

Report of activities of Ethiopian EOA - 2017

The challenge of the closure of PANOS Ethiopia

Background Information

PANOS-Ethiopia was identified and signed up in 2014/15 through an MOU with Country Director, Ayele Kebede, to be responsible for EOA Pillar 2 (Information and Communication) in Ethiopia. PANOS developed a Work Plan and Budget breakdown for both 2015 and 2016. The work plan for 2016 was developed together with the ISD Communications Operational Unit that was implementing EOA Pillar 2 with support from SSNC.

In the first half of 2016, ISD disbursed 60% of the agreed budget for 2016. However, PANOS did not submit either mid-year or final year financial and narrative reports for use of these funds in 2016 to ISD. As a consequence, BvAT was unable to release the remaining 40% of the 2016 budget to ISD. On 22 February 2017, through an announcement published by the Ethiopian Charities and Societies Agency (ChSA) ISD learnt that PANOS-Ethiopia had been closed and all its assets and accounts taken over by the ChSA. The information with ChSA showed that PANOS had received Birr 384,008.02 from ISD.

ISD reported this situation to the NCS in April emphasizing that there had been no response from PANOS despite repeated visits by Samuel Mekonnen, assistant to the Director and the EOA Coordinator, to the PANOS office. The NCS was also informed that Dr David Amudavi visited ISD in mid-March to discuss and give advice on both recovering the funds from PANOS as well as finding an appropriate organization to take responsibility for executing the EOA Pillar 2 work plan. Dr David told ISD that identifying a replacement for Pillar 2 should be done in close consultation with NSC.

The NSC members, particularly the Chairperson, helped ISD clarify with ChSA that the fund transferred to PANOS was not a donation but part of an approved budget to execute an agreed work plan by getting a support letter from the Ministry of Agriculture, signed by the Minister.

The result was that the ChSA Executive Director instructed the Director of the Asset Liquidation Transfer and Disposition Directorate of the ChSA to write a letter to ISD indicating that it should take legal action against PANOS for the sum of 384,008.02 disbursed to it by ISD, but not accounted for by PANOS. The original letter of 2 July 2017 from ChSA was shared with the NSC members.

The NSC meeting of 15 September 2017

ISD requested a meeting of the NSC for 15 September 2017 to update the NSC members on the steps taken to recover the funds from PANOS as well as identify a replacement for Pillar 2. The meeting also prepared the agenda for a meeting of 19 September, when Dr David Amudavi would visit Addis and meet with the NSC members and the ISD management. The meeting was given more background detail, as follows:

- ISD informed the NSC that in November 2016 while in Addis for another meeting, Dr. David Amudavi of BvAT had told ISD that he had met Ayele Kebede in the Embassy of Sweden. Ayele told Dr David that he had joined the staff of the Embassy. Ayele had not mentioned anything regarding PANOS.

- Dr David had visited the Embassy of Sweden in Ethiopia to request funds from Sida (Swedish International Development Agency) for EOA-I.
- ISD only learned about the closure of PANOS when it was announced in the Reporter Newspaper on 22 February 2017.
- ISD acting as the CLO for Ethiopia, faced the following challenges that were shared with the NSC members:
 - First, the delay in accessing and informal nature of the information regarding the closure of PANOS;
 - Second, ISD only got the official information from the Ethiopian Charities and Societies Agency about the closure of PANOS Ethiopia because ISD was recorded as a 'donor' for PANOS;
 - Thirdly, due to the delay of PANOS, ISD was unable to provide BvAT with complete financial and narrative reports for 2016.
 - This led to a bigger challenge for ISD in that BvAT was unable to release the remaining 40% of the budget for 2016 for all EOA Pillars. This had a strong negative impact on the work of Pillar 1, Research, Training and Extension, due to Mekelle University that had on-going experiments in the field, Pillar 3, Value Chain and Market Development being managed by Azeb in ISD, and then ISD itself as the CLO (Coordinating and Leading Organization). ISD informed the NSC that BvAT is insisting that ISD refund BvAT the US dollar equivalent of the ETB 384,000 disbursed to PANOS before it will release the outstanding 40% of 2016 for all Pillars;
 - Fourthly, the challenge in finding a replacement for PANOS. ISD informed the NSC that despite placing adverts in the newspaper and on official notice boards here in Addis, ISD had received one proposal from an ex-PANOS employee (that cannot be accepted), and one outline proposal from PAN-Ethiopia. ISD had also asked Fana Broadcasting Corporate and Sheger FM if they would take up the activities of Pillar 2. These are private media businesses that work for profit, and cannot accept grants for non-profit work.

Action Taken by NSC

- After the issue of PANOS closure was communicated to NSC members by ISD, the NSC provided advice on the way that the challenge can be solved. The chairperson of the NSC, Mr Mesfin Seleshi, assisted ISD to bring the case to the Ministry of Agriculture (the Minister) in order to get a support letter to the ChSA.
- The NSC expressed its appreciation to ISD for the action taken and advised that this should be the main agenda during the meeting with BVAT that was planned for 19 September 2017.
- Regarding the issue of replacement of PANOS, the NSC appreciated and expressed its gratitude to the efforts made by ISD. It requested ISD to present the two offers for discussion by the NSC on 19 September 2017 in the presence of Dr David.

- The NSC also discussed the possibility for ISD to undertake the activities considering that the present phase of the EOA project supported by SDC will end in December 2018.
- It was also pointed out that PANOS and the ISD Communications Operation Unit had planned joint activities for Pillar 2 for 2016.

Future Action Points

Having discussed the status of EOA implementation in Ethiopia and challenges faced due to delay in receiving funds from Bvat, the NSC members made an understanding that:

- In order to build a vibrant EOA platform under the Ethiopian conditions, the NSC members committed themselves to strengthen the function of the NSC
- An understanding was also taken that the inactive members of NSC should be replaced by committed members from among the stakeholders
- Also recommended to revise the current rules and procedures of the NSC
- Using all possible options to invite other organizations to join the Ethiopian EOA platform and strengthen networking among the member
- The NSC gives close follow-up and provides support to CLO on the legal options for the challenge faced due to PANOS closure
- Together with the CLO (ISD), facilitate mechanisms for bringing on board a relevant Pillar 2 partner from civil society for EOA Information and Communication in the next phase

Action Plan: Pillar-IV 2017 (Budget in USD)

Pillar IV. Country Lead Organization (CLO) Pillar Implementing Partner: ISD

PILLAR 4: SUPPORT AND CEMENTING	Detailed Activities	Output indicators	Jan-March	Ap-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Annual Target	2016 Carry Over	2017 Budget	2017 OVERALL TOTAL
Output 4.1. Fully functional National Platforms with Steering Committees established and strengthened										
4.1.1 Develop the TOR and Rules of Procedures for the National Platforms and Steering Committees facilitated by the CLOs	Already done								-	
4.1.2 Organize at least one meeting for bringing together country partners to share experiences and lessons + 4.2.4 CLOs convene at least two national platform meetings a year for PIPs and other stakeholders	A. Two consultative meetings among EOA partners to share developments in EOA project	Meeting reports	X		X		Synthesize and aware country partners on EOA developments in Ethiopia	2,073.86	2,716.73	4,796.59
	B. Two meetings of the national steering committee	Meeting reports	X		X		For NSC to decide on selection of PIP for PII and also to get aware on EOA developments			
	C. One regional technical committee meetings to support pillar I	Meeting reports				X	To facilitate a consultation and technical advice from RTC to Mekelle University			
	D. Repeat to support other university (or Mekelle) to conduct the National EOA Conference						Bringing and showcasing country experiences and researches done with EOA related topics			
	E. One national platform meetings held	Meeting reports			X					
4.1.3 Sensitize various actors and stakeholders in the country about the value of EOA in development	A. Inviting new partners onto the existing platform	Number of new entrants into the platform		X			To invite and involve at least 5 new stakeholders to the national EOA platform	1,000	2086.05	3086.05
	B. Meetings of platform partners on selected EOA issues	Meeting reports			X	X	Conducting 2 EOA platform partner meetings to synthesize			

PILLAR 4: SUPPORT AND CEMENTING	Detailed Activities	Output indicators	Jan-March	Ap-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Annual Target	2016 Carry Over	2017 Budget	2017 OVERALL TOTAL
							and generate directions on EOA			
4.1.4 Undertake gap analysis on existing policies/legislations as related to EOA, identify and prepare legal/policy measures and actions to support the development of robust EOA sector in Ethiopia	A. Share interim reports of consultant to NSC and the platform based on the agreed timeline with the consultant	Meeting reports strategy and policy documents produced	X		X		Share the policy tools to the dev't of EOA to NSC and EOA platform members		6,023.91 (the money is to be paid for the consultant, activities will be synergized with 4.1.5)	6023.91
	B. Follow up on the process of policy development	Consultant's report	X	X	X	X	Continuous follow-up on delivery and implementation of the policy dev't on EOA			
	C. EOA harmonization discussion facilitated	Meeting reports		X	X	X	3 meetings with MP members and MOA experts on findings and roadmap of the policy tools			
4.1.5 Advocate for inclusion of EOA into national policy making processes, strategies and investment plans.	A. One-to-one policy discussion with MoA (eg. With the state minister)	Meeting reports			X		One discussion with the MoA's Minister and/or State Minister on EOA policy tools	4,000	1,505.98	5,505.98
	B. financing publications of Ethiopian Economics Association on EOA	Number of printed copies and number of different publications			X		Continue on showcasing EOA practices to Ethiopian policy makers and researchers			
	C. Appropriate and targeted advocacy messages and papers prepared, published and disseminated in partnership with other pillars (eg. Policy briefs and brand manual)	Number and type of published and shared publications	X	X	X	X	Produce 4 policy briefs and brand manuals on EOA in Ethiopia, in partnership with PIPs			
	D. Two meetings with the Agricultural standing committee of the parliament	Meeting reports	X			X	To be synergized with 4.1.4			

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	E. Field visit of parliamentarians to EOA practitioners	field visit report	X				To be synergized with 4.1.4			
4.1.6 Develop long term goals and strategies for the National Platform facilitated by the Steering Committee and CLOs	A. Present the draft of the Strategic Plan to the national platform for comments	Meeting reports	X				One meeting to inform to and consider feedbacks from partners on EOA strategy	2,000	1,000	3,000
	B. Finalize the SP for EOA									
	C. Publish and share the Strategic Plan	Number of copies distributed	X				Publish and distribute at least 500 copies of EOA strategy			
4.1.7 Develop directory and database of members of the national platforms and development partners	A. Selection of IT consultant to develop electronic EOA database platform based on technical and financial proposals	Number of bids received	X				Develop an electronic database for EOA actors to interact and to facilitate knowledge management		3,011.95	3011.95
	B. Develop ToR between the consultant and CLO	Signed agreement	X							
	C. Follow-up in the development of the database		X	X	X	X				
4.1.8 Support participation in regional forums	A. IFOAM and BIOFACH 2017 in India	Number and type of attended forums	X			X	Send at least one participant from MP to BioFACH and one from MoA to WOC		6,023.91	6023.91
4.1.9 Create website for visibility of the initiative and information sharing	A. Develop EOA website link (under ISD's)	Link of the website		X			Synergized with 4.1.7		1,505.98	1505.98
	B. CLO publications about EOA related knowledge and policy briefs in partnership with PIPs – pillar II	Number and consistency of frequency of the publications	X	X	X	X	Synergized with 4.1.5			
4.1.10 Prepare annual work plan and budget through participatory processes	A. Prepare a work plan for 2018 together with PIPs	Meeting report				X	Bring PIPs together for planning and learning from experiences		2,500	2.500
Sub total										

PILLAR 4: SUPPORT AND CEMENTING	Detailed Activities	Output indicators	Jan-March	Ap-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Annual Target	2016 Carry Over	2017 Budget	2017 OVERALL TOTAL
Output 4.2. Capacities of Country Lead Organizations (CLOs) and Pillar Implementing Partners (PIPs) to perform their functions strengthened										
4.2.1 CLOs prepare contractual agreements and disburse funds to PIPs		X					One contractual agreement for the new PIP for PII			
4.2.2 Strengthen capacity of CLOs and PIPs in project coordination and implementation	A. Prepare trainings for PIPs project planning and management Based on CLO trainings done by BvAT	Number of days and variety of training, variety of guest experts	X		X		Synergized with 4.2.5	2,500	1,000	3,500
4.2.3 Facilitate development of criteria for selection of PIPs	Already done									
4.2.5 CLOs and PIPs conduct project supervision, support, monitoring, evaluation and reporting to executing agencies and other stakeholders	A. Consultation meetings among PIPs and introduce M&E platform of PELUM	Meeting reports	X	X		X	Conduct 2 consultation meetings on regular M&E	2,000	2,000.56	4,000.56
	B. Conduct monitoring visits together with PIPs (in Haike)	Monitoring reports, ISD comments in Back to Office reports		X		X	Synergized with M&E			
4.2.6 Prepare annual work plan and budget through participatory processes	Refer to 4.1.10								0.00	
4.2.7 Staff time allocation for cementing and organizing	Staff time allocated for: *Project coordinator: 10working days per month @rate USD 700 per month * Project officer: 10 working days per month @ rate USD 600 per month * Finance officer: 10 working days per month @ rate of USD 500 per month							11,891.64	6,108.36	18,000
Sub total										
Administration costs (10%)									3,942.6	3,942.6
Subtotal										
TOTAL FOR PILLAR 4								25,465.5	39,426.46	64,891.53