



ETHIOPIAN EMPLOYERS FEDERATION (EEF)
in cooperation with ILO-ACT/EMP

**PROJECT ON
ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR
IN COFFEE AND TEA SECTOR
IN ETHIOPIA**

**REPORT ON ASSESSMENT OF GOOD BUSINESS
PRACTICES IN COMBATING CHILD LABOUR IN
COFFEE AND TEA SECTOR IN ETHIOPIA**

(26 JANUARY to 1 FEBRUARY 2007)

February 2007

Report on Assessment of Good Business Practices in Combating Child Labour in Coffee and Tea Sector in Ethiopia

1. Background

Since May 2004, EEF in close collaboration with the ILO Bureau of Employers Activities (ACTEMP) is actively engaged in combating hazardous child labour the in coffee and tea sector in Ethiopia. The Federation has been working on this issue by targeting four coffee and two tea plantations, namely Limu Kossa , Limu Sunthu, Bebeke & Tepi Coffee plantation and Wushwush and Gumaro Tea Development Plantations.

During the past two years, intensive sensitization activities, training of trainer's workshops as well as change agents' workshops were conducted. To ensure the sustainability of the project, change agents' committees were formed in each of the stated plantations and have gone through intensive trainings. Observations made during this period showed that, since the project activity began, different kind of support and collaboration is taking place between the management and the community in awareness creation, provision of support in school upgrading and construction activities etc. It is likely that these kinds of initiatives indicate behavioral changes taking place at the management, trade unions and community level. It is important to track such initiatives when assessing the project.

2. Objectives

The objective of the mission was to assess existing good business practices in coffee & tea plantations in combating child labour and to disseminate the printed Information Kit for change agents to enable them commence their activities.

3. Assessment Team:

No	Full Name	Organization	Position
1	Mr. Yohannes Beshah	EEF	A/Director EEF
2	Mr. Tsegaye Bekele	Limu Coffee Plant	G/Manager
3	Mr Getachew Tuffa	Limu Kossa Coffee Plant.	Administrator
4	Mr. Adamu Yimam	Limu Sunthu Coffee Plant	Administrator
5	Mr. Getachew W/Yohannes	Gumaro Tea Development Enerprise	HR & Admin. Head
6	Mr. Demeke Beyessa	Gumaro Tea Plant.	G.Manager
7	Mr. Alemseged W/Yohannes	EEF/ILO	Project Officer

4. Sites Visited:

- Limu Kossa Coffee Plantation(Limu Kossa Coffee Plantation)
- Ambuye Secondary School (Limu Kossa Coffee Plantation)
- Limu Sunthu Coffee Plantation (Limu Coffee Plantation)
- Gumaro Tea Development Enterprise (Gumaro)
- Gumaro primary school(Gumaro)
- Site under construction for residential houses (Gumaro)
- Site under construction for school up-grading(Gumaro)

5. Assessment Methodology

For the purpose of the assessment exercise, a checklist was developed to structure & set the tone of the discussion. The targeted officials were management representatives from the selected plantations, Directors of nearby schools where school construction or upgrading activities had taken place, and representatives of trade unions. Other than the assessment check list, a reporting format and monthly minute-taking format as well as a booklet were disseminated as follow up action for the periodic reporting of the change agents' performance.

6. Limu Kossa Coffee Plantation

In conducting the assessment exercise, the management of Limu Kossa Coffee Plantation, the Director of Ambuye Secondary School and the representative of the trade union were involved in the discussion. The same discussion was also made with each of them separately.

As a first phase of the activity, discussion was conducted with the management representative of the plantation on any registered changes or efforts exerted towards tackling child labour during the last two years.

The representative of the plantation Mr. Getachew Tuffa, expressed that since the first child labour sensitization activity performed by the EEF, the management has considerably acknowledged the seriousness of the problem. Subsequently it exerted its utmost effort to work together with the EEF/ILO in the effort to create awareness amongst the plantation community as well as the management team. The management outlined some of the core achievements the plantation has made since the project began sensitization activity in the plantation;

- ✓ the awareness level of the management team and the community at large tremendously raised;
- ✓ children under 14 years age are restricted to engage in any form of farming activities in the plantation;
- ✓ ensured the engagement of young workers in the age bracket of 14-17 years of age in light activities;
- ✓ Hazardous activities strictly prohibited for children under the age of 18;
- ✓ Realized practical actions like collaborating with the local community to upgrade access to education for children by upgrading Ambuye primary school to a secondary school.

He also briefly cited the history that Ambuye School during the last years as follows:

- The school is located in Oromyaa region, Jimma zone Limu Kossa Wereda , Ambuye Village and was established in 1971 GC;
- Initially the school was a primary school teaching up to grade 6;
- The school currently has 11 teachers and 521 pupils, of which 378 male and 143 female;
- The school was upgraded to a secondary school in the year 2005 with the collaborative effort of the community, Limu Kossa coffee plantation and the Regional Government with a total capital of ETB 201, 000.00 or USD23,110.00;
- Out of this the community raised in cash ETB 42,000.00 and in a form of labour ETB 70,000.00 (56%);
- Limu Kossa coffee plantation supported in kind in a form of vehicle and machinery ETB 45,000.00 (22.4%);
- Regional government supported in kind (cement and corrugated iron) ETB 44,000.99 (21.8%);



Secondary School built in 2005 with the assistance of the management



Prior to the construction of the secondary school in 2005, the school used to be a primary school which only enrolled children up to 6th grade. The management representative expressed that the existence of such a school near the plantation had immensely contributed to an enhanced access to education for children living around the area. Previously, children who complete 6th grade were obliged to engage in farming activities

mainly due to the non existence of secondary school in the area. The only available secondary school nearer to the area is in the town of Limu Genet village town that is 23 km away from the plantation. Due to that, only a few of those who complete primary school could proceed to secondary school due to the distance and other associated socio economic challenges. This was even more serious for girls, as parents hesitated to send them to distant areas due to many cultural and other gender related social problems, prevalent in the area.

It was noted that, due to the above stated reasons, the construction of the school and upgrading its services was a crucial course of action both for the community and the plantation management alike.

The building of the school nearer to the plantation had contributed a lot in enhancing access to education for children and especially for girls. The upgraded school is only 5km from the plantation.

The discussion conducted with the Director of Ambuye Secondary School Mr. Balcha Hirpa revealed that the situation of child labour in the last two years is indeed decreasing mainly due to the awareness raising activity carried out and the construction of the secondary school that took place in the area. He stressed that despite many challenges, thanks to the collaborative effort of Limu Kossa coffee plantation, the regional government and the community that the school became into being in 2005. He also said that other than the support provided in transport and machinery; the plantation also assisted in advisory & professional services. He also acknowledged that the trade union has also contributed in the effort of the school construction process though it is minimal. Both the director as well as the management noted that the school is still far from being fully complete as some finishing works on the floors of the classes as well as offices are not completed, classes are not fully furnished, the library is not in its modest form due to lack of reference books and the required furniture and finishing works.



7. Meeting with Change Agents

A discussion forum was organized for change agents to discuss the activities performed & orient them with the information kit and other supporting materials. It was learnt that all of the change agents had formally received the information kit booklet from the management where the TOR is included. Questions and suggestion were raised and discussion was made on the activities that change agents perform.

A monthly change agents (minutes taking format) & summary report compilation format developed for this purpose was also presented and discussed. These formats were developed in a bid to standardize the reporting formats as well as minutes taking process of all change agents activities across the board. For constant record keeping & tracking purpose, a registry book was also handed over for the chairman of the committee which will be used on the monthly

committee meetings. It was also agreed that as this document is an important document for follow up and activity tracking purpose, it is appropriate to keep it at the plantation's administration office. It was also noted that by doing so, it is imperative that the management gets involved & support the committee in their effort to combat child labour at the plantation level.

6.2 Limu Sunthu

In Limu Sunthu Coffee Plantation, discussion was made with the management representative who is Mr. Adam Yimer, general service head of the plantation. He stated that he has attended the series of awareness raising workshops conducted by EEF. He noted that the situation of child labour is slightly decreasing mainly as a result of the recently introduced salary increment and awareness creation activity performed by EEF. He acknowledged that other than the awareness creation activity performed together with the EEF, there is no specific initiative taken by the management towards tackling child labour. He noted the fact that the plantation is not far from the town called Limu Genet where primary and secondary schools are available, the management concentrated on raising the awareness level of the workers and the community alike.

The trade union representative Mr. Berahnu Mulat also stated that he has attended the different awareness raising workshops but believes that so far no practical action are taken neither by the management nor by the trade unions to combat child labour. The initiation to come up with some kind of initiatives is also slow.

During the discussion session held for change agents and administration officials, the content of the information kit was clarified, change agents' monthly meeting minute-taking format as well as reporting book was also handed over to the chairman of the changer agents committee.



Change agents and administrative representatives discussing on the information kit and other materials

6.3 Gumaro Tea Development Enterprise

The discussion on good business practices on combating child labour in Gumaro Tea Plantation was made with Mr. Demeke Bayessa General Manager and Mr. Getachew W/Yohannes Human resource & Administration Manager of the plantation. The officials confirmed that the management has attended the sensitization and awareness creation

activities that were organized by EEF. The management has tried to support the school upgrading activity at Gumaro primary school & in the process of building and furnishing the library for students. Other than such activities, the management is currently constructing new classes for the school in the plantation & new residential houses for teachers to enhance the enrollment capacity of the school. As regards to the situation of child labour over the past two years, the management confirmed that it is drastically decreasing.

In explaining the reason for the decrease the following points were raised:

- ✓ As a result of the EEF's project, the awareness level of the management and the workers have drastically increased;
- ✓ As the result of the existence of secondary school nearer to the plantation;
- ✓ The management decided to adhere to the minimum age stated in the local labour law;
- ✓ Children under 18 years of age are prohibited from engaging in hazardous activities and efforts exerted to identify hazardous activities in the farm;
- ✓ More and more school expansion activities are performed;
- ✓ Library service as well as other school furnishing activities introduced & performed;
- ✓ Residential houses for teachers constructed;
- ✓ Aggressive family planning campaigns promoted by the management for workers
- ✓ Change agents committee established and became active.



The school under construction by the management



Residential houses for teachers under construction by the management

The manager stressed that the other substantial achievements made in regard to streamlining the issue of child labour in the corporate agenda of the company, is the inclusion of new clauses in the collective agreement pertaining to elimination of hazardous child labour. Accordingly, a total of nine sub articles, directly related to the issue of child labour, were included in the collective agreement that was concluded at the end of the year 2006. The core sub articles included are:

- ✓ The company and the union shall work jointly to eliminate hazardous child labour from the company;
- ✓ To eliminate hazardous child labour , the company and trade unions will conduct study to find the cause of the problem;
- ✓ To eliminate inappropriate child labour , the company and the trade union will give solution together with the community leaders;
- ✓ To exert efforts so that the efforts and adjustments made by the government and trade unions in particular employers becomes effective in order to solve the problem of children.(see the attached document)

The trade union representative also confirmed that the understanding created between the management and the workers is encouraging and due to that both parties have agreed to combat child labour in general and hazardous child labour in particular. He also pointed out that in order to aggressively engage in such effort, more and more guidance material are required which are not sufficiently available currently.



Discussion with the school director in Gumaro Tea development enterprise

Mr. Abebe Endrias Director of Gumero School also confirmed that there is adequate awareness among the community on the situation of child labour. He also felt that the situation of child labour is decreasing mainly due to the fact that the awareness level of most of the parents increased. Most importantly, the expansion of the school is the other fundamental reason for the increased enrollment capacity of the school. Discussing on the contribution of the plantation's management, he enumerated the contribution as follow:

- ✓ Construction of additional classes carried out with the full cost of the management;
- ✓ Close consultation on any issues that require professional consultation (the plantation is the most organized and well staffed in terms of professionals in the area especially in the engineering & other fields);
- ✓ Construction of residential houses for the teachers made (the cost was entirely covered by the management)
- ✓ Support in the construction and commissioning of library services for the school (the management contributed 25% of the total cost)



Change Agents committee members during the tea break conducting informal discussion



Change agents discussing on the information kit

The discussion with the change agents revealed that member of the committee have officially received the information kit prepared by EEF. It was also learnt that they had had one monthly meeting prior to the assessment process. On the stated meeting the committee discussed three issues:

1. The need to develop Action Plan
2. Determining the monthly date & time of meeting
3. Amount & source of stationary materials required

Accordingly a monthly report was submitted to the management which revealed that a three member committee was established to develop a draft action plan; the monthly meeting is fixed to be in the first week of the month on Wednesday from 3:00 to 4:00

PM. and that the stationary materials requirement issue was to be submitted to the administration of the plantation for action.

8. Conclusions

The assessment made in the three plantations revealed that the awareness level of the management, the workers and the community is very high. All those requested to, confirmed that this high awareness level is the result of the consistent activity performed by the management, the trade unions, teachers and the community representatives which is commenced after the EEF's "Elimination of Child Labour Project". This is especially vividly seen in Limu Kossa coffee plantation and Gumaro Tea Development plantations.

Many of the officials contacted confirmed that the situation of child labour is steadily decreasing, which is mainly as a result of the sensitization activities and the consequent responses made on the side of the management. This is especially true in Limu Kossa coffee plantation where the management contributed 23% of the school upgrading expenses other than the advisory services it provided for school expansion and up grading.

Out of the initiatives taken by the management, the case of school upgrading activity undertaken with the assistance of the management in Ambuye Secondary School in Limu Kossa Wereda is exemplary. As a result of this activity, children who used to travel 23km to the nearest village town seeking secondary education are currently having a secondary school with in the radius of 5 km from their respective dwelling areas. This has enhanced the enrollment of children into school.

The other encouraging initiative is the one taken by Gumaro tea development enterprise, where the cost of school upgrading activity as well as construction of new classes & residential houses for teachers is thoroughly constructed by the management. The management has showed its determination to combat hazardous child labour by incorporating new clauses in the recently signed collective agreement with the trade union. To the knowledge of the Federation, this gesture is the first of its kind in the collective bargaining history of the country where the nine sub articles related to the issue of child labor are incorporated in the collective agreement.

Hence, it is believed that primarily the courageous effort exerted by Gumaro tea development plantation to eliminate child labour in general and hazardous child labour in particular can be taken as an exemplary action as good business practices exercised especially as a result of the sensitization activity conducted by EEF ILO ACT-EMP.

The efforts and initiatives taken by the management of Limu coffee plantation in Limu Kossa area is also another example of good business practices which also attract attention. This effort shows the extra miles the management has gone to address the problem of child labour in the area. Though the contribution of the management is not that high (nearly 25%) of the total cost of the school , it was substantiated by the fact that as the school is outside of the premises of the plantation, the contribution of all parties concerned i.e the regional government, the community, the trade union and the community at large was essential.

