

# Project progress and achievement evaluation report

“Building Institutional Capacity and Participatory  
Leadership in Awash and Simien Mountains National Parks  
for Resilience, Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change”

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POPULATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT ETHIOPIA CONSORTIUM

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## ACRONYMS

ANP	Awash National Park
BICAS-RMACC	Institutional Capacity and Participatory Leadership in Awash and Simien Mountains National Parks for Resilience, Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change
CRGE	Climate Resilient Green Economy
EWCA	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FZS	Frankfurt Zoological Society
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PHE EC	Population, Health and Environment Ethiopia Consortium
PPD	Project Proposal Document
SCIP	Strategic Climate Institutions Program
SMNP	Simien Mountains National Park
WSD	Wildlife for Sustainable Development

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project entitled “Building Institutional Capacity and Participatory Leadership in Awash and Simien Mountains National Parks for Resilience, Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change (BICAS-RMACC)” was developed under the framework of Strategic Climate Institutions Program (SCIP). It was developed by Population, Health and Environment Ethiopia Consortium (PHEEC) and its partner organizations, Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and Wildlife for Sustainable Development (WSD). The project aimed at improving park management and leadership capacity and developing appropriate climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience strategies in Simien Mountains and Awash National Parks. It was developed in accordance with government strategies, communities’ needs and international climate change agenda. As strategy, an integrated participatory, multi-sectoral approach that involved all relevant stakeholders at different levels was used for the implementation of the project.

Included in this project were a number of activities which are related with environmental and climate change awareness raising of all stakeholders including communities, creation of stakeholders’ partnership and collaboration, building institutional leadership capacity, building entrepreneurship capacity of women and youth, document and disseminate updated information regarding the conservation status of the two parks. The purpose of this progress and achievement evaluation is to draw lessons learnt from the pilot phase project which will be useful for the implementation of the next phase of the project.

The most important results of this evaluative study showed that the project has been successfully implemented and most of the stated objectives have been achieved. The project has been very successful in strengthening stakeholders’ partnership and collaboration and creating conducive platform for future protected areas management activities. Those activities that targeted at strengthening park management and leadership capacity have been accomplished and have brought some changes; however still there remains more work to build the capacity of park level practitioners and higher level leaders. Entrepreneurship capacity building activities for women and youth groups have been successful and those women and youth groups are striving towards changing their livelihood with technical and material support they get through this project. Promotion of good ecosystem rehabilitation practices and information dissemination activities have been accomplished successfully. Overall, the project has been successful, and establishment of working task forces has been one of the biggest outcomes of the project. To enhance leadership capacity, higher level taskforces have to be empowered and need to be given the right momentum. The experience of this project has demonstrated that an integrated participatory, multi-sectoral approach is a successful approach which can be practiced in most of the protected areas in the country where there are sever stresses from adjacent communities and climate change.

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## **Project description/Background**

The project is entitled “Building Institutional Capacity and Participatory Leadership in Awash and Simien Mountains National Parks for Resilience, Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change (BICAS-RMACC)”. It was initiated by Population, Health and Environment Ethiopia Consortium (PHEEC), a lead organization and its partner organizations, the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) which is a governmental organization responsible for the management of national parks and protected areas, and two non-for-profit non-governmental organizations, Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and Wildlife for Sustainable Development (WSD) which are responsible for the project implementation at Simien Mountains and Awash National Parks, respectively. This project was developed under the framework of Strategic Climate Institutions Program (SCIP).

PHEEC is a non-for-profit non-governmental organization accredited for environmental, population and health related activities prioritized by government policies and communities’ needs. It envisages population growth characteristics, their health and environment in the context of unforeseen future and particularly under the prospects of climate change. Its partners are also important players of wildlife conservation and development issues of the country.

The project aimed at building institutional capacity of multi-stakeholders for improved park management and building resilience to climate change having four specific objectives that include strengthening stakeholder collaboration and partnership, building park management and leadership capacity of primary stakeholders, building eco-friendly entrepreneurship capacity of women and youth and promoting good conservation and rehabilitation practices of the two parks.

To achieve these four core objectives, the project employed participatory and integrated multi-sectoral approach composed of all relevant stakeholders at different levels as a cornerstone, and outlined a number of activities for achieving each objective. The structural arrangement of the project and responsibility of the different actors were clearly stated.

## **Project rationale**

There is a huge capacity gap in park management and leadership in Ethiopia in general, and almost all parks are struggling at a risk of heavy pressure from nearby park adjacent communities and climate change. Acknowledging the ill-consequences of climate change and impact of the huge stress of local communities, the government of Ethiopia has outlined green growth strategies that will avert the business-as-usual scenario and embark into a new era of

consented approaches to managing and protecting national parks and other natural resources and ensure climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience in the long term perspective (Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) and Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) are good indicators). Despite outlining development directions and strategies, the government has limited capacity to convert proposed conservation strategies, natural resource management and development directions and climate change adaptation, mitigation approaches into practice. To this end, the participation of non-governmental organizations like PHEEC in highly prioritized parks like the Awash and Simien Mountains National parks is an indispensable opportunity. Hence the project document has well defined and stated objectives, new approaches, clearly articulated activities, measurable outcomes, well structured and has a potential impact to bring in the future in both parks. As the project follows current government directions and strategies, strengthen collaboration among stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries, provide balanced concern of the park and park adjacent communities, and hence has a potential to be successful.

**Objectives of this project evaluation are to:**

- Assess progress made towards the achievement of results at the output and outcome levels of the project implementation
- Determine if the results had contributed to the projects overall objective,
- Assess performance in terms of the relevance of results and its sustainability, and
- Identify lessons learned and provide recommendations for promoting/scaling up the lessons learned,

**Description of Awash National Park**

Awash National Park (ANP) is the oldest national park in the country, being established in 1966 and gazetted in 1969. The park covers an area of 756 km<sup>2</sup> though over two third of the park is highly encroached by adjacent pastoral communities.

Awash national park is located at 9°20'N 40°20'E about 225km away from Addis Ababa. It is bordered by Metehara and Awash towns of the Oromia and Afar regional states, respectively. The altitude ranges from about 712m.a.s.l at Sabure to 2007m.a.s.l at the pick of Mount Fentale. Awash and Kesem rivers border the park in the southern and northern boundaries, respectively.

The climate of ANP is characterized as semi-arid. It has two rainy seasons, the main one is from July to September and the small one from February to April. The average annual rainfall is about 619mm. Temperatures range from 22°C at nights to 42°C during the day.

There are basically three types of micro-ecosystems, based on vegetation characteristic, in the park. Acacia woodland dominated most of the park area with expanding bush into the grassland. The savannah grassland, which is home and grazing field to many of the mammalian wildlife species and an attraction to livestock from the park adjacent local communities, is one of the unique habitats which are under enormous human pressure. Climate change, which is favoring expansion of the acacia bushes into the grasslands including invasive species, is another challenge threatening the unique habitat. The third type of ecosystem in the park is riverine and wetland ecosystem which is characterized by dominant and diverse tree species which is also facing a problem of pollution from expanding development from the surrounding like Methehara Sugar Factory, Kesem Sugar Factory etc.

The park has over 80 identified mammal species. In addition, there are over 460 bird species which made the park an important bird area (IBA) among which six are endemic, five vulnerable and three near threatened species. Over 60% of the total migratory bird species listed in Ethiopia are also found in the park. There are also 43 species of reptiles (extracted from Daniel 2011).

Tourist flow to the park is very low when compared with its potential. The attractions in the park include semi arid acacia wood land and grass land ecosystems, rich mammal and bird species, Awash River Fall, hot springs, the smoking dormant volcano on Mount Fentalle, and rich cultural assets of the surrounding communities. However, the average number of annual visitors does not exceed 4000, and annual gate revenue is about 60,000 Birr (Daniel 2011).

Local communities living around ANP are pastoralists of Afar and Kereyu from Afar and Oromia regional states, respectively. These two ethnic groups used to experience recurrent conflicts for access to grazing resources in and around the park. However, in recent years elderly members from both communities have reached to a consensus on the issue of resource utilization and peaceful co-existence and currently there are no significant conflicts between the two communities. Both ethnicities have rich culture and tradition which could be integrated into the major attractions of tourism for the park.

### **Description of Simien Mountains National Park**

SMNP is located in the northern part of Ethiopia, North Gondar Zone of the Amhara Regional State. It is situated along the Gondar Mountain Massifs that include seven mountain peaks, and among which reaches Mount Rasdejen, 4620 m.a.s.l, is the highest peak in the area as well as in the country. It includes. The park has an area of 412 km<sup>2</sup>. Geographically situated around 13° 11'N, 38° 04'E, having the head quarter at Debarq, which is 886 km away from the capital Addis

Ababa and 123 km from the city of Gondar. The park is surrounded by six Woredas. Based on the elevation differences, the climatic condition within the park ranges from woina dega at lower altitude (1500 – 2400 meters above sea level) to wurch zone at the upper elevations (3700 meters above sea level). High-dega and temperate climate zones are found in between the two (Falch and Keiner, 2000). Approximately 75% of precipitation in the area falls between June and September as predominantly hail, rain and mist resulting in a mean annual rainfall of 1550mm. Temperatures are relatively consistent throughout the year, however there are large diurnal fluctuations ranging from a minimum of -2.4-4°C at night to a maximum of 11-18°C during the day (Sillero-Zuberi *et al.*, 1995; as cited in Busby *et al.*, 2006).

SMNP was established in 1966 and officially gazetted in 1969 for its rich of rare and endemic wildlife species, diverse fauna and flora composition and for the beauty of its spectacular landscape and unique scenery. The park was inscribed in the World Heritage List for fulfilling criterion III (exceptional beauty) and criterion IV (importance for biodiversity) in 1978. SMNP is the first natural World Heritage Site inscribed in Ethiopia. The civil war in the 1980s has drastically affected the park management and resulted in expansion of settlement inside and around the park. Consequently, wild animal population has reduced rapidly, habitat fragmentation and blocking of ecological corridors has threatened some of the rare and endemic species to extinction. The park is then categorized under the World Heritage in danger list in 1996. UNESCO has set four benchmarks, based on recommendation of the monitoring mission, to be achieved so that the park will be removed from the World Heritage in danger list (Guy *et al.* 2006). These bench marks were,

- (1) *Realignment of the park's boundary to exclude the villages along the boundary;*
- (2) *Extension of the park to include at least Mesarerya and Lemalimo Wildlife Reserves;*
- (3) *Significant and sustainable reduction in the human population density within the park, especially within the core area;*
- (4) *Effective conservation within the extended national park of a larger population of *Walia ibex* and *Ethiopian wolf*.*

Efforts are being made by different actors to fulfill the UNESCO benchmarks and finally improve the status and values of the park. However, the joint UNESCO/IUCN mission after the 29<sup>th</sup> World Heritage Committee meeting in 2004, has found that significant progresses have been made in benchmarks 1, 2 and 4, and there was no progress in benchmark 3. This mission proposed four revised benchmarks to remove the property out of the List of World Heritage in Danger (Guy *et al.* 2006). These are:



- “(1) Finalize the extension of SMNP to include the Silki Yared – Kiddis Yared Mountains and the Ras Dejen Mountain with the interlinking corridors;*
- (2) Re-gazetment of the new park boundaries, including the extensions of Lemalimo, Mesarerya, the Silki Yared – Kiddis Yared Mountains and the Ras Dejen Mountain as well as the realignment of the boundary to exclude certain villages;*
- (3) Develop a strategy and action plan, as part of the planned management plan revision, to significantly reduce the impact of livestock grazing on the conservation of the property by introducing “no grazing” and “limited grazing” zones based on ecological criteria and by setting up a strict management regime in zones where grazing will still be tolerated in the short to medium term, and secure funding for its implementation;*
- (4) Develop a strategy and action plan as part of the management plan to support the development of alternative livelihoods for the people living within the park as well as its immediate vicinity, in order to limit in the medium term their impact on the natural resources of the property, and secure funding for its implementation.”*

In view of improving the park management to fulfill these benchmarks and finally remove the park from the List of World Heritage in Danger, the park has developed a 10 year General Management Plan (GMP) for the period 2009-2019, and is striving to achieve its mission in the shortest possible time. The GMP included five management programs which enable to address those benchmarks and improve the status of the park (GMP 2009-2019). These are;

1. Ecological Management Programme
2. Settlement Management Programme
3. Park Operations Programme
4. Tourism Management Programme
5. Outreach Programme

Despite the great progress made so far, the park is still under the List of World Heritage in Danger and there remains so much to do to improve its status.

## **Methodological approach**

Different methods of data collection techniques have been employed and different forms of data have been collected to generate reliable information which enabled to appropriately evaluate the project progress and achievements.

### **1. Careful analysis of Project Proposal Document (PPD)**

The PPD is the principal reference document against which project performance and achievement has been evaluated. Hence, stated objectives, proposed activities and expected

outcomes of the project have been identified. Communicated stakeholders and communities, field visits and contents of questionnaires are extracted based on the content of the PPD.

## **2. Conducting Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

Focus Group Discussions have been conducted with Limalimo and Dudub communities of the Simien Mountains and Awash National Parks, respectively. The FGDs' discussants were selected randomly from the park adjacent communities where the project had an active role. In addition, some community members who are believed to have a better understanding of the project have been communicated individually in random manner to share their knowledge about the project and its impact in the area.

## **3. Field visits to School Environmental Clubs and Women and Youth Associations**

Field visits were made to school environmental clubs and women and youth associations established by the support of the project to have firsthand information about the project implementation on the ground. Chirolaba Full Cycle Primary School of the Janamora Woreda from Simien Mountains National Park and Dudub Primary School of the Awash Fentale Woreda from Awash National Park were the case schools selected for the school environmental clubs visit. Some members of the Honey Production Association of the Simien Mountains and Women and Youth Associations established for eco-tourism business and traditional handicraft production from the Fentale and Awash Fentale Woredas of Awash National Park were the sample women and youth associations and members communicated.

## **4. Communication with primary stakeholders**

Since the detail of the project idea and its implementation and lessons learnt is primarily obtained from the primary stakeholders, project leader and partner institutions and organizations have been communicated to share their experience. PHEEC, EWCA/park offices, FZS, WSD, Woreda Culture and Tourism Offices of park adjacent Woredas have been communicated for details.

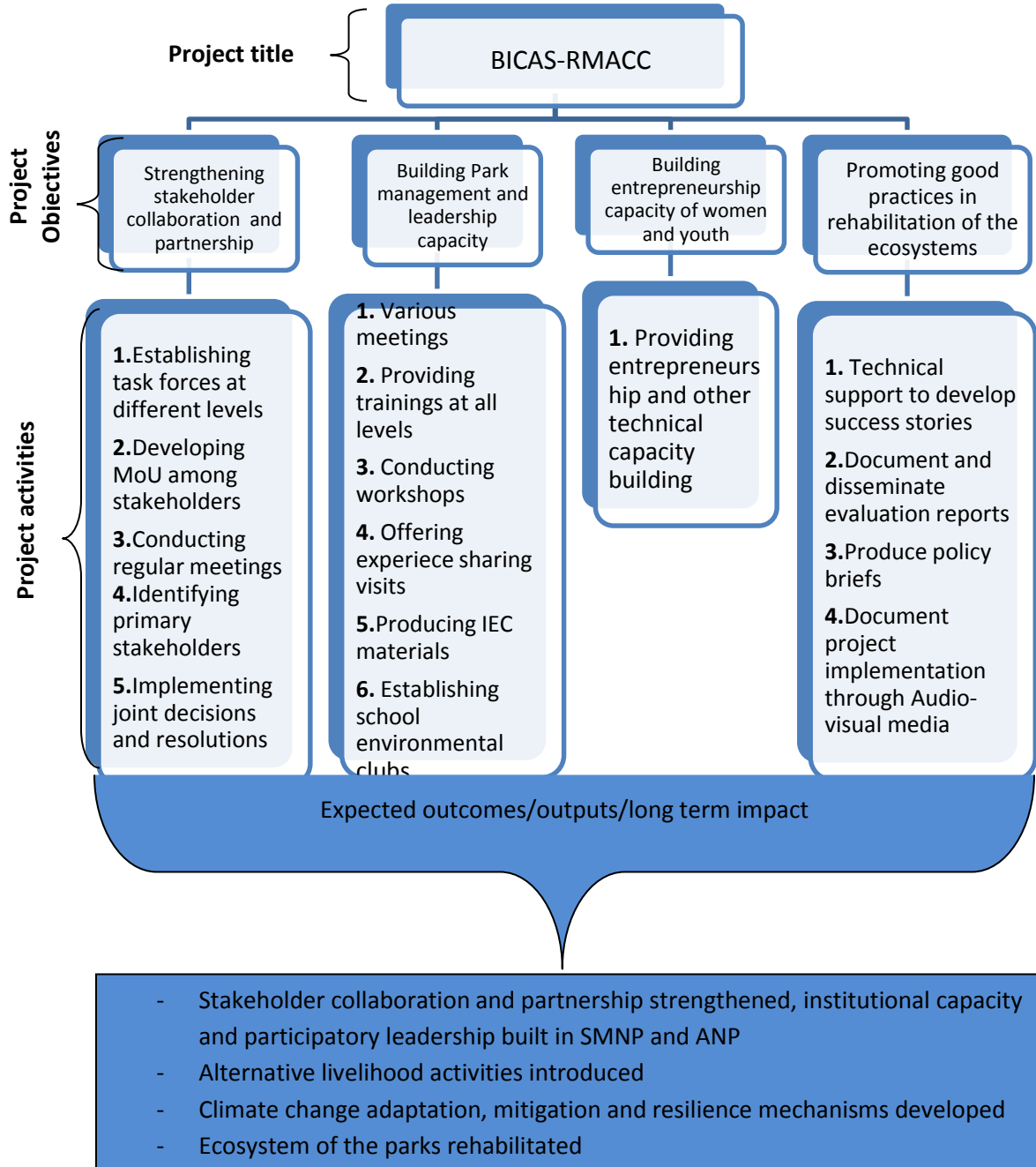
## **5. Data collection through questionnaire**

Formal questionnaire has been prepared and distributed to relevant stakeholders at park-woreda level; Park Offices, adjacent Woredas Administration Offices, Culture and Tourism Offices, Women and Youth Offices, Agriculture Offices, Pastoral Development Office, Environment and Land Administration Offices, Police Offices, Justice Offices, Health Offices, Education Offices etc. In addition, few representatives from the zone-regional and intra-regional task force level have been communicated through phone.

6. Collection and analysis of deliverable project outputs to determine to what extent they match to expectations.

## Results/outcomes

### 1. Analysis of the project proposal document



**Fig. 1.** Structural representation of project contents

The project has been evaluated based on its approach, logical reasoning and practicality point of view. As an approach, this project has introduced a new multi-sectoral integrated and participatory protected areas management approach which has not been tried before in the two parks or any other protected areas in the country. The epicenter of the project approach is being participatory (collaboration and partnership among the different stakeholders and beneficiaries in problem identification, planning, decision making and project implementation), integration of different sector activities and resources and balanced concern of the wellbeing of the parks and adjacent communities in light of climate change scenarios. The project has emphasized the lack of tangible changes of a single sector approach in the past, and the need for a broader scale integrated and participatory approach which aims at improving the leadership capacity of the two parks and livelihood of park adjacent communities and all in all improve the climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience capacity of the two parks and park adjacent communities in the long term perspective.

The selection of Awash and Simien Mountains National Parks as project sites was appropriate pertaining to their significance to the country as protected area, the level of anthropogenic pressure these parks are currently facing and prospective risks and threats climate change is causing in the conservation status of the parks and livelihood of park adjacent communities. These two parks have different ecosystems and resources, and adjacent communities have different kind of livelihood and lifestyle. Thus the two parks can be a good representation of the varieties of parks available in the country of different ecosystems, resources and communities.

While the project has followed logically a good approach and has selected appropriate case sites, the practicality of the project implementation seemed difficult pertaining to the number of stakeholders to be involved, a number of activities to be accomplished, extent of integration required and the ambitious objectives to be achieved. While the project is so well designed and has very solid logical basis (See Fig. 1 above), it also seemed too demanding in financial, technical and time attributes.

## **2. Focus group discussion outcomes**

Focus group discussants of the Limalomo communities of the SMNP were selected randomly. They had little knowledge of what exactly is the project about and its activities. However, they have witnessed that environmental awareness trainings, entrepreneurship activities for women and youth in bee keeping and eco-tourism aspects have been provided through the park. However, they still feel that what has been done so far is very little and it is even insignificant when it is looked at from improvement of their livelihood perspective. Justifying the environmental awareness activities that have been delivered recently, they proudly expressed that they are more aware of the importance of the park and the surrounding resources and they are now the protectors of the park than ever. They have agreed upon the protection of the

natural forest and they arrest any intruder into the natural forest who cut trees for any purpose or who makes charcoal in the forest. While doing this, they explained that they are planting their own trees for the purpose of fulfilling their wood demand. The participation of community members in the park-woreda level task force has appraised their feeling of ownership and responsibility on one hand and the thrust and partnership towards the park and other stakeholders on the other hand. They also expressed that they have felt climate change is reality and they can do whatever it takes for adaptation, mitigation and resilience activities which could be directed by the government and/or the park.



**Picture 1:** discussion with Limalimo communities of Debark Woreda, SMNP

The discussion with the Dudub and Duho Kebeles communities of the Awash Fentale Woreda was inspirational, filled with emotions. They are well aware of the project activities and have applauded its role in raising their awareness and establishing the platform for future integrated management approach for the park and surrounding ecosystem. They have admitted that the project has enabled to bring a general consensus among adjacent communities in particular and all relevant stakeholders in general. They have amplified that their livelihood is in hostage of climate change, and the wellbeing of the park is a crucial element of their life. As a result of the activities of this project, the amount of illegal grazing in the park has dropped dramatically, and the community has prepared its own rules for anyone who commits illegal grazing in the park. They have mentioned one case in point that they have recently convinced a few illegal settlers in the park to withdraw from the park peacefully. They are deeply concerned of the illegal charcoal production in the area, and they have mentioned that even if there is a big reduction very recently, they still have to do more to drain it from the root. They have also mentioned

that they have opened their eye for tourism and handicraft production activities as a potential supplement to their livelihood. They have confidently mentioned that the futurity of the park is bright and there is no way of back.



**Picture 2:** Arrested charcoal which is illegally produced, at Fentale Pastoral Development Office

There was an opportunity to meet women and youth groups at the time when entrepreneurship training had been taking place. They have also warmly applauded the opportunities they got in the name of this project. One youth group which has already started an ecotourism business has made it clear that their lives have started to change already, and their future is bright. Two women groups which were established recently on traditional handicrafts production and ecotourism are in the preparation phase to start functioning in the near future with technical and material support from WSD (project implementer, which the associations are more familiar with). In addition to the three FGDs, few informal individual discussions were made, and the expression is similar with the women and youth group members' opinion.

### 3. Field visits to school environmental clubs and women and youth groups

#### i) Visit to school environmental clubs

The visit to school environmental clubs has been one of the most crucial case points of what has been successfully achieved in this project. Among the 11 school environmental clubs established, two have been visited and investigated of the technical and material support they received through this project. At SMNP area, six school environment clubs were established and material and technical supports were given in close collaboration. As the plan was to establish only 5 school clubs, this was an activity accomplished even beyond the plan. The closest of the six school clubs is Chiroleba, which is about 80kms from Debar. As the pictures below show it all, the area is completely degraded and ecosystem restoration and environmental rehabilitation is definitely the most important issue in such areas. Supporting school environment clubs in such areas is synonymous to sowing the seeds of future plants in the area. There is literally no any natural form of vegetation, even a single natural tree in the area. The only plants that can be seen in the area are few eucalyptus trees here and there. Wood is truly a scarce resource in the area. The small eucalyptus wood lots, crop residue and animal dung are the only source of energy in the area. Considering the remoteness of the area, and the extreme level of natural resource degradation in the area, this project is like a candle in the darkest night. As discussed with school director and the club coordinator, they have received varieties of materials necessary for tree planting and gardening, environmental education guideline (toolkits), and trainings about climate change and environmental awareness.



**Picture 3:** Chiroleba school environment club members, change engines of the future for the extremely degraded land seen from behind



**Picture 4:** Eucalyptus trees planted by the club, the only trees to be seen in the area



**Picture 5:** Materials supplied to Chiroleba Full Cycle Primary School, Janamora Woreda, SMNP



### **The visit to Dudub primary school environment club, Awash Fentale Woreda of ANP**

Five school environment clubs have been established around ANP. According to the discussion made with the school director, club coordinator and member students, the club being established just recently has done very little so far. However, it is actively working on environmental awareness, not only just for students but for local communities too. They have established a weekly environmental education forum with local communities, where they discuss about their environment, natural resources and climate change issues. They have appreciated the technical support and environmental education materials they have been offered, and they are aware of other materials which they expect to be given soon.



**Picture 6:** Dudub primary school environmental club members, Awash Fentale Woreda, ANP

#### **ii) Visit to women and youth associations**

Different women and youth groups were formed and repeated trainings have been given to build their entrepreneurship capacity in prioritized activities. In the SMNP, apiculture and ecotourism were selected and in ANP, traditional handicrafts production and ecotourism business were prioritized activities based on feasibility studies.



**Picture 7:** women and youth groups taking training, Metehara, ANP



**Picture 8:** Eco-friendly entrepreneurship capacity building training given to women and youth groups, Fentale Woreda, ANP

#### **4. Outcome of the primary stakeholders consultation**

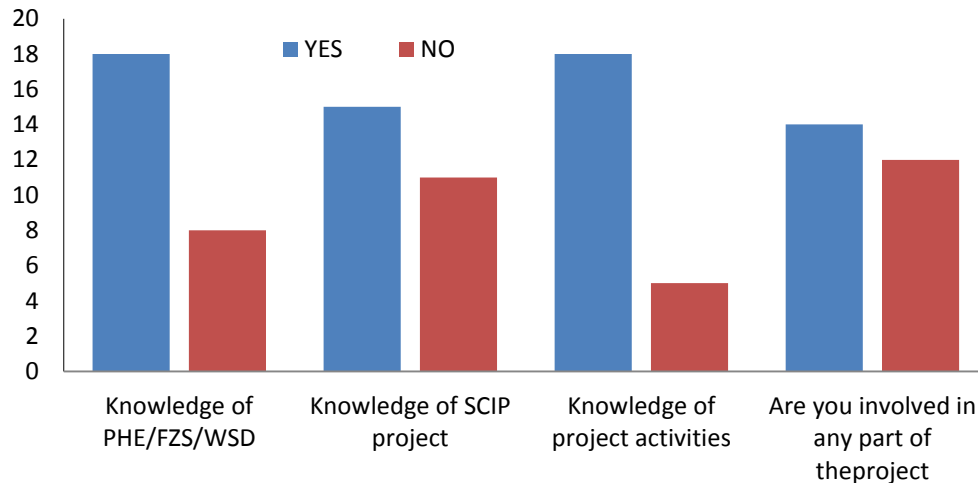
The information provided by those primary stakeholders (project leader (PHEEC), partners (FZS and WSD) and project facilitator (EWCA/park offices and Adjacent Woreda Culture and Tourism Offices)) was by large positive and consistent. At the beginning of the project, MoU has been signed by those primary stakeholders and specific scope of work has been developed for each partner. They all agree that this pilot phase has been a success, and quite a lot of achievements and lessons have been drawn from it. The most important achievement mentioned by all is the establishment and actively functioning park-woreda level task forces. The establishments of the task forces have been a breakthrough and a new foundation whereby different stakeholders come together for a common goal. This has made it possible to develop similar level of understanding regarding environmental awareness, park management, climate change and livelihood of local communities. This was made possible as a result of the combined effect of the different activities of this project, such as regular meetings, workshops, trainings, experience sharing field visits, different printed materials (posters, environmental education toolkits, brochures) and audio-visual records which were produced and distributed to different stakeholders and other organizations.

At both parks, the park officers have admitted that the changes registered in this project have been milestone. In SMNP, this project has been applauded for its transparency, effectiveness and success it registered in just one year period and relatively with limited resource as compared with other projects which had little impact with relatively longer period of exercise and ample financial resource. In ANP, the park office has admitted that the project had performed at a faster pace which the office had not coped with. The management at ANP has been less active than local communities and other stakeholders with regard to the involvement in this project. Despite the lack of full-fledged support from the ANP park office, the project had achieved its objectives very successfully and the park office needs to take advantage of such opportunities and maximize its share of contribution and benefits in future. The challenges of the project as indicated by all the primary stakeholders were; difficulty of convincing all relevant stakeholders to come on board for a new development pathway, two to three months deleyance of the project from the beginning has pushed all the activity schedule, clash of schedules with other stakeholder offices' schedule and involvement of ANP park office with lower level of tempo.

## 5. Outcome of the questionnaire

### i) Respondents' knowledge of the project

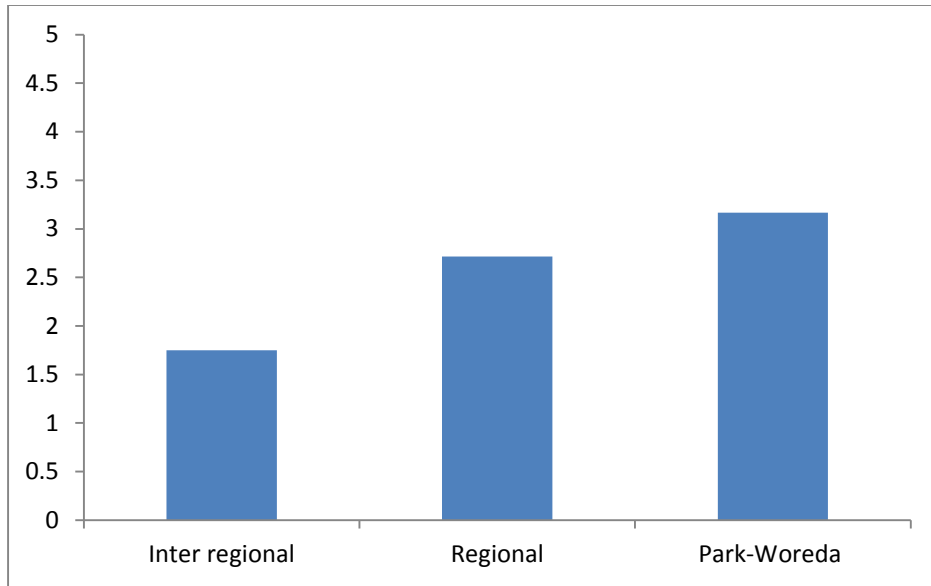
As shown in Fig.2 below, majority of the respondents have a good knowledge of the project; activities of the project, practitioner organizations and its mission. 50% of the respondents are aware of both PHEEC and FZS/WSD, project leader and implementer organizations.



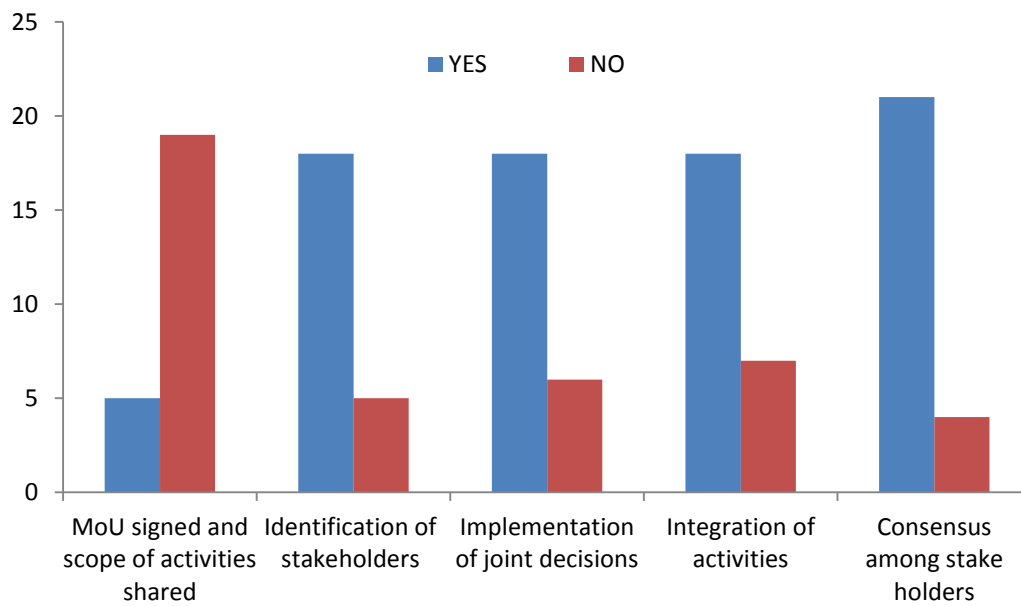
**Fig. 2.** Respondents' knowledge of the project

### ii) Contribution of the project for strengthening stakeholder collaboration and partnership

As respondents rating of the functional role of the different level task forces (rated out of 5) indicated (Fig. 3), the park-woreda level task force is currently the most visible and actively functioning task force. And the level of the functional role and practical recognition of the other task forces declines against the hierarchy. As Figs. 3 and 4 shows, most respondents have a positive opinion of accomplishment of the different activities which are essential in strengthening stakeholder collaboration and partnership. However, most of the respondents are not aware of the MoU signed by primary stakeholders (Fig. 4). This is probably due to the fact that most respondents were not from those primary stakeholders.



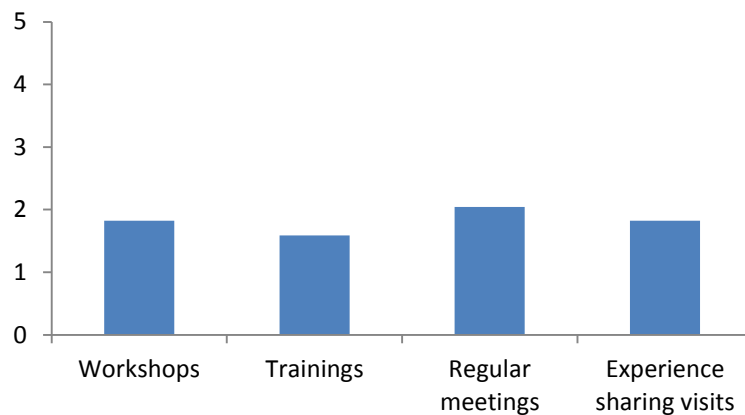
**Fig. 3.** The degree of functionality of the different task force levels as rated out of 5



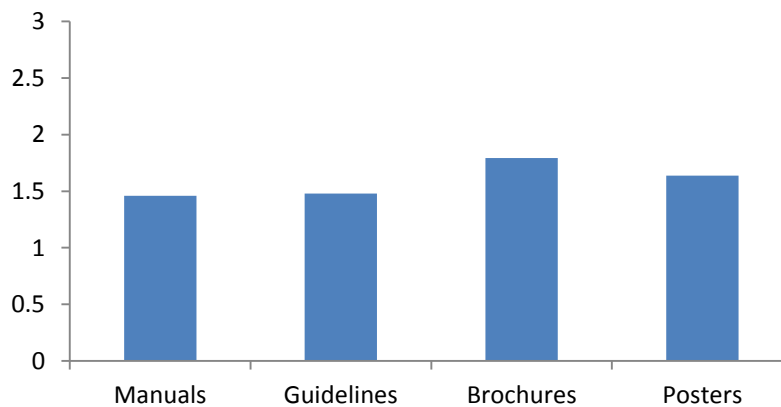
**Fig. 4.** Stakeholders' identification and integration

### iii) Building park management and leadership capacity

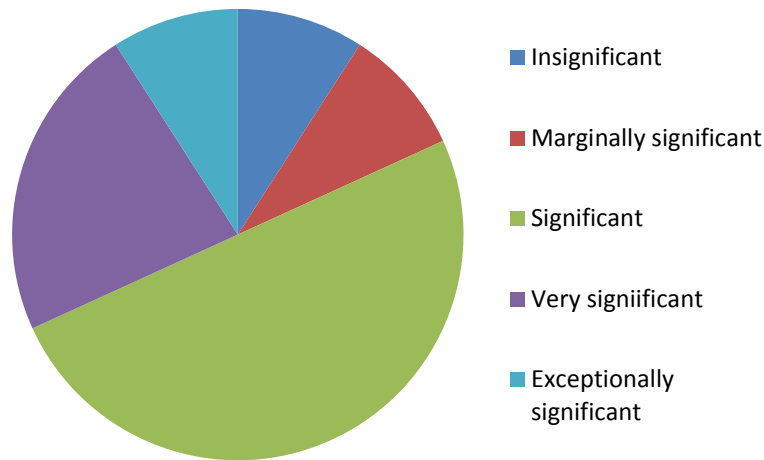
60% of the respondents believe that park management and leadership capacity has been improved as a result of this project. The contribution of the different activities for building park management and leadership capacity was rated out of 5, as presented in Fig. 5 below. Though most of the respondents agree that the project has significant contribution to the improvement of park management, the degree of significance individual activities had low rating. Moreover, the different IEC materials have assisted park management as shown in Fig. 6. The fact that most respondents were participated not in all events resulted low rating for the contribution of the different capacity building activities. The capacity building activities had been, however, explained to have a significant role from the primary stakeholders' consultation and individual interviews. Regular meetings, workshops and experience sharing tours have been mentioned to play very significant role in building park management and leadership capacity. As illustrated in fig. 7, most of the respondents (> 75%) believed that the overall contribution of the different capacity building activities has been significant.



**Fig. 5.** The contribution of the different capacity building activities towards park management and leadership (rated out of 5)



**Fig.6.** The significance of the different IEC materials (rated out of 3)



**Fig.7.** Overall contribution of the different capacity building activities for improvement of park management and leadership

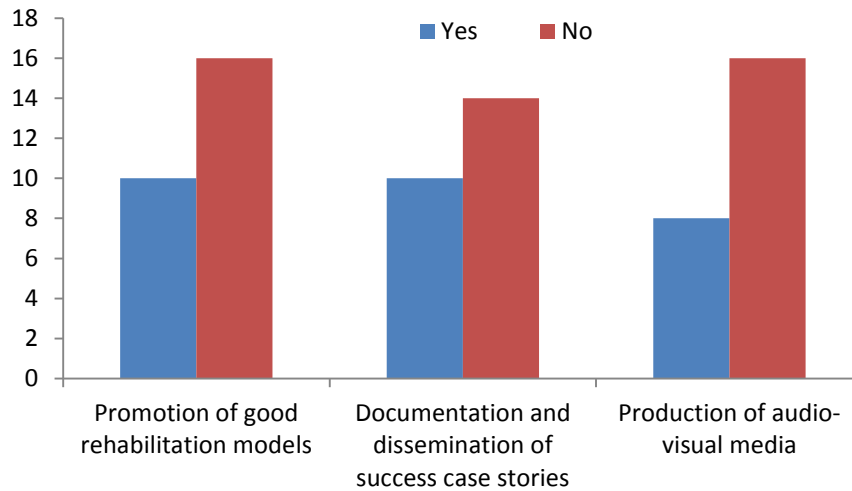
**iv) Building entrepreneurship capacity for women and youth**

52% of respondents agree that fair and equitable benefit sharing mechanisms have been established as a result of this project, and 60% have responded that entrepreneurship capacity building activities have been vital in meeting the required objectives. From the discussion with women and youth groups it was elaborated that they are getting technical and material support through this project which will pave the way for changing their livelihood. The support provided, however, has to be sustained until those women and youth groups reached to a level where they stand by their own and help others to follow their line.

**v) Promotion of good rehabilitation practices**

The project has successfully accomplished the promotion of the two parks through production of audio-visual recoding; preparing posters and brochures and documenting and disseminating the status of the parks. From the discussion with primary stakeholders, FGDs, visit of the school environment clubs and consultation of women and youth groups, it was learnt that the project has successfully produced and disseminated the different printed and recorded deliverables to all relevant stakeholders. However, the outcome of the questionnaire showed that most respondents do not believe the promotion of good practices of rehabilitation has been successful (Fig. 8). This could be due to lack of awareness of those respondents about the project achievements. This, however, indicates that more work is required in encouraging relevant stakeholders' task force members to share the knowledge they get through this

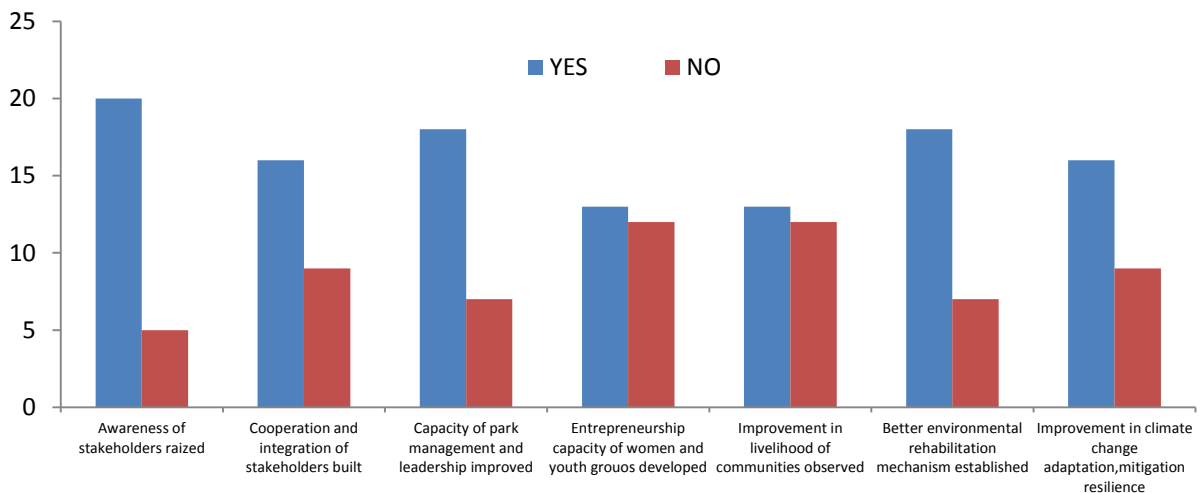
project to other members in their sector office. This is particularly important for SMNP, where most respondents showed limited awareness of the project deliverable outputs.



**Fig.8.** Promotion of good rehabilitation experiences

**vi) Overall evaluation of the project activities and achievements**

Majority of respondents have assured that the project has been successful in achieving its objectives, and most of the planned activities have been successfully implemented and expected outputs and outcomes have been registered (Fig. 9). Activities related with awareness creation, integration of activities and building cooperation and partnership among stake holders have been very successful. Environmental rehabilitation mechanisms have been properly established. However, changes on livelihood of adjacent communities and the environment are not yet perceived.



**Fig. 9.** General overview of the project implementation and achievements



## 6. Deliverable outcomes (IEC materials) produced

There are over 7400 IEC materials produced in different languages; 2500 copies in English, 3900 in Amharic, and 1000 copies in Oromifa. These materials include project briefs, brochures, posters, environmental education toolkits and leaflets and they have been distributed to all stakeholders and relevant government institutions. The plan was to disseminate 10000 copies, and the remaining 2600 copies are awaiting printing.



Fig. 10. Some samples of IEC materials produced

**Table 1. Rate of achievement of the project until the evaluation assessment was made**

<b>Stated Objectives</b>	<b>Proposed activities</b>	<b>Accomplished activities</b>	<b>Accomplished</b>
Strengthening partnership and collaboration among stakeholders and beneficiaries	7 task forces will be established at different levels	6 are established, one (Federal level) remains	85.7%
	14 regular meetings	9 regular meetings	64.3%
	Number of decisions and joint resolutions passed	Agreements were reached on major issues among all stakeholders	100%
	Number of MoU and partners /stakeholders specific scope of work developed and signed	MoU signed among PHEEC, EWCA, FZS and WSD, scope of work for task forces have been developed	<b>100%</b>
Building park management and leadership capacity	2 training need assessments	2 training need assessments	<b>100%</b>
	Conducting 12 trainings at different levels	10 trainings were given	<b>83.3%</b>
	Conducting 6 workshops at different levels	5 workshops were carried out	<b>83.3%</b>
	Producing 10,000 IEC materials	7400 IEC materials	<b>74%</b>
	Establishing 10 school environmental clubs and providing technical and material support	11 school environment clubs have been established and technical and material support has been given	<b>110%</b>
	Establishing fair and equitable benefit sharing systems	Fair and equitable benefit sharing system guideline has been prepared	<b>100%</b>
Building entrepreneurship capacity of women and youth	Feasible biodiversity smart income generating activities will be identified	A number of different income generating activities have been identified	<b>100%</b>
	Number of women and youth who get entrepreneurship skills	Over 250	<b>100%</b>
	Traditional conflict management and resolution mechanisms identified and promoted	Community based conflict resolution mechanisms developed	<b>100%</b>
Promoting good practices of rehabilitation of the park ecosystem as a model for environmental resilience, mitigation and adaptation	Two evaluation reports to be disseminated	2	<b>100%</b>
	Number of demand driven research topics identified	2 broad scale research topics have been identified	<b>100%</b>
	Two documentary films will be produced	2 documentary films produced	<b>100%</b>
	Producing factsheets/policy briefs	Project brief, leaflets and posters have been produced in different languages	<b>100%</b>
<b>Over all (average of all activities)</b>			<b>94.2%</b>

## Lessons learnt from the project

The project have attempted a new approach of park and protected area management, and the most important concern is drawing the lessons gained out of it. While, there are quite a number of achievements for each activity of the project, the most important success stories to be shared as a lesson are summarized hereunder.

1. Integrated and participatory multi-sectoral approach of park management as a way forward for improving park management and leadership; this approach has demonstrated optimism by almost all stakeholders and the progresses made in this project have indicated that it is a possible and potential approach to bring change in the status of the parks. Hence it can be practiced in other parks and protected areas where there are similar problems and it has to be strengthened at the two parks with better amplitude.
2. Park-woreda level task forces have been a success and they are now serving as a platform whereby issues related with the park and park adjacent communities are well entertained and problems solved easily.
3. The project has created awareness across the different stakeholders regarding environment and climate change in which a common understanding and consensus has been developing.
4. The community based conflict resolution mechanisms developed have been crucial in reducing park-community conflicts. Communities are now playing the leading role of protecting the parks than ever. Intruders, illegal settlers, illegal grazing and charcoal production activities are now very strict and have declined significantly.
5. The project has increased the feeling of ownership and responsibility of all stakeholders in general and the park adjacent communities in particular.
6. Empowering women and youth of the park adjacent communities to build eco-friendly entrepreneurship capacities have been appreciated to provide alternative livelihood.
7. The integrated interventions of the different activities will have paramount significance in rehabilitating the parks, improving livelihood of park adjacent communities and improving adaptation, mitigation and resilience to climate change in the long term.
8. However, the bottom level practitioners are well aware of the approach of the project and have started practicing; the upper level ones are not fully embraced with the project approach and its potential role. Hence, the next phase of the project has to give a balanced weight for both the lower level practitioners and higher level leaders so that understanding across the hierarchy will be guaranteed.

## **Sustainability indicators**

While the project is yet at its initial phase when it is not right time to put in place of exit mechanisms, there are some indicators which shows sustainability of the new approaches and initiatives. Some of these indicators are summarized here below.

1. The environmental awareness creation activities have been successful and all stakeholders have developed better knowledge of environment and climate change issues. Particularly, all stakeholders are well aware of the ongoing climate change and its consequences and hence will be always involved in any remedy effort that will bring change.
2. Since this project follows a participatory approach, the ownership and responsibility feeling has been developed across the different stakeholders. Hence all stakeholders have developed sense of ownership and responsibility.
3. Task forces are already functioning and the chairing position for the task forces has been given to Culture and Tourism Office, which has the mandate of following up the management of the parks. Thus even if current project leader (PHEEC), and its implementing partners (FZS and WSD) may leave the parks, the current initiative will continue, though relatively with lower tempo.
4. There is very good partnership and collaboration established among the different stakeholders which will be the basis for the sustainability of the project.

## **Conclusion and recommendation**

The one year pilot project has been successfully accomplished; most of the planned activities have been implemented and objectives achieved successfully. Stakeholders' collaboration and partnership has been established and strengthened. The establishments of task forces at park-woreda level were particularly the biggest success of this project. The two park-woreda level task forces (ANP and SMNP) are functioning practically and have assured that park management through collaborative decision making and integration of activities is possible and more successful than the usual sector-based approach. In the SMNP, though the formation of the park-woreda level task force has been a huge success, additional efforts are needed to aware and familiarize the park adjacent communities and inform what it is all about in addition to the task force members. In ANP, the park office has shown limited effort and as a primary stakeholder more work is needed to upscale the level of commitment and participation of the park office as it is important to sustain the success of the project. Regional and inter-regional level task forces are successfully established. However, the required level of multi-sectoral decision making and leadership capacity is not strengthened yet. The national level task force is

not yet established. It is therefore necessary to strengthen higher level task forces taking the park-woreda level task force achievements as a lesson.

Park management and leadership capacity building activities have been implemented successfully. However, to build the required level of management and leadership capacity more effort is needed, particularly to link a similar level of capacity at the different levels of the management hierarchy.

Alternative livelihood and entrepreneurship capacity building activities conducted for women and youth groups were very successful. Demand driven feasible livelihood activities were selected for each park and technical and material supports provided have been properly utilized by the women and youth groups. Scaling up of these experiences and more technical support and follow up of the established groups is still necessary.

The project has successfully met generation and dissemination of deliverable outputs which promote the project and the parks. At this stage, ecosystem rehabilitation practices outlined in this project have been successful, and change in rehabilitation of the parks' ecosystem is expected in the future.

Generally, the project has been very successful in implementing proposed activities. It has established the platform for future engagements. It is, however, at its infant stage to generate tangible impact on the ground. Strengthening ongoing activities and scaling up of some achievements is very important.

With all the positive impacts of the project activities reflected in this evaluative study, it can be concluded that the approach this project has brought has been successful and practical and can be practiced in other parks where there are similar problems of heavy population pressure from adjacent communities and climate change.

## **Acknowledgement**

Different organizations and individuals have been communicated to successfully accomplish this evaluative study. While all are appreciated for their contribution, some deserve to be acknowledged specifically. At Simien Mountains National Park; Ato Maru Molla (Chief warden of the park), Ato Sisay Yeshanew (social expert of the park) and Ato Gebeyaw Dilnesaw (from FZS) deserve special gratitude for their hospitality and all round support during the time of data collection at SMNP. At Awash National Park; Ato Dejen Muluye (Awash FentaPle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office), Ato Awas Chercher and Ato Mukitar (Fentale Woreda Culture and Tourism Office), Ato Shelemew Abiyu (ANP, wildlife expert) and Ato Teshale Atsebaha (from WSD) are acknowledged for their support and hospitality during the time of data collection at ANP. Last but not least, Ato Tadesse Hailu (from PHEEC) is acknowledged for his assistance in providing necessary documents regarding the project and extending any support necessary for the success of this evaluative study.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I: Communicated offices and individuals

No	Name	Office	Place	Contact information
1	Ato Gebeyaw Dilnesaw	FZS	Debark	
2	Ato Maru Biadigilign	SMNP park office	Debark	
	Ato Sisay Yeshanew	SMNP parkoffice	Debark	
3	Ato Getinet Tsegaye	Debark Woreda Agriculture office	Debark	0918571887
4	Ato Tefera Teresa	Debark Woreda Education Office	Debark	0918731100
5	Ato Baye Gedilu	Debark Woreda Education Office	Debark	0933182087
6	Sefer Mulat	Debark Woreda Women and Youth Office	Debark	0581170174
7	Hamid Mohamod	Debark Woreda Women and Youth Office	Debark	0581170174
8	Tezera Biadigo	Debark Woreda Women and Youth Office	Debark	0581170174
9	Kasahun Tadese	Debark Woreda Women and Youth Office	Debark	0581170174
10	Ato Getachew G/Hiwot	Chiroleba primary school	Chiroleba	
12	Dinsir Mamech	Chiroleba primary school	Chiroleba	
13	Ato Tadesse Hailu	PHEEC	Addis Ababa	09166300833
14	Ato Teshale Atsibiha	WSD	Addis Ababa	
15	Hawas Chercher	Fentale Woreda Culture and Tourism Office	Metehara	
16	Ato Mukitar	Fentale Woreda Culture and Tourism Office	Metehara	
17	Shelemew Abiyu	Awash National Park	Park Office	0910104756
18	Zerihun Ketema	Awash National Park	Park Office	0913661554
19	Abayineh Mitiku	Dudub Primary school	Awash	0910400503
20	Bayu Eshetu	Dudub Primary School	Awash	0910874636
21	Abdu Ali	Dudub primary school	Awash	0931417130
22	Taha Mohammad Gadito	Duho Kebele	Awash	0913218652
23	Momina	Awash Fentale Woreda Women and Children Office	Awash	
24	Selamawit Teshome	Awash Fentale Woreda Women and Children Office	Awash	0910154686
25	Ato Dejen Muluye	Awash FentaleWoreda Culture and Tourism Office	Awash	0911958702
26	Ato Ali Ahimed	Awash FentaleWoreda Agriculture Office	Awash	0913918567
27	Ato Mohammad Yaye	Afar Region Culture and Tourism Beauru	Awash	0911093346



## Appendix II

### Questionnaire

This questionnaire is prepared to collect information relevant to make project progress and achievement evaluation for the project “**Building Institutional Capacity and Participatory Leadership in Simien Mountains National Park for Resilience, Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change and improved livelihood**” which has been implemented by PHEEC and FZS under the framework of SCIP. Thus you are kindly requested to spend few minutes of your time and complete the questionnaire. Thank you very much indeed.

Part one. Personal information				
Identification number (ID):				
Woreda:	Kebele:			
Name (optional)				
Sex	Male		Female	
Age	18-30	31-45	46-60	>60
Education level	Basic	Primary	Secondary	Diploma >=BSc/BA
Marital status	Married	Unmarried	Divorced	Widow/er
Occupation				
Household size	Male:	Female:	Total:	

#### Part two: your knowhow of the PHE/FZS SCIP project

1. Have you heard of PHE and/or its partner FZS? Yes=1, No=0  if yes which one?

Only FZS =1      Only PHE=2      both=3     

2. Have you heard of the project undergoing by PHE and FZS under the framework of SCIP which targets at improving park management and leadership capacity of SMNP?

Yes=1, no=0

3. If your answer for question 2 is yes, what is the project doing and aiming at?

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4. Are you involved in any part of this project? Yes=1, No=0 , If yes how?

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**Part three:** Evaluation of progress/achievement of project objectives and activities (only if you are aware of the project)

**i) Improving stakeholders collaboration and integration of activities**

1. Do you think that this project has created partnership and collaboration among the different stake holders and beneficiaries?

Yes=1, No=0

2. Do you know about the establishment of task forces at different levels involving different stakeholders?

Yes=1, No=0

3. Which task forces are you aware of their establishment?

National=1, Intra-regional=2, regional=3, park level=5

4. How functional and successful have been task forces of the different levels in bringing the required level of partnership, collaboration and integration of activities?

<b>Task forces</b>	<b>Degree of collaboration (1=very low to 5=very good)</b>	<b>Integration of activities (1=very low to 5=very good)</b>
National		
Intra-regional		
Regional		
Park level		

5. Have you been involved in any of the following regular meetings?

<b>Type of meeting</b>	<b>Number of times</b>
Quarterly	
Bi-annual	
Annual	

6. Is there a MoU signed among the different stakeholders? No=0, Yes=1 , if yes mention?

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7. Are primary stake holders and beneficiary communities identified? No=0, Yes=1

8. Do you think that joint decisions and resolutions of task forces implemented accordingly?

No=0, Yes=1

9. Do you think that there is better integration of resources, activities, time and expertise among stakeholders than it used before?

No=0, Yes=1

10. Do you think that there is generally better understanding now among stakeholders for a common goal than before? No=0, Yes=1

**ii) Building park management and leadership capacity**

11. Has park management and leadership capacity improved as a result of the PHE project?

Yes=1, No=0

12. What activities in particular had significant contribution towards the improvement of park management and leadership capacity

Activity	Numbers	issues	Significance (1-5), 1=not significant, 5=very significant
Workshops			
Trainings			
Stakeholder meetings			
Experience sharing visits			

13. At which level has been the PHE capacity building activities more active and effective

Federal=1, regional=2, Woreda=3, Park=4, Community=5

14. What IEC (Information, Education and Communication) materials have been produced?

IEC material	Number	Standard; 1=poor, 2=good, 3=very good
Manuals		
Guidelines		
Brochures		
Publications		

15. Has the project enable to establish school Environment /wildlife clubs in park adjacent woredas?

Yes=1, No=0  if yes elaborate below

Name of club	Number of schools	Number of Woredas	Average number of members	What activities have been accomplished

16. How do you rate the overall contribution of the different activities towards park management and leadership capacity?

Insignificant	Marginally significant	Significant	Very significant	Milestone

**iii) Building entrepreneurship capacity and improving alternative livelihood of women and youth**

17. Has the project assisted park adjacent communities to establish fair and equitable benefit sharing system? Yes=1, No=0

18. Has the project provided entrepreneurship capacity building activities for local women and youth so as to improving alternative livelihoods? If yes, what are those activities?

Yes=1, No=0

19. What alternative livelihood activities have been promoted and what entrepreneur capacities have been developed?

Community groups	Alternative livelihood/ entrepreneurship activity	Number of groups	Total evolved	Woreda/Kebele
Women				
Youth				

**iv) Promoting rehabilitation of the ecosystem**

20. Has the project promoted good rehabilitation practices of the PA?

Yes=1, No=0

21. How many rehabilitation practices have been selected as models?

Woreda	Number of model rehabilitation sites	Lesson gained

22. Does the project managed to document and disseminate success case stories and evaluative studies of the park? Yes=1, No=0

If yes, mention of the documents and/or evaluative studies of the park

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23. Has the project managed to produce policy briefs and document the major project implementation progress through audio-visual means? Yes=1, No=0

**Part five: Project outcome and impact overview**

24. Has awareness of stakeholders particularly communities been improved due to this project?

Yes=1, No=0

25. Is there better cooperation and integration among different stakeholders?

Yes=1, No=0

26. Has the capacity of park management and leadership improved as a result of this project?

Yes=1, No=0

27. Is there now better opportunity of alternative livelihood and improved entrepreneurship of women and youth?

Yes=1, No=0

28. Has the livelihood of communities shown improvement in general?

Yes=1, No=0

29. Is there better environmental rehabilitation now and in future?

Yes=1, No=0

30. Is there an improvement in climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience in the area?

Yes=1, No=0

31. Mention challenges and opportunities and any other thing that you would like to add

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**Thank you very much for your cooperation!**