

Case Stories of Giving for Change Community of Practice

A. Women's Voice through community of practice

A Community of Practice (CoP) is a group of Civil society Actors (CSA) who share a domain of interest, which they use as a basis for interaction. Members of a CoP share resources, experiences, problems and solutions, tools, and methodologies. This result in members gaining knowledge from one another and, by extension, contributes to the development of knowledge within the domain and different field) more broadly. It also served as effective platforms to engage diverse stakeholder to strengthen the poor partnership and weak areas of collaboration between CSOs/WROs (including organizations working on women with disabilities), SHG institutions, the state and other actors. This will create the opportunity to debate, dialogue, jointly plan, implement, and monitor for their common agendas Such us; GBV response mechanisms and advocating gender equality.

Adama CoP is one of the existing structures of community development that are strengthened by the CSSP2 project in this reporting period. With a total member of more than 28,202 Adama CoP contain 9 civil society actors (CSA) which are from Adama Elders Association, Ethiopian women lawyer Association (EWLA), Timeret lelewet Federation, Yenege Tesfa CLA, Adama town general Idir forum, Adama town People with disability Association, Adama Youth Federation, Adama Women Federation, Women youth Christian Association (YWCA). The CoP has an organizational structure that has a managerial team and sub committees of Community development, Lobby and advocacy, Resource Mobilization and community philanthropy, and community grievance and response which are supported by Technical Working Group from the government offices that are consists of finance bureau, Social and Labor affair office, women and children office and youth office. The community practices have their own by law that help to guide their works and also have a regular meeting once in the month. Adama Community of practice identified and prioritized more than 10 lobby and advocacy issues on legalization of SHG, Gender Based Violence, different youth issues, job creation, and communication. Among the list of advocacy issues, the legalization of Self Help Group Approach (SHGA) was their main

agenda.

Among the CoP members, 'Timret Lelewut' (meaning, federation for change) has been established by SHG women in Adama city. Even if SHGA was introduced and empowered women self help group members in Ethiopia before two decades, the federation (Timret Lelewut) did not have a legal certificate from the power holders. As a result, the federation couldn't access land from the government to build their own office, the member women in SHGs were not able to link with financial service providers to get access for external finances, having no legal receipt, stamp, and formal identity adversely affected the institution. In order to solve the challenges, 'Timret Lelewut' together with the Adama city community of practice (where the federation is a vice-chairperson), have lobbied the local government for legal registration. Subsequently, the federation hosted the government duty barriers to their temporary office. A representative from Adama city Labor and Social Affairs Bureau held discussion with the leadership of the federation. The official then briefed them on the procedure for legal registration. As the chairwoman of the federation W/ro Tigist Egigu mentioned 'having a legal certificate is significant for the federation and its members. As we got supportive statements from government office, we have already started compiling the necessary documents needed to gain legal registration of our federation'.

B. WIDOWED WOMAN'S JOURNEY OF FINDING STRENGTH THROUGH COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Melesech, a resident of Batu Town, is dealing with a physical disability and is doing her utmost to support her two children by operating a small cafeteria close to her residence. Her husband, regrettably, passed away and he had been the one providing for their family financially. Suddenly, their possessions were taken away, including their ancestral land which had been commandeered by the administration as part of the town's master plan change. During that hard moment, it was very challenging and she even considered taking her own life. Yet, despite all the hardships, she didn't give up, instead she tried to transform her and her family's life with enthusiasm.

Meselech and her family live in a nearby village where the Batu Dembel Community of Practice, an incredibly active people's institution, is located. This community organization is composed of local institutions in the town including the women groups, association of PWDs, elderly association, Iddirs, youth groups, etc. It brings together nearby community associations to decide which needs should be prioritized and then solves these issues through community philanthropy.

When the Community of Practice heard Meselech's story, three subcommittees (lobbying, advocacy, and community philanthropy) stepped in and immediately decided to mark International Volunteer Day by constructing a house for Melesech, with the help of the local government offices as a technical working group (TWG) and by mobilizing their resources.

The Community of Practice was enthusiastic to get behind Meselech and started a fundraising effort that quickly accumulated an astounding 43,000.00 ETB from different sources, such as individual philanthropists, the government, CBOs, and members' contributions. When they had the funds, they procured 400 concrete blocks and other construction materials to start the construction and the project was under-way!



Before

Meselech is now beginning to experience optimism. She is immensely thankful to Batu Dembel Community of Practice and the Technical Working Group for their eagerness to help her out. It won't be long before she has her own home and a secure environment for her and her kids to live in and study. She is so excited for the future that lies ahead and ready to put in the hard work needed to make this possible. She knows that with the right support, she can work towards a brighter tomorrow and provide better lives for her children. With faith and determination, Meselech is sure that her dreams will come true soon!

After



C) Holeta Community of Practice (CoP) move for Development

Burqqa Harbu is one of the primary schools in Holeta town which provide access to education for over thousand children in the community for more than 25 years. Due to shortage of funds, the elementary school was unable to construct standard classrooms and separate pit latrines for boys and girls. As a result, the school has been rated below the set standard in terms of school infrastructure and facilities. Moreover, students were affected in the day-to-day learning, created psychological problem ultimately led to dropouts. The unsafe space specifically for young girls is directly linked with their Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR). These major problems remained as big concerns for the school community.

The encountered problems were raised to the attention of Burqqa Gelana Community of Practice (CoP), which was established by 18 associations under the Giving for Change (GfC) project under implementation in Holeta since 2021. Consequently, members of Burqqa Gelana CoP took the issue as their first prioritized agenda to deal for 2023. Therefore, they decided to mobilize support and resources from the community as per the resource mobilization skills they acquired from Change the Game Academy (CTGA) trainings. Additionally, the CoP won a matching grant after submitting proposal to the call initiated by Development Expertise Center (DEC). As a result, the CoP was able to secure a matching grant of ETB 300,000 against equal amount the CoP raised from the community.

Finally, Burqqa Gelana CoP completed the project of renovation of class rooms and building separate latrine for girl students. The project was completed within three months and brought big relief to the Burqqa Harbu School. In words of a 6th grade young girl, “now we are not ashamed of our menstruation and it will not affect our school attendance as it used to”. The school management as well the Holeta town government bodies were very grateful for the generous contribution of Burqqa Gelana community of practice for showing the love and respect to the future generation.



rooms and side view of the girls pit latrine



Left to right: front view of the class