food given/eaten by various members of the household, 48.24 % of respondents reported that there is no difference.

Increased women and men equal consumption of food by the number of meals taken during food sufficient and food shortage months is also another indicator that is used to measure immediate outcome 1.2. Thus, in terms of the number meals/day, women beneficiaries reported eating equal and even slightly more meals than their men counterparts both during food sufficient and food shortage months. Women beneficiaries reported eating more than males during food sufficient months (2.9) vs. (2.4). Women also reported eating slightly more meals/day than their male counterparts (2.39) vs. (2.3) (See Table 25).

Table 25: Number of meals per day consumed by respondents

No. of meals per day	N	Mean	Std. Dev (SD) ²⁹
for male adult during Food sufficient months	229	2.432	0.732
for male adult during Food shortage months	188	2.308	0.821
For female adult during Food sufficient months	192	2.901	0.643
for female adult during Food shortage months	191	2.397	0.905

Source: computed from Field survey (April, 2016)

Table 26: Progress on Immediate Outcome 1.2

Indicators	Baseline	Midline	End line ³⁰	Overall project target
Proportion of	Only 52% of	NA	• 60.48 of the	At least 70% of

²⁹ It is a measure of dispersion, which is the difference between each observation from the mean value squared then divided by total observation.

³⁰ As mentioned earlier, in this end line evaluation, the great majority of respondents were female, thus, the computation consists of both sexes, however, it largely stands for women beneficiaries.

women and men who reported increased equal consumption of food among men and women.	women reported equal consumption of food among men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of the women eat their food with their husband and children • 45% of them eat their food with their children • Only 2% of them indicated that they eat alone <p>If measured by the number of meals, men consume 2.53 meals while women do 2.57 meals per day.</p>	<p>respondents indicated that there is no difference between male and female adults and children in terms of consumption.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48.24 % of respondents reported that there is no difference in the amount of food served to members of the HH • Women beneficiaries reported eating more than males during food sufficient months (2.9) vs.(2.4). Women also reported eating slightly more meals/day than their male counterparts (2.39) vs. (2.3) 	women and men reported equal consumption of food among men and women
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Immediate Outcome 1.3. Decreased gap between men’s and women’s control over resources necessary to ensure sustainable food production

Decreasing gap between men’s and women’s control over resources was taken to a crucial element of the project’s outcome. As presented in the table below, women’s control over resources in the household has increased. 66.67 % of survey respondents indicated that they make joint/equal decisions on grain trading (buying and selling). However, only 12.5 % of respondents indicated that women make decisions on grain trading. With regards to livestock trading and making decisions on income from livestock, there is a great diversity in responses. For instance, women have been indicated to be the major decision makers when it comes to income from cow (91.67 %) and income from adult goats (77.94 %). However, men seem to still make the main decision with regards to

income from oxen, Heifer and even chicken. Overall, 75 % of respondents indicated that both male and female make decisions regarding livestock trading, with females making 25 % of the decision by their own.

With regards to fruits and vegetables, any significant decision by women is registered. This is partly due a large non-response on these questions by respondents. However, through qualitative interviews, focus group discussions and field observations it was found that women are the major producers as well as decision makers when it comes to vegetables and fruits.

Analysis of qualitative data gathered from women and their husbands also revealed that women’s control over the resources of the household such as crops and livestock has increased significantly. Men (husbands) also confirmed that they are increasingly listening to their wives’ ideas and consult them in decisions that involve crops, livestock and other resources.

In this regard, many of the male group FGD participants have indicated that the project has brought a lot of benefits in terms of encouraging women to make decisions that benefits the welfare of the household. For instance, an opinion by an FGD participant from Bareda *Kebele* encapsulates the view shared by many. He noted:

My wife has got several benefits from ABDISHE project: She developed sense of ownership on our sources; her ability and participation on decision making and managing and controlling over resources has increased and as a result, our family gained a chance to get credit to improve our productivity. Most of all she gained new knowledge about technology and agricultural information, which is helping us a lot in meeting our food needs.

In general, there is an increase in the joint decision making on household enterprises with 66.7 % of respondents indicating that both male and female make decisions.

Table 27: Progress on Immediate Outcome 1.3 Indicators

Indicators	Baseline	Midline	End line	Overall project target
% of women with control over key productive assets compared	18.8% of women decide on crop products, 45.5% of women decide	76% of the respondents indicated that they equally participate in agricultural input	66.67 % of beneficiaries (both women and men) indicated that they make joint/equal decisions on grain trading (buying and selling). With regards to livestock, there is much	50% of women decide on crop products, 70% of women decide on livestock and 80% decide on fruits

with men	on livestock products and none on perennial plants	and output decision making 12.5% of them indicate that they make such decisions on their own	diversity that goes with the type of livestock. 75 % of respondents indicated that both male and female make decisions regarding livestock trading	and vegetables
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Immediate Outcome 2.1. Increased women and men equal access to the knowledge, skills and services needed to strengthen and diversify their economic activities

To achieve the planned objective of ensuring that women have equal access to the knowledge, skills and services needed, the project set out a target to increase the proportion of women who have access to knowledge, skills and services needed from 25.76% at the baseline to 50% at end line. Despite the terms access to knowledge, skills and services are subjective and somehow open to interpretation, the study team has used some measurable indicators to capture the project’s results regarding this outcome.

Thus, the results of the survey revealed that 18.5 % of the women beneficiaries have received training and technical support needed to strengthen and diversify their economic activities through the project. If what the project accomplished is taken as an addition to what the women have had before the project, it can be argued that the proportion of women who got access to knowledge, skills and services has been enhanced by 18.5%. Adding the baseline figure with what has been added by the project, it may be said that over 44% of the women have had access to the knowledge, skills and services they needed (see table below). Since the overwhelming majority of project beneficiaries were women, and this is reflected in the sample survey, the evaluation team was not able to measure equality of access to knowledge, skills and services among men and women in a more accurate manner. Despite this however, the respondents reported that 51.47 women received price information, 10.8 % reported to have received farmers training center (FTC) demonstration and 16.9 % reported receiving extension advise on improved input use.

Table 28:Progress on Immediate Outcome 2.1 Indicators

Indicators	Baseline	midline	End line	Overall project target
Proportion of women who reported equal	25.76% women and 45.11% of	41. 76%	Overall, 44 % of surveyed	50% of women and men reported access to the

access to the knowledge, skills and services needed	men reported access to the knowledge, skills and services needed		households have received training and technical support. Respondents reported that 51.47 women received price information. 10.8 % reported to have received Farmers training center (FTC) demonstration 16.9 % reported receiving extension advise on improved input use	knowledge, skills and services needed
Proportion of HHs used improved crop and livestock inputs increased	6.4% of HHs accessed improved crop inputs and none on improved livestock	15%	65.09 % respondents indicated using crop production input 18.83% of respondents reported using livestock input	20% of HHs accessed improved agricultural inputs

Table 29: Women that received improved seed, and training and technical support

	Improved seeds	Training and technical support
N & % from total (midline)	54 (15%)	60 (16%)
N & % from total (end line)	36 (31.6%)	36 (18.5 %)

Source: computed from field survey (April, 2016)

Another indicator that was identified to measure progress to the project's objective of increasing women and men equal access to the knowledge, skills and services was the proportion of HHs that used improved crop and livestock inputs. The target was to increase the proportion of HHs who accessed improved crop inputs and none on improved livestock from 6.4% (baseline data) to 20%. As presented in the table above, the results of the survey showed that 65% of the households that participated in the survey have received improved seeds through the project and 18.8 % of respondents reported using livestock input.

Immediate Outcome 2.2. Increased in women and men engagement on Value Chain (VC) activities

With regards to value chains, 69.74 % of respondents reported improvements in the value additions of their products. This is a positive change when compared to the overall project target which was set at 25%. Moreover, 94.07% received Market value chain training and it is likely that this increases the proportion of HHs who sold products as primary, sorted by quality and process.

Table 30:Progress on women and men engagement in VC activities

Indicators	Baseline	Midline	End line	Overall project target
% of HHs (women and men) engaged in VC activities	7% of the community members involved in VC activities	Was difficult to determine at this stage as was no much progress to get concrete evidence	69.74 % respondents reported improvements in the value additions of their products. 78.95 % of the respondents reported that women play the major role in the value addition of livestock products	25% of beneficiaries engaged in VC activities
Proportion of HHs who sold products as primary, sorted by quality and processed	11.61% sold after processed/value added, 35.58% sold by sorting based on quality and 50.93% sold as primary product		94.07% received Market value chain training.	At least 30% of HHs sold after processed/value added, only 25% sold by sorting based on quality and only 25% sold as primary product

Immediate Outcome 2.3. Collectives and Business Development Service Providers (BDSP) provided more equally relevant support to male and female owned enterprises

There are some Collectives and Business Development Service Providers (BDSP) in Fedis *Wereda*. The prominent ones include Savings or credit groups and Community agriculture or garden groups (see Table 31). Getting information on the provision of more equally relevant supports to male and

female owned enterprises by Collectives and Business Development Service Providers (BDSP) was difficult to find. The evaluation team therefore used document reviews that included project documents, mid line assessment report and other relevant documents. This DC indicated that the BDSPs have been providing different types of support to male and female project participants. The support they have been providing included capacity building training in different areas, technical advice, and business development services and linking the groups with different sector offices. The project has provided training and supported community and government institutions to provide more gender-equitable service. Reflections of the community also indicated that there is a general improvement on the recognition and supports to women from the various community and government institutions.

Table 31:BDSP enterprises

	Savings or credit group		Community agriculture or garden group	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Yes	373	98.16	206	54.21
No	7	1.84	174	45.79
Total	380	100	380	100

Source: computed from field survey (April, 2016)

3.6.4. Objective/Intermediate Outcome 3: The policy and regulatory environment support on poor women’s and men’s equal control of agricultural resources and market processes:

According to the progress report (2015), Abdishe project had trained gender-focal persons from different government sectors in order to support mainstreaming gender sensitive programming. These trained persons, or the trainees developed action plan to promote gender mainstreaming and equality. The action plan was shared among different stakeholder platforms at zonal and on village levels. At the same time, sensitizations on gender equity and justice and gender based violence was introduced as well. This program was run by the community based legal advisors (CBLAs) and Social Analysis and Action (SAA) facilitators. According to the qualitative responses, it was reported that gender-based violence and conflicts have significantly reduced. There were community level conflict resolution mechanisms which have been instrumental in resolving gender-based conflicts. The trained CBLAs were providing village level legal service and the *Kebele* administration was

providing different types of support to these legal personnel including office facility. Moreover, CARE's performance report of 2015 has indicated that the gender gap in terms of access to and control over extension services was reduced by 5.95% and 5.3%, respectively. Likewise, the gender gap in access to and control over goat has been reduced to 26.5% and 14.7%, respectively. In consolidating these facts, the key informants and FGD members have noted that there were significant changes of attitude from both community and government institutions towards gender sensitivity and inclusiveness whereby sectoral plans have begun to mainstream gender issues and synergistic implementation of those plans has been observed. To this end, a key informant from the *Wereda* women and children office noted that

“The burden of speaking on behalf of women’s rights was exclusively considered to be the task of our sector. However, after the Abdishe project, we have seen tremendous change in those major development sectors such as agriculture, health, education, and cooperatives. There were significant changes in the attitude and practical commitment of each sector in terms of planning and implementing gender inclusive development activities. The justice sector has also been undertaking planned measures in order to protect the rights of women and girls.”

Responses from key informant interviews have also suggested that there was a growing trend in the *Wereda* administration that each sector was required to report its respective contribution and planned commitment towards promoting gender sensitive development activities in relation to its sectoral mandates. During periodic performance evaluation sessions, sector offices were evaluated on the basis of the extent to which they have demonstrated their commitment towards facilitating women's empowerment. Hence, it is evident that the project has been effective in facilitating a supportive policy and regulatory environment to poor women's and men's equal control of agricultural resources and market processes.

3.7. Unintended Outcomes of the Project

Extract from the qualitative studies indicated that although the ABDICHI was designed to improve the lives of its beneficiaries, as in the case of similar programs, it has some 'unintended outcomes'. These include:

- **Reduced polygamy.** Polygamy has been reported to have largely declined as due to the change in the assertiveness of women and their enhanced decision making skills.

- **Reduction informal transfers:** This can be taken as one of the negative unintended consequences of the program. Here, qualitative evidence suggests that beneficiaries' family and friends reduce the amount of informal support and transfers they had previously been providing. In circumstances where there are shocks (both idiosyncratic and covariate) leaving the beneficiaries in the same state or sometimes even worse off than they were before the project and could potentially hamper trust and social cohesion.
- **Social change and increased access to social services.** Many beneficiaries indicated that their livelihood has improved much and, as a result, they are sending their children to school without worrying much about school materials. Women and their families are better off now and they are sending their children to school, have access to medical care, and so on. Social change is also happening not only in the beneficiaries but also beyond the project. Some VSLAs are being established in areas outside the project *Kebeles*. The project is also believed to have contributed to improvements in sanitation of children and women.

5. Concluding remarks and recommendations for future CARE Ethiopia women's empowerment program

5.1. Concluding remarks

Abdishe project was aimed at enhancing the graduation of poor and chronically food insecure women, girls, men and boys in 11 *Kebeles* of Fedis *Wereda*, East Hararghe, Oromia region, it has been successful in attaining the project targets set in the baseline.

The project has been highly relevant to the pressing needs of the poor households and chronically food insecure women as well as the broader policies and strategies of the country. Hence, it has drawn the attention of stakeholders at different tiers of administration. The project had multiple benefits that range from capacity building training, asset transfer, income generating activities, market linkages and value chains and more importantly addressed the issue of gender equality and women empowerment. The project has created access to and control over resources by the poor women though confronting the deep rooted male-female relationship that has been detrimental to any development intervention and hence, this has been the peculiar aspect of the project to be scaled up and replicated elsewhere in similar context. Besides these achievements, it has established a long lasting platform of mobilizing, coordinating, synergetic planning and gender sensitivity among different stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental; formal and informal; local and higher levels. Even if the country wide El Nino induced drought has challenged the benefits and outcomes of the project, the beneficiary communities and their institutions have developed a significance level of capacity and sense of ownership to sustain the project. However, it requires a cautious and strategic exit that is followed by a planned post project phase out support, which has to consider the current situation where beneficiary households are due to El Nino induced drought, which otherwise, may largely devastate livelihoods.

5.2. Recommendations for future CARE Ethiopia women's empowerment program

Based on the discussions made so far and evidences documented in the report, the following points are put forward as alternative ways to address the challenges identified and experiences as well as best practices to be shared, scaled up and replicated.

- ⇒ In spite of the recent El Nino induced shocks that challenged the beneficiary households' livelihoods, and resilience capacities and threatened their food security status, the enormous and positive outcomes of the Abdsihe project has saved lives and livelihoods need to be scaled and replicated in areas, which are moderately vulnerable to shocks. This is because, the study area is one of the most vulnerable to shocks and palaces of development intervention by number of NGOs for years, however, the challenges are still persistent. Thus, sustaining the positive outcomes will not be a critical challenge if replicated in area where the context partly supports such kinds of project ideas. In doing so, CARE Ethiopia in collaboration with the partnering organizations at different tires of administrations (e.g., *Kebele to Federal*) and geographic settings (different contexts) should consider the gaps identified during this evaluation and capitalize on the best practices when designing new projects. One such best practice, from which lessons can be drawn is the involvement of local communities in all processes (including planning, training and capacity building, implementation and monitoring and evaluation) and enhanced coordination and active participation of local stakeholders in the project. This has been the key for successful, effective and efficient project implementation.
- ⇒ Besides CARE Ethiopia's commitment both from head office to the field level, the effective implementation of the project was due to the synergetic cooperation and ownership of the project by the partnering organization at all levels. This is therefore, to acknowledge the good relationships and build on the experiences of working collaboratively to the best interest of the "beneficiary households" and bring both social and economic transformation in the area.
- ⇒ Given the natural vulnerability of the area to various types of shocks and livelihood being highly dependent on climate change and variability as well as the dependency syndrome being observed among the beneficiary households, it is so imperative to focus on drought resistant strategies such as introduction of drought resistance perennial crops (e.g., cassava) and initiate small scale water harvesting mechanisms as well as use of irrigation agriculture as opposed to the rain-fed agriculture.
- ⇒ So long as the beneficiary households are exposed to the current drought, which is threatening their improved livelihoods, food security, and resilience capacity, there has to be a 'post project phase' out strategy' that works towards supporting the sustainability of the benefits and outcomes achieved. This is because, if the project phases out abruptly in such a critical condition, some of the beneficiary households would hardly recover from the shocks and transform to better tomorrow.

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Annex 1: LINKAGES Results at outcome level

Complete the table using data from your Project Outcome Monitoring Sheet (or another sources of data, where applicable), expanding here on the narrative. *Please also annex your most up-to-date POMS worksheet with the report.*

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
Ultimate Outcome Improved livelihood security and resilience for vulnerable women, girls, men and boys in Bolivia, Ethiopia, Ghana and Mali					
Proportion of women to men with access to those assets (physical, social, economic) that are key to resiliency.					
Increased and more equal control over livelihood assets by direct beneficiary women and men.					
Enabling organizations exhibit at least two characteristics of a gender sensitive organization (from a standard international best practice list)					
Ghana: % of HHs consuming different types of the food groups (carbohydrate, protein, and micro-nutrients) weekly	45%	0%			
Mali: Rate of acute malnutrition among children (boys/girls) under age of 5.	9.54% (reduction of 10%)	10.6%			
Mali: Rate of chronic malnutrition prevalence among children (boys/girls) under the age of 5.	38.97% (reduction of 10%)	43.3%			
Ethiopia: # of CFI beneficiaries who moved out of food support. (%)	(60%) # 3,840	(0%) # is 6,400	76%	beneficiaries receiving food support decreased by 65.9	The El Niño effect
Ethiopia: # of positive coping strategies adopted	CSI score= 38 (M); 39 (W)	CSI score =36.9 (M); 37.9 (W)	To be determined (TBD) by the end-term evaluation as specified in the M&E plan of the	CSI= 38.6 using the “reduced” CSI. 40.1 for women and 38.7 for men beneficiaries.	

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
			project		
Bolivia: # of women and men who have increased access to secure income sources.	774 W 774 M				
Ghana: # and type of assets (physical, financial and social) acquired by women	2 assets (farm produce and livelihood asset such as cell phones, bicycles, motorbikes, or livestock)				
Intermediate outcome 1 increased quantity and quality food production and consumption by women, girls, men and boys					
Ghana: % of processed soya and cowpea consumed by women and girls.	60%	30%			
Ghana: % of male HH heads encouraging their women and girls to consume processed soy and cowpea products.	70%	50%			
Ghana: % of women (groups and individuals) increasing production of soy and cowpea for household consumption	45% CP; 55% SB	0			
Ethiopia: Quantity & diversity of food produced by women and men community members.	At least 4 types of crops & 25% increase in kg/ha for each crop type	3 (low DDS)	3.38 6 food types out of the 9	HHs reported consuming at least 6 types of the 9 food crops. The overall HDDS score is 3.38	
	25% increase in production of field crops				
Ethiopia: Frequency and diversity of food groups consumed by women and men community members.	30% increase in target HH 3 meals per day	3 food groups 2 meals/day	64% increase in target HH 2.58 meals/day	48.8% of respondents reported eating at least 3 food groups out of 9 2.31 meals/day with minimum of 1 and maximum	The sample size and response rates n=349 for end line while n= 388 for the midline the drought due to El

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
				of 3 41% of households eat 3 meals, while 50% of them eat 2 meals	Niño may have also forced households to reduce consumption as a coping strategy. For instance, in its recent situation report, FAO indicates that the rates of malnutrition have rose in alarming rate as one in four districts in the country are hit by drought and officially classified as facing a nutrition crisis (see FAO, 2016).
Ethiopia: % of HH accumulating productive assets that will lead to graduation from the safety net program.	Decreased length of food shortage by 3 months (5 months) 25% increase in production of field crops	8 months 0	Not available	The average months of reported food shortage is 3.66 months	
Ethiopia: % of farm areas planted with recommended varieties of seeds	20% increase in ha of land planted with improved crop seeds	0	1 ha	1.42 ha	
Mali: % boys / girls aged 0-5 months exclusively breastfed. (compared)	32.5%	10.5%			
Mali: % households having acceptable or good food consumption profile	77.8%	57.8%			
Mali: % pregnant and lactating women having a good diet diversity score	76%	55.9%			
Mali : % women/men having a good diet diversity score	80%	59.8%			

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
(compared)					
Intermediate outcome 2 Women, men, and male and female youth are better able to manage and control their economic enterprises					
Ghana: % of net profit accruing to women and girls at every level of the soya and CP value chain.	40% for production 60% for marketing	10%			
Ghana: Ratio of women and men controlling the different levels of the VCs.	Production: 6:4 Processing: 1:9 Marketing: 3:7	0			
Ghana: # of out-of-school girls participating in and benefitting from soy and CP VCs.	200 (100 girls in each district)	0			
Ethiopia: % of women and men engaged on economic enterprises.	20%	13.22% of women and 33.33% of men engaged in none farm activities	49.5% of the women are engaged in off-farm activities/micro enterprises	63.9 % of women reported engaging in off-farm activities. While 71.43% of male are engaged in such activities	
Ethiopia: % HHs accumulated increased assets from economic enterprises. (indicator changed to HH average savings) Average income of households	20%(73.74Birr) 40% increase or 2593 Birr/year	0 (61.45Birr) 1851.88 Birr/year	1,680 birr 3648 Birr/year	830.03Birr/year (includes both saving with VSLA and home saving 3348 Birr/year	
Ethiopia: Proportion of women and men who control HH's economic enterprise.	20%	0			
Mali : % of increased income for women	20%	0			
Mali : % of increased income for men	20%	0			
Mali : % of increased income for men compared to women	50%	0			
Mali: % of VSLA women with daily income of => \$1.25	60%	38,9%			
Bolivia: % increase in profitability of SMEs	No target set	0			
Bolivia: % of men and women	50% W 50% M	0			

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
who have increased their income.					
Bolivia: # SMEs that have a mechanism for equitable distribution of profits.	18	0			
Intermediate outcome 3. The policy and regulatory environment supports poor women's and men's more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes.					
Ghana: # of women led platforms that are influencing A/C and D/A decision-making processes.	3	0			
Ghana: # types of A/C decisions and actions that respond to and support community-driven women-led platforms in CP and soy production and processing.	3	0			
Ethiopia: The proportion of target women and men who report supportive and gender relevant policy and regulatory environment for more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes	20%	0			
Ethiopia: The proportion of target women and men who report improved level of government and community institution's responsiveness to gender inequalities Reduced barriers to equal control of agriculturalresources and market processes among women and men.	20%	0			
Mali: % of women and men (compared) who participated in elaboration of village's food security conventions.	60%	0			
Bolivia: # of public policies implemented that promote local economic development.	4	0			
Bolivia: # of municipal strategies that promote local economic development / support	8	0			

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
competitiveness of SMEs.					
Immediate Outcomes 1.1 Decreased gap between men's and women's control over resources necessary to ensure sustainable food production					
Ghana: # of extension services provided to women-led groups at each level of the soy and CP VC.	7	0			
Ghana: % of women in SB/CP value chains reached with extension services	50% across the board	EM/MHH 61%(M) 39 (W)			
Ethiopia: Proportion of women and men who have control over core agricultural resources of the HH.	20% Disaggregated as follows: Crops 50% Livestock 70% Fruit/veg 80%	Crops 19% Livestock 45.5% Fruit/veg 0%	76% of the respondents indicated that they equally participate in agricultural input and output decision making 12.5% of them indicate that they make such decisions on their own	66.67 % of survey respondents indicated that they make joint/equal decisions on grain trading (buying and selling). With regards to livestock, there is much diversity that goes with the type of livestock. 75 % of respondents indicated that both male and female make decisions regarding livestock trading	
Immediate Outcomes 1.2 W/M/B/G more equally consume nutritious food					
Ghana:# of new recipes.	5 (3 SB/2CP)	0			
Ethiopia: Proportion of women and men who reported more equal consumption of nutritious and adequate food among men and women.	30%	52% of women reported equal consumption as men		60.48%	
Immediate Outcomes 2.1 W/M/B/G have increased and more equal access to the knowledge, skills and services needed to strengthen and diversify their economic activities					
Ethiopia: Proportion of women who have access to the knowledge, skills and services needed to strengthen and diversify their economic activities	30%	W 25.8% M: 45.1%	41.76%	Overall, 44 % of surveyed households have received training and technical support. Respondents reported that 51.47 women	

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
				received price information. 10.8 % reported to have received FTC demonstration 16.9 % reported receiving extension advise on improved input use	
Mali: % men/women (compared) having knowledge in nutrition for pregnant/breastfeeding women	50%	33%			
Mali: % women/men (compared) having knowledge in good nutritional practices	50%	0			
Bolivia: # of women and men that have increased their management capacity and competitiveness	45 W, 45 M	0			
Immediate Outcomes 2.2 Decreased gap between men’s and women’s access to and control over a variety of processes in select value chains					
Ghana: % of women owning key stages and assets of VC.	20% in production stage and assets 80% in rural markets and assets 10% in larger markets and assets	5%			
Ghana: % of women equally making decision on the use of HH income.	50%	47.2%			
Ethiopia: Proportion of men and women reporting equal access to and control over a variety processes in selected value chains.	20%	7%		69.74 % respondents reported improvements in the value additions of their products. 78.95 % of the respondents reported that women play the major role in the value addition of livestock products	

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
Ethiopia: Proportion of men and women engaged in controlling a variety processes in selected value chains.	30% sold with value added 25% sold by sorting based on quality 25% sold as primary product	11.6% sold after value added 36% sold by sorting based on quality; 51% sold as primary product		94.07% received Market value chain training.	
Mali: % of women compared to men having access to productive assets: land, technology, information.	50%				
Mali: % increase in yield per hectare for basic crops on women/men land (compared).	25% increase	0			
Mali: % increase in yield per hectare for basic crops on women/men land (compared). detailed by basic crop	25% increase millet	W: 584,6 g/ha M:841,7kg/ha			
	25% increase sorghum	W:818,5 g/ha M:663,2kg/ha			
	25% increase cow pea	W:472,56kg/ha M:324,47kg/ha			
	25% increase groundnut	W:462,6kg/ha M:539,8kg/ha			
	25% increase sesame	F=283kg/ha H=495,9kg/ha			
Bolivia: # of men and women who have increased their participation in the value chain	380 W, 380 M	101 W, 36 M			
Bolivia: # of women and men who have increased their capacity to access key spaces for decision-making.	380 W 380 M	0			
Bolivia: # of women and men who have improved their position and skills in SMEs.	160 W 160 M	0			
Bolivia: % of women and men who recognize the contribution of women's roles in the value chain.	60%W 60% M	0			

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
Immediate Outcomes 2.3 Collectives and Business Development Service Providers (BDSP) provide more equally relevant support to male and female owned enterprises					
Ghana: % of individual women and # of groups making the appropriate decisions in VC	30% women	0			
Ghana: # of contracts successfully negotiated / implemented between district, Producer Orgs and VSLAs	3 groups (2 producers/1 marketing)	0			
Ghana: Presence of gender-disaggregated data in each D/A (database)	Yes	No data			
Ethiopia: # of Coop/SMEs by type of support to clients disaggregated and compared by sex.	At least 4 types of support to clients 7 types of interventions provided to coop/SME clients 75% women receive equal services from coop/SMEs				
Immediate Outcomes 3.1 Local value chain (VC) actors (women’s groups, collectives, suppliers) have increased role in the formulation of policies and regulations that enhance men’s and women’s food, nutrition & income security					
Ghana: # of projects in the 2 D/As that demonstrate / reflect specific needs of women and men	2 (in each district)				

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
Ghana: # of operational guidelines for soy and CP VCs	3 (producers, marketing and processing)	0			
Ethiopia: # of VC actors reporting increased role in formulation of relevant policies and regulations disaggregated and compared by sex	At least 7 VC actors	0			
Ethiopia: Types of roles assumed /contributions in the formulation of relevant policies and regulations by VC actors disaggregated and compared by sex	At least 2 types of new roles	0			
Bolivia: % of municipal gender-sensitive budget assigned to local economic development	20%	N/A			
Immediate Outcomes 3.2 Local government structures have increased capacity to effectively and transparently engage different stakeholders in development planning and implementation processes.					
Ghana: # of functional linkages among VC actors linked to District and Regional Committees	2 (1 between producers & SPs ; 1 between marketers & SPs)	0			
Ethiopia: # and type of relevant participatory events organized by the local government	6 planning & monitoring events	no baseline data			
Ethiopia: % of beneficiaries reporting satisfactory /meaningful engagement/participation in development planning and implementation.	40%	no baseline data			
Mali: # Local government can identify key gender issues in nutrition and food security	4	0			
Mali: # Local government plans that include activities to address gender issues on F&N.S	4	0			
Mali: % women/men (compared) participating in community food security planning processes.	50%	0			

Indicators <i>Program</i> Bolivia Ethiopia Ghana Mali	Targets	Baseline Data	Midline Data	FINAL Result	Variance explanation
Bolivia: # of private/public negotiation / social learning spaces promoting local economic development.	4	0			
Bolivia: # of women and men participating and proposing concerted action in these key decision-making spaces.	16 W / 16 M	0			
Bolivia: # of public policy projects on local economic development that promote SME innovation that rely on public resources and co-investment.	4	0			

Annex 2a: Key informant interview (KII) guide

The purpose of this key informant is to conduct a final evaluation of ABDISHE project and to assess the project results. The information you provided will be useful to draw some conclusions, acquire lessons and forwarding possible recommendations, which can be helpful for making some practical interventions by the concerned bodies. Therefore, your kind cooperation with honest responses to the KII will be vital for the overall success of the study. Results and any other details will not be used for un-intended purpose. To this end, anonymity and confidentiality of our respondents are highly guaranteed unless and otherwise under mutual agreement between the concerned parties.

KII Guide:

1. Can you introduce yourself, your level of education, work experience, and current position?
2. To what extent women are involved in accessing productive resources and achieving control over those resources due to ABDISHE so as to improve quantity and quality of food production (land credit, new technology, and agricultural extension information)? What special approach has been in place to enable women to better manage and control the enterprise?
3. How adequate the policy support was in the pathway of ensuring women control over agricultural resources and what possible options are there for further improvements?
4. How palatable and easier was the technical aspects of the ABDISHE project for the implementing bodies at local level? Was it within the scope of the existing expertise at *Wereda* level?
5. To what extent the project was effective in contributing to graduation of targeted CFIW/households from their food insecurity situation in the project area?
6. What evidences are there to demonstrate possibly of women graduation from chronically food insecure situation and how these evidences could help formulate and guide further efforts of women graduation from CFI situation?
7. Was ABDISHE project implemented in the most efficient way, were objectives achieved within the limits of allocated time and budget?
8. What priority issues of CFIRW CARE has addressed and transformed the socio-economic needs and aspiration of women and girls?
9. What is the major attribution/contribution of ABDISHE/CARE to the graduation of the targeted CFIW/households from their food insecurity in the project area?
10. How did the project contribute to women's equitable access and increased control over the productive assets and resources at household level? If not, why?
11. What were the practical changes that have been made both in the formal and informal institutions as well as socio-cultural norms/rules/practices...etc in order to be supportive towards women's empowerment? If not, why?
12. How did the project intervention contribute to women's meaningful participation in household and community level decision-making as well as assuming leadership positions? If not, why?

13. How supportive was the structure across different tiers of administration in realizing gender equality being demonstrated in the respective policies and plans of implementing bodies? If not, why?
14. Do you think the project benefits could continue in the absence of CARE? If so, what are your justifications or evidences for sustainability of the project (explain the status of local institutional capacity, sense of ownership by line departments; community capacity, confidence and inspirations)? If not, why?
15. Can the project be scaled up, replicable, and integrated in to other sectors/development initiatives in the way that it can be sustained in the absence of the donor agency?
16. What were the significant strengths and weaknesses of the intervention? What are your suggestions for further improvement?

Annex 2b: Community FGD guide (Male respondents)

Introduction

The purpose of this FGD is to conduct a final evaluation of ABDISHE project and to assess the project results. The information you provided will be useful to draw some conclusions, acquire lessons and forwarding possible recommendations, which can be helpful for making some practical interventions by the concerned bodies. Therefore, your kind cooperation with honest responses to the FGD will be vital for the overall success of the study. Results and any other details will not be used for un-intended purpose. To this end, anonymity and confidentiality of our respondents are highly guaranteed unless and otherwise under mutual agreement between the concerned parties.

FGD Guide:

1. We will start by introducing ourselves. Please tell us your name, your age, *Kebele*, level of education, and how many members in your family.
2. What do you know about the ABDISHE project? What did it benefit you? Can you describe the benefits you or your household members acquired from ABDSIHE project?
3. Has your family experienced any food insecurity in the last 12 months? If yes, can you describe the situation?
4. In your household, if there is lack of food, who usually goes without? Why is that?
5. In your opinion, how has your family improved its food security status? What do you think has contributed to this?
6. As a husband, can you describe the benefits your wife has got following her participation in the ABDISHE project?
7. Who generally controls these assets in your household? Why is that?
8. Does your wife/female family member participate in community groups and decision making? If no, why not?

9. In your opinion, have there been any changes in how you interact with your wife/female family member? How? What about in women's work load assignment – have there been changes compared to the situation before ABDISHE project? If not, explain the reasons?
10. Why do you think those changes have occurred? At home? In the community?
11. Would you tell us the most significant change (a specific benefits) you or your family members have experienced following your involvement in ABDISHE project?
12. Would you describe some of the changes ABDISHE project brought to the works and behavior of the institutions in your locality (government, NGO and community organizations such as VSLA, *equib*, *Iddir* and others)?
13. After the project ends, how will you maintain the new skills (coping or technical) that you have learned? How confident are you that you can maintain the learnings? If no, explain the reasons.
14. What suggestions do you have to improve the supports and services of the project so as to improve the household livelihood status in general and wellbeing of women in particular?

Annex 2c: Community FGD guide (Female respondents)

FGD Guide:

1. We will start by introducing ourselves. Please tell us your name, your age, *Kebele*, level of education, and how many members in your family.
2. What do you know about the ABDISHE project? Can you describe the benefits you or your household members acquired from ABDISHE project?
3. How do you describe your household food security status? Is there any change compared before your involvement in the project? If not, what is the reason?
4. Who benefited most from the project (e.g., as an individual, household, and community)?
5. Do you think that the participation in the project brought changes in terms of women's equitable access to resources and increased control over resources at household level? If not, why?
6. What is the role of women in different activities such as VSLA, community decision making, agricultural activities, marketing etc.? Are there changes in women's level of participation in *Equib*, *Iddir*, VSLA and others?
7. To what extent did women assume their increased leadership roles (meaningful representation) due to the project intervention? If not, why?
8. Would you tell us the most significant change (a specific benefit) you or your family members have experienced following your involvement in ABDISHE project?
9. Would you describe some of the changes ABDISHE project brought to the works and behavior of the institutions in your locality (government, NGO and community organizations such as VSLA, *equib*, *Iddir* and others)?

10. What were the practical changes that have been achieved in changing the social and cultural norms, rules, stereotypes, women workload and task assignment, etc., in order to encourage gender equality? If not, why?
11. Can you maintain the continuation of the project in the absence of CARE's support? If yes, explain the level of your capacity, confidence, inspiration. etc that can help maintain the project benefits. If not, explain the reasons and challenges.
12. What suggestions do you have to improve the supports and services of the project so as to improve the household livelihood status in general and wellbeing of women in particular?

Annex 2d: Household Survey Questionnaire

Introduction and consent

Hello, my name is _____ and I am from Terneh Zenna Business and Management Consultancy (TZBMC). CARE Ethiopia has been implementing a project named "ABDISHE" in your Kebele. The purpose of this Household Survey Questionnaire (HSQ) is to collect information for final evaluation of the ABDISHE project. You are selected randomly for this survey and your participation in the survey is based on your willingness to take part. Therefore, your kind cooperation with honest responses to the HSQ will be vital for the overall success of the study. Results and any other details will not be used for un-intended purpose. To this end, anonymity and confidentiality of our respondents are highly guaranteed unless and otherwise under mutual agreement between the concerned parties.

General instruction for the interviewer/enumerator

- Please put the code chosen by the respondent in the space provided for close-ended questions;
- In a household where both husband and wife are present during the interview, the enumerator will ask the household head questions pertaining to the household demographic, income, and joint decision making. Then, the enumerator will administer the other parts of the questionnaire to the wife.
- The respondent can choose more than one response for some questions;
- Skip the code to which it does not require the response;
- Write down the response for open-ended questions whenever the respondent provides and necessary;

Respondent agrees to be interviewed

Respondent does not agree to be interviewed

..... 1

..... 2 → END

↓

HH identification number:		
Kebele: _____	Gotte _____	
Agro-ecology type:	1) Highland	2) Midland
		3) lowland
Date of the Interview:		

Household head	1) Male head	2) Female head
For male head, number of wife: _____		
Participation in PSNP 1) Member, food for work, 2) Member, free access to food, 3) Non-member		
Enumerator	Name: _____	Signature: _____

Name and signature of supervisor: _____ Date: _____

FOR OFFICE USES ONLY

Encoded by: _____ Entered by: _____

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE HOUSEHOLD (applicable to both sexes)

S.N	1. Position in the household (1=household head 2= spouse 3=Son/daughter, others write	2. Sex (Male=1, Female=2)	3. Age (Years)	4. Marital status Single =1; Married =2; Divorced = 3 Widowed)=4	5. Level of education (1: Illiterate, 2: Write and read, 3: grade1-4, 4: grade 5-8, 5: grade 9-12, 6: 12+)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

SECTION 2: ECONOMIC ACTIVITY (Applicable to both sexes)

Code	6. What are the sources of livelihoods and estimated earnings for all members in the household? (Answer all that apply)	1= Yes 2= No	Estimated monthly income	Estimated yearly income
1	Crop production			
2	Livestock production			
3	Off-farm income			
4	Employment (skilled labor)			
5	Employment (unskilled labor)			
6	Other (Specify)			

Landholding and Ownership (Applicable to both sexes)

9. Could you please indicate the total size of your land holding _____*qartte*.

10. Ownership entitlement (Yes=1, No=2)			
1. Males adult (Yes=1, No=2)	2. Female adult (Yes=1, No=2)	3. boy (Yes=1, No=2)	4. girl (Yes=1, No=2)

11. Household asset holding (Applicable to both sexes)

11.1. Do you participate in a savings group?

11.2. If yes, approximately how much were you able to save in the last 12 months?

11.3. Do you or members of your household have any other savings?

11.4. If yes, approximately how much in total savings do you have (including savings from a VSLA or savings group).

Livestock production

12. Did you engage in livestock production during the last one year? 1) Yes 2) No

If yes to the above question, please indicate the livestock production which you engaged in (in the last one year)

No.	Livestock type	Livestock/bee hive number currently owned by:			Number sold during last 1 year by:			Income earned (birr) from sales by (last year)			Who decides on the earned income? *	
		female HH members	male HH members	all HH members	female members	male members	Jointly	female members	male members	Jointly	M	F
1	Oxen/adult bull											
2	Cow											
3	Heifer											
4	Yung bull											
5	Calf											
6	Sheep, adult											
7	Sheep, kids											

No.	Livestock type	Livestock/bee hive number currently owned by:			Number sold during last 1 year by:			Income earned (birr) from sales by (last year)			Who decides on the earned income? *	
		female HH members	male HH members	all HH members	female members	male members	Jointly	female members	male members	Jointly		
		M	F									
8	Goats, adult											
9	Goats, kids											
10	Chicken											
11	Donkey											
12	Horse											
13	Mule											
14	Camel											
15	traditional beehives											
16	improved beehives											

* 1= male (spouse); 2= female (spouse); 3= children; 4=every household member

13. Livestock production during the last 1 year and household income earned from sales of livestock products and by-products in the last 1 year.

Code	Livestock products	No. of animals involved	Unit	Qty	Average unit price during the last one year (birr/unit)	Who sells?*	Who decides on the income? *
1	Egg produced		Number				
2	Cow milk		Liter				
3	Goat milk		Liter				
4	Butter produced		Kg.				
5	Hides and skin		No				
6	Honey (modern beehive)		kg				
7	Honey (traditional beehive)		kg				

* 1= male (spouse); 2= female (spouse); 3= children; 4=every household member

Crop production

14. Did your household produce crop during 2015/16? 1) Yes 2) No

15. If yes to the above question, please indicate crop production which you engaged in (in the last one year)

Code	Type of crop produced	Area (Qartt)	Production (qt)	Amount sold (qt) *			Income from sales (Birr)*			Who decides on the earned income from the sale		
				M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Staple crops												
1	Maize											
2	Sorghum/											
3	Finger millet/											
4	Teff											
5	Wheat											
6	Barely											
7	Oats											
Oil crops												
8	Peanuts											
9	Flax (<i>Telba</i>)											
10	Safflower (<i>suf</i>)											
Pulse												
11	Haricot bean											
12	Horse bean											
13	Pea											
14	Lentils (misir)											
15	Fenugreek											
16	Chickpea (shinbira)											
17	Bean (baqella)											
18	Pea (atar)											
Vegetables												
19	Potato											
20	Beet roots											
21	Cabbage-local											
22	Cabbage-exotic											
23	Onion											
24	Tomato											
25	Carrot											

26	Sweet potato													
----	--------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

* Ask the quantity sold and income generated by Male (M), Female (F) and Total (T) for all the household members

Number of perennial crops grown by men and women (Applicable to both sexes)

16. Do you own perennial crops? 1) Yes 2) No

17. If yes to the above question, please indicate the number of perennial crops you own and income earned during the last one year.

Code	Type of crop produced	No. of trees/ bushes owned (by owner type)			Prodn. (qt)	Amount sold (qt)*			Income from sales (Birr)*			Who decides on the income earned from sale**		
		M	F	T		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	Mango													
2	Banana													
3	Papaya													
4	Coffee													
5	Khat													
6	Others specify													
7	Others specify													
8	Others specify													

* M= Male; F= Female T= All household member

** = 1 = male F= Female T= All household member

Access to improved crop and livestock production inputs and services (Applicable to both sexes)

18. Did you use any crop production input in the last one year? 1) Yes 2) No

19. If yes to the above question, please indicate the type of input, sources and decisions.

Type of inputs/services used	Who received/ purchase it (1=Men, 2=women, 3=both)	Who decided on the use of the inputs/services (1=Men, 2=women, 3=both)	Area covered in (ha)
Improved seeds			
Fertilizer			
Pesticides/herbicides			
Training on improved input use (improved crop husbandry practices)			
Extension advise on improved input use (improved crop husbandry)			

practices)		
FTC demonstration		
Price information		

20. Did you use any improved livestock inputs during the last crop production year? 1) Yes 2) No IF NO, SKIP TO 21

21. If yes, please indicate the type, amount and cost of livestock inputs used during the last crop production year.

Code	Input type	Qty	Cost (Birr)	Who decides on what inputs/ services to get (Men=1, women=2, both=3)	Who decided on the allocation/ use (Men=1, women=2, both=3)	Did you get the input/ service timely (yes=1, No=2)
1	Improved chicken (No)					
2	Improved dairy cow (No)					
3	Use of artificial insemination (animals served) (No)					
4	Sheep/goats (No)					
5	Fodder species (kg)					
6	Veterinary service	---				
7	Crashing service	---				
8	Concentrated feed (kg)					

SECTION 3: ACCESS TO CREDIT SERVICE AND MEMBERSHIP TO MICROENTERPRISES

22. Did you have an access to any cash credit service from any source during the last one year?
1) Yes 2) No

23. Do you own a micro-business or enterprise? 1) Yes 2) No

24. If yes to the above question, indicate the type of enterprise.

1. Group business 2. Individual business 3. Others, specify _____

25. If you are engaged in microbusiness, who is the main decision maker in the business?

1. Yourself 2. Husband only 3. Wife only 4. Jointly 5. Others, specify _____

26. Are you a member of Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA)? 1) Yes 2) No

27. If yes to the above question, indicate when you became a member. Month _____ Year _____

28. Are you a member of cooperatives or Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) 1) Yes 2) No

29. If yes to the above question, indicate when you became a member. Month _____ Year _____

SECTION 4: FOOD SECURITY SITUATION

No.	Question	Response	Skips
30	HDDS QUESTIONS		
	<p>Now I would like to ask you about the types of foods that you or anyone else in your household ate yesterday during the day and at night. This does not include food that you ate at a restaurant or outside of the home.</p> <p>Read the list of foods. Choose “yes” if anyone in the household ate the food in question. Choose “no” if no one in the household ate the food.</p> <p>THE FOODS LISTED SHOULD BE THOSE PREPARED IN THE HOUSEHOLD AND EATEN IN THE HOUSEHOLD OR TAKEN ELSEWHERE TO EAT. DO NOT INCLUDE FOODS CONSUMED OUTSIDE THE HOME THAT WERE PREPARED ELSEWHERE.</p> <p>VERIFY THAT YESTERDAY WAS NOT UNUSUAL OR SPECIAL (FESTIVAL, FUNERAL, OR IF MOST HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS WERE ABSENT). IF IT WAS AN UNUSUAL/SPECIAL DAY, SKIP this table.</p>		If yesterday was special or unusual day, skip this table
1.	Any enjera, bread, rice, biscuits, or other foods made from teff, millet, sorghum, maize, rice, pasta, macaroni, wheat or barley or other cereal.	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
2.	Any potatoes, yams, cassava, or any other foods made from roots or tubers?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
3.	Any vegetables?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
4.	Any fruits?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
5.	Any meet, beef, lamb, goat, wild game, chicken, liver, kidney, heart, or other organ meats?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
6.	Any eggs?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
7.	Any fresh or dried fish?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	

8.	Any foods made from beans, peas, lentils, haricot beans, or nuts?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
9.	Any cheese, yogurt, milk, or other milk products?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
10.	Any foods made with oil, fat, or butter?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
11.	Any sugar or honey?	1 = Yes, 2 = No	
12.	Any other foods, such as condiments, coffee or tea?	= Yes, 2 = No	
13	How many months can you feed your household from the crop produced during the last production year?	_____ months	

Food Access: Household dietary diversity score (HDDS) (**Applicable to female respondents**)

Coping strategy

31. If you faced food shortage in the last one year, please indicate how you tried to cope with the food shortage months?

No.	Which strategy you implemented?	Write 1 if Yes, 2 if No	If Yes, please indicate how often you have used the following strategies Number of days out of the past 7days: (Use 0 – 7 to answer number of days; Use NA for not applicable)
1	Rely on less preferred and less expensive foods		
2	Sell livestock to buy food/grain		
3	Purchase food on credit		
4	Sell household assets to buy food/grain		
5	Depend on wild fruits, roots,		
6	Consume seed stock held for next season		
7	Borrow from friends or relatives		
8	Asked for grain/food gift from neighbors/relatives/friends		
9	Cut and sell trees/charcoal		
10	Worked on neighbor farms/nearby town to earn income/food		
11	Limit portion size at mealtimes		
12	Reduce number of meals eaten in a day		
13	Send children to eat with neighbors		

No.	Which strategy you implemented?	Write 1 if Yes, 2 if No	If Yes, please indicate how often you have used the following strategies Number of days out of the past 7 days: (Use 0 – 7 to answer number of days; Use NA for not applicable)
14	Restrict consumption by adults in order for small children to eat		
15	Skip entire days without eating		
16	Others, please specify		

32. Did you encounter food shortage in your household in the last seven days? 1) Yes 2) No

33a, Can you recall a period of time in the last 12 months that you and your family experienced food shortages (a shortage is a decrease in amount of food from what family typically consumes) 1) Yes 2) No - If No, SKIP to 33.

33b How long did this period last? 1. Less than 1 week; 2. 2-4 weeks; 3. 1-2 months; 4. 2-3 months; 5. 3 months or more

34a. How many meals did your family eat yesterday? 1) 1 meal; 2) 2 meals; 3 meals

34b Is there any difference between male and female adults and children in terms of **frequency** of food served per day? 1) Yes 2) No

34c. Is there a difference in the amount of food given/eaten to various members of your household? 1) Yes 2) No - If No, Skip to 36_____

35. If yes, please indicate meal how often and priority of serving.

Code	Household member	Food sufficient months		Food shortage months	
		No. of meal per day	Ranking of priority of serving*	No. of meal per day	Ranking of priority of serving*
1	Male adult				
2	Female adult				
3	Boys				
4	Girls				
5	Children				

* 1= first served, 2= second, 3= thirdly, 4= simultaneously served

SECTION 5: OFF-FARM INCOME AND MARKETING (Applicable to both sexes)

Participation in Off-farm income activities

36. Have any of your household members participated in non-farm income generation? 1) Yes 2) No

37. If yes to the above question, indicate the type of IGA involved and income earned in the last 1 year.

No.	Type of income generation	Participation (1=Yes, 2=No)			Income in <i>Birr</i> last year	Decision making (✓) to use IGAs		
		Male	Female	Both		Male	Female	Both

1.	Household enterprise/selling drink, food, etc							
2.	Handicraft							
3.	Sales of firewood/charcoal							
4.	Beekeeping and sale of honey							
5.	Employment (wage and salary)							
6.	Khat trading							
7.	Grain trading (buying and selling)							
8.	Livestock trading							
9.	Petty trading (salt, soap, sugar, etc.)							
10.	Milk trading							
11.	Others (specify)							

38. Do you know about the Abdishe project? 1) Yes 2) No

39. Do you think that income of your household improved due to market development by the project?

1) Yes 2) No

40. If yes, do you think that your household will be able to maintain the income IGAs without any support from the Project? 1) Yes 2) No

41. List the types of supports you got from the Project related to IGAs.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

44. What do you think about the problems related to markets (multiple responses are possible. In this case write the responses in their order of importance 1st _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____

1) Access to road 2) Transport 3) Perishable product 4) Lack of buyers of grain

5) Lack of supply of non-agricultural products 6) Low price for agricultural products

7) High prices of industrial goods 8) Low negotiation power of producers 9) others, specify _____

45. Do you think that the problems related to markets have reduced due to the Project's intervention?

1) Yes 2) No

46. If you, which one?

Value chain actors (Applicable to both sexes)

47. Indicate the farm products marketing and value addition

No.	Commodity	Sold to whom (use code 1)	Market (use code 2)	Forms of products (use code 3)	Who plays the major role in the value addition (use code 4)
1	Cereals				
2	Pulse				
3	Oil crops				
4	Honey				
5	Livestock				
6	Large animals				
7	Sheep/goat				
8	Chicken				
9	Livestock products				

Code 1: 1= Local collectors 2= Traders 3= Consumers 4=Cooperatives 5=Grain bank 6=others, specify_____

Code 2: 1= on farm 2=Village/PA market; 3= Woreda market; 4=Cooperative office 5= Grain bank office 6=others, specify_____

Code 3: 1= Sold as primary (as harvested) 2= Sorted to separate quality ones 3) sold processed 4=sold after fattening

Code 4: 1= Male; 2= Female; 3= Both

48. Do you see any value addition of your products? 1) Yes 2) No

SECTION 6: WOMEN'S DECISION MAKING (Applicable to female respondents)

49. Indicate women's decision making within their homes

No.	Type of decision	Use code (1-5)
1	Buying small food items, groceries, toiletries	
2	Buying clothing for yourself and your children	
3	Spending money that you yourself have earned	
4	Buying or selling major household assets (land, livestock, crops)	
5	Buying or selling jewelry	
6	Use of loans or savings	
7	Expenses for your children's education	
8	Expenses for your children's marriage	
9	Medical expenses for yourself or your children	
10	Expenses for family planning (contraceptives)	
11	To move to shelter during time of disaster	
12	Actively participate and involved in <i>salish</i> decision making	

Codes

- 1 = Can decide alone
- 2 = Can decide with husband or other adult male family member
- 3 = Husband makes decision after discussion with wife
- 4 = Not involved in decision
- 5 = Not applicable

Participation in community groups and local institutions (Applicable to both sexes)

50. Which of the following groups are you a member of in your village?

SN.	Type of community groups/institutions	Female Respondent	Participation status	Male Respondent	
1.	Community agriculture or garden group	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Member 2 = Committee Member/Officer 3 = Not a member	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Member 2 = Committee Member/Officer 3 = Not a member
2.	Community health group	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Member 2 = Committee Member/Officer 3 = Not a member	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Member 2 = Committee Member/Officer 3 = Not a member
3.	Parent-Teacher Association or School Management Committee	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Member 2 = Committee Member/Officer 3 = Not a member	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Member 2 = Committee Member/Officer 3 = Not a member
4.	Mother's Group	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Member 2 = Committee Member/Officer	N/A	N/A
5.	Women's support group	1 = Yes 2 = No	1 = Member 2 = Committee Member/Officer 3 = Not a member	N/A	N/A

Types of trainings and their significances

51. What are the type of trainings you have received from Abdishe project?

S/N	Types of trainings	Code/response	Training significance
1	Crop production and productivity	1=Yes 2=No	1=Very high 2= High 3= Medium

			4= Low 5= Nothing
2	Livestock production and productivity	1=Yes 2=No	1=Very high 2= High 3= Medium 4= Low 5= Nothing
3	Income generating activities	1=Yes 2=No	1=Very high 2= High 3= Medium 4= Low 5= Nothing
4	Family planning program	1=Yes 2=No	1=Very high 2= High 3= Medium 4= Low 5= Nothing
5	Market value chain	1=Yes 2=No	1=Very high 2= High 3= Medium 4= Low 5= Nothing
6	Natural resource management	1=Yes 2=No	1=Very high 2= High 3= Medium 4= Low 5= Nothing

Thank you for your information and time!!

Annex 2e: Document Review Checklist

The document reviewed focused on:

- Comprehensiveness in integrating multifaceted aspects of rural development;
- Emphasis on livelihood improvement and inclusion of viable strategies;
- Synergy among policies and strategies of livelihood diversification, food security, and women empowerment;
- Focus on women participation, decision making, facilitation of access to and control over resources as well as transformation of socio cultural factors and institutions, etc.
- Relevance of the project to the existing PSNP and related policy and strategies.
- Comparison of baseline and mid-term evaluation results of the project towards the end line.
- Looking in to periodic progresses and outcomes towards achievement of the expected results through reviewing the report and other working documents.

The documents included in the review were:

- Government Rural development policy, food security strategy, and related documents (National and regional)
- Two sets of reports (before and after ABDISHE intervention) of *Wereda* government focusing on food security, women empowerment and livelihood diversification will be explored for comparison; and
- Baseline survey and Mid-term evaluation reports of ABDISHE project.
- The research output which was conducted by Haromaya University on social transformation and house hold responsibility will be reviewed
- The recent performance reports of ABDISHE project will be compared against the baseline document.

Annex 3: Document Reviews of Abdishe project

1. Background and overview of *Abdishe* Project

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia launched the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) in 2004 to provide food and financial transfers to the chronically food insecure (CFI) population in a way that prevents asset depletion at the household (HH) level and creates productive assets at the community level. However, there remains a greater need for households to diversify income sources away from agricultural production and adopt more non-farm or off-farm income generating activities (IGAs). In fact, non-farm or off-farm IGAs are also, constrained by linkages to markets. To this end assistance is needed to provide alternative and accelerated pathways towards graduation from the PSNP and build up market opportunities. *Abdishe* – ‘hope for a woman’- is a project specifically designed to provide alternative and accelerated pathways towards graduation from the PSNP. The project is centered on market-driven approaches; and planned to contribute to improving the livelihoods of CFI Women by deliberately and concurrently assisting PSNP beneficiaries and other vulnerable women, men, boys and girls who lack access to other food security and microfinance programs to acquire assets through entry into viable markets and a range of contextually relevant microfinance services.

Abdishe project has targeted in Eastern Part of Oromia region in Fedis *Woreda*, East Harerghie zone of Oromia Region where chronic food insecurity is highly pronounced. The project planned to reach 6,400 CFI women and their HHs (which mean reaching a total of 32,000 individuals in the *woreda*), thereby improve the livelihoods of the project beneficiaries through increased quantity and quality of food production and consumption by women and men, enabling women and men to equally manage and control their economic enterprises. Participants of the project include 4,597 PSNP households from 14 rural *kebeles* and the rest 1,803 non-PSNP households from the same 14 rural *kebeles* and nearby urban kebeles. The project supports policy and regulatory environment of the local government to improve supports to poor women’s and men’s more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes. This initiative is also considered potentially promising in promoting and complementing the rural-urban linkage for local economic development. It complements several

aspects of the country's Growth and Transformation Program (GTP), i.e., strengthening agricultural production, promoting potential of Ethiopian women, and managing risk through diversification of livelihoods. Duration of the project is 4 years: August, 2012 – August, 2016. The project came to an effect in 2013.

1.1. Main Objective and Expected Results of Abdishe Project

Main objective of *Abdishe* Project is to improve the livelihood security and resilience for chronically food insecure women, girls, men and boys in Fedis *woreda*, by focusing on market-driven approaches and rural-urban linkages. With this ultimate outcome the project has the following expected results:

Expected Result 1: Increased quantity and quality of food production and consumption by women, girls, men and boys

ER 1.1: Increased women and men agricultural production and productivity.

ER 1.2: Increased women and men equal consumption of food.

ER 1.3: Decreased gap between men's and women's control over resources necessary to ensure sustainable food production.

Expected Result 2: Women and men are better able to manage and control their economic enterprises

ER 2.1: Increased women and men equal access to the knowledge, skills and services needed to strengthen and diversify their economic activities.

ER 2.2: Increased in women and men engagement on VC activities.

ER 2.3: Collectives and Business Development Service Providers (BDSP) provided more equally relevant support to male and female owned enterprises.

Expected Result 3: The policy and regulatory environment supports poor women's and men's more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes

ER 3.1: Local value chain (VC) actors (women's groups, collectives, suppliers) have increased role in the formulation of policies and regulations that enhance men's and women's food, nutrition and income security.

ER 3.2: Improved capacity of local government structures to effectively and transparently engage women in development planning and implementation processes.

Abdishe project has integrated a wide range of approaches to ensure sustainability of programming activities and provide a viable exit strategy. The approaches include:

Participatory approaches and techniques including processes that engage poor rural households, government officials and private sector actors in joint decision-making and planning. These approaches extend stakeholders' sense of ownership and responsibility for the activities that they will be implementing, expand participation, foster ownership, and promote long-term maintenance and sustainability of structural and extension activities.

Capacity building of community groups and local government in order to increase program implementation efficiency and effectiveness, scale and coverage, sustainability of service delivery, and programming scope. The project has contained a significant amount of capacity building activities both for the target community members, community, and government institutions that can significantly improve the level of their capacities.

Strengthening good governance, member accountability and market orientation within VSLAs and facilitating access to training and financial products and services enhances the long-term sustainability of associations formed and strengthened under Abdishe.

Strategic partnerships between the private sector, government, and producers bridge gaps which have undermined market-led initiatives in the past. Taking a long view at the value chain process identifies weaknesses and areas for improvement throughout the production, processing and marketing system which are critical areas for the success of any activity aimed at linking poor to markets.

Integration and complementarities within and outside of the program lends itself to greater sustainability. Within the program, producers are linked to markets and necessary financial supports in order to support long-term viability of their enterprises. Interventions under the program are expected to be market driven, to guarantee that there is a ready and increasing market for the commodities and products produced by participants.

Promoting women's participation is the core of this project throughout program activity implementation. The full inclusion of women promotes the goal of graduation, as women are more likely to spend income on the betterment of their families through education, improved nutrition and/or healthcare. Working in close collaboration with local government structures, the project has planned to improve government and Civil society collaboration and partnership to women empowerment and gender *issues and* thereby ensure sustainability of proven approaches by contributing to the institutional environment required for future government support and scaling-up.

1.2. Performance Indicators and Baseline Findings of Abdishe Project

The broad indicators to measure the performance of *Abdishe* Project are number of CFI women who moved out of food support, positive Coping Strategies (CS) of food shortages employed by women and men and women's self esteem improvement. Baseline survey which could serve as benchmark to evaluate performance and achievement of *Abdishe* Project against the project's performance indicators was undertaken. During the base line survey 6400 women & their HHs were CFI; over 90% of households depend on food aid for their HH food availability. The HHs in the stud area had coping strategy index (CSI) score of 37.1 (36.9 for Men and 37.9 for women); average score of women's level of self-esteem, during the survey time, was 2.67 out of 4 scoring, which seems women felt they could handle the typical problems that come up in their life though they tend to agree with the statements that states at root they were weak and feel like a failure – indicating their dissatisfaction with their social and economic situations. Hereunder, the detailed findings of the

baseline study are summarized, against the respective performance indicators, as per the expected results of the project.

1.2.1. Expected Result 1: Increased Food production and consumption

Performance indicators: Diversity of food groups consumed by Female/male beneficiaries, number of meals consumed per day; number of food shortage months; proportion of HHs that could feed from own produces; number of crops grown by women and men; annual income from agriculture increased; proportion of beneficiaries cropping with improved varieties of seeds increased; proportion of women and men who reported increased equal consumption of food among men and women; and percentage of women with control over key productive assets compared with men are used as performance indicators.

Baseline findings: survey result showed that only 3 major crops consumed by most HH with no significant difference between female and male study groups; the majority of the HHs had low dietary diversity; the average HH dietary diversity in the total survey households was found to be 35.67% (with no significant difference between female and male headed HHs) which is an indicator of food insecurity of households in the study area; most HHs consume less than 2 meals per day and over 40% of the surveyed HHs frequently skip the entire days without eating during the past 12 months before the survey; most HHs experienced 8 food shortage months; 85% of HHs couldn't feed themselves for 6 months from own produces and so depend on food aid for their HH food availability, there was statistically significant difference between PSNP participants and non-PSNP participants on average number of months they depended on their own crop produces (non-PSNP participants depended on for 4.86 months, while PSNP participants e for 3.76 months); many families grow only 3 crops per year; average annual income from agriculture was 112.3 Birr; almost negligible proportion of farmers planted with improved varieties of seeds, only 52% of women reported increased equal consumption of food among men and women; 18.8% of women reported as they have the power to decide on crop products, 45.5% of women decide on livestock products but not a single women reported decision on perennial plants.

1.2.2 Expected Result 2: Men's and women's control and management of economic enterprises

Performance indicators: Percentage of women and men engaged in economic enterprises; average income of HHs increased; proportion of women who reported equal access to the knowledge, skills and services needed; proportion of HHs used improved crop and livestock inputs increased; percentage of HHs (women and men) engaged in VC activities; proportion of HHs who sold products as primary, sorted by quality and processed; number of support types to clients and number of interventions; proportion of target women getting services from Cooperatives/SMEs.

Baseline findings: According to the base line study overall 27.1% of HHs were engaged in off-farm and non-farm activities; 13.22% of women and 33.33% of men engaged in non-farm activities;

average income from physical capital is 1851.88 Birr; average saving among the study subjects during the survey time was 61.45 Birr; 25.76% women and 45.11% of men reported access to the knowledge, skills and services needed; only 6.4% HHs used improved crop inputs (improved seeds, fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides) in the last crop production year and none of the survey HHs had access to improved livestock; 7% of the community members involved in VC activities; 32.8 % of HHs added value to their products (i.e. they sold their products after processing), 35.58% sold by sorting based on quality and 50.93% sold as primary product; only 1 type of support exist for 5 types of interventions to both men and women; and only 27.2% of women got services from Cooperatives/SMEs implying the need to devise alternative economic empowerment interventions for women.

1.2.2. Expected Result 3: Policy and regulatory environment

Performance indicators: Increase in women's decision making power in different aspects; the proportion of target women who report supportive and gender relevant policy and regulatory environment for more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes; percentage reduced barriers to equal control of agricultural resources and market processes among women and men; number of VC actors (male/female) reporting increased role in formulation of relevant policies and regulations; number of roles assumed by VC actors /contributions in the formulation of policies and regulations; proportion of women participation in development planning and implementation processes.

Baseline findings: during the baseline survey time out of 4 scoring the average score of women's decision making in their home was 2.76, less than three (where husbands make decisions after discussing with wife). Among the identified social and economic items, women tended to decide more on buying small food items and groceries; while their decision making on selling and buying major household assets (land, livestock, and crops) was low. Three barriers identified to equal control of agricultural resources and market processes among women and men; only 5 VC actors were reported as they have role in the formulation of relevant policies and regulations however the roles of VC actors in formulation of relevant policies and regulations is limited and even not clearly defined; there was 20-30% women representation in development planning and implementation processes in different sectors and the representation in the *Woreda* and *Kebele* houses was 50%.

2. Analysis of *Abdishe* Project Progress

2.1. Baseline versus Mid-term Evaluation analysis

At the halfway of *Abdishe* Project life-cycle, during the first two years of its implementation, there the project progress and implementation effectiveness was evaluated via mid-term evaluation. The achievement of the project under each of its ultimate (main objective), intermediate, and immediate outcomes was evaluated and hereunder the assessment result against the baseline data is summarized.

- ❖ **Ultimate outcome:** to improve livelihood security and resilience for CFI women, girls, men and boys in Fedis Woreda

The performance of the project in achieving its goal was meant to be measured by three impact level indicators including the number of **CFI women who moved out of food support, Positive CSI employed by women and men, improvements in women's self-esteem score**. In the mid-term evaluation the progress of the project was measured using similar factors on the first and third indicators (progress on CSI was left for the end-term evaluation as stipulated in the project's M&E Plan). Accordingly, the progress that has been made by the project during the first two years of its implementation on indicators selected is summarized in Table 1:

Table 1: *Progress on Project Goal/Ultimate Outcome*

Indicators	Baseline	Progress to Mid-term evaluation date		Overall project target
		Actual		
		Number	Percentage	
Number of CFI women who moved out of food support	6400	4,864	Survey data shows that beneficiaries receiving food support decreased by 76%	3840 (60% of target beneficiaries)
Positive Coping Strategies (CSI) employed by women and men	CSI = 37.1 (36.9 for Men and 37.9 for women)	NA	To be determined (TBD) by the end-term evaluation as specified in the M&E plan of the project	CSI = 38 for men and 39 for women (one point increase for both women and men)
Women's self-esteem improved	Women's self-esteem = 2.67 out of 4 scoring	NA	Women's self-esteem increased from 2.67 to 3.15 out of 4 scoring (improved by 0.48 points)	Women's self esteem = 3.50 out of 4 scoring

As presented in Table 1 above, 76% of the respondents stated that their household is not receiving any food support during the survey time. Considering the baseline situation that indicated all the 6,400 target women beneficiaries were receiving food support before the implementation of the project, it can be inferred that the number of households that have moved out of food support has increased from 0% to 76%, representing 4,864 beneficiaries. This shows that the project has exceeded its 60% target by achieving 127% of the target half way through its implementation. However, as the indicator “moved from food support” was not defined, the evaluation team assumed that beneficiaries that are no longer receiving any food support have moved from such support, which may not necessarily mean that they are food self-sufficient or not requiring external support.

- **Expected Result 1:** Increased quantity and quality of food production and consumption by women, girls, men and boys

The progress made by *Abdishe* project, during the first two years of its implementation, on the indicators that were identified to measure changes quantity and quality of food production and consumption by women, girls, men and boys is summarized in the table 2 below:

Table 2: *Progress on Expected result 1*

Indicators	Baseline	Progress to Mid-term evaluation date	Overall project target
		Actual	
Diversity of food groups consumed by male and female beneficiaries,	Only 3 major crops consumed by most HHs (low dietary diversity)	Quantitative and qualitative result show that they eat at least six types of food groups/items (Sorghum, Maize, Barley, Wheat, Meat and Dairy, and Haricot Bean)	HHs consume 5 or more of the 9 food groups (better dietary diversity)
Number of meals consumed per day	less than 2 meals per day	2.58 meals/day with minimum of 1 meal to maximum of four meals per day). 64% of households eat 3 meals while 30% of them eats 2 meals per day	3 meals per day
Number of food shortage months,	8 food shortage months	In the month before the mid-term evaluation, 91.8% of the respondents had enough food to eat all day ³¹	Decreased length of food shortage season at least by 3 months
Proportion of HHs that could feed from own produces	85% of HHs couldn't feed themselves for 6 months from own produces	Out of those that purchased food in the last 6 months, only 2.1% of them indicated that they pay for food from family/friend loan and only 0.8% of them bought with loan from money lender. This means that the remaining 97% respondents were able to pay for food from their own produces (saving, sold livestock, sold poultry, and sold peanut and chat)	75% of HHs feed themselves at least for 9 months

From the table above (table 2) progress on changes in the quality and quantity of food consumption measured by the diversity of food groups consumed by women and men beneficiaries showed that beneficiary households eat at least six types of food groups/items which were only three food items

³¹ Data needed to determine the number of months of food shortage in the year was not collected. The collected data was rather on number of days of food shortage.

during the baseline survey. With regard to the number of meals consumed per day, which was another indicator to measure the project's performance on the change in the quality and quantity of food consumption, the mid-term survey result showed that beneficiary households took an average of 2.58 meals per day during the month before the survey. The target was to increase the less than two meals consumed per day at baseline to three meals after the completion of the project implementation. Taking the target in to consideration, the mid-term evaluation result shows that the project has progressed very well during its first two years of implementation. Regarding the number of food shortage months, baseline figures showed that most of the target HHs used to face 8 food shortage months. During the mid-term time, 91.8% of the beneficiary HHs stated that they have enough food to feed their family all day during the month before the survey. The survey assessment on the adequacy of food a year before the survey showed that, over 47% of the beneficiaries had either just enough or excess food. The proportion of HHs that could feed themselves from their own production is the fourth indicator to measure progress on ER 1 of the project. The four year target of the project was to improve the baseline situation where 85% of HHs were not able to feed themselves for 6 months from own produces into a situation where 75% of HHs could feed themselves at least for 9 months. The indirect measures to determine the progress on the proportion of HHs that could feed from own produces indicated that 97% respondents were able to pay for food from their own produces (saving, sold livestock, sold poultry, and sold peanut and chat).

- **Expected Result 1.1:** Increased women and men agricultural production and productivity
Increasing women and men agricultural production and productivity was one of the immediate outcomes identified for the project. The summary mid-term evaluation result on the progress of the project, based on the indicators, in this dimension is summarized in the table 3

Table 3: *Progress on Expected result 1.1*

Indicators	Baseline	Progress to Mid-term evaluation date	Overall project target
		Actual	
Number of crops grown by women and men	Many families grow only 3 crops per year	Most beneficiary households (77%) of households grow Sorghum. 44% of the households also grow Peanut and Maize. Chat is grown by 34% of the households. 63% of the households grow 1 to 3 crops while only 21% of them grow 4 to 6 crops.	At least 6 types of crops grown

Annual income from agriculture increased	112.3 Birr average annual income from agriculture	Birr 317.20 ³² which represents 44.5% increase from the cumulative expected growth in the past two years (Birr 219.5). Put differently, the income from agriculture grew by 182% from the baseline.	40% increase in annual income from agriculture
Proportion of beneficiaries cropping with improved varieties of seeds increased	Almost negligible proportion of farmers planted with improved varieties of seeds	100% of the target HHs for cereal and vegetable production are using improved seeds in recommended way ³³	10% of target beneficiaries planted improved crop seeds

- **Expected Result 1.2:** Increased women and men equal consumption of food

In the absence of indicator definitions, the mid-term evaluation team measured increased women and men equal consumption of food by the number of meals taken and whether women and men eat together. In terms of meal, women and men were found to eat almost equal number of meals per day. Indeed, women consumes a little more meals (2.57 meals) compared to men who eats 2.53 meals per day. The summary of the finding is given in table 4

Table 4: Progress on Expected result 1.2

Indicators	Baseline	Progress to Mid-term evaluation date	Overall project target
		Actual(Percentage)	
Proportion of women and men who reported increased equal consumption of food among men and women.	Only 52% of women reported equal consumption of food among men and women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of the women eat their food with their husband and children • 45% of them eat their food with their children • Only 2% of them indicated that they eat alone If measured by the number of meals, men consume 2.53 meals while women do 2.57 meals per day.	At least 70% of women and men reported equal consumption of food among men and women

- **Expected Result 1.3:** Decreased gap between men's and women's control over resources necessary to ensure sustainable food production.

As presented in the table below, during the mid-term evaluation survey time women's control over resources in the HH has increased. 76% of the women respondents indicated that they equally

³² The figure is an average of agricultural income collected from 169 households only.

³³ Source: project report for the period July-Dec 2014

participate in agricultural input and output decision making processes. 12.5% of them also indicate that they make such decisions on their own.

Table 5: *Progress on Expected result 1.3*

Indicators	Baseline	Progress to Mid-term evaluation date	Overall project target
		Actual(Percentage)	
Percentage of women with control over key productive assets compared with men	18.8% of women decide on crop products; 45.5% of women decide on livestock products and none on perennial plants	76% of the respondents indicated that they equally participate in agricultural input and output decision making; 12.5% of them indicate that they make such decisions on their own	50% of women decide on crop products; 70% of women decide on livestock and 80% decide on fruits and vegetables

- **Expected Result 2:** Women and men are better able to manage and control their economic enterprises

The progress made by Abdishe project, during the first two years of its implementation, on the indicators that were identified to measure changes to better able women and men to manage and control their economic enterprises is summarized in the table 6, below. Percent increase in women and men engaged in economic enterprises, average income and savings of the household were the three indicators identified to measure project progress on this particular objective. The summary of the progress made so far on the indicators vis-à-vis the baseline and targets is:

Table 6: *Progress on Expected result 2*

Indicators	Baseline	Progress to Mid-term evaluation date	Overall project target
		Actual	
Percentage of women and men engaged in economic enterprises	13.22% of women and 33.33% of men engaged in none farm activities,	49.5% of the women are engaged in off-farm activities/micro enterprises	35% of women and men engaged on non-farm activities
Average income of HHs increased	Average income from physical capital = 1851.88 Birr,	3,648 birr from micro-business alone	40% increase in the income from all assets
Increased average savings of HHs	Average saving = 61.45 Birr	1,680 birr ³⁴	Not set at the beginning

³⁴ Saving with VSLA equaled 623.6 birr, while saving in other places including home and RuSSACO was 1056.3.

The mid-term evaluation report stated that since almost all direct beneficiaries are women, the survey did not include men and as a result did not attempt to determine the proportion of men that are involved in economic enterprises. The findings of the evaluation survey revealed that close to half of the beneficiary women (49.5%) are engaged in economic enterprises. With regard to average income the mid-term evaluation reported that due to problems in data collection the evaluation team did not find the data collected on income of HHs reliable. However, while it is true that HHs have different sources of income, at the time of the survey, the findings of survey showed that the beneficiary HHs earn an average of 304 Birr per month from their micro business, at the time of the survey. This means that each beneficiary HH have earned 3,648 average annual income from micro-business alone. Considering the baseline average income of 1,851.88 Birr with a 40% target growth rate set for the project, the project targeted to increase HH income from 1851.88 (baseline) to 2,593 Birr. With the income from micro business alone, the survey finding revealed that the project has exceeded even its four years target significantly. In terms of savings, the beneficiaries have an average savings of Birr 1.680 at the time of the survey. Compared to the baseline figure of 61.45 Birr, the average savings of beneficiaries has increased by 2,634%, which was reported in the Mid-term evaluation as an impressive growth over the first two years of the project implementation.

- **Expected Result 2.1:** Increased women and men equal access to the knowledge, skills and services needed to strengthen and diversify their economic activities.

Although access to knowledge, skills and services is a broader term that may be subject to different interpretation, the results of the mid-term evaluation survey revealed that within the first two years of the project implementation 16% of the women beneficiaries have received training and technical support needed to strengthen and diversify their economic activities through the project. If what the project accomplished is taken as an addition to what the women have had before the project, it can be argued that the proportion of women who got access to knowledge, skills and services has been enhanced by 16%. Then adding the baseline figure with what has been added by the project, it may be said that over 41% of the women have had access to the knowledge, skills and services they needed. Table 7 summarizes the finding:

Table 7: *Progress on Expected result 2.1*

Indicators	Baseline	Progress to Mid-term evaluation date	Overall project target
		Actual (Percentage)	

Proportion of women who reported equal access to the knowledge, skills and services needed	25.76% women and 45.11% of men reported access to the knowledge, skills and services needed	41.76%	50% of women and men reported access to the knowledge, skills and services needed
Proportion of HHs used improved crop and livestock inputs increased	6.4% of HHs accessed improved crop inputs and none on improved livestock	15%	20% of HHs accessed improved agricultural inputs

- **Expected Result 2.2:** Increased in women and men engagement on VC activities.

The mid-term evaluation report on the project’s progress in terms of increasing women and men engagement on VC activities in the first two years of the project implementation years was found to be difficult to determine at that stage as there was no much progress to get concrete evidence

- **Expected Result 2.3:** Collectives and Business Development Service Providers (BDSP) provided more equally relevant support to male and female owned enterprises.

Mid-term evaluation result showed that data on the provision of more equally relevant supports to male and female owned enterprises by Collectives and BDSP provided support was hard to find. This was mainly because the government body that was responsible for coordinating the provision of such supports was not available for consultation. Project documentations, however, show that the micro and small enterprise development agency have been providing different types of support to male and female project participants. The support they have been providing included capacity building training in different areas, technical advice, and business development services and linking the groups with different sector offices. The project has provided training and supported community and government institutions to provide more gender-equitable service. Reflections of the community also indicated that there is a general improvement on the recognition and supports to women from the various community and government institutions.

- **Expected Result 3:** The policy and regulatory environment supports poor women’s and men’s more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes

In the Mid-term evaluation the progress made by the project in the third ER was measured based on one of the indicators identified. This is because, as to the report, the evaluation team was not able to determine progress on the other indicators as they were not operationally defined and were hard to

measure. The summary of the finding on the progress of *Abdishe* project in ER 3 is given in table 8, below:

Table 8: *Progress on Expected result 3*

Indicators	Baseline	Progress to Mid-term evaluation date	Overall project target
		Actual	
Women's decision making power in different aspects increased	Women's decision making score = 2.76 out of 4 scoring	2.97 at four of the key indicators that were used to measure women's decision making score at baseline ³⁵	Women's decision making power score = 3.25 out of 4 scoring
The proportion of target women who report supportive and gender relevant policy and regulatory environment for more equal control of agricultural resources and market processes	No assessment done	Explained qualitatively	Decrease in the proportion of target beneficiaries (women and men) who inform about the existing barrier policy and regulatory environment
percent reduced barriers to equal control of agricultural resources and market processes among women and men	3 barriers identified to equal control of agricultural resources and market processes among women and men	Explained qualitatively	10% decrease in the # of barriers to equal control of agricultural resources and market processes among women and men

Increasing women's decision making power in different aspects 2.76 to 3.25 out of 4.0 (maximum score) was the target set by the project. The mid-term evaluation measured women's decision making power in terms of their involvement in decisions relating to usage of their earning, health, purchase, visit to relatives, agricultural input, and use of contraception. Women decision making score as measured by four of the 11 parameters or indicators that were utilized to measure the decision making score at baseline was 2.97 out of a 4 score.

³⁵ Some the variables that were used to measure women's decision making score at baseline were not measured during the mid-term evaluation due to oversight.

- **Expected Result 3.1:** Local VC actors have increased role in the formulation of policies and regulations that enhance men's and women's food, nutrition and income security.

Mid-term evaluation report stated that data that could evidence the role of VC actors in the formulation of policies and regulations that enhance their food, nutrition and income security was not found. Indeed, it may also be difficult for such local VC from one of more than 800 *woredas* in the country to have increased role in the formulation of policies and regulations that are often formulated at national and regional levels. The evaluation report raised concern on appropriateness of the indicator considering the project context and coverage. It may, however, worth noting that the interaction between community members with local government bodies and their participation in the multi-stakeholder meeting has been increasing. Such engagements may contribute ideas that local authorities may utilize to influence policies and regulations at higher levels.

- **Expected Result 3.2:** Improved capacity of local government structures to effectively and transparently engage women in development planning and implementation processes.

Mid-term evaluation result reported that the evaluation team was not able to obtain documented evidences that show the level of representation of women and their participation in development planning and implementation processes. However, capacity building trainings have been provided by the project although the reports on the frequency and consistency of the trainings were not uniform. This can be attributed to the high turnover rates experienced in the *Woreda* Administration and its sector offices. While there is no Gender budgeting as such, trainings on Gender sensitivity and planning has been given for all 28 sectors by the Abdishe project including training on reporting.

In general, the mid-term evaluation report showed that in the first two years of implementation *Abdishe* project was instrumental in increasing food production and consumption, joint decision making of men and women and control over of resources and shared responsibilities in both domestic and economic engagements. Despite such progress, there are concerns raised in the mid-term evaluation report. One concern is that while the Gender sensitive approach is to be commended, an approach that is not inclusive of men may not exactly be a gender sensitive approach as that may have repercussions in the long run. These issues were already present at the time of mid-term evaluation as men were showing some interest in the trainings and meetings offered by the project at both the beneficiary as well as the partner levels. The focus on the gender division of labor in the economic sphere as well as the household has also overshadowed other areas such as Harmful Traditional Practices and Gender Based Violence (GBV). All these combined may adversely affect the sustainability of the project results and appropriate amendments to the strategic documents may need to be addressed accordingly. Moreover, as the implementation of the Social Analysis and Action (SAA) is not uniform, while the places observed where SAA has been adequately implemented seems to show remarkable progress, the lack of consistency has left some gaps in awareness and internalization. The other area of concern raised in the mid-term evaluation result is related to the Shegoye or Dancie - a tradition where young adolescents form groups and

spend the night in another house all together and without adult supervision. This aspect of the local culture is a possible area of concern for Sexual and Reproductive health and source of GBV issues as the culture evolves and the link with the rest of the world magnifies with the market linkage, cell phone technology and economic development.

2.2. Summary of Abdishe project Annual progress report for July 2014 – June 2015

Up to the survey date (February 2015), the project supported the organization of 5555 HHs under 297 VSLAs, of which 1982 HHs are supported to be organized in 98 VSLAs during this reporting period. In this reporting period, over 3500 HHs have been provided different kind of trainings and technical support in the broader areas of VSLA methodology, appropriate feeding practices, nutrition, animal husbandry, gender issues and so on. In support of enhancing the livelihood security of beneficiaries, the project provided 85 kilograms of different kinds of vegetable seeds to 630 HHs; purchased and transferred 1722 goats to 574 HHs; 1826 offspring transferred to 503 second level beneficiaries HHs; 85% of the oxen transferred to the second level beneficiaries; and 50 modern beehives with complete set of accessories and processing equipment to 50 HHs organized in three producers groups. Reflection with community groups and individual beneficiaries confirm that significant improvements are registered in terms of production, productivity and dietary practice, both in variety and quantity of food consumption at household level. This is also confirmed from data generated from the rolling profiles.

During this reporting period, significant numbers of women, around 2302 HHs, have received VSLA methodology training and animal husbandry training. Likewise, more than 4000 HHs have received agricultural inputs through asset transfer provision; they are also provided technical and experience sharing support on bee hiving, vegetable production, and small ruminates and animal husbandry. Promising and encouraging results also came out in terms of women's capacity in managing and controlling over their enterprises. Preliminary evidences are reflected from beneficiaries that the HH level power relation is changing, because of the engagement of men and women in addressing gender inequalities, increased awareness on women's right, potentials and capacity and women's contributions to the HH income and economy. The mid-term evaluation also indicates that the gendered division of labor has changed over the first two years of the project implementation and HH chores that used to be traditionally taken care of by women are now being shared by husbands. Over 68% of the women that participated in the survey also indicated that their husbands help them with the household chores.

The project engaged the trained gender-focal persons from different government sector offices to support them mainstreaming gender sensitive programming. The trainees developed action plan on promoting gender mainstreaming and equity and have shared widely in the MSP at zonal and village levels. Likewise, wider sensitizations have been made at village and community levels on gender equity and justice and GBV by the community based legal advisors (CBLAs) and SAA facilitators. The communities reported that GBV and conflicts are significantly reduced. Community level conflict resolution mechanisms are also placed at village level to resolve considering gender equity

lens and family values. *Kebele* administration has provided office to the trained CBLAs so that they can provide the legal service at village and decentralized level.

3. Policies and Programs on Food security, gender equality and women empowerment in Ethiopia

3.1. Food security situation in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia eighty-four percent of households are located in rural areas and majority of these remain chronically food insecure and vulnerable to shocks and potential disasters (World Bank, 2009). Smallholder farmers who contribute for great portion of agricultural production in rural Ethiopia face constraints including extreme shortage of land, land degradation and soil infertility, poor terms of trade and lack of investments, erratic and unpredictable rainfall patterns, poor access to markets, few off-farm employment opportunities, low agricultural productivity, thereby poverty and food insecurity. Food security is a major challenge in Ethiopia. In the 2013/2014 fiscal year, an estimated 6 million people in the country were considered chronically food insecure and covered by the PSNP. These people reside in a total of 319 *Woredas* (close to half of the total *Woredas* of the country) of the eight regional states, and Fedis Woreda is one of them³⁶. In response to this the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) is designing and implementing different programs. At the center of GTP (for 2010/2011 – 2014/2015) of FDRE is sustaining rapid and equitable growth that will help expand employment and income, eventually eradicating poverty. In the GTP it was planned to transform agriculture to high growth path in order to ensure the food security challenge of the country and to curb inflationary pressure as well as broadening the export base of the country. Therefore, in order to promote multiple cropping and better cope with climate variability and insure food security, GTP planned enhancing the uses of country's water resources through the expansion of small-scale irrigation. Moreover, the plan put provision of sustained support for telecommunication, railway, road, energy, and irrigation development in order to enhance and sustain pro-poor growth via job creation and initiating domestic industrial development.

Food Security Programs and strategies

To ensure food security the Ethiopian government also designed food security programs (FSPs). The recent food security program (FSP) of the Ethiopian Government, which covers a period from 2010 to 2014 has four components, namely, Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), Household Asset Building Program, Complementary Community Investment, and Voluntary Resettlement. The PSNP is designed to assure food consumption and prevent asset depletion for food insecure HHs, while stimulating markets, improving access to services and natural resources, and rehabilitating and enhancing the natural environment. PSNP is implemented in *woredas* and *kebeles* defined by the

³⁶Ministry of Agriculture. Productive Safety Net and Household Asset Building Programs- Annual Work Plan and Budget for 2013/14 (2006 EFY)

Government as CFI. Their eligibility for the PSNP was defined by the frequency with which they required food assistance in the ten years preceding the design of the PSNP (the ten years up to 2004). The clients of the PSNP are the food insecure populations living in these *woredas* and *kebeles*. The vast majority of PSNP clients are resource poor male- and female headed HHs who fail to produce or purchase enough food even in times of normal rains. The PSNP provides a safety net to protect people falling further into trouble, while also providing a secure food and asset platform from which they may be able to improve their household status and become food secure. Households that are identified for graduation will remain in the PSNP for one additional year to promote stability in their livelihoods and the building of resilience. To ensure that the PSNP is effective in achieving its objectives it needs to be implemented with the principle of fair and transparent client selection, timely, predictable and appropriate transfers, primacy of transfers, productive safety net, integrated into local systems, scalable safety net, cash first principle, and gender equity. Moreover, since PSNP is implemented by multiple government ministries and departments supported by NGOs, to achieve its objectives, efficient coordination is required between NGOs and concerned government institutions at all levels- federal, regional, zonal and *woreda* levels.

In the household asset-building component of FSP, packages that are based on the food security strategy are formulated. The Household Asset Building Programme is to diversify income sources and increase productive assets for food insecure households in CFI *woredas*, and to contribute to the achievement of improved food security status. It targets on safety net beneficiaries and give them support for business plan preparation, training, technology supply, credit and extension they will be able to ensure them food security. The packages are inclusive of areas which are moisture deficit, suitable water harvesting, and that can lead to ensure food security. FDRE government also aims to eliminate food insecurity problem based on regional and agro-ecological consideration. Accordingly, the other component of the FSP, which was designed to bring food security rapidly, has been the resettlement program that is carried out on voluntary basis. Resettling people, such as pastoral communities, living in some drought prone regions where food insecurity and poverty are pervasive and deep to areas where there is enough land and rainfall is one of the strategies to expeditiously realize the objective of food security in the country. In addition, those who have very small plots and landless youth and women will be encouraged to engage in non-farm IGAs with adequate support in terms of preparing packages, provision of skill and business management trainings, provision of credit and facilitating markets, so that they can ensure their food security. Early warning for disaster prevalence and response capacity building is also planned to be one of the keys tasks over the next five years. In terms of preparedness, there is a plan to increase in food and non-food reserves. Storage capacity will be built in line with the expected increase, particularly food security reserves. In pastoralist areas improved livestock resources development, natural resource management and establishment of modern agricultural system like the marketing practiced through Ethiopian commodity exchange (ECX) is planned to continue with strength.

3.2. Gender equality and women empowerment in Ethiopia

The National Policy on Ethiopian Women has also the objectives of creating and facilitating conditions for equality between men and women in all political, social and economic spheres; creating conditions to make rural women beneficiaries of social services; eradicating traditional practices inflicted on women; and eliminating stereotypes and discriminatory perception and practices that constrain the equality of women. The FDRE government's rural development strategy and policy document put emphasis on gender equity in the agricultural sector. The document gave special attention on the multiple benefits of the provision of primary education to women. Providing primary education to women will help them reduce child and early marriage, practice family planning, support children's education, improves family hygiene and health care. Harmful and backward traditions militating against equality of women in education should be eliminated, and women's educational levels should progressively be lifted towards those of men. Unless women's productive capacity is enhanced, and unless they are employed in production and development activities, the desired development outcome cannot be attained. Hence, great effort should be exerted to make the work burden on women lighter.

Moreover, the disease prevention and primary health care programs should be oriented more towards women because women care for more people than just for themselves, and as such, their contribution to the health of the nation in general carries more weight. In the case of land use, women's right is legally ensured to have equal access to land with men counterparts. The FDRE government rural development policy also gives stress on the importance of organizing women's associations at *kebele* level to enable women to obtain technical and credit services as well as exchange of views and experiences. Thus, policy document give stress on the role women empowerment for the attainment of rural development and food security program in Ethiopia.

The FDRE realize that the objectives of the GTP can be achieved only when the multidimensional problems faced by women are concurrently addressed and resolved. Hence, the Government planned to scale up its efforts to implement the Women's and youth Policy, which is necessary to release the untapped potential of these segments of the population of Ethiopian in a holistic and integrated manner. Unleashing the power of girls and women will have profound effect on the speed, equity, and sustainability of Ethiopia's growth and development. The government is committed to increase the participation of women in education, public life and to strengthen their membership-based organization. Providing affirmative action for women and enhanced popular participation are also the major targets in the GTP. In the time frame of the plan priority objectives are ensuring women's active participation in the country's economic development and equal benefit from the economic growth; increasing participation of women in the social sector and empowerment of women by abolishing Harmful Traditional Practices, and asserting women's participation in politics. According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (2010) the gender sensitive implementation strategies of GTP include:

- Ensuring the economic sector programs and extension packages consider women participation.
- Assist women to form cooperatives and advance the beneficiaries.
- Encourage women to increase their income by participating in other income generating activities other than agriculture.
- Promote women's use of saving and credit services.
- Increase women participation in all educational levels.
- Providing better health care and combat women related health problems
- Extend programs that help decrease the work burden of rural women
- Create conducive environment to enable women association operate effectively.
- Increase decision making role of women

4. Summary of major achievement of *Abdishe* project and lesson learned

Abdishe project directly meets several of the Ethiopian government's GTP seven pillars strategies:

- 1- Sustaining faster and equitable economic growth
- 2- Maintaining agriculture as a major source of economic growth
- 3- Creating favorable conditions for the industry to play key role in the economy
- 4- Enhancing expansion and quality of infrastructure development
- 5- Enhancing expansion and quality of social development
- 6- Building capacity and deepen good governance
- 7- Promote women and youth empowerment and equitable benefit

The fact that the project targeted women to promote women's and men's more equal control of economic resources and enterprises was also found very coherent with the country's constitution, policies and strategies. The Constitution of Ethiopia recognizes gender equality as a basic requirement for the full realization of all other rights. By promoting the potential of Ethiopian women through targeting of women and gender mainstreaming the project meet pillar strategy #7. The project meet pillar strategies #1 and #2 by creating employment opportunities (both on- and off-farm) and pushing for the acceleration of growth in the agricultural sector and through improved financial products and services. It also promote women's participation in household decision making, community development and economic activities, and so meet pillar strategy #5; and build implementation capacity for government actors at the *Woreda* levels and for private actors by which the project meet pillar strategy #6.

As it has also reported in the Mid-term evaluation the *Abdishe* project, its goal to Improve Livelihood Security and resilience for CFI households is well aligned with the government's FSPs, particularly with the PSNP and Household Asset Building components of the program. As such, it contributes to achievement of the FSP's expected Outcome of improved food security status of male and female members of food insecure HHs in CFI *woredas*. It also contributes to the major outcome of the HH

asset building component which aimed to diversify income sources and increase productive assets for food insecure HHs in CFI *woredas*. Since the beneficiaries are PSNP women, the project is also playing important roles in increasing the number of PSNP graduates in the *Woreda*. This project intervention has also contributed to diverse types of skills and knowledge building in the areas of gender equity, nutrition, business and financial training. As part of institutional capacity building, the project has supported the organization of the multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) where key government and private sector representatives and project beneficiaries are participated and sensitized on gender-sensitive VC and market linkage.

Having good achievements in Feris *Woreda* the project should be scaled up to other *woredas*. In fact, this is also the view of many stakeholders. As it has been reported in Mid-term evaluation some stakeholders argue that such huge resource could have covered other *woredas* and reached larger number of beneficiaries although it is understandable that the revolving and transferable nature of assets transferred to the first level beneficiaries to second level beneficiaries and then to third level beneficiaries could help mitigate the resource intensity and increase number of beneficiaries over the long term. In general, the project has promoted nutrition education, balanced-dietary practices, gender sensitive extension service and equitable HH level food consumption. It has also registered a significant result in the area of building business skills, asset creation, smoothening household food consumption, promoting saving culture, enhancing group solidarity and social cohesion, increasing self-confidence.

Annex 4: Project approach and OECD-DAC evaluation criteria

1) *Project evaluation approach*

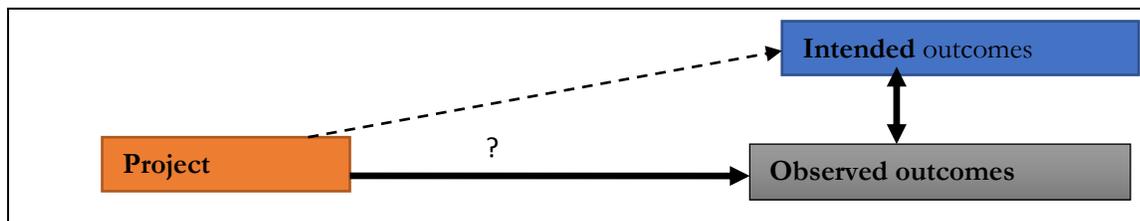
In many project evaluations, one of the most widely asked key questions is that: “*To what extent, were the intended objectives met?*” As stipulated in the project document, ABDISHE project has clear intended objectives to be attained over the project implementation years. Figure 2 gives the picture of such expectation. The project is presented in a “rectangle”, which serves as a conceptual boundary between the project and the project environment. The intended objectives, which can be taken as statement of the project's *intended outcomes*, occur outside the project itself. To put it differently, the intended outcomes are *results* intended to make a difference outside of the project itself.



Source: TZBMC Construction (2016)

Figure 5 Linking project and intended objectives

As indicated in Figure 3, the arrow connecting the project and its intended outcomes is a key part of most project evaluations. It indicates that the project is intended to cause the outcomes. It is possible to state as "objectives achievement" question in words that are a central part of most project evaluations: "Was the project effective (in achieving its intended outcomes)?" On contrary, project effectiveness is the most common reason why project evaluation is needed by most donors and government bodies on different issues. Therefore, the interest is to know whether, and to what extent, the project's actual results are consistent with the outcomes expected. With regard to this, there are two evaluation issues related to project effectiveness and it is clearly stated in Figure 3.



Source: TZBMC Construction (2016)

Figure 6 Two commonly asked project effectiveness questions in most evaluations

The horizontal causal link between the project and its outcomes is modified in two ways: (1) intended outcomes are replaced by the observed outcomes (what we actually observe when we do the evaluation), and (2) a question mark (?) has been placed over that causal arrow. The original question can be restated in order to achieve the intended objectives as: "To what extent, if at all, was the project responsible for the observed outcomes?" Figure 3 raises the second evaluation question: "To what extent, if at all, are the observed outcomes consistent with the intended outcomes?". Hence, the actual outcomes with what the expected comparing what we actually find with what the project was expected to accomplish. Concerning this, answering that question does not tell us whether the project was responsible for the observed or intended outcomes. From Figure 3, the broken lines link the project to the intended outcomes, and assessments of the links are often a focus of performance measurement systems. Where, the benchmarks or comparisons between actual outcomes and intended outcomes can be made. However, what is missing from such comparisons is an assessment of the extent to which observed and intended outcomes are attributable to the project.

2) *OECD-DAC criteria for evaluation*

It is clearly stipulated in the TOR and from our previous experiences of project evaluation, OECD/DAC criteriaⁱ and ADAⁱⁱ are informed by and reflect the priorities of international standards and guidelines, i.e., the Sphere Standards. Therefore, OECD/DAC criteria will guide the ABDISHE project final evaluation. As in the TOR, TZBMC has integrated the evaluation questions as part of OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and summarized as follows:

a) Project relevance

Relevance is one of the five OECD/DAC criteria that focuses on the extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partner' and donor's policies. It also considers other approaches that may have been better suited to address the identified needs. The validity of design is an important element of relevance. Major guiding questions of relevance will be:

- ⇒ To what extent are women involved in accessing productive resources due to ABDISHE so as to improve quantity and quality of food production (land credit, new technology, and agricultural extension information)?
- ⇒ What special approach has been in place to enable women to better manage and control the enterprise? Why?
- ⇒ How adequate the policy support was in the pathway of ensuring women control over agricultural resources and what possible options are there for further improvements?

b) Project effectiveness

Effectiveness measures the extent to which an intervention has achieved its intended or results. This will be based upon an intervention's objectives stated in the project document and related indicators, typically stated in a logical framework. However, the assessment of effectiveness should not be limited to whether an intervention has achieved its objectives, but also to identify the major reasons and key lessons to inform further implementation or future interventions. The major guiding questions of effectiveness will be:

- ⇒ To what extent the project was effective in contributing to graduation of targeted CFIW/households from their food insecurity situation in the project area?
- ⇒ What evidences are there to demonstrate possibly of women graduation from chronically food insecure situation?
- ⇒ How this evidence could help formulate and guide further efforts of women graduation from CFI situation?

c) Project efficiency

Efficiency of the project will be measured as to what extent the results have been delivered in the least costly manner. Measure of efficiency will be assessed based on evaluating the magnitude of the resources spent on the project and the scale and magnitude of the benefits achieved from the intervention. It will be carried out by weighing up how efficient were the resources used to attain the desired goals at least cost. In this case, the major guiding questions of efficiency include:

- ⇒ Was ABDISHE project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative?
- ⇒ Were activities cost-efficient? And were objectives achieved on time?

d) Project impact

This criterion deals with both the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and

effects resulting from the activity on the local, social, economic, cultural, and other development indicators. It tries to measure how much difference the project made. In the project evaluation, it is relevant to consider both the intended and unintended results and must include the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as changes in terms of market and financial conditions. Its scope includes the wider effects of an intervention, including the social, economic, technical, and environmental effect on individuals, groups, communities, and institutions. The major guiding questions of impact will be:

- ⇒ What priority issues of CFIRW CARE has addressed and transformed the socio-economic needs and aspiration of women and girls?
- ⇒ What are the major attribution/contribution of ABDISHE/CARE to the graduation of the targeted CFIW/households from their food insecurity in the project area?
- ⇒ What evidences are there to demonstrate possibility of women graduation from chronically food insecure situation?
- ⇒ How this evidence could help formulate and guide further efforts of women graduation from CFI situation?
- ⇒ What lessons could be transferred to other CARE's programs, further funding opportunities and policy influence?

e) Project sustainability

Sustainability is the fifth OECD-DAC evaluation criterion, which mainly deals with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. There are also indicators of sustainability such as the extent of local institutional and social capacity that could maintain the continuation of the project with sense of ownership and confidence. The major guiding questions of impact will be:

- ⇒ How was the ownership sense of the community/government line departments on the project implementation process and outcome? Why?

iOECD-DAC (2000) suggested five standard program/project evaluation criteria such as relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

ⁱⁱ See for detailed formats in Austrian Development Agency. (2009). Guidelines for Project and Programme Evaluations, pp 1-48.