Ethiopian Rural Self-Help Association (ERSHA) end line report

MFS II country evaluations, Civil Society component

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This report describes the findings of the end line assessment of the Ethiopian Rural Self-Help Association (ERSHA) that is a partner of ICCO and IICD under the Connect4Change (C4C) Consortium. The evaluation was commissioned by NWO-WOTRO, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research in the Netherlands and is part of the programmatic evaluation of the Co-Financing System - MFS II financed by the Dutch Government, whose overall aim is to strengthen civil society in the South as a building block for structural poverty reduction. Apart from assessing impact on MDGs, the evaluation also assesses the contribution of the Dutch Co-Funding Agencies to strengthen the capacities of their Southern Partners, as well as the contribution of these partners towards building a vibrant civil society arena.

This report assesses ERSHA’s contribution towards strengthening Civil Society in Ethiopia and it used the CIVICUS analytical framework. It is a follow-up of a baseline study conducted in 2012. Key questions that are being answered comprise changes in the five CIVICUS dimensions to which ERSHA contributed; the nature of its contribution; the relevance of the contribution made and an identification of factors that explain ERSHA’s role in civil society strengthening.

Keywords: Civil Society, CIVICUS, theory based evaluation, process-tracing
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Acknowledgements

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## List of abbreviations and acronyms

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSI</td>
<td>Basic Capabilities Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>C4C</td>
<td>Connect for Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>C6NGOs</td>
<td>Network of 6 NGOs</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCRDA</td>
<td>Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association</td>
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<td>CDI</td>
<td>Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen UR</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFAs</td>
<td>Co-Financing Agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFO</td>
<td>Co-Financing Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Civil Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSP</td>
<td>Proclamation to Provide for the Registration and Regulation of Charities and Societies</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPPC</td>
<td>Federal Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission</td>
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<td>ERSHA</td>
<td>Ethiopian Rural Self Help Association</td>
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<td>FMO</td>
<td>Farmer Markets Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>GTP</td>
<td>Growth and Transformation Plan</td>
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<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>IICD</td>
<td>International Institute for Communication and Development</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<td>IFPRI</td>
<td>International Food Policy Research Institute</td>
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<td>IO</td>
<td>Intermediate Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<td>MoFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>MFS</td>
<td>Dutch co-financing system</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>PANE</td>
<td>Poverty Action Network Ethiopia</td>
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<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public Private Partnership</td>
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<td>SERF</td>
<td>Social and Economic Rights Fulfilment Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPO</td>
<td>Southern Partner Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ToC</td>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
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<td>Wageningen UR</td>
<td>Wageningen University &amp; Research Centre</td>
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1 Introduction

This report presents the civil society end line findings of the Ethiopian Rural Self-Help Association (ERSHA) which is a partner of ICCO and IICD under the Connect4Change (C4C) consortium. It is a follow-up to the baseline assessment that was carried out in 2012. According to the information provided during the baseline study ERSHA is working on MDG 1, Agriculture.

These findings are part of the overall evaluation of the joint MFS II evaluations to account for results of MFS II-funded or co-funded development interventions implemented by Dutch CFAs and/or their Southern Partner Organisations (SPO) and to contribute to the improvement of future development interventions. The civil society evaluation uses the CIVICUS framework and seeks to answer the following questions:

- What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?
- To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?
- What is the relevance of these changes?
- What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

The CIVICUS framework that comprises five dimensions (civic engagement, level of organization, practice of values, perception of impact and contexts influencing agency by civil society in general) has been used to orient the evaluation methodology.

Changes in the civil society arena of the SPO

In the 2012 – 2014 period the two most important changes that took place with regards to the level of organisation and the perception of impact dimension of CIVICUS.

ERSHA’s Farmer Market Organisations (FMOs) became more independent since the baseline. Eight of these, having access to electricity, were equipped with ICT tools to conduct digital transactions, which helped some of them to improve their bargaining position when negotiating with traders and gain more trust of their members. In the meanwhile they became a member of the Oromia Cooperatives Association. More women are said to take leadership positions in the FMOs, and female membership increased slightly from 27 % since the baseline to 27-30 %.

The union, endorsed by the government, managed to diversify its financial resource base. In the meanwhile it adhered to the Federation of Oromia Cooperative Unions.

ERSHA itself became a member of the East African Food Security Network of ICCO partners and engaged with their Kenya partners on ICT.

With regards to perception of impact, in particular the relations with the woreda administration are constructive: both the administration, the FMOs, the Union and ERSHA together explore how they can access potential market chains. Apart from this the local administration gave a clearance to the 14 MFOs to create their own union: officially only one union per district is allowed, but when the existing union refused the adhesion of the FMOs, these were allowed to create their own union. Additionally ERSHA has worked to link the union to different stakeholders such as the financial sector and to the Federation of Oromia Cooperative unions. In particular the relations with the Bank helped the union to diversify its financial resource base and to do investments that help the further marketing of agricultural produce.

These findings were obtained through an analysis of documents, a workshop and follow-up interviews with ERSHA, and interviews with external resources persons working in civil society organisations that receive support from ERSHA; other civil society organisations with whom ERSHA is collaborating; public
or private sector agents and; external resource persons capable of overlooking the MDG or theme on which ERSHA is concentrating.

**Contribution analysis**

Based upon an analysis of the projects and programmes financed by the Dutch CFAs a selection was made of SPOs to be included in an in-depth process tracing trajectory and those to be included for a quick contribution assessment. ERSHA was selected for a quick assessment.

The first outcome achieved that the evaluation team looked at was the increased capacities of the FMOs to serve their members: at least 6 of the eight FMOs are said to have improved their performance. The most plausible explanation of this outcome consists of both projects implemented by ERSHA and the other members of the C6NGO consortium; an ICCO funded project to create value chains and create FMO and Unions and; the ICT project implemented with IICD and the Connect4Change Alliance. Both together seem to provide a sufficient and necessary explanation of the outcome. The ICT component helps FMO leaders to track their financial situation, to more easily obtain price information to negotiate better prices and to increase relations of trust between FMO members and the management. However the enabling environment provided by the local government is to be seen as a condition to this success.

A second outcome achieved consists of the wider network in which the FMOs and the Union currently engage. These networks have both a business character (access to finance and to markets) and a civil society character (membership of the Federation of Oromia Cooperative unions and of the Oromia Cooperatives Association). Also in this case both project contributed to the outcome.

**Relevance**

Interviews with staff of ERSHA, with external resource persons, with ICCD as well as contextual information helped to assess the relevance of ERSHA’s interventions in terms of; its Theory of Change (ToC) for Civil Society (SC) as designed during the baseline study; the context in which ERSHA is operating; the CS policies of ICCO and IICD.

With regards to the baseline ToC, the interventions and outcomes achieved are relevant because FMOs have been capacitated in terms of skills and knowledge of ICT, but also in taking ownership of their work and forming a union. In terms of the second condition ERSHA has not increased the networking much. This is largely due to the fact that they are already regularly meeting with the C6NGOs network. The largest change in this respect is the effort to form a partnership with Kenya. The area where ERSHA is lacking behind is the organisational development. The issues which were identified during the baseline have not been resolved.

The changes identified helped to increase farmers’ trust in cooperative structures and to make access to markets easier to some extent and therefore are relevant; however their relevance would increase with the availability of a full-fledged market information system. The fact that one FMO, not on the power grid, managed to mobilise contributions from his members as a means to run a generator for electricity is to be interpreted as an indicator of the relevance of ICT as perceived by farmers.

With regards to IICD’s and C4C’s policies the changes are relevant because they contribute to its social innovation policy, in particular with regards to the creation of trust amongst stakeholders and increased connectivity.

**Explaining factors**

The information related to factors that explain the above findings was collected at the same time as the data were gathered for the previous questions. The evaluation team looked at internal factors within ERSHA, the external context in which it operates and the relations between ERSHA and ICCO/IICD.

Most important internal factors that explain the findings consist of a positive level of motivation of staff, but field staff missing the experiences necessary to engage with the private sector.

The most important external factor that explains the findings is that market information available is not always relevant, because only the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange provides regular information only in relation to export commodities. Access to internet facilities is generally low in Ethiopia, as well as having access to electricity; yet with the expansion of the mobile network access will improve over time.
The following chapter briefly describes the political context, the civil society context and the relevant background with regards to MDG 1 that ERSHA is working on. Chapter three provides background information on ERSHA, the relation of its MFS II interventions with the CIVICUS framework and specific information on the contract with ICCO. An evaluation methodology has been developed for the evaluation of the Civil Society component which can be found in appendix of the country report; however, deviations from this methodology, the choices made with regards to the selection of the outcomes for contribution analysis, as well as difficulties encountered during data collection are to be found in chapter 4. The answers to each of the evaluation questions are being presented in chapter 5, followed by a discussion on the general project design in relation to CS development; an assessment of what elements of the project design may possibly work in other contexts or be implemented by other organisations in chapter 6. Conclusions are presented in chapter 7.
2 Context

This paragraph briefly describes the context ERSHA is working in. A description of the Civil Society Context assessed according to the CIVICUS framework is provided in appendix 3 of the country report for Civil Society.

2.1 Political context

The Ethiopian Government has enacted a five year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) to implement over the period of 2011-2015.1 Two of the major objectives of the plan are to maintain at least an average real GDP growth rate of 11%, meet the Millennium Development goals, and expand and ensure the qualities of education and health services thereby achieving the MDGs in the social sectors (FDRE, 2010). The government acknowledged that NGOs and CSOs have an important role to play in the implementation of this plan: According to the preamble of the new charities and societies proclamation NO. 621/2009 of Ethiopia, civil society's role is to help and facilitate in the overall development of the country.2 This is manifested in the government's approach of participatory development planning procedures. For example, NGOs established a taskforce under the umbrella of the CCRDA to take part in the formulation of the country's first Poverty Reduction Strategy paper formulation. They were a major stakeholder in the planning process of the five year GTP plan. Despite fears that the NO. 621/2009 proclamation was thought to have negative impacts on Civil Society, the number of newly registered charities and societies have increased considerably. 800 new charities and civil societies were registered between 2010/11 and 2011/12 and as of February 2012, these were implementing over 113,916 projects in different social, economic and governance related sectors. Governance related projects comprise interventions in the area of democracy and good governance, peace and security, human rights, justice, and capacity building. The charities and societies are most engaged in the health sector (19.8%), followed by child affairs (11.9%), education (9.2%), governance (8.3%) and other social issues (7.8%). These figures are more or less similar to the pre-proclamation period, and would imply that new charities or societies have replaced foreign and Ethiopian charities that are not allowed to work on sectors related to governance and human rights.3 This might indicate that there might have been some flexibility in the interpretation of some of the provisions of the proclamation.

2.2 Civil Society context issues with regards to the MDG

ERSHA is a member of a consortium of six NGOs which is working on market access strategies for poverty alleviation of small-scale farmers. As part of the consortium, ERSHA has been supporting and strengthening farmers marketing organizations (FMOs) as well as forming and strengthening unions of FMOs. The activity includes linking FMOs and unions with chain actors, introducing of new high value crops, and integrating ICT to the FMOs and unions activity. It aims at increasing agricultural production, increasing household income, and enhancing the capacity of the target community.

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2 February 2009, Charities and Societies Proclamation (proc. no.621/2009), Federal Negarit Gazeta, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
ICT can play a crucial role in benefiting the resource-strapped farmers with up to date knowledge and information on agricultural technologies, best practices, markets, price trends, and weather conditions. The experiences of most countries indicate that rapid development of ICT, which facilitates the flow of data and information, has tremendously enhanced the knowledge management practice in agriculture. However, in Ethiopia the use of ICT for the accumulation and dissemination of knowledge and information is still low. The major challenges inhibiting the use of ICT in disseminating agricultural knowledge and information primarily is the availability of relevant information and the low access level of access to ICT infrastructure and services.

Thus, the low level of ICT infrastructure in Ethiopia is believed to have hindered the agriculture sector from realizing its potential. It has inhibited the effectiveness of farmers training centres that are available at Kebele (i.e., the lowest administrative unit) level. The centres aim at closely supporting smallholder farmers in creating and delivering agricultural knowledge to increase productivity and production and to enhance efficiency. But, in most places, these training centres are not connected to modern ICT infrastructure and services. As a result, research-extension-farmer linkages are weak and costly as such linkages have to be fostered through physical contact such as training, field demonstration, field day program and visits. The low level of access to ICT infrastructure is also believed to have slowed the sharing and exchange of knowledge and information generated from research centres at national and regional levels. The contribution of access to ICT also includes the benefit of obtaining production and market information that help farmers sell their produce at the right price, moment and places. It also improves competitiveness of the actors involved through adding efficiency and effectiveness. But the fact that access to ICT service is low has limited the performance of farmers and the cooperatives they created.
3 Description of ERSHA and its contribution to civil society/policy changes

3.1 Background of ERSHA

History

Ethiopian Rural Self Help Association (ERSHA), is a national, Non-Governmental, not for profit development organization (NGO), registered under the Federal Ministry of Justice in October 1997 and has operational agreement with the Federal Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) and project agreements with different concerned Regional Bureaux.

ERSHA started its operations in January 1998 and implements projects in different parts of rural Ethiopia. The organization is involved in the implementation of rural development programs and is governed by a Board of Directors and a General Assembly.

Vision and mission:

Vision: To see a poverty free Ethiopia where men and women equally enjoy dignified life
Mission: ERSHA aims to support the rural community with special emphasis on the poor households in their efforts to attain food security by implementing gender sensitive and sustainable development programs, through active participation of stakeholders.

Main strategic actions:

ERSHA supports gender equality promotion, HIV/AIDS mitigation, natural resource development and environmental protection and indigenous capacity efforts as crosscutting development themes.

The values of ERSHA include solidarity with the poor and marginalized people, justice and equality, respect for the rights of women and children, integrity and partnership.

3.1 MFS II interventions related to Civil Society

ERSHA is one of the members of the Consortium of six NGOs (C6NGOs) that implement the ‘Integration of ICT in Agricultural Commodity Value Chain’ project with support of ICCO and the Connect for Change Alliance. Other members of C6NGOs are ADAA, CDI, ERSHA, FC, HUNDEE and OSRA.

The C6NGOs are responsible for the implementation of two projects with the support of the ICCO. One project focuses on organizational support for FMOs and their Unions for which ICCO is the responsible Dutch NGO and which is part of the ICCO alliance4 (see Report MFSII Joint Evaluation C7), while the above mentioned ICT project is being implemented under the responsibility of IICD as a member of the Connect for Change Alliance. This last project consists of the provision of ICT infrastructure for the involved FMOs, their Unions and the NGOs supporting these farmers’ organizations.5

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4 Farmers Competitiveness on Agricultural Commodity Value Chain with the ICCO alliance

5 The last project consists of the provision of ICT infrastructure for the involved FMOs, their Unions, and the NGOs supporting these farmers’ organizations.
ERSHA’s project sites for the two projects are West Shoa, Ambo area - Gosu (100 km from Addis Ababa) and Altufa (106 km from Addis Ababa). It will reach 14 out of 115 Farmers Marketing Organisations, 1400 – 1800 farm households (11% of all households), and 2700 indirect beneficiaries (11 %) of the entire project implemented by C6NGOs. ERSHA’s general operations in Ambo have ended by September 2014 except the ICT activities as reported by the former program manager Mr. Olika Belachew on 25.10.2014.

The main interventions of the ICT project consist of capacitating Farmers Market Organisations (FMOs) and their members and the established unions in the area of ICT. This should improve their access to market information and would ultimately improve their efficiency and professional work.

3.2 Basic information

Table 1: basic information on ERSHA

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of SPO</th>
<th>Ethiopian Rural Self Help Association (ERSHA)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consortium and CFA</td>
<td>ICCO/IICD Connect4Change (C4C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project name</td>
<td>Integration of information and communication technologies on agriculture value chain commodities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG/theme on which the CS evaluation focusses</td>
<td>1 – Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start date of cooperation between the CFA and the SPO</td>
<td>September 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other donors if applicable</td>
<td>Not specified by documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contracts signed in the MFS II period</td>
<td>Period # months Total budget Estimation of % for Civil Society</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>First Phase of the project</td>
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Sources: project documents
4 Data collection and analytical approach

The data collection aimed at answering the question of change was conducted as planned. All relevant information were collected through discussion and document review from the SPO’s head office in Addis Ababa as well as from various stakeholders in the field located in Guder. The field visit has not required methodological adjustments of any kind.

The two impact outcome orientations chosen for the evaluation were strengthening intermediate organizations (IO) and networking. Three management members including the executive manager have been consulted at the head office level and the filed officer, the Woreda cooperation officer, the union leader and FMO leaders are consulted at the field level.

Both, the management staff and the field staff confirmed that ERSHA is contributing a lot to change the livelihood of the farmers by strengthening the farmer organizations. A continuous training, financial and material supply with the associated follow up is ERSHA’s model of change. Similarly, respondents confirm that ERSHA’s effort in creating a better networking is becoming fruitful.

In this data collection, we observed that the project coordinator is no longer in his position and we face a minor challenge in collecting some hard copy documentations. But, the other project staffs located in the project site were very cooperative and facilitated the data collection activity effective.
5 Results

5.1 Results obtained in relation to project logframe

The planned outputs and outcomes for the project ‘integration of ICT in Agricultural Commodity Value Chain’ are focused on the C6NGOs network. ERSHA’s work is mainly based in Gosu and Altufa, and plans to reach 14 out of 115 Farmer Markets Organisations (FMOs). This leads to a total of 1400-1800 farm households and 2700 indirect beneficiaries reached. Unfortunately it is impossible to check the progress with regards to these numbers as the progress reports do not mention numbers or are inconsistent about them.

Three outputs are being mentioned in the progress reports and proposal. The first output is to ‘establish a management information system at C6NGOs level through the use of ICT and improve networking and collaboration among consortium members and other stakeholders for learning and information sharing’. ERSHA’s contribution to this is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of 14 FMOs for the promotion of value chain development using ICT. Basically this output can be seen as the foundation for the whole project as most activities are developed to enhance the ICT skills of the C6NGOs members. It was decided that a needs assessment would be done by every member of the consortium, and that staff members would be trained on ICT tools for communication and development, and website development. Progress reports mention that these activities all have been done, but are inconclusive about the number of participants. Also, new ICT tools were bought for the NGOs in order to capacitate them in their work.

The second output, ‘establishing interactive market information system through the use of ICT’, focuses on enhancing competitiveness of FMOs in the decision making process of their member households through accessing relevant and reliable market information. For ERSHA this means that they focus on 14 FMOs and 1075 member households. The main activities for this output are to train FMO leaders on ICT tools, mobile phone use and market information management. Other activities include facilitating training centres and providing FMOs with ICT materials. According to data sheets provided by IICD in 2013 and in 2014, 13718 FMO staff and members (of which 16 percent women) were trained by C6NGOs, however no detailed records were available for ERSHA. Progress reports further mention that the ICT training centre at the Ambo site was established by ERSHA and equipped with materials. Also, 8 of the 14 FMOs were equipped with ICT tools, the six remaining not having access to electricity. A last important step consisted of establishing a collaboration between Apposit and C6NGOs in 2013 to discuss data collection for the market information system during the project and in the future. Apposit is a private IT firm which develops software to collect market information. The initial plan was that the Union would collect market information themselves and distribute it to FMOs through this software. However, the software proved to be too expensive for the Union which caused them to doubt the added value of using it. Apposit started collecting market information in Ambo and other places, but neither ERSHA nor the Union were involved in the process and until so far data were not made available.

According to the progress reports made available (those of 2012 and 2013) the following outcomes were reached:

- 5781 (1292 women) small-scale producers and entrepreneurs use ICT to access production and market information;
- More than 1111 farmers (142 women) are receiving wheat market information from Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX) because of skills and experience gained from the project. However, this can only tell the trend of wheat prices rather than national market price information. They also use their computers to write letters to their customers in order to notify them the official grain prices

\(^5\) Information obtained from ERSHA after the first feedback round
and the existing stocks. The usage of ICT has simplified the communication systems with their customers. This has saved time, energy and money they spent in communication;

- More than 1265 (231 women) farmers have obtained mobile phone user skill and experiences
- The FMO’s in ERSHA’s target area formed an Union;
- 28% of the FMO’s in ERSHA’s target area graduated after fulfilling all steps and requirements to integrate ICT in the way they are doing business. This is said to have enhanced communication at different levels of the chain using mobile short messages i.e. communication between unions and FMO leaders and between FMO leaders and members. This further improved members’ satisfaction and trade performances’;
- FMOs which are exchanging information have increased their turnover rate;
- Most FMOs attracted new members and membership increased by 1142 (7%) with female membership increasing by 580 (11%);

The third and last output is ‘enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of ICT services’. This output focuses on improving household productivity. The planned activities to achieve this are creating awareness on ICT in the community at large, deploying social media for knowledge sharing and discussion, developing audiovisual on improved agricultural technology. The progress reports state that several NGOs (not ERSHA) of the network have collaborated with research centres to develop learning materials whilst ERSHA has created general awareness on ICT usage.

5.2 Changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period

5.2.1 Civic engagement

Civic engagement describes the formal and informal activities and participation undertaken by individuals to advance shared interests at different levels. Participation within civil society is multi-faceted and encompasses socially-based and politically-based forms of engagement.

ERSHA’s main target group consists of 1400-1800 small-scale households and 2700 indirect beneficiaries. These are divided over 14 Farmer Market Organisations, of which some have formed a union. Unfortunately it does not become clear how many members this union has. The average FMO member is a small scale farmer. Between 27 and 30 per cent of the FMO members are women in 2014, compared to 27 % in 2011. Their participation is promoted in the bylaws of the FMOs. Since the baseline, the number of women taking leadership roles in FMOs has increased, although the total percentage of women has not increased. However, not all FMOs are including more women in their management committees and some are not including marginalised groups as they should be. Women are represented at the consortium level as they are part of the FMO management committee.

The total score for this dimension is +1, and this is mainly due to the increased involvement of women at a leadership level. The total number of women members in FMOs has not increased, although this was already identified as an issue during the baseline. Also, the total number of households and beneficiaries has not increased since the baseline.

**Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3:** 2
**Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of (-2, +2):** 1

5.2.2 Level of organization

This dimension assesses the organisational development, complexity and sophistication of civil society, by looking at the relationships among the actors within the civil society arena.

Like during the baseline, collaboration between ERSHA and the other members of the C6NGOs consortium remained constructive as well as relations with the CCRDA and the Poverty Action Network Ethiopia (PANE). The same applies for ERSHA’s relations with the FMOs and the Union that was formally established in 2012. A new East African Food Security Network with ICCO partners is currently being created and ERSHA engaged with their Kenya partners on ICT.
Since the baseline the FMOs and the union are increasingly taking the responsibility to defend the interests of their members. These structures have become more independent from ERSHA. In the meanwhile ERSHA’s financial resource base has deteriorated with two donors ending their partnership.

**Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3:** 2
**Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of (-2, +2):** 1

### 5.2.3 Practice of Values

Practice of Values refers to the internal practice of values within the civil society arena. Important values that CIVICUS looks at such as transparency, democratic decision making, taking into account diversity that are deemed crucial to gauge not only progressiveness but also the extent to which civil society’s practices are coherent with their ideals.

ERSHA’s executive leader is accountable to the General Assembly and the Board of Directors, which is unchanged since the baseline. During the baseline evaluation it was indicated that these bodies are less frequently informed than the government or donor organisations. Nothing changed in this respect. The FMOs and union leaders indicated that they are being informed by ERSHA about the project and phase out.

The Board of Directors is currently comprises four men and one woman. During the baseline there was no information available about the composition of the Board of Directors. Consequently it is not possible to indicate any change for this indicator. The same applies to the financial auditing, which is still done annually by an external firm. There is no information available on these audits.

**Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3:** NA
**Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of (-2, +2):** 0

### 5.2.4 Perception of Impact

Perception of Impact assesses the perceived impact of civil society actors on politics and society as a whole as the consequences of collective action. In this, the perception of both civil society actors (internal) as actors outside civil society (outsiders) is taken into account. Specific sub dimensions for this evaluation are the extent to which the SPO has contributed to engage more people in social or political activities, has contributed to strengthening CSOs and their networks, and has influenced public and private sector policies.

Since the baseline FMO members have obtained better access to markets and to market information and became a member of the Oromia Cooperative Association. At the same time the union has diversified its resource base by taking a share in the Oromia Cooperative Bank and built a store and an office. The Union is now better connected to other stakeholders such as the Federation of Oromia Cooperative Unions.

Six of the 8 FMOs that accessed ICT equipment are now able to keep records of transactions made which helps them to set the sales price and with their mobile phones they can reach out to more traders and negotiate better prices. Two of the eight FMOs equipped still have a weak performance.

Relations with the public sector at district level are constructive: together with the district cooperative promotion office, FMOs, the Union and ERSHA address their common concern of market access. Although the regulations in place currently allow the presence of only one union per district, the FMOs obtained the clearance to establish their own union after the one existing union refused their membership.

ERSHA has made attempts to link the FMOs to flour and oil factories, but the organization lacks the necessary capacities at field level to connect the FMO to promising value chains. The organization is currently negotiating with an organization who knows how to supply market information via SMS, but an agreement on the intellectual property rights has not been fulfilled. In the meanwhile the FMOs and the union work with private sector organisations to sell their produce or to buy inputs.

**Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3:** 1
**Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of (-2, +2):** 2
5.2.5 Civil Society Environment

The social, political and economic environment in which civil society operates affects its room for manoeuvre. The civil society context has been described in chapter 3. In this section we describe how ERSHA is coping with that context.

The 2009 Proclamation to Provide for the Registration and Regulation of Charities and Societies (CSP) and the related “70/30” regulation that limits administrative costs for all charities and societies to 30% of their budgets. This has resulted in a delay in the start of the ICT project as new administrative arrangements had to be taken by ICCO.

Also there is a lack of reliable and responsive private sector work in the area of ICT. Market information is not yet fully available and is not always accurate. So far only ECX (Ethiopia Commodity Exchange) provides information on a regular basis, yet this is only from the central trade market in Addis and considers only export commodities.

Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3: 1
Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of (-2, +2): 0

5.3 To what degree are the changes attributable to the Southern partners?

5.3.1 FMOs have the capacity to serve their members.

According to the interviews, some but not all FMOs improved their services to their members. In the first place this is reflected by the fact that they function according to their bylaws, calling a general assembly two times a year, record transactions which are audited, and using their ICT equipment. FMOs have obtained the trust of their members who in consequence increased their sales volumes through the FMO. In addition, members have started to use improved seed varieties and started to grow cash crops to ensure a better access to markets. On their turn, some of the FMOs are said to have increased their sales volumes considerably, which gives them a better bargaining position on the market. As a member of the union, FMOs have further expanded their services to their members, by means of making available consumer goods.

The integration of the ICT component in the operations of the eight selected FMOs had the following contribution to this outcome: In the first place FMOs started recording their daily transactions in excel, which helped them to easily and effectively track their financial status which also helped in the auditing of each cooperative. In the second place FMO management started to use mobile phones and more easily obtain price information from many traders, also from other towns. This has increased their possibility to compare different traders and to negotiate better prices, implying that their bargaining power has increased. In the third place ICT is said to have helped increase the transparency of the FMO management towards their members and particular with regards to the payment of dividend.

Not all eight FMOs that were equipped with ICT tools improved their performance: two FMOs do not have the educational level, do not show commitment and do not take initiative and have high staff turnover. On the other side another FMO that does not have access to electricity mobilised contributions from its members to use a generator which then helped the FMO to access the ICT tools.

The most plausible explanation for this outcome consists of the technical support provided by ERSHA through both the ICCO alliance Value Chain Program and the ICT program. This is a sufficient and necessary explanation of the outcome. However the enabling environment provided by the local government, meaning Woreda level, is to be seen as a condition to this success.

It has however not been possible to assess exactly what the contribution has been of the ICT introduction and that of the value chain development project. Both interventions need to be seen as a causal package. ICT is mainly being used to improve processes and access to information.
5.3.2 Increased network to access financial services and access to markets

The second outcome achieved consists of the FMOs and the unions having increased their networks which led to improved access to financial services, in particular the Union being linked to the cooperative bank of Oromia in which it took a share and obtained a loan. This loan is said to be used by FMOs to pay their members upon delivery of agricultural produce because the Union transfers a sufficient amount of money to the FMOs as a means to manage their cash flows. Other network outcomes are that more sharing of lessons takes place amongst FMOs of C6NGOs; the Union becoming a member of the Oromia Cooperative federation, and; FMOs being able to sell produce to consumer cooperatives after conflicts had been resolved.

ERSHA’s contribution consisted of facilitating experience sharing, providing technical assistance to the Union to engage with Oromia Cooperative Bank and Oromia cooperatives federation. Those contributions are to be attributed to both projects implemented by ERSHA and the C6NGOs. ERSHA, UNION, Oromia Cooperative bank and Oromia cooperatives federation play an important role. ICT interventions are contributing to this outcome as it helps to improve connectivity. As a result of ICT interventions it becomes possible to access information about stakeholders, but also to share information and documentation. Moreover, the technical assistance provided by ERSHA entailed providing a better membership overview which was a result of ICT interventions. ICT thus helps to connect between organisations, stakeholders, traders etc.

5.4 What is the relevance of these changes?

5.4.1 Relevance of the changes in relation to the Theory of Change of 2012

The ToC of 2012 states that the overall objective of ERSHA is to become an innovative and efficient civil society organisation that serves its clients. There are three conditions to reach this objective: 1) strengthening material and technical capabilities of FMOs and their members, 2) networking and partnership development and 3) strengthening ERSHA’s organisational capacity to meet clients’ and partners’ needs.

The changes achieved as described in paragraph 5.2 show that progress has been made to meet all three conditions.

5.4.2 Relevance of the changes in relation to the context in which ERSHA is operating

The relevance of the changes in relation to the context has two components: that of organising farmers in value chains and supporting these chains with market information systems and ICT for the management of FMOs and Unions.

A differentiation needs to be made between the FMO business oriented cooperative structures and the government supported multi-purpose cooperatives that aim to support consumers and vulnerable households. Past governments have used cooperative structures for their Marxist policies, which in consequence has led to a distrust of farmers in any new cooperative structure. If the FMOs manage to increase the trust of farmers in their services as well as help farmers to sell their produce at a higher price, than the change is very relevant.

ICT services are an important factor in making the agricultural sector efficient. However, in Ethiopia the availability of ICT tools and services is limited. The ICT tools necessary for receiving information are not available everywhere and are difficult to come by. Moreover, the knowledge and skills of farmers in the area of ICT is very limited. ERSHA has worked on improving the knowledge and skills of FMOs in working with ICT tools. This has worked for 6 of the eight FMOs, the two remaining facing difficulties related to amongst others low education levels.

However market information for agricultural commodities is only limited to export crops and the collaboration with Apposit to collect market information for the FMOs and the Unions until so far has not been successful. Although some indications exist that sms-services help farmers and FMOs to collect market information and to improve their bargaining position, the absence of a market information system partially questions the relevance of the ICT project in relation to market access.
The changes identified helped to increase farmers’ trust in cooperative structures and to make access to markets easier to some extent and therefore are relevant; however their relevance would increase with the availability of a full-fledged market information system.

5.4.3 Relevance of the changes in relation to the policies of Connect4Change

IICD’s approach is that of social innovation and their Civil Society policy is that of providing their partners with support and information after having received a request for support. According to IICD ICT has shown to increase the trust between farmers and their FMOs because it helps to increase the transparency of the management of sales which is to be considered as a major contributor to social innovation.

The work of ERSHA has been relevant as the agricultural sector is not very organized when it comes to access to information. In this project IICD trained ERSHA to introduce the ICT in the FMOs and ICCO provided the necessary funding. ERSHA was the leading party to implement it in FMO practices. They have also taken an important role in creating awareness of the importance of this information for the farmers. They have raised awareness to a level where farmers are willing to pay a small price for receiving accurate information which can be used at their farm. They have started to realize that this can improve their livelihood.

5.5 Explaining factors

5.5.1 Internal factors

Despite the fact that ERSHA mentioned in its 2012 ToC that its own organisational performance needed to be addressed, only limited efforts have been taken until so far. One of the areas that needs further attention – not related to the market information system however – is that staff at field level strengthens its capacities to engage with private sector actors as a means to integrate the FMOs in promising value chains. The staff is highly motivated in this organisation.

5.5.2 External factors

As mentioned above, only market information for export commodities is available in Ethiopia and a market information system to inform the farmers with whom C6NGOs are working and who are delivering on domestic markets is not yet available. Making the ICT tools available is a first step, however the second step of providing the FMOs and farmers with market information did not yet materialise.

The government of Ethiopia is increasingly looking at ICT as an important tool for development. The five year government plan under implementation, called Growth and Transformation Plan, argues that embracing ICT is essential to creating new jobs, new business opportunities, to education and to improving the effectiveness of government administration and service delivery. Nonetheless, it was found out that the Ethiopia’s ICT initiatives have not been taken up by the private sector and therefore reliable statistics are not as easily available as in some other African countries that have been strategically ramping up their local ICT industry (Lixi and Dahan, 2014).6

According to International Telecommunication Union Key Global Telecom Indicators released in 20147, Ethiopia registered improvement in the ICT growth. Nonetheless the performance of Ethiopia remained very low compared to other counties in Africa as well as other developing countries. The following figures show how Ethiopia performed in some of the key indicators:

- Percentage of individuals using internet improved from less than 0.2 in 2004 to about 1.5 percent in 2012,

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6 Marc Lixi and Mariana Dahan. 2014. ICT as an Enabler of Ethiopia. World Bank
• Fixed broadband subscription per 100 inhabitants increased to 0.045 in 2012 from 0.005 in 2010,
• Mobile cellular subscription per 100 inhabitants reached close to 24 from a figure that was well below 5 in 2008. As a result mobile subscription surpassed 23 million.

The International Telecommunication Union classified Ethiopia as one of the least performing in terms of ICT Development Index (IDI), which measures the level of ICT advancement in 166 countries by combining 11 indicators that focus on three areas – ICT access, ICT use and ICT skills. The result showed that Ethiopia stood 162 both in 2012 and 2013. The four countries that performed less than Ethiopia in both years were Eritrea, Chad, Niger, and Central African Republic.

Price and affordability of ICT services is one of the challenges that is affecting access to the services in Ethiopia. If we take the cost of an entry-level fixed-broadband subscription as an example the performance was that in 2012 it cost Ethiopia USD 23.70 to access fixed broadband internet (ITU, 2013). The cost was higher than what several countries charged for the same service. In addition, the cost in Ethiopia was one of the most expensive in terms of gross national income per capita which amounted to 71 percent. As a result Ethiopia ranked as 18th most expensive country out of 169 countries in total.

This ICT context explains the difficulties that the C6NGOs have in negotiating the provision of market information with ICT businesses like Apposit.

5.5.3 Relations CFA-SPO

In September 2014 the field office of ERSHA was closed because of funding problems. In consequence the value chain project that helped to create the FMOs and the unions was closed, but the ICT project will continue until the end of 2015. As of that moment IICD only engages with the headquarters of ERSHA and lost contact with the field.

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6 Discussion

6.1 Design of the intervention

The intervention is designed for the entire C6NGOs consortium which makes the goals and activities applicable to all involved organisations. ERSHA works with a limited number of FMOs but has been successful in implementing the programme. The FMOs and their members report that they feel better capable to perform in their business and use ICT in their work. The introduction of the ICT in the first place helps to keep data, but in the second place helps to negotiate better prices.

An important component that would be worthwhile to explore consists of a more systems approach oriented intervention that would, apart from the technical devices, also ensure that market information becomes reliable. This would improve the project design.
7 Conclusion

Changes in the civil society arena of the SPO
In the 2012 – 2014 period the two most important changes that took place with regards to the level of organisation and the perception of impact dimension of CIVICUS.

ERSHA’s Farmer Market Organisations became more independent since the baseline. Eight of these, having access to electricity, were equipped with ICT tools to conduct digital transactions, which helped them to improve their bargaining position when negotiating with traders. In the meanwhile they became a member of the Oromia Cooperatives Association. More women are said to take leadership positions in the FMOs, and female membership increased slightly from 27 % since the baseline to 27-30 %.

The union, endorsed by the government, managed to diversify its financial resource base. In the meanwhile it adhered to the Federation of Oromia Cooperative Unions.

ERSHA itself became a member of the East African Food Security Network of ICCO partners and engaged with their Kenya partners on ICT.

With regards to perception of impact, in particular the relations with the local administration are constructive: both the administration, the FMOs, the Union and ERSHA together explore how they can access potential market chains. Apart from this the local administration gave a clearance to the 14 MFOs to create their own union: officially only one union per district is allowed, but when the existing union refused the adhesion of the FMOs, these were allowed to create their own union. Additionally ERSHA has worked to link the union to different stakeholders such as the financial sector and to the Federation of Oromia Cooperative unions. In particular the relations with the Bank helped the union to diversify its financial resource base and to do investments that help the further marketing of agricultural produce.

These findings were obtained through an analysis of documents, a workshop and follow-up interviews with ERSHA, and interviews with external resources persons working in civil society organisations that receive support from ERSHA; other civil society organisations with whom ERSHA is collaborating; public or private sector agents and; external resource persons capable of overlooking the MDG or theme on which ERSHA is concentrating.

Contribution analysis
The first outcome achieved that the evaluation team looked at was the increased capacities of the FMOs to serve their members: at least 6 of the eight FMOs are said to have improved their performance. The most plausible explanation of this outcome consists of both projects implemented by ERSHA and the other members of the C6NGO consortium; an ICCO funded project to create value chains and create FMO and Unions and; the ICT project implemented with IICD and the Connect4Change Alliance. Both together seem to provide a sufficient and necessary explanation of the outcome. The ICT component helps FMO leaders to track their financial situation, to more easily obtain price information to negotiate better prices and to increase relations of trust between FMO members and the management. However the enabling environment provided by the local government is to be seen as a condition to this success.

A second outcome achieved consists of the wider network in which the FMOs and the Union currently engage. These networks have both a business character (access to finance and to markets) and a civil society character (membership of the Federation of Oromia Cooperative unions and of the Oromia Cooperatives Association). Also in this case both project contributed to the outcome.

Relevance
With regards to the baseline ToC, the interventions and outcomes achieved are relevant because FMOs have been capacitated in terms of skills and knowledge of ICT, but also in taking ownership of their work and forming a union. In terms of the second condition ERSHA has not increased the networking much. This is largely due to the fact that they are already regularly meeting with the C6NGOs network. The largest change in this respect is the effort to form a partnership with Kenya. The area
where ERSHA is lacking behind is the organisational development. The issues which were identified during the baseline have not been resolved.

The changes identified helped to increase farmers’ trust in cooperative structures and to make access to markets easier to some extent and therefore are relevant; however their relevance would increase with the availability of a full-fledged market information system. The fact that one FMO, not on the power grid, managed to mobilise contributions from his members as a means to run a generator for electricity is to be interpreted as an indicator of the relevance of ICT as perceived by farmers.

With regards to IICD’s and C4C’s policies the changes are relevant because they contribute to its social innovation policy, in particular with regards to the creation of trust amongst stakeholders and increased connectivity.

**Explaining factors**

Most important internal factors that explain the findings consist of a positive level of motivation of staff, but field staff missing the experiences necessary to engage with the private sector.

The most important external factor that explains the findings is that market information available is not always relevant. Access to mobile data networks is generally low in Ethiopia, as well as having access to electricity.

**Design**

The design of the intervention is replicable for other FMOs that have access to electricity, whose managers have the appropriate educational background and whose organisational performance is strong. Apart from this, similar interventions need to take into account the quality of the data entered into the market information system.

**Table 2**

**Summary of findings.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When looking at the MFS II interventions of this SPO to strengthen civil society and/or policy influencing, how much do you agree with the following statements?</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The CS interventions were well designed</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The CS interventions were implemented as designed</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The CS interventions reached their objectives</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The observed outcomes are attributable to the CS interventions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The observed CS outcomes are relevant to the beneficiaries of the SPO</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score between 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all" and 10 being "completely".
References and resource persons

Documents

**Documents by SPO**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERSHA annual project update</td>
<td>2012</td>
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**Documents by CFA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnership agreement P1=6</td>
<td>2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project C5 C4C EcoDev proposal final</td>
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**Documents by Alliance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICT consortium annual report</td>
<td>2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT terminal report</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT donor biannual update</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT 1st quarter report</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT 4th quarter report narrative</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other documents**


Lixi M. and Dahan M. 2014. ICT as an Enabler of Ethiopia. World Bank


**Webpages**


Social Watch, Basic Capabilities Index 2011. The boom and the busted,


University of Oslo, Students’ and guardians’ views and experiences with the Alternative Basic Education (ABE) program in the Amhara, National Regional State of Ethiopia, https://www.duo.uio.no/handle/10852/31206, 2009


Resource persons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of key informant</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Function in organisation</th>
<th>Relation with SPO</th>
<th>Contact details including e-mail</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Eshetu Yimer</td>
<td>ERSHA</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Executive leadership</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eshetuyimer@yahoo.com">eshetuyimer@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibebe Alemayehu</td>
<td>ERSHA</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>Executive leadership</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ersha@ethionet.et">ersha@ethionet.et</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuri Mersha</td>
<td>ERSHA</td>
<td>Finance and Administration director</td>
<td>Executive leadership</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ersha@ethionet.et">ersha@ethionet.et</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aynaddis Abebe</td>
<td>ERSHA</td>
<td>Gender and Social Service Coordinator</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ersha@ethionet.et">ersha@ethionet.et</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fikadu Gebeeyehu</td>
<td>ERSHA</td>
<td>Planning, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management coordinator</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ersha@ethionet.et">ersha@ethionet.et</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digafe Eyana</td>
<td>Union</td>
<td>FMO and union secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:ersha@ethionet.et">ersha@ethionet.et</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dereje Teressa</td>
<td>Toke Kutaye Wereda cooperative office</td>
<td>distribution process leader Input supply and</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Jifara</td>
<td>Bedasa Former</td>
<td>Chair person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Muleta</td>
<td>Bedasa Former</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
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<td>Jadelte Terressa</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Olaf Erz</td>
<td>Interview Olaf Erz IICD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 1  Civil Society Scores

This table presents the appreciation of the evaluation team regarding changes occurred for each indicator between 2012 and 2014 on a scale of -2 to +2

- 2 = Considerable deterioration
- 1 = A slight deterioration
0 = no change occurred, the situation is the same as in 2012
+1 = slight improvement
+2 = considerable improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Change in the indicators in the 2012 – 2014 period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civic engagement</td>
<td>1 Needs of marginalised groups</td>
<td>How does your organisation take the needs of your beneficiaries/target groups, in particular marginalised groups into account in your planning, actions, activities, and/or strategies?</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Involvement of target groups</td>
<td>What is the level of participation of your beneficiaries/target groups, in particular marginalised groups in the analysis, planning and evaluation of your activities?</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Political engagement</td>
<td>How intense is your (individual staff or organisational) participation in locally-nationally elected bodies and/or sectoral user groups?</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of organisation</td>
<td>5 Relations with other organisations</td>
<td>In the past 12 months what has been the most intensive interaction you had with other CSOs?</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 Frequency of dialogue with closest CSO</td>
<td>In the past 12 months how many meetings did you have with the CSO that you have most intensive interaction with?</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 Defending the interests of marginalised groups</td>
<td>Which CSO are most effective in defending the interests of your target groups? In the past 12 months, how did you relate to those CSOs?</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 Composition current financial resource base</td>
<td>How does your organisation finance institutional costs such as workshops of the General Assembly (if applicable); attendance to workshops of other CSOs; costs for organisational growth and/or networking?</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice of Values</td>
<td>8 Downward accountability</td>
<td>To what extent can mandatory social organs (steering committee, general assembly, internal auditing group) ask your executive leaders to be accountable to them?</td>
<td>+0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9 Composition of social organs</td>
<td>What % of members of your mandatory social organs belong to the marginalised target groups you are working with/for?</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 External financial auditing</td>
<td>How regularly is your organisation audited externally?</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of impact</td>
<td>11 Client satisfaction</td>
<td>What are the most important concerns of your target groups? How do your services take into account those important concerns?</td>
<td>+2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 Civil society impact.</td>
<td>In the past 12 months, what impact did you have on building a strong civil society?</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13 Relation with public sector organisations.</td>
<td>In the past 12 months, what interaction did you have with public sector organisations to realise your programme and organisations' objectives?</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 Relation with private sector organisations</td>
<td>In the past 12 months, what interaction did you have with private sector organisations to realise your programme and organisations' perspective?</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence upon public policies, rules, regulations</td>
<td>How successful have you been in influencing public policies and practices in the past 2 years?</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence upon private sector agencies’ policies, rules, regulations.</td>
<td>How successful have you been in influencing private sector policies and practices in the past 2 years?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Coping strategies</td>
<td>In the past 2 years, how did your organisation cope with these changes in the context that may have been positive or negative consequences for civil society?</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2  Changes in civil society indicators between 2012 and 2014

1. Civic Engagement

1.1 Needs of marginalised groups SPO

The ultimate target groups of the ICT project with the C6NGOs are 16,440 small holders and their households. Those of ERSHA are 14 FMOs, including one Union, 1400-1800 small scale households and 2700 indirect beneficiaries. 27-30% of FMO members are women and their membership is promoted by bylaws within the FMOs. According to ERSHA it takes the considerations of women and that of children in other projects into account in its project cycle. This was confirmed by the Union; FMO members are small farmers, including women, who face problems of market access due to lack of market information, in ability to use mobile phones and some other constraints. The same Union however observes that due to its early stage of formation, it has itself not yet engaged sufficiently enough with the 14 FMOs and their members. Since the baseline period an improvement in the number of women’s in leadership of FMOs has observed.

Score: +1

1.2 Involvement of target groups SPO

Stakeholders’ participation was the main feature of the project design cycle where by all members of the C6NGO consortium, government officials, and technical advisors from donor and other organizations are represented. In the process, farmers are represented by the FMO leaders. Women’s are also represented through the women at the FMO management committee. Similarly, the union has the same structure to represent women. In general, more women take leadership positions during the end line as compared with the baseline. This is not true for all the FMOs, rather some FMOs are lagging behind in the inclusion of marginalized groups like women.

Score: +1

1.3 Intensity of political engagement SPO

SPOs that get funding from external donors are not allowed to engage in politics of the country.

Score: 0

2. Level of organization

2.1 Relations with other organizations SPO

Since the baseline period ERSHA has been actively collaborating with members of C6NGOs. It also took part in other civil society networks, such as the Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA), Poverty Action Network Ethiopia (PANE), Sustainable Land use Forum. Effort has been made to create partnership with NGOs working particularly in Kenya and Uganda where by the outcome is to form an East Africa food security network (East African ICCO Partners network). The executive director and one technical team member of ERSHA went to Kenya to collaborate on areas of ICT which enabled ERSHA to learn more and share their best experiences too.

Score: +1
2.2 Frequency of dialogue with closest civil society organization SPO

ERHSA indicated that in the last 12 months it had 6 meetings with the C6NGO consortium. In addition the organization is closely interacting with the FMOs at least once in a month. The bi annual meeting is continued to be held as well.

**Score: +1**

2.3 Defending the interests of marginalized groups SPO

Since the baseline ERSHA and consortium are effective in defending the interests of the target groups. But these days the FMOs and the Union are capacitated to take over the role of ERSHA through their Union, so that they can defend the interest of their members. They are now even more capable in defending the interest of the member farmers since they became a member of the Oromia Federal Cooperatives Union.

**Score: +2**

2.4 Composition of financial resource base SPO

Despite the frequent efforts to diversify the funding base, ERSHA is not successful in doing so. Rather, ERSHA lost its former donors such as Oxfam Novib and Help a Child.

**Score: -1**

3. Practice of values

3.1 Downward accountability SPO

Similar to the baseline situations the executive leader of ERSHA is accountable to the General Assembly and the Board of Directors. However, these are less frequently informed than the government and donor organizations. It is also reported by the FMO and the Union leaders as they are informed about the projects and the project phase out.

**Score: 0**

3.2 Composition of social organs SPO

Like during the baseline two farmers are members in the general assembly of ERSHA. Currently, there are four men and one woman in ERSHA’s Board of Directors.

**Score: 0**

3.3 External financial auditing SPO

ERHSA has continued to be audited annually by an external audit firm.

**Score: 0**

4. Perception of impact

4.1 Client satisfaction SPO

A union leader has mentioned that, ERSHA has given them several management and accountancy training and which enables them to be capacitated and to be successful. The same is true for the FMOs. Hence, these target beneficiaries are satisfied by ERSHAs efforts. Compared to the pre intervention period, members get a better access to market and market information. In addition, ERSHA has tried to link the union with different stakeholders. Currently, to diversify its financial
source, the “Torban kutaye” union purchased share from Oromia Cooperative Bank. It is also a member of Federation Oromia Cooperative unions to get loans and other services. The program also supported around 1.16 million Eth birr to construct a store and an office; at present construction of both store and office is finalized. Beyond storing union and FMOs inventory, the store is expected to generate additional income to the union as they can rent it to other organizations.

**Score: +2**

### 4.2 Civil society impact SPO

The FMOs and its union that are established by ERSHA are capacitated. Since the baseline period the FMO’s ICT knowledge has improved and now started a digital recording of transaction. Their bookkeeping has also improved. They have got now a better bargaining power in the market and also are in a better position to assess the market situation. These 14 FMOs established their own union and the union is performing good and got recognition from the cooperatives agency as a best performing newly established Union. They have their own store building and truck. They purchased share from Oromia cooperative bank and accessed loan twice. They are also now a member of the Oromia cooperatives association. However, there are some FMOs who still have a weak performance.

Other members of the C6NGO consortium consider ERSHA to be one of the strong local NGOs in Ethiopia, which is trustworthy organisation that has a proven track record in development. ERSHA is aware of key thematic areas and ‘best practices’ and has a sound understanding of factors that contribute to effective, efficient and sustainable performance.

**Score: +2**

### 4.3 Relations with public sector organizations SPO

ERSHA is working with the public sector throughout the project cycle. Most frequent collaboration consists of joint planning and implementation of activities. This was confirmed by Gourder Woreda Cooperative Promotion Office that states that it has a good working relationship. In the last 12 months ERSHA has carried out a project inception workshop with local government office representatives. Both FMOs, the woreda cooperative promotion office and ERSHA share a common problem of market access for farmers’ produce which the union as well as the FMOs are trying to solve. As a result the “Access to Market Information” project is seen as a foundation for easy access to market information developed by Oromia marketing agency with the financial support of the project. FMOs were linked with the source of market information i.e., Oromia Marketing agency and other related sources and with unions as well.

**Score: +1**

### 4.4 Relation with private sector agencies SPO

Though ERSHA is exerting some effort to connect FMOs with the private sector, it is usually short lived. ERSHA tried to integrate the FMOs in the appropriate value chain by connecting them with Oil factories and flour factories. One of the constraints that ERSHA is facing currently is that field staff lacks sufficient capacity in the field of value chain development and the role of private sector organizations. In addition, it has also worked with DOT Ethiopia for supplying market information via SMS but DOT Ethiopia and ERSHA do not agree on the ICT management ownership and they are still in negotiation. On the other hand the FMOs/ Union are working with the private sectors/dealers and buyers/ to sell their produces and to get inputs.

**Score: +0**

### 4.5 Influence upon public policies, rules, regulations SPO

The 2009 Ethiopian law on registration and regulation of charities and societies does not allow NGOs to influence policies, rules and regulations and ERSHA in consequence is not involved in any lobby and advocacy. But one scenario is reported a successful policy influence on the government organ, particularly in the woreda cooperation office. The 14 FMOs requested to become a member of the
AMBO cooperatives union which was refused by this union. Although the cooperative law only allows one union per district, they managed to influence the regional and zonal offices and obtained a clearance to establish their own union.

**Score:** +2

4.6 Influence upon private sector agencies’ policies, rules, regulations SPO

ERSHA has not (yet) succeeded in influencing the policies of private sector organizations. It’s most important strategy for doing so is however by bringing together different actors in the value chain and their service provided to discuss and establish a win-win solution helps. Since it is not well planned in the project proposal, ERSHA find it difficult to influence policies of private sector organizations. Though it is not successful, it was reported that there was an attempt to link the producers with flour factory.

**Score:** 0

5. Environment

5.1 Coping strategies

The new civil society legislation on the allocation of administration cost (30/70) has delayed the start of the ICT project and as a result new administrative arrangements had to be taken by ICCO to accommodate for these inconveniences. Also, the unavailability of reliable and dependable private firms in the ICT sector, poor internet connection and availing reliable market information were major challenges.

**Score:** 0
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