Community Based Child Support Project Kirkos

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Phase II: 01.2007 – 12.2009

Project No.: AF 1416 / ETH 1067-06

Wabe Children’s Aid and Training (WCAT)

Impact Evaluation

Report

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I. Summary

1 Brief description of the project and framework conditions

Addis Ababa represents poverty and social challenges of the entire Ethiopia, ranking among the poorest in the world (HDI 2009: 171 of 182; Welthungerhilfe-Index: 30.8). The sub-city of Kirkos is one of the focal areas with lowest living standards, high unemployment, extremely poor housing and sanitary conditions and a high HIV/AIDS rate. The related huge number of orphans, semi-orphans and other destitute children and youth are in need of protection, support, orientation and a perspective for their future. The project aims at improving the socioeconomic living conditions to provide the basis for a self-reliant life, and to individually support the children in school attendance, education and training. The project pays a monthly amount to guardian households, provides school uniforms and other items to the students as well as vocational training courses for youth, and it organises saving & credit groups for the guardian household members.

Kirkos is one of ten sub-cities of Addis Ababa, comprising about 14.7 km² and featuring large slum areas. The total population of Kirkos stands officially at about 335,000. The project area is only one part of Kirkos with about 5,500 households and a total of 22,000 inhabitants.

People living in the project area are having different ethical and religious backgrounds. Many of them are migrants. HIV/AIDS is a prevalent problem. The major source of income for the inhabitants of Kirkos is petty trade within the sub-city and daily (unskilled) labour here and anywhere in the capital. As a consequence, the majority of the households in Kirkos are by all means poor. The city government actually is planning a major restructuring of the Kirkos area, including the construction of major roads and multi-storey buildings.

2 Outcomes and impacts

The major outcomes and impacts of the Kirkos project are to be found in economic and socio-cultural areas. Institutional, organisational and environmental outcomes are limited.

The vocational training activities of the project have a direct and tangible outcome for those having successfully completed a training and having found an employment in that profession. The most important outcome is the immediate and significant earning of an income. The range of monthly income found according to the interviewees goes from ETB 200 to ETB 750. All the interviewees said that they contribute part of their new income to their family's household budget. Considering the typical household income of the project's clients, the contribution in many cases represents a doubling of the available household cash. The economic outcome of successfully attending a vocational training therefore benefits several other persons in the household.

1 Source: Addis Ababa City Administration: www.addisababacity.gov.et
2 Source: Project, based of information by the local government. Surprisingly this number is less than half of what was stated in the project proposal (48,000); and there the actual number was estimated as being double that much due to illegal settlers
Participation in the saving & credit groups of the project seems to have a direct outcome in terms of increased income of the women. They invest the credit received directly into improving and / or enlarging their business. Typical for petty traders is the investment in larger amount of stock.

The achieved increase in income is not exactly to determine. Based on calculations by the evaluator, it is estimated that the credit-induced additional monthly income ranges from at least ETB 150 to ETB 250 and more. This would be a significant increase in household income, meaning even a doubling for some of the very poor households in the project's target group. Regarding the use of the additional income, it became obvious that it is spent to improve the general livelihood conditions (food, clothing etc.) and also for the school education of the children.

Outcome and impact of the monthly food allowance of ETB 160 for guardian families, caring for an "adopted" orphan or semi-orphan in their household, remains rather unclear. There is no proof or at least plausibility to argue that it would improve the nutritional status and the health status of the children. The project at present does not have any criteria or indicators to measure any "success" of the food allowance. That does not mean that this allowance has no outcomes or any impact: it is definitely justified to conclude that the so called "food support" improves in general the economic livelihood of target families, thereby mainly having an economic outcome and impact, but not the social one the projects intends to induce.

The educational support component with its provision of a range of materials and services to the target children (e.g. school uniforms, individual counselling and additional training), according to the evaluator's assessment with a very high plausibility does have a substantial positive effect on the students (e.g. self-esteem, vitality). But it remains unclear, which element of the entire ensemble of support measures leads to which outcome. The project's indicator of school-class ranking at least is not a suitable instrument to measure the success of the project component (if applied, the outcome would be sobering indeed).

The major institutional outcome of the project so far is the establishment and official registration of two self-help (saving & credit) groups with a total of 94 members. Political outcomes and impacts were not found, and the special situation in Ethiopia has to be considered in this regard.

The project's intention to "develop exemplary impulses for social work in Addis Ababa and Ethiopia, which could be taken on by other donors and could be used for fundraising purposes in Germany", did successfully materialise in Germany only.

3 Sustainability

The sustainability of the project in total has to be distinguished from the sustainability of the projects components. Three of the project's components (i.e. saving & credit, vocational training, educational support) will have a high sustainability of their outcomes and impacts. For the food allowance component no significant outcome and impact can be determined, thus the question of sustainability is irrelevant.

3 Usually not by legal procedures
4 Proposal (Projektvorlage), November 2006, p.2
The **saving & credit component** is as such a sustainable approach, as the groups will continue even beyond the project. And its benefits in terms of outcomes and impacts will persist depending on external factors beyond the control of the project (e.g. economic development).

A **vocational training program** can not be self-sustainable as such, as it always requires external funding for the trainings. But it is time-bound (until the end of the training) – unlike the food allowance and the educational support –, and it can be easily copied by other organizations and governmental institutions. Outcome and impact of the program on beneficiaries' level will be highly sustainable, as they will enjoy long-lasting advantages from attending the trainings.

Also the remaining two components – apparently the core elements of the project's approach – are not sustainable as such, because the do not contain structural self-help elements and they require continuous funding by Welthungerhilfe or anyone else without a perspective of withdrawal.

However, the **educational support component** is believed to indeed boost the overall personal development of the benefiting children. And of course, these positive effects will be of a sustainable nature. On the other hand the **food subsistence allowance** not only lacks a structural sustainability, but there are also no distinguishable outcomes and impacts to determine, which could be sustainable.

In summary the Kirkos project approach is only partly sustainable, while three of its four components produce sustainable outcomes and impacts. However, the question must be allowed, whether such a social project with charity elements could be self-sustainable at all.

### 4 Relevance

The projects approach is of highest relevance towards the core problems of the target groups. The structural deep and almost extreme poverty is explicitly characterised by a high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate, a low school education, the absence of vocational expertise, leading to very small income levels and its subsequent consequences like hunger. For the poor that means to have no perspective to leave poverty by their own means - but an ongoing fight for survival only. The project with three of its components tackles exactly this situation.

The relevance of the Kirkos project to the objectives of Welthungerhilfe is highly evident. Activities, objectives and approach of the project are reflected in four of the seven objectives of Welthungerhilfe as stipulated in its charter (§3 b, c, d, f). The project also reflects the MDGs 1, 2, 3 and 6.

The Kirkos project also fully fits into WCAT’s approach and matches core ideas of the organisation. And the project is of high relevance to the specific conditions in Ethiopia.

### 5 Effectiveness

The Kirkos project has clearly contributed towards the achievement of the overall development goal (a correct project objective is not specified). The project preparation was comprehensive and built on existing structures. The project planning reveals some significant shortcomings in the PPM and its logic, but was adequate in terms of staff and finances.
Welthungerhilfe undertook a comprehensive assessment of the partner organisation finding it suitable for implementing the project. Its steering of the project, however, still leaves room for improvement and intensification. The same is true as well for the project steering through the RO of Welthungerhilfe. In particular the RO uses the Kirkos project for presentations in the development environment.

The project pursues a close cooperation with the target groups and with the local administration. However, there is rather little cooperation with other stakeholders like NGOs etc. An overall evaluation of the project execution must come to the conclusion that there are no major deficiencies. Although the frame-conditions for NGOs in ETH have not remained stable and positive, the project has managed its way due to WCAT’s wise behaviour.

6 Efficiency

The overall cost/benefit ratio of the project must be rated as very satisfactorily when looking at the share of staff and running costs and the investment per beneficiary. Also three of the four major components can be rated as of satisfactorily or good efficiency. Only the vocational training in some cases spends funds without achieving an adequate benefit.

The project through its internal M&E system collects a variety of data, of which some form the basis for the daily work. But on some important aspects no systematic data collection / monitoring is done. Other collected data are not analysed adequately or are not fully exploited. The project is monitoring several aspects, but falls short of an adequate analysis of the information and thereby missing a qualitative evaluation of its achievements.

7 Most important recommendations

Regarding the Saving & Credit component (ref. chapter 2.1.2)

Project should offer an ongoing professional business consultancy service for S & C members for one or two years after receiving the first credit in order to improve the business performance. Therefore the project should monitor quarterly or bi-annually the business performance of the members and keep records accordingly.

Regarding the Vocational Training component (ref. chapter 2.1.1)

It is highly recommended to expand the vocational training component using promising professions for members of OVC families. The project is advised to refer to professional assistance for identifying promising trades and professions.

Regarding the Food Subsistence Allowance (ref. chapter 2.2.1)

A subsistence allowance should be paid for a transition period of one to two years only. Parallel the household head should be economically strengthened via S & C membership, while another household member could be subject to vocational training. Both would bring a significantly higher monthly financial advantage and would be sustainable and a contribution to self-reliance.
Regarding the Construction of Youth Centre (ref. chapter 5.6.4)

Due to the planned and foreseeable government initiated transformations and developments in Kirkos the construction of a new youth centre by the project should be well reconsidered as the idea may be obsolete.

Regarding the Steering of the project (ref. chapter 5.5)

As guidance and supervision of the project by WCAT and Welthungerhilfe Regional Office do leave opportunities for improvement, a more intensive and more frequent contact might be beneficial for the project's development and performance.

Regarding the Cooperation with other actors (ref. chapter 5.6.2)

The project holder WCAT and the project itself are encouraged to actively seek a more intensive networking and cooperation with other actors, working on the same subject and / or in the same area.

8 General conclusions

➤ Even the best project partner organisation deserves in one way or the other a certain intensity in monitoring and consultancy (i.e. "supervision" in its most positive sense) by a Regional Office and / or the headquarters. External professional inputs are always helpful (and often desired).

➤ To save on project staff can be economising at the wrong end. Social projects tend to require relatively more staff than other types. And having more staff can turn out sometimes to be the more effective approach.

➤ The combination or mixture of charity elements and development approaches in one project gives cause for concern and is questionable, as the former one is usually not sustainable and has no development effects. Such combination is adequate in emergency situations but should be avoided in normal development programs.