

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	God for People Relief and Development Organization
Project Title:	Consolidating Alternative Livelihoods Income Sources Focused Forest Development and Protection Approaches in Bechi Peasant Association
Date of Report:	31 st of March 2017
Report Author and Contact Information	Seralegin Abera, gprdo@ethionet.et

CEPF Region:

The project is located in Eastern Afromontane, Western part of Kaffa and Yayu Biosphere Reserves Corridors with the specific focus on the site indicated as ETH 69: Sheka Forest (Metu-Gore-Tepi) and (KBA nr 224).

Strategic Direction:

Strategic Direction 1 (one) which stated as “Mainstreaming biodiversity into wider development policies, plans, and projects to deliver the co-benefits of biodiversity conservation, improved local livelihoods and economic development in priority corridors”

Grant Amount:

USD 20,000.00

Project Dates:

From March 2016 to February 2017 (One year)

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

GPRDO as Project Implementing Partner (PIP) has been making close collaboration with local stakeholders. The concerned stakeholders supported the planned activities of the project by directly involving in the implementation process. Their lists and roles include 1) community forest conservation groups- involved in activities of forest protection and development; 2) local authorities- addressed administrative and legal issues; 3) agricultural research institutes- provided technical support and agricultural inputs; 4) agricultural and environment agencies- provided technical backup; 5) marketing agencies- purchased forest products produced by forest conservation groups; 6) micro finance institutes- provided saving and credit services to community forest conservation groups; and 7) community members- involved in the environmental rehabilitation activities.

Conservation Impacts

Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

The project has significant contribution to conservation and development of Sheka Biosphere Reserve, which is one of the key priority areas of CEPF. It has reduced inflicts imposed on the remnant dense forests in the target Bechi Peasant Association and adjacent by restricting open access by the local community groups. With the help and information from local community members, fifty households who secretly established their settlement in the heart of local forests were brought in front of court and made to leave the area. By this project, additional 58 hectares of natural forest became under protection by local community, and as a result of CEPF support, about 82 hectares of Bechi forests are managed and conserved through active participation of target community groups. In addition, communities in two of the adjacent kebeles have agreed and put 28 hectares of forests under conservation and protection from any intervention. The

practice has led to restoration of endangered tree species such as *Cordia africana* and wild animals that previously migrated to other areas. Some of the wild animals that reappeared in the protected and conserved forests after fifteen or more years include pig, hyena, lion, baboon monkey and spider monkey. The following photos show some of the wild animals reappeared in the Bechi forests.



Photo 1: Spider Monkey



Photo 2: Baboon Monkey

Local community members also witnessed the occurrence of new pied (multicolored) bird that feeds on the fruits of black pepper spice. The awareness created for local community members has enabled them to thinking forest as beyond trees and branches. They are providing due diligence to the other forest resources such as waters, springs, cultural sites, caves and other important features within the forests in their locality.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project against the expected results detailed in the approved proposal.

The impacts of the project against the expected results are explained as follow:

1. Increased community awareness, initiation, participation and involvement towards joint forest protection by applying forest friendly productive agricultural practices in target villages/woreda

More than 700 local community members who were drawn from farmers, women, youths, clan leaders, village level decision makers, and suspects who undertake illegal forest devastation have been directly involved in different awareness raising sessions related to sustainable forest and forest resources management, and promotion of forest friendly agricultural activities. Regular monthly community conversation sessions were organized among local community members at three centers/villages of Bechi Daget, Merki and Emech using coffee ceremony program. The issues that negatively affect forest dependent community groups, especially women and minority ethnicities were mainstreamed into the session. Community members who attended the session remarked that sustainable management of forest ensures protection of forest resources and biodiversity, which at the same time, protects their livelihood. They underlined to focus on viable economic alternatives to cutting forest recklessly while they help restore the forest tree species.

The community conversation sessions/events were supported with key messages which have a potential of bringing attitudinal changes among forest dependent communities. These key messages were forwarded by members of the community and displayed to the participants during the event. Some of the key messages are:

- No Forest Tree ~ No Bee ~ No Honey ~ No Money;
- Forests are not just timber;
- Insects are not just pests;



Photo 3: Key Messages on the Importance Tree for Beekeeping

- Wild animals are not just predators;
- Saving one forest tree from destruction means saving one family member from death;
- I prefer one of my legs being amputated than one of the forest trees would disappear;
- Conserving forest means surviving the lives of the societies; and etc

Minute of Understanding (MoU) had been taken at each community conversation session and sent to kebele administration and other relevant government offices. This trend has enabled wider public and local stakeholders to involve in joint forest management process. Community members who directly participated in community conversation sessions had been sensitizing the rest of community members who were not getting the chance of attending the event. Indirectly, more than 6700 people were reached with key messages and issues discussed/agreed among participants during community conversation session. In addition to community conversation session, local awareness creation workshops were organized in the form of experience sharing to project sites, learning and sharing event among members of community forest conservation groups, and joint supervision support.

As a result of awareness created at local level, community groups has taken initiation to conduct rehabilitation and reforestation activities in respective villages. Totals of 10 hectares of endangered trees located within the local forest reserve and 8 hectares of bare farmers' plots on mountainous and hilly areas have been replanted using more than 16500 tree seedlings raised at nursery sites managed by community forest conservation groups. Out of the rehabilitated and replanted areas 6 hectares belong to neighboring villages.



Photo 4: Tree and cash crops seedlings promoted for next planting season



Photo 6: Cash crops seedlings (coffee) promoted for current planting season

About 1580 communities in target villages and in four neighboring kebeles were directly participated in the process of tree planting in transitional forest zone with appropriate trees species. Local authorities have been appreciating what the project has been done, especially in supporting the local plan of Water and Soil Conservation (WSC). The focus was given to promotion of native and endangered tree species. For instance, more than 1900 *Cordia africana* tree seedlings have been replanted within affected forest areas found in the target and neighboring kebeles. *Cordia* tree is highly demanded by local communities for its timber (to make beehives, furniture, utensils) and firewood. In addition to promoting

plantation of forest tree species, the local community groups have used seedlings of forest fruits, spices and bee forages in the process of conserving local forests.

2. Consolidated knowledge, skill and technical gaps of members of community forest conservation groups on how to manage the forest and sustain the practicing of alternative livelihoods income sources in the project targeted areas

The GPRDO has been working towards the strengthening of forestry three community institutions called Community Forest Conservation Groups (CFCG). In addition to improved agricultural inputs, 151 members of three CFCGs were getting skill and technical backup from the project in the areas of cooperative and business management, processing, packing and marketing of Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), value addition of amaranthus, preparation of black pepper spice, and practical demonstration in splitting bee colonies. Such support has helped them to mature and address some of their previous



Photo 7: Expensive Black Pepper climbing Cordia tree

problems and challenges in expanding their functions of forest conservation and their livelihood improvement. Some of the members of CFCGs who were involved in these skill capacity building are serving the rest of community members in cascading the knowledge they gained from the project. As can be seen from the following photos 8-11, farming members of Bechi Daget CFCG are providing practical demonstration to government workers and local community groups on how to prepare expensive black pepper spices seedlings and how to make it climb forest trees using cutting method.



Photos 8-11: Demonstration on how to preparing black pepper seedling and make it climb Cordia tree

The strengthened capacity of CFCGs has also enabled the members to halt many illegal and risky business of forest destruction for the purpose of firewood, timber and agricultural land. Members of CFCGs have built relationships both with community within the target village and the surrounding on to how conserve and develop the delineated forest area in partnership or jointly. Now, local community members are considering CFCGs as valid community development organizations in voicing their needs to government and to other sources of support in addressing some of the community needs. Because, the CFCGs have been helping them work towards being a stronger partner to government and leading on initiatives to develop alternative livelihoods in farmers in the target village and beyond. The nursery sites of CFCGs have been a source of seedlings, and local community able to access them with low price. Especially the forests in which Cordia tree is conserved through promoting black pepper spice that climb the tree have been serving as demonstration station for local community groups. More than 500 black pepper seedlings prepared and distributed to farmers in adjacent (non target) kebeles as part of replicating the success of the project results.



Photo 12: Community and government workers visiting integration of Cordia and black pepper



Photo 13: Harvested fruit of black pepper spice

On average, the CFCG harvests about 10 kg of black pepper spice and sold 1kg to 380 Birr using local market (1 USD= 22.65 Birr). This is very promising income sources as compared to production of coffee which is sold at 17 Birr, but consuming much labor. Some of the farmers in four neighboring kebeles have replicated the process of conserving Cordia through cultivating black pepper spice. The target groups have got significant benefits from other forest development focused

activities such as beekeeping, fruits, vegetables, and amaranthus under shade of forest and in the backyard. Amaranthus which was introduced into the target areas by the previous implementation period is now widely used as leaf and grain (flour) in the daily food by local community groups in making enjera, bread, stew, drinks, colo (roasted grain of amaranthus, and etc. They able generate higher



profit by adding value to their different produces promoted and introduced by the project. Some of them witnessed that the value

Photo 14: Model farmer widely producing amaranthus crop

adding process has doubled their income level as compared to their previous deeds of selling raw products. After processing and packaging of their produces, local buyers come from Teppi town take the produces at reasonable price. In addition, the CFCGs are also selling the processed and unprocessed produces to local community and passengers. Since GPRDO facilitated market linkage for the production in the areas, farmers are encouraged and motivated to produce more.

The farmers have opened small shop where they sell their products (honey, coffee, spice, fruits and other high value crops) with value addition. They are also on the process to construct big marketing center at the nearest town. The management team of each CFCG is run the respective group on business principles. Each CFCG has opened bank account in the name of their respective groups, and made deposit their income they obtained from selling and marketing of NTFPs. Profit from the business of NTFPs is distributed to conservation works, business recapitalization and shared among members to cover their needs.

3. Enhanced knowledge management and information sharing practices of the positive impacts of the project in the target and out of the target areas.

Effective communication is one of the most important factors contributing to the success of the project and future conservation efforts in the target areas. To ensure visibility of the project, information has been disseminated to local stakeholders and target groups as well as to concerned bodies out of the local areas using various channels in combination including audio visual. The main channels that have been used for knowledge and information sharing include:

- Meetings, two way communication,
- Workshops and events,
- Key messages addressing main project objectives have been distributed to community members,
- Regular quarterly reports were produced and made accessible to concerned local stakeholders,
- Conferences and consensus building gatherings,
- Correspondence like letter, memo, email etc,
- Joint site visits and experience sharing gatherings, and
- Production and dissemination of participatory video on the project impacts.

The effective knowledge management and information sharing have helped to replicate the project results in adjacent kebeles and woredas. Most of the activities in this project have higher resonance effect and communities and stakeholders in other areas have replicated them observing and learning from the outcome.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: 82

Species Conserved:

Corridors Created:

Describe the success or challenges of the project towards achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.

In recent years, the activities of beekeeping in target villages have witnessed a decline and numbers of bee colonies are falling in the face of poor weather, disease, habitat fragmentation and loss, and changing farming practices. Building awareness of beekeepers and maintaining benefit from bees depends on planning, training and on-going support. Previously, target communities conduct beekeeping activities by putting traditional log hives on the top of long tree branches, and this type of beekeeping is possible



Photo 15: Farmer with string and knife for traditional honey collection

only to persons who are physically able bodied and who can climb the tree. Photo 15 illustrates some of the materials local community had been using before project intervention (string to climb tree for loading/unloading hives, and knife to cut honey comb). The system was wildness and affected the lives of many bee colonies and that of person who conduct the activity. But, the project introduced another options of bee friendly space for installing beehives by constructing beekeeping shelter and growing bee forage near the shelter. The following photos (16 and 17) depict how currently the target groups are producing honey using improved ways of shelter based approach which is possible for all residents including women, disabilities and elders.



Photos 16-17: Project Officer of GPRDO explaining operation of improved beekeeping to visitors

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

The project was designed based on the priority of the need and demand from the target community. Based on the few positive benefits they had already obtained from the previous project implementation, community leaders had taken initiative and approached GPRDO to undertake enhanced development of community based sustainable livelihood promotion for sustainable development of forest in Bechi Peasant Association in the form of request letters. As a result, GPRDO had organized field visit and community meetings in which the target community groups and local stakeholders were actively involved in the project designing process. The involvement was starting from commenting on the project idea, target area selection, problem identification, prioritization, identifying their opportunities, suggesting possible solutions, project activity planning and validation of the final compiled project design participating their representatives in a separate consultation meetings held with each ethnic group. In addition, people with special needs such as disabled and aged people are also made to participate through their representatives. Such consultation meetings and the project designing process were done where the concerned local level stakeholders' representatives such as wereda agriculture and environment office, cooperative promotion office and other pertinent offices were participated in as the owner of the service provider. Such consultation meetings had enabled us to identify the main focuses of the project: capacity building for forest dependent minority ethnic community empowerment, skill development on Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), and agro-forestry, capital and tools support, creating community assets, and building forestry community institutions.

Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

On going community consultations had been organized in the form of Community conversation Session (CCS) in which target community and local stakeholders were participated and addressed their concerns on livelihood and conservation activities. Community and stakeholders' genuine demand for the project was increased as their involvement in the CCS process had assured that the project is implemented as proposed intervention in designing phase. The demand is also developed because of they have learnt the importance and benefits of the project. The project implementation had been in the context of community understanding (there was no complex sciences that deter every sections of community from engaging in different cycles of the project).

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Another important aspect with this project was capacity building provided to project staff on the Project Cycle Management Training, a consultant hired by CEPF. This aspect has not only improved the project design but also significantly contributed to the project execution as the staff got necessary skills relevant to their job. Staff capacity building, especially training related to conservation is very limited since local CSOs have no sufficient resources to do so. Hence, project staff capacity building should be continual as there are various conservation issues they face in undertaking grassroots activities.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
GPRDO	Grantee contribution	1589.62 USD	Covers 28.64% of staff salaries

****Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:***

- A*** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B*** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- C*** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Sustainability/Replicability

Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.

The buy-in and support of stakeholders on the project has still continued since the project idea was first discussed with them in terms of what gap it fills and what support it will have to the local government, other CSOs and private organizations working in the local area. In addition, in the process of the project implementation their involvement was assured. This, again, has enabled

them to know well about the project practical results and make them develop trust on the importance of the project.

The project implementation has brought positive changes in the livelihood practices of local communities. The skill building measures provided to target groups has improved the effectiveness of existing and new livelihood practices. The project has not imposed any practice that is locally unviable. The behavioral and attitudinal changes brought in by the project among the women, minority ethnicities and other forest dependent communities who have been actively participated in decision making processes at the community level. Further, the project has significantly affected the lives of target groups in their income generation activities, livelihood security and self employability. This will encourage the beneficiaries to continue the forest development focused livelihood practices, which directly contribute to increased family economy through sustainable forest utilization.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Four of neighboring kebeles that were not targeted by the project replicated the results which include production of amaranthus crop, integration of Corida and black pepper, establishment of community nurseries, and rehabilitation of affected areas.

Safeguard Policy Assessment

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

Discussions to raise awareness of community on the environment and social safeguard policies were mainstreamed into regular activities such as community conversation sessions, and Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) activities. Still more awareness creation is required to reduce utilization of chemical fertilization and pesticide by local communities.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

The capacity of the target community groups has been built so that they can play a part in the process of conserving nearby forest, but more technical assistance, mentoring, and political support (including with the provision of legal access to forest land based on sustainable utilization principle) is needed for more community groups not targeted by the current project. Hence, we shall appreciate your kind support and cooperation for sustainable development of the poor minority ethnic community in Sheka Forest Biosphere Reserve with partnering with our organization. Looking forward for opportunities to work with you and fulfill the noble cause you are committed for.

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

Name: Seralegin Abera
Organization name: God for People Relief and Development Organization (GPRDO)
Mailing address: 17381 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: +251-116621834
Fax: +251-116621835
E-mail: gprdo@ethionet.et

*****please complete the tables on the following pages*****

Performance Tracking Report Addendum

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved for project from inception of CEPF support to date	Describe the principal results achieved during project period (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	Yes	82	Forests in Bechi Daget, Merki and Emech villages are being protected and conserved by the participation of target community groups.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	Yes	28	Learning of the project impacts on the community conservation of Bechi Forests, communities in two adjacent kebeles delineated the forest areas from intervention. The specific sites are Kura and Fide.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.			
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.			
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	Yes	10980	

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table.

Table 1. Socioeconomic Benefits to Target Communities

Please complete this table if your project provided concrete socioeconomic benefits to local communities. List the name of each community in column one. In the subsequent columns under Community Characteristics and Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit, place an X in all relevant boxes. In the bottom row, provide the totals of the Xs for each column.

Name of Community	Community Characteristics							Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit													
	Small landowners	Subsistence economy	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists/nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Communities falling below the poverty rate	Other	Increased Income due to:				Increased food security due to the adoption of sustainable fishing, hunting, or agricultural practices	More secure access to water resources	Improved tenure in land or other natural resource due to titling, reduction of colonization, etc.	Reduced risk of natural disasters (fires, landslides, flooding, etc)	More secure sources of energy	Increased access to public services, such as education, health, or credit	Improved use of traditional knowledge for environmental management	More participatory decision-making due to strengthened civil society and governance.	Other
									Adoption of sustainable natural resources management practices	Ecotourism revenues	Park management activities	Payment for environmental services									
Menja community group	X	X	X				X		X				X		X	X		X	X		
Sheko community group	X	X	X				X		X				X		X	X		X	X		
Mejenger community group	X	X	X				X		X				X		X	X		X	X		
Amhara community group	X	X			X		X		X				X		X	X		X	X		
Keficho community group	X	X			X		X		X				X		X	X		X	X		
Amhara community group	X	X			X		X		X				X		X	X		X	X		
Oromo community group	X	X			X		X		X				X		X	X		X	X		
Bench community group	X	X			X		X		X				X		X	X		X	X		
Total																					

If you marked "Other", please provide detail on the nature of the Community Characteristic and Socioeconomic Benefit: