MANAGEMENT AGENCY
Multi Donor Trust Fund

 **Ethiopia Social Accountability Program (ESAP3**)

**Grant Agreement [TF0A9293]**

**Progress Report Project Year 2, Quarter 1**

 **January – March 2020**

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# List of Acronyms

ADV Addis Development Vision

AWP Annual work plan

BoFEDs Bureau of Finance and Economic development

COVID-19 Coronavirus disease 2019

CSC Community score card

DLR Disbursement linked result

ECC Ethiopian Catholic Church

EIO Ethiopian Institute of Ombudsman

ESAP2/3 Ethiopia Social Accountability Program Phase 2/3

FTA Financial Transparency and Accountability

GRM Grievance Redress Mechanism

GSI Gender and social inclusion

JAP Joint action plan

M&E Monitoring and evaluation

MA Management agency

MDTF Multi donor trust fund

MoF Ministry of Finance

MOOC Massive open online course

PC Program coordinator

PFM Public finance management

PM Prime minister

QDA Qualitative data analysis

QR Quarterly report

RCWDO Rift Valley Children and Women Development Organization

RF Results framework

SA Social accountability

SAC Social accountability committee

SAIP Social accountability implementing partner

SC Steering committee

SNNPR Southern Nations, Nationalities and People Regional State

TC Technical committee

ToT Training of trainers

WB World Bank

WSAE Woreda social accountability expert

# Executive Summary

During the first quarter of 2020, the management agency (MA) continued its program coordination support to 22 cluster lead social accountability implementing partners (SAIPs) and their sub-partners, focusing mainly on aligning its program strategies and processes with the new Ethiopian context.

Activity implementation was limited, as the large majority of SAIPs failed to submit action plans and budgets for 2020 that met the instructions and guidelines that the MA had shared with them. Since the last quarter of 2019, the MA has shared with its partners the strategic shifts required for ESAP to achieve its objectives during this third phase of the program, and to ensure that reported achievements are based on accurate, verified and relevant data that are collected on ESAP’s progress in establishing a higher level of accountability within government in response to citizen expressed priorities. This requires changes at every level of implementation and MA oversight. Also, given the difficulty that various partners have to accept the changes, it may require reconsideration of some partners to implement the third phase of ESAP.

The highlights of the MA activities include:

* Elaborated strategic direction of the program for 2020 and beyond
* Organized and delivered training for all regional bureaus of finance and economic development (BoFED), public finance management (PFM) staff and SAIP program coordinators (PCs) on aligning woreda joint action plans (JAPs) with woreda planning and budgeting processes
* Revised key steps in SA process and developed new woreda JAP formats
* Developed an intervention on COVID-19 response using SA structures and community and other radio stations
* Revised and submitted to the multi-donor trust fund (MTDF) ESAP’s annual work plan (AWP) 2020
* Conducted monitoring visits to 18 ESAP woredas to track work progress and provided technical, operational and program support to SAIPs, targeting identified implementations gaps and challenges they experienced.
* Provided SAIPs on various occasions, both formally and informally, with guidelines and instructions to facilitate the preparation and implementation of their respective AWP 2020 and budget.
* Conducted a one-day training for MA staff involved in field monitoring visits.
* Submitted a JAP implementation status report (on DLR 7.9) to the ministry of finance (MoF).
* Attended and presented the MA’s strategic direction to ESAP’s technical committee (TC) meeting.
* Launched external audit process for the year 2019
* Assessed performance of staff

Key activities planned for the next quarter (April – July 2020):

* Provide technical and monitoring support to SAIPs on COVID-19 response implementation
* Develop an online training program for SAIPs [monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officers and PCs in particular] on COVID-19 response project implementation.
* Finalize the financial transparency and accountability program (FTA)-SA-grievance redress mechanism (GRM) partnership guidelines and submit to the MDTF for approval.
* Streamline and adjust the MA’s internal work units with the new strategic changes
* Participate in ESAP technical and steering committee (SC) meetings
* Finalize and obtain approval from the ESAP SC for ESAP AWP and budget
* Move MA Addis Ababa branch office

# Technical Progress

## ESAP strategic direction for 2020 and beyond

Over the last quarter, a major achievement of ESAP3 was the modification of its strategic direction based on the following key observations:

1. The political and operational context has changed, as has the mandate of ESAP. CSOs need to be enabled *and* required to play a stronger role in supporting ESAP implementation in line with the program’s changed strategy;
2. SA structures and processes in 240 existing woredas (ESAP2 woredas) were found to be dormant or at poorly functional level. No evidence exists for the general notion that ESAP3 can build upon the achievements of ESAP2;
3. Linkages with the FTA program at all levels need to be established to avoid duplication and optimize the use of resources between FTA and ESAP;
4. Since no evidence exists that can demonstrate with verified/verifiable data the reported achievements of ESAP2, the MA needs to invest in establishing a strong monitoring function, as well as an M&E system that focuses on generating accurate and relevant data to measure output and outcome more efficiently;
5. No strong, objective research has been conducted to support building an evidence base, hence the need for action research; and
6. The MA is funded at a level that falls far short of the levels communicated during design and solicitation phases.

The strategic approach, as part of the ESAP3 Annual Work Plan for 2020, was presented to the ESAP technical committee (TC).

## Component 1: Expand SA

Component 1 deals with the scaling of SA to additional woredas and kebeles, covering sectors that represent priorities set by citizens.

SAIPs reported that during this quarter most of their activities focused on conducting in-house staff meetings and reviews, where they oriented lead and partner staff on the MA’s new strategic guidelines of using existing local community structures, not kebele or facility-level SACs, the development of JAPs at woreda level, and a focus on deepening rather than scaling up of SA to new kebeles. Two SAIPs (RCWDO, ADV) reported having provided lead and partner staff with training on aligning JAPs with the woreda budget, based on a training of trainers (ToT) that the MA conducted in February. SAIPs reported that they were mainly engaged in preparing and negotiating with the MA on their AWP 2020 and did not implement any field activities to report on. The MA also instructed SAIPs on March 10th not to engage in any SA activities due to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic as these activities are often related to gathering people.

SAIPs also reported that they were actively engaged on organizing, compiling and reporting data on ESAP2 JAP implementation status, as part of their report to the MA on disbursement linked result (DLR) 7.9, requested by MoF.

SAIPs also hosted different monitoring teams from the MA in the early weeks of the quarter under report.

Summarizing, the major reasons stated by SAIPs for their limited activities in the reporting period are: (i) consulting with the MA to modify annual action plan and budget – this is correct, as SAIPs by and large failed to follow instructions and guidance from the MA on the completion of these plans; (ii) the AWP 2020 was not approved – while the MA is not able to approve annual action plans and budgets due to the pending MA AWP 2020, SAIPs were advised that they could submit no objection requests for MA approval for selected activities. The MA received one such request; (iii) security problems (ECC); and (iv) as of March 10th, the MA instructed SAIPs to cease operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The government of Ethiopia (GoE) then also declared its regulations, further prohibiting the implementation of activities that require the gathering of people; almost all SA activities have traditionally involved bringing people together in groups. The MA is now exploring alternative approaches preempting the need for most of such gatherings.

### Monitoring visits

The importance of effective monitoring is self-evident; it is, indeed, a main task of any MA. Initial results of the monitoring visits underscore the importance of using this tool for determining the type of capacity building required. This is a capacity strengthening activity that the MA conducts as part of its component 2 role. Monitoring visits also serve to verify data collected and reported by the SAIPs and others (AWP 2020).

The MA developed procedural guidelines and templates for planning and conducting monitoring visits, as well as for reporting and follow up. Based on experience and lessons learned during the previous quarter – and a training workshop for MA staff - these guidelines and reporting templates were revised in January 2020.

Not all (317) ESAP woredas can receive a monitoring visit, and criteria for prioritizing field visits have been developed. These are, among others, woredas and/or partners that perform poorly, and a balanced distribution over regions and rural vs. urban woredas. Also, all (76) lead and sub partners must have at least one visit during the project life span. As noted above, implementing partners, both cluster leads and sub partners, may change during the project period, depending on performance.

Although multiple woredas can be visited during a field monitoring mission, a separate report is made for each woreda. Monitoring reports have two functions:

* Determine action points for individual follow up with the SAIP/cluster based on findings identified during the monitoring visit; and
* Explore factors that enable/disable the implementation of SA, identify common problems across regions, woredas and partners, and suggest solutions to MA management to address matters as required.

Since the start of field monitoring missions in October 2019, 48 woredas were visited, 18 of which during this quarter. This represents 15% of ESAP woredas over 6 months. Field missions took place in 9 regions, involving 19 of the 22 ESAP clusters. Dire Dawa and Harar did not receive monitoring visits this quarter due to security issues in the area.

Table 1: Number of field visits per year and region

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **REGION** | **2019** | **2020** | **Grand Total** |
| Addis | 3 |  | 3 |
| Afar | 1 |  | 1 |
| Amhara | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Benishangul Gumuz | 2 |  | 2 |
| Gambela | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Oromia | 9 | 9 | 18 |
| SNNPR | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Somali | 3 |  | 3 |
| Tigray | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| **Grand Total** | **30** | **18** | **48** |

Figure 1: Map of ESAP woredas covered by the monitoring visits[[1]](#footnote-1)



Of the visited woredas, 71 percent is rural, and 69 percent involve ‘old’ woredas.

Table 2: Percentage of rural/urban and new (ESAP3)/old (ESAP2) woredas visited

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Row Labels** | **Rural** | **Urban** | **Grand Total** |
| ESAP2 | 52% | 17% | 69% |
| ESAP3 | 19% | 13% | 31% |
| **Grand Total** | **71%** | **29%** | **100%** |

The MA looked at general challenges and opportunities in the implementation of ESAP3 as reported by the monitoring teams. Challenges (problems, issues, disabling factors) are reported far more frequently than opportunities (strengths, enabling factors).

Table 3 presents the frequency of various challenges as identified in the monitoring reports. We identified 8 broad categories, which includes challenges that do not fit in the listed categories. We also decided to take ‘poor citizen representation’ as a separate category since this is, indeed, a key factor of the SA process. Poor citizen representation and SAC-related findings are the most reported challenges. A few findings did not fit into any category, and are not reported due to their limited relevance.

The MA is studying these challenges to understand the underlying reasons and find way to address them by supporting SAIPs accordingly.

Table 3: Frequency of challenges identified during the monitoring visits

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Description** | **Frequency of reporting**  | **Number of woredas where reported** |
| Poor citizen representation | Lack of citizen representation is a major issue and will have priority in coding, e.g. lack of citizen representation in SACs, in scaling (selection of sectors /kebeles) | 29 | 24 |
| SAC issues | Any issue related to a potentially dysfunctional SAC, e.g. per diem issues, lack of commitment  | 27 | 23 |
| SAIP performance | Challenges related to SAIP performance, e.g. staff turnover, lack of qualified staff, poor relationship with sub partners | 29 | 20 |
| Government issues | Restrictions on the side of the government, e.g. lack of budget, concern for increased demand, busy schedule | 25 | 19 |
| SAIP budget | Challenges related to (reported) budget limitations, affecting expanding SAC, scaling, training | 24 | 18 |
| MA action required | Challenges related to need for MA action, e.g. lack of guidance and/or training, delays in transferring funds | 20 | 17 |
| External issues | External challenges, such as natural disaster, conflict, security situation, other causes that have or may have disrupting effect on project implementation | 11 | 10 |
| Scaling problems | Problems with scaling that are not categorized elsewhere | 7 | 7 |

Table 4 shows the frequency of various opportunities as identified during the monitoring visits. We identified four broad categories and a fifth category ‘other’. A good relationship with the government is the most reported opportunity (in 28% of woredas).

Table 4: Frequency of opportunities identified during the monitoring visits

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Description** | **Frequency of reporting this opportunity** | **Number of woredas where this opp is reported** |
| Relationship with government | Statements referring to relationship between cluster and government | 13 | 13 |
| Enabling SAC | Statements that describe why SACs function well, e.g. champions, motivation, citizen representation | 8 | 8 |
| FTA-GRM | Statements that describe active cooperation with FTA and/or GRM | 10 | 8 |
| Synergies with government initiatives | Statements that refer to synergies with government activities, e.g. use of CSC | 2 | 2 |
| Other opportunities |  | 2 | 2 |

Under ‘synergies with government initiatives’ category, an interesting example is reported in Endamehoni woreda in Tigray, where the Ministry of Health (MoH) is using the CSC in the health sector. It represents an opportunity for collaboration between ESAP and the MoH to avoid potential overlap *and* to leverage respective interventions.

The MA is exploring how to build on identified opportunities, and support SAIPs accordingly.

## Component 2: Capacity and Systems Strengthening and Institutionalization of SA

The MA has engaged extensively in re-orienting and aligning the program with the current socio-economic and political context. This included, among others, fine-tuning the program with the current democratization reform process under the leadership of the new prime minister (PM), particularly opening up of the civic society space; this has a direct bearing on ESAP’s work. The MA has followed a strategy of building on its past intermediary position between government and citizens in strengthening government accountability for service delivery improvements in responsive to the needs as identified by the communities. This meant giving more emphasis to component 2 than was previously the case, based on the recognition that for SA to be sustainable, it must be embedded within the overall institutions and systems of government following a longer-term process.

Component 2 includes strengthening of the capacity of the SA system in Ethiopia, including building capacity and strengthening structures for service delivery actors (in the health, education, agriculture, rural roads, and water and sanitation sectors; and within regional and woreda administrations). It also includes building links with FTA and GRM systems, and mainstreaming SA in government and non-government institutions.

In order to remain responsive to the continuously evolving context that ESAP is operating in, a flexible and learning-by-doing approach has been adopted. The project had already proposed that it will no longer organize large scale ‘learning events’ and ‘write shops’ but focus on monitoring and capacity building ‘on the ground’, involving those who are directly responsible for implementing and supporting the SA process. In addition, in a world that is changing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the MA is further accelerating the design of implementation approaches that will replace the need for gathering people in training event and workshops as much as is possible, and while aiming to improve the impact of such training modalities.

The following major activities were conducted during the reporting period.

### Training of trainers on alignment of SA with government planning and budgeting

As part of its move towards the new ESAP strategic orientation that emphasizes embedding SA in local government operational systems and mechanisms, the MA organized a training of trainers (ToT) workshop on aligning ESAP interventions with local government planning and budgeting processes in Bishoftu town on February 27-28, 2020. The event was attended by regional FTA focal persons, regional planning and budget heads, Channel One coordinators and the PCs of ESAP SAIPs. The training benefited from the presence of MoF officials, FTA and SA senior experts as well as the WB SA team. The workshop deliberated on the following topics:

* **ESAP3 Strategy 2020 and Beyond:** The ESAP MA team leader outlined ESAP’s objectives and the strategic shifts that the program is making to focus on pragmatic approaches that can be shown to work and be sustained, measuring woreda level outcomes with verifiable up-to-date data that show the program’s successes and challenges which can then be used for analysis and to improve the program’s performance. He emphasized the need for shifting away from supporting kebele and facility level SACs, i.e. parallel structures, toward exploring ways and means to work with existing community structures on the ground, such as kebele councils and locally embedded community based organizations (CBOs). The need for partnering with new CSOs/SAIPs with the further expansion of the program was emphasized, particularly to invite innovative approaches to SA. With regard to scaling SA to more areas, the TL underlined the need to be cautious when expanding further, not to compromise quality, using innovation as a strategy to explore/develop approaches and tools that can help to take SA to the next level and by collaborating with different stakeholders to leverage their knowledge and expertise. Participants appreciated the point made on program expansion versus quality and agreed that implementation should not be rushed.
* **Local Planning/Budgeting Process and the Entry Points for Citizen Engagement:** This presentation was made by the FTA senior expert with the Addis Ababa City Administration Finance Bureau. His presentation provided information on the local planning/budgeting process in Ethiopia and the different phases of the planning and budgeting cycle at woreda level, including entry points for engaging citizens as a citizen engagement strategy. The expert outlined the four essential steps in the Ethiopian budget cycle, i.e.
	+ - Budget preparation
		- Budget approval & appropriation
		- Budget execution
		- Budget control and performance monitoring

He emphasized that, in the current Ethiopian context, SA has a significant role to play in the first two steps of the budget cycle, i.e. budget preparation and budget approval, building on the experience of FTA, and particularly in pre-budget discussions. Different modalities of aligning SA with the budget process were discussed that indicated promising starts as well as challenges, including the budget limitations of the government to accommodate the citizens’ voice, as well as the existence of various ad-hoc structures involved in the process; this requires streamlining. Participants also emphasized the need for engaging citizens at all stages of the budget cycle, including in monitoring, given the huge gap between plans and actual execution of budget.

* **Financial Transparency and Accountability (FTA) Program and Opportunities for Enhanced Linkage and Synergy for SA Intervention:** This topic was covered by the FTA team leader Expenditure Management and Control Directorate, MoF. He presented highlights of the implementation strategies of the FTA program, including updates on project implementation status, achievements and challenges. He emphasized the need for enhanced collaboration between FTA and SA programs and provided ways and means of facilitating the collaboration. The need for moving beyond the project approach and deepening the current institutionalization of FTA in government systems was emphasized. The workshop participants reflected on the need for creating synergies and integration among the three development oriented committees at woreda level, i.e. WSAC, service priority and organizing committee and planning forum organized by the planning commission. The MA explained that a national committee composed of representatives from the WB, MoF, EIO and the MA is currently working to update the existing FTA-SA linkage guidelines.
* **Aligning SA interventions with planning and budgeting process at woreda level – ESAP perspective:** The capacity development (CD) lead at the MA presented ESAP3’s theory of change, the benefits of citizen engagement in local government planning and budgeting process and ESAP3’s strategy and modality of aligning JAPs with woreda level planning and budgeting processes. He informed participants that structures and work processes are being designed to align woreda JAPs with woreda level planning, budgeting and monitoring processes through revisiting the SA process and its different steps.

Participants worked in groups and deliberated on questions that focused on:

1. Measures required to operationalize the alignmentof SA processes with the woreda planning, budgeting and monitoring processes (including synchronization with the budget cycle)
2. Suggestions on the proposed woreda JAP template by the MA
3. Outline an action plan on how to cascade the ToT to regions and woredas
* **Next steps:** the workshop enabled participants to cross-fertilize their knowledge and experiences of working both with FTA (regional BoFEDs) and SA (SAIPs) as well as the broader experience of MoF and MA in steering the program. The following follow-up action steps were agreed up on:
	+ - Cascade the ToT to regions and woredas both for FTA and SA key stakeholders, including SAIP staff and woreda finance experts;
		- Provide a training guide on “aligning SA interventions with woreda budget process”;
		- Finalize the FTA-SA-GRM linkage document and distribute;
		- Streamline local structures working on woreda level planning and budgeting to avoid duplication; and
		- Provide similar capacity development support by the MA and SAIPs at local levels.

### Revisiting Key Steps in SA Process

The ESAP3 mandate calls for a change in direction from past implementation approaches with a stronger emphasis on institutionalizing of the SA process and on mobilizing responses on the supply side. During the previous ESAP phase, JAPs primarily served the purpose of local problem solving, which was a big step forward in terms of bringing citizens and service providers to the same table to discuss issues of service delivery. As this third phase of ESAP demands a more structured and predictable planning and budgeting process that needs not only the articulation of citizens’ demands, but triggering effective response from local government, the SA process demanded a revision and an adjustment to that effect.

During the quarter, the MA took ample time to reflect on the SA process. It concluded that the key features of the new process, which are built on the previous SA process but raised to meet the new demands of ESAP3, include:

* **Use of media**: If used judiciously and effectively, the media have great potential to promote social accountability by amplifying the voice of citizens, facilitate dialogue between citizens and the state, act as a sounding board for government policies, and fulfill its watch dog function of protecting citizens against potential abuse of power. The media can be engaged at each stage of the SA process, particularly by using community radio to reach out to the larger community. Focus will be on raising awareness among citizens on their rights and entitlements to equitable delivery of quality public services. In addition, it serves the purpose of informing citizens on their right to hold public service providers accountable and responsive to citizens’ needs and demands.

The media will also be used as a feedback platform, through organizing local talk-shows and interviews for citizens to discuss the state of services as perceived by them. The use of media could serve the purpose of demonstrating the productive and cooperative engagement between service providers and users, particularly through documenting and transmitting interface meetings using community radios. Lastly, the use of media can be used for capturing, documenting and transmitting interactions between councilors and citizens in assessing SA results, and drawing lessons and strategizing on future course of action.

* **Cross-cutting role of GSIEs and M&E officers:** Gender and social inclusion experts (GSIEs) are responsible to ensure at each stage of the SA process that the needs and priorities of vulnerable sections of society, including women, the elderly, the disabled, etc. are properly addressed. This includes, among other, ensuring that these groups participate in the various SA awareness training programs, understand their service rights and entitlements, adequately engage in the assessment of services from the perspective of *their* particular needs and priorities, and that their voices are heard during the formulations of JAPs.

The M&E officers play an active role in ensuring that the various feedback loops are functioning through timely and adequate data collection, analysis and field monitoring visits. In addition, they have the role to follow-up and ensure that the agreed upon JAPs are effectively aligned with local planning and budgeting processes, adequately implemented and proper feedback is given to citizens by local decision makers on the state of JAP implementation.

* **User and provider service assessments:**
1. ***Assessment of services by user groups***

User groups identified through institutional mapping by SAIPs will, within their own setups, deliberate on the most pertinent service delivery problems of their kebele. Currently, ESAP supports SA interventions related to service delivery in 5 pro-poor sectors; this could be expanded in the future. Broad questions could be asked here, such as:

* + - How are basic services organized and delivered?
		- Which services are up to standard, and which are not, and why?
		- Are certain groups perhaps being not served, or inadequately served?

During the SA training to be organized for these groups, the woreda SA expert (WSAE) will provide them with the sector score card with assessment indicators that could serve to facilitate the discussions. This will be followed by a step where these user groups, aided by the SAIP and in cooperation with the kebele council standing committee, assess a selected service facility using the sector scorecards. During the assessment, kebele council and citizen representatives will make sure that the needs of the different social groups, men, and women, the elderly and vulnerable groups are taken into consideration. They will connect with user groups relevant to the facility (e.g. PTSAs, water committees, health committees), and objectively assess and score on the state of service delivery in the selected facility as per ESAP CSC manual. Services can be scored from 1-5 (where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good).

1. ***Service providers self-assessment***

Self-assessment by service providers is a process where frontline service provider staff assess the state of service provision in their own facilities (a school, clinic, etc.) by scoring on the service delivery problems identified by the citizens groups. They are given the consolidated list of issues or identified problems by service user citizens, but not the scores. The aim here is to capture provider’s perspectives and help them already think about the right responses to service delivery problems in their facility. This is important in the later stages of the process during JAP formulation, as it will help sector officials and decision makers to see and appreciate service delivery problems from the perspective of both users and providers. This would also allow providers and users engage into a more constructive dialogue to address service delivery problems. In addition, the data generated in this ‘co-operative’ manner will also help woreda SACs during their lobbying for incorporating JAP priority issues into the sector plans and budgets. It is assumed that service providers have their own internal self-assessment mechanisms that could go far beyond the issues raised by service users.

* **Consolidation of citizen priorities at kebele level:** The kebele council will convene representatives of citizen and service provider groups that participated in the scoring and self-assessment process. They will consolidate and prioritize the identified service delivery problems. Care must be taken that needs of women and vulnerable groups are reasonably and objectively reflected in the consolidated list of priorities. GSIEs will support in helping both sides understand and consider how citizens could benefit from addressing gender and social exclusion problems in service delivery. Minutes of the consolidation discussion and final decision on priorities of the kebele will be taken and signed by the kebele council and citizen representatives to confirm full citizen participation. The results of the consolidation at kebele level will be sent to the woreda SAC by the kebele council standing committee that led the SA process, along with the minutes of the proceedings. The W-SAC will further refine and consolidate these priorities in order to serve as input to the woreda JAP formulation process.
* **The joint action plan:** The JAP describes service improvement actions agreed between citizens and service providers during interface meetings at woreda level. It may involve a variety of stakeholders, the most important of which include representatives of service user citizens’ groups, service provider sector representatives, local administration and council members, as well as renowned personalities and leaders of civil society and private sector organizations in the woreda. The key actors from both the demand and supply side are the primary stakeholders whose negotiation and productive dialogue on the identified citizen service needs and priorities articulated by the woreda SAC should result in the formulation of joint action plans for service improvements. JAPs are meant to serve as an input to the woreda planning and budgeting process. It is anticipated that some priorities included in JAPs may be referred back to kebele councils, citizen groups, and frontline service providers for resolution at kebele level. The involvement of representatives from the wider community during the woreda interface meeting aims to mobilize local knowledge, technical and financial resources to expedite the effective recognition and implementation of JAPs as citizens’ priorities at all levels. SAIPs will consult the MA on who should participate in the interface meetings. Please see the revised key SA Process in Annex 1.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

As described in the AWP, the MA has started the fine-tuning of its M&E system, including rethinking which data and indicators best measure actual SA outcomes. The figure below summarizes the main steps that were followed in this quarter. The steps and timeline for completing the review and revision of the system is presented in figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Steps in review and revision of ESAP M&E system



The new strategy has a significant impact on the operationalization of the monitoring system. One difference is the change from kebele- to woreda-centered implementation of SA. In practice this means that data will be collected in 317 woredas, rather than in over 2,000 kebeles in 317 woredas. Since the MA does not have the capacity to monitor kebele-level SA interventions adequately, and because the ESAP3 mandate calls for the alignment of SA demand-side priorities with supply-side planning and budgeting processes, monitoring at woreda level is not only more sustainable, but also more relevant during ESAP’s third phase.

In all ESAP woredas, the focus will be on SAC functionality and JAP implementation (with a new template being developed). Other data may still be collected, but always based on a determination of the need and cost (what, who, why, and collection and processing costs).

#### Review of the key indicators

The strategic changes also require a change in key indicators, and during the months of February - March, several discussions took place within the MA to review these indicators. By the end of March, there was consensus to keep 12 key indicators[[2]](#footnote-2). A discussion is planned for early quarter 2 to finalize the list for presentation to the MDTF.

#### Review of M&E tools and procedures

In parallel with the discussion on the key indicators, the monitoring tools also need to be adjusted. Some tools may be substantially simplified, others may be dropped. Also, the frequency of reporting can be reduced without affecting the ability of the MA to monitor.

In January, collection of data about progress in the implementation of social accountability was halted due to the revision process.

#### Training of partners

The refresher training for SAIP M&E officers and PCs that was scheduled for March 2020 was postponed due to COVID-19. It is unlikely that a refresher training can be scheduled within the coming months. Therefore, the MA is developing a ‘massive open online course’ (MOOC) to enable online learning for SAIPs. The MA also is exploring to extend the system to replace other training and workshops, including on the ESAP COVID 19 response.

### Communications

The MA’s communications unit is, in addition to covering the MA’s public relations function, responsible for providing technical assistance to the program and the SAIPs on the use of media for SA interventions. The units main activities are presented here.

#### ESAP Newsletter

Content for the latest edition of the ESAP Newsletter, prepared prior to SAIPs suspending operations due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, has been updated to address issues with regards to the MA’s engagement in COVID-19 emergency response. This edition will be shared with partners through soft copies.

#### ESAP COVID-19 emergency response

ESAP’s COVID-19 emergency response with the media involves community radios and selected government/commercial media outlets, most of which have taken part in the ‘Social Accountability for Journalists’ training provided by the MA in December 2019. Following the first confirmed case in the country, the MA shared a list of credible sources of information that are being updated in real time with community radios (CR) to ensure the dissemination of factual and timely information and prevent misinformation and rumors - the risk for the latter is likely to be higher in regions that lack access to timely information. CR journalists also received one-minute long audios narrating prevention methods in different local languages (Amharic, Oromiffa and Tigrigna). These audios and a poster featuring illustrations of prevention methods were shared with SAIPs for printing and dissemination in target woredas.

The MA prepared separate guidelines for community radios and SAIPs on the use of community radio to not only disseminate information but also serve as a platform for citizens’ feedback to local government (See Annex 1 & 2).

#### Other activities by the communication unit

* Took part in monitoring visits to assess SAIPs’ implementation of program and provide guidance.
* Conducted SAIPs’ performance assessment in terms of communication focusing on their SA process documentation practice, engagement with media and innovative ways of promoting SA.
* ESAP’s social media updates are ongoing - the MA’s workshop to align SA interventions with government planning and the current recommendation of the MA to SAIPs to suspend operations that require the gathering of people has been shared via the platform.
* Documented the MA’s workshop to align SA interventions with government planning through a report and pictures.
* Contribute to preparations for ESAP website redesign

## Component 3: Project Management, Coordination, and M&E

This component covers overall program management, including grants management, finance, internal audit, routine M&E, and operations.

### Grants and Finance

#### Percentage of available resources used

All 22 SAIPs submitted their fourth quarter (October – December 2019) financial report and review on completeness, accuracy and acceptability was conducted following requirements specified in the operational manual and the approved budget. Issues identified during the review process were communicated to the partners for future improvements, or for more immediate resolution. In some cases, disallowances were necessary.

As per the approved financial reports, 22 clusters utilized a total of USD 1,091,797.50 over that period. For the reporting quarter (Jan – March 2020), a total of USD391,842.58 was reported by SAIPs in expenditures; this is subject to review and approval by the MA finance team, which has started,

For three quarters, i.e. from July 2019 – March 2020, a total of USD 1,498,687.55 was reported as expenditures, including the reporting quarter expenses that, as mentioned, are subject to review by the MA. This appears high given the relatively late start of activity implementation; the MA is following up as necessary with the SAIPs involved.

It must be noted that the majority of SAIPs submit reports late and incomplete, requiring much follow up by the MA team. The MA is concerned about this practice and is putting pressure on its partners to improve.

Figure 2: Total grants, disbursement, and expenditure as of 31 March 2020

Figure 2 above shows that SAIPs utilized more than the total disbursed amount (USD 1,860,648.99 - please see details by cluster in Annex 4). As per Annex 4, seventeen clusters utilized more of the disbursed amount; two clusters utilized between 93-96%; two clusters utilized an average of 78.5% and one cluster utilized 51% of the disbursed amount.

#### Percentage of grant money disbursed

A total of USD 43,892.67 was disbursed this first quarter of 2020 for two cluster leads (LIA and ACSOT). In total USD 1,860,648.99, or 58% of the total contract amount of USD 3,204,748.92, has been disbursed to date.

The MA shared the 2020 action plan and budget template with 22 clusters on 17 December 2019. Subsequently, clusters presented their plans and budget during the period January through February 2020. The MA team reviewed the plans and arranged negotiation meetings with each partner to discuss points requiring revision based on the guidelines and instructions that the MA shared with SAIPs in December. Additional guidance was also developed and shared for final consideration. Clusters then submitted their revised plans. Unfortunately, even these resubmissions were still not adhering to the instructions, and no SAIP had yet an approved plan and budget for 2020 at the time of writing of this report.

In order to facilitate implementation, SAIPs were advised that pending the approval of a full action plan/budget, they had an option to submit for MA review and no objection individual activity plans. The MA received and approved just one such a request.

Since March, the MA is giving priority to processing an emergency response plan for COVID-19 activities involving SAIPs. Plans submitted by SAIPs in following with the instructions that were shared by the MA will be promptly reviewed and processed, and once approved, enable disbursements to the partners.

The MA is using performance assessment criteria to evaluate performance of the 22 clusters in 2019. The assessment covers both technical and financial performance. Financial criteria include (i) quality of financial report & documents, (ii) free of ineligible expenditures, (iii) responsiveness, (iv) documents completeness, and (v) timely submission of reports. Technical criteria include (i) delivery of results, (ii) inclusion of all stakeholders in SA process, (iii) quality of reports, (iv) local and regional partnerships, and (v) communication efforts. The evaluation and scoring of partners started, with each the financial and technical assessment contributing a maximum of 50 percent of the score. Results will be shared in the next quarter.

### Internal Audit

Internal audit conducted an audit on ESAP3 SAIP – OWDA for the period from May 2019 to September 2019.

* An audit report with observations and recommendations has been shared to the SAIP management for implementation.
* Reviews have been conducted on SAIPs annual external audit reports for the year ending December 2019; feedback was shared with SAIPs.
* Follow up was done on SAIPs that were delayed in submission of audit reports.

### Operations

The MA operations team started a search for new office space for the MA since the current office is cramped, not too well maintained, relatively expensive. New office space was identified in a new office building on Asmara Road, opposite Century Mall, providing for approximately 40% more space at less than 70% of the current cost. The MA plans to occupy the new office by the beginning of July 2020.

The operations team also coordinate the evaluation of the bids to redesign the MA’s website. A final decision is expected to be made the third week of May.

#

# ESAP COVID-19 Emergency Response through the Use of Media

A major task the MA undertook during the last month of the quarter under report was the development of an organized response to the national COVID-19 emergency. In addition to contributing to the national call, this intervention is designed in a manner that contributes to future SA operations, particularly the use of community radios as citizen engagement platforms.

The overall objective of ESAP’s COVID-19 response is to support national and local government efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic through use of media, particularly community radios (CRs), in ESAP’s 317 operational woredas. A COVID-19 task force was formed within the MA to work on detailed procedures and workflow arrangements between SAIPs and community radios in running live radio call-in shows that collect direct feedback from citizens on the implementation of COVID-19 regulation and measures by government.

To that end, the MA has developed a detailed action plan, elaborating on objectives, deliverables, activities and budget. The MA also developed implementation guidelines for SAIPs and CRs to run live radio call-in shows that collect direct feedback from citizens on the implementation of COVID-19 regulations and measures by government, clearly articulating the roles of the various actors, including SAIPs, CRs and the MA.

A monitoring protocol has been developed that outlines the role of SAIP M&E officers, the type of data to be tracked and the data collection tool. With regard to organizing and aggregating the information collected from the call-in radio shows, the MA developed an online survey that M&E officers will complete following each radio show, capturing data on various attributes of callers, including personal and community stories.

# Annex 1 – Key Steps in SA Process

| * **No.**
 | **Activity in SA process** | **Responsible** | **Remark** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | **Key step 1 - SA awareness raising and citizen mobilization** |  |  |
| 1.1 | SAIPs conduct institutional mapping to identify key community structures that will participate in the SA process including vulnerable groups  | GSIE and WSAE | MA organizes documentation of the process in selected woredas  |
| 1.2 | SAIPs/W-SACs organize consultation and validation meeting with woreda social and labor affairs, women and children affairs office to agree on local community structures and service user groups to be involved in the SA process.  | W-SAC supported by GSIE and WSAE | Same as above  |
| 1.3  | Conduct woreda level awareness creation and training workshop on SA process, gender & social inclusion for community group representatives who are identified from kebeles through institutional mapping. Involve local media (community radios in particular) in the awareness creation activities to reach out to the larger community.  | W-SAC, supported by WSAE, PC and GSIE in coordination with local media, community radios in particular  | * MA provides technical support, including availing existing SA and gender training materials. GSIEs to be actively involved in this process mindful of the fact that, most often, traditional associations miss the gender aspect.
* Use media in this platform to send the messages to the wider woreda community both as an ‘access to information ‘campaign to put the wider community on-board and to send a message to SACs that the community now knows its legal entitlements and puts them under pressure to perform
 |
| 1.4  | SAIPs organize and deliver training for selected members of standing committees of woreda and kebele councils on SA processes and the role of councils in promoting SA as a citizen engagement mechanism | PC, GSIE and WSAE, FTA & GRM | MA supports in making updated councilor training materials available. Once the key council members are trained, they in turn are expected to introduce SA to their peers in their respective kebeles with the support from SAIPs.  |
| 1.5 | Train WSAEs, selected council members and WSAC chairs on aligning woreda JAPs with local level budgeting and planning processes.  | PC, BoF, FTA | BoFEDs (FTA) representatives team up with PC to provide the training that will culminate in to a woreda level action plan for alignment. MA provides technical support and makes available an ‘Alignment Guide’. In addition to the active role FTA plays in the provision of the training, it will have a key role to play in the actual implementation of the budget alignment process   |
| 2 | **Key step 2 - Assessment of services**  |  |  |
| 2.1 | Conduct SA and GSI training for service providers groups to enable them conduct self-assessment (use CSC procedure)  | GSIE and WSAE  |   |
| 2.2 | Conduct users and providers service assessment in selected facilities/sectors–Please uses the MA’s standard CSC procedures with the identified local structure to assess, prioritize, consolidate and score issues using their regular meetings as appropriate and feasible. (SAC and SAIPs will facilitate the process).  | Local community structures, kebele council with the technical support from WSAE including initial support from W-SAC  | This is an important step that could provide opportunities for reaching out to more citizens and user groups by tabling the SA agenda in their normal work routine i.e. PTSA, water committee, Eider meetings. *MA will guide and follow up that this element is emphasized in all SAIP-organized SA trainings.* * In addition, this requires technical support from WSAEs and GSIEs to ensure that gender and social inclusion needs are properly addressed.

The involvement of W-SAC is an Interim solution during transition. As once trained on basic SA processes, citizen structures and kebele councils are expected to manage the service assessment process |
| 2.3  | Establish the priority needs of citizens at the kebele level: The kebele council will convene representatives of the citizen groups who participated in the scoring process and will consolidate, prioritize and short list the identified service delivery problems of the citizens in the kebele to be sent to the woreda SAC. Minutes of the consolidation discussion and final decision on priorities of the kebele will be signed by council and citizen representatives.  | Kebele council leads the process with the active participation of W-SAC and citizen groups, supported by WSAE  | The endorsement of kebele council standing committees that may already be involved in the SA process will be of a strategic advantage as the standing committee members of the kebele council are also members woreda council.There will be *no interface meeting at the kebele level*, as there is no government budgeting here. However, kebele councils could make an action plan to solve locally the issues that do not require a budget, such as, for example, behavioral and administrative problems of frontline service provider staff.Kebele councils will be encouraged to use their normal meetings with citizens to share and update them on SA activities and results (bi-annual meetings with citizens) |
| 2.4  | Conduct W-SAC meeting to consolidate, prioritize and agree on citizen demands received from each SA intervention kebeles as the final woreda priorities | W-SAC leads the process with support from GSIE and WSAE  |  |
| **3** | **Key step 3 - Interface meeting and JAP formulation**  |  |   |
| 3.1 | Organize and conduct a woreda interface meeting with the presence of all stakeholders (basic sector office and citizen representatives) based on the results of steps above. The result of the interface meeting is a woreda joint action plan (JAP) as per the JAP format provided by the MA, with clear indication of the actions to be taken, responsibilities and at which level of government the action is to take place (kebele, woreda, zone/region). SAIPs should organize local media to document and transmit the dialogue process during these interface meetings.  | W-SAC leads the process with support from WSAE, PC and GSIE, involving local media | * The woreda interface meeting will be attended by all relevant representatives of service provider woreda sector offices and service user communities, including influential institutions (state and non-state) as per the AWPs of SAIPs approved by the MA.
* MA aligns monitoring visits with selected woreda interface meetings for quality assurance and documentation purposes.
*
* The formulation of the JAP should be consistent with the budget calendar of the government to ensure effective government response.
* Refer to the CSC guidelines on how to conduct the interface meeting.
* JAP issues may be addressed, as proposed by W-SAC, on 3 levels depending on the type of issue:

Referred back to kebeles for local solutions Incorporated into the woreda budget (alignment)Escalated to zones/regions for policy and resource allocation decisions  |
| 4 | **Key step 4 - JAP alignment with woreda planning and budgeting process**  |  |  |
| 4.1 | Conduct round table discussion between sectors and W-SAC to lobby for the inclusion of consolidated W-JAP in their respective sector plans before they make their budget proposal to the woreda cabinet/council.  | W-SAC supported by WSAE  | Councilors who are woreda SAC members and FTA experts will have a key value adding role to play here. SAIPs will provide support to make this happen.  |
| 4.2  | W-SAC participates in the pre-budget discussion process and lobbies for approval of proposed citizen priorities/JAPs by the woreda council. SAIPs will use local media to document and transmit the pre-budget discussion process, particularly the dialogue on JAPs. | W-SAC supported by WSAE  | SAIPs closely work with councils and FTA units in each woreda to make this happen. In some regions, the process can build on an experience where woreda SAC members participated in budget hearing meetings.  |
| **5** | **Key step 5- Monitoring JAP implementation**  |  |  |
| 5.1  | W-SAC actively participates in the monitoring of JAP implementation at all levels by participating in quarterly review meetings and by triangulating the quarterly review reports by consulting the network of citizens who have been involved in assessing the services that made it into the woreda budget.  | W-SAC, in collaboration with W-Council, supported by WSAE, PC, M&E officers and GSIEs | As part of the local budgeting cycle, the woreda administration and the relevant pro-poor sector offices organize a meeting and jointly monitor/review implementation progress quarterly. W-SACs will participate in these meetings, which FTA can facilitate. This includes monitoring execution of JAP items included in the woreda budget, escalated to higher tiers of government, or committed to by other state and non-state actors for local/kebele level solutions. This includes also the monitoring of relevant government reports, including audit reports.  |
| 5.2 | SAIPs provide space for citizen-council-provider dialogue to provide feedback to citizens on the implementation status of woreda JAPs (what was implemented and not? why?). Use local media to properly document and disseminate the messages coming out of these feedback discussions to the community at large.  | W-SAC supported by WSAE and PC | This represents a feedback loop and demands close MA monitoring, quality assurance and documentation work. Use of local media is crucial. Media should be present during the dialogue meeting and preferably cover the event live. |

# Annex 2 - Guidelines for SAIPs to Engage and Monitor Community Radios

1. **Introduction**

The current COVID-19 outbreak is a global crisis and requires the involvement of all stakeholders to be addressed. In light of this, the Ethiopia Social Accountability Program Management Agency (ESAP/MA) will work with the objective of supporting the national effort on the fight against COVID-19 using SA structures at local level. Transparency, facts and accountability, particularly in terms of communicating COVID related information, remain crucial to protect the public’s health. The ESAP MA can support the flow of factual information on local government decisions by supporting community radios and possibly other media that reach the most underserved communities in the regions. Community radios potentially also serve as a platform for voicing citizens’ questions and concerns to the government related to the issue (current practice shows that community radios are broadcasting phone call queries from the community). This document describes the role that Social Accountability Implementing Partners (SAIPs) can play in disseminating locally relevant information to the public and keeping the social accountability movement relevant during the COVID-19 outbreak.  This is a living document and the MA will monitor the situation on an ongoing basis providing updates as warranted by the evolving situation around COVID-19.

In December, 2019, the ESAP/MA trained 23 journalists from 15 community radios and 7 FTA radio/TV programs from Amhara, Afar, SNNPR, Benishangul, Harari, Oromia, Tigray and Dire Dawa  The media outlets were selected based on their broadcast reach to ESAP targeted woredas. See the list of trained community radios and their geographical reach (Annex 1)**.**

Most community radios have continued daily broadcasts and are disseminating messages about COVID-19 in local languages in the form of news, drama, phone-in discussions and public service announcements. However, the functions of these radios, which are usually run by volunteers, are under strain. Some of the challenges they face are:

* Transport issues to move around to conduct interviews and attend press briefings by local health authorities
* Airtime (mobile cards) to conduct phone interviews
* Access to internet to get information in real time
* Lack of commodities like sanitizers for personal hygiene

The MA can provide support to community radios through SAIPs in order to support the provision of accurate and timely information from credible sources to the general public. SAIPs will assess the community radios’ need for support and, with the MA’s guidance, work with them in their respective woredas to follow up on spending of resources and monitoring messages. SAIPs will not receive additional funding for these activities but are allowed to redirect budget allocations for regular SA activities to COVID-19 related work.  Please refer to the document ‘Instructions for SAIP ESAP Action Plan and Budget Preparation – 7 April 2020’ for further instructions.

In order to support these activities and contribute to factual and safe reporting, the MA has developed basic guidelines on COVID-19 reporting for community radios as seen below.

1. **Basic guidelines on COVID-19 reporting for community radios**

Community radios are indispensable in building community awareness, modeling the right behaviors for prevention and combating misinformation. Their role is pronounced as they broadcast messages in local languages to communities in remote areas, who otherwise would have limited access to important information. These media outlets are responsible for broadcasting factual and timely information to the public. In light of the current COVID-19 outbreak, community radios can take the following measures to report accurate information and remain safe while continuing as a vital public service.

* Refer only to official sources below at all times for accurate and up-to-date information:
* World Health Organization [www.who.int](http://www.who.int) ([www.facebook.com/WHO](http://www.facebook.com/WHO))
* Ministry of Health - [www.moh.gov.et/ejcc](http://www.moh.gov.et/ejcc) ([www.facebook.com/EthiopiaFMoH](http://www.facebook.com/EthiopiaFMoH))
* Ethiopian Public Health Institute - [www.ephi.gov.et](http://www.ephi.gov.et/) (<https://www.facebook.com/ephipage/>)
* Office of the Prime Minister – [www.pmo.gov.et](http://www.pmo.gov.et/) ([www.facebook.com/PMOEthiopia](http://www.facebook.com/PMOEthiopia))
* Local health authorities (woreda, zonal and regional) and the local emergency preparedness team

* Refrain from reporting  anything posted on social media. Information from sources that are not reputable or credible should be avoided. Make sure to include a source in all of your stories and ensure as much as possible that you are using direct sources rather than from or through social media. In instances where you must use a social media source, make sure that a verified account shared the information prior to covering it. A verified account (an account established as an authentic presence of a notable public figure or organization) has a blue little checkmark that appears next to the account’s username as seen below.



* Practice proper care for staff and volunteers by maintaining at least 1.5m distance between people – obviously, a longer distance is better - including between newscasters and interviewees, cleaning equipment with 60% alcohol sanitizers, and washing hands frequently for at least 20 seconds.
* Use two microphones, one for the journalist and another for the interviewee, and clean all equipment with alcohol before and after use. Show or mention on air that you are taking these precautions, as a good example.
* Minimize the number of journalists who are required to stay in the newsroom.
* Remember that the COVID-19 response requires a collaborative effort. Exchange information with your fellow community radio journalists about your efforts in producing prevention messages and implement best practices. For instance, a drama that is produced by one radio station can be shared with another that may not have the resources to produce  such a program. A Telegram page (<https://t.me/joinchat/HV2t9xQiHJdg9PpE8UqvYA>) opened by the ESAP/MA can serve as a platform for this initiative.
* Make sure your messages go beyond focusing on prevention methods to including measures to be taken when individuals show symptoms, refraining from accusing people for bringing the disease and attacking them, and refer to risks related to the disease’s economic and social impact based on the issues you see in your local setting.
* The COVID-19 State of Emergency regulation issued by the Ethiopian government states that *“Unless authorized by the Ministerial Committee or sub-committees established at regional levels or local administration levels, neither professionals nor officials at federal and regional levels can give COVID-19 related statements on behalf of the federal or regional governments. This does not include daily updates and information given by the Ministry of Health, comments by professionals or analysis/clarification/elaboration by health professionals/physicians.”*For this reason, we advise community radios to ask all potential interviewees to state a disclaimer at the start of their statements on air mentioning that what they will say is exclusively their own opinion and does not represent the government at federal, regional or any other level.
* Remember to give different community members the platform to raise their issues and ask those in power about matters that affect them with regards to COVID-19.
* Review the situation daily and follow the advice of the relevant authorities.

1. **ESAP’s engagement with community radios**

SAIPs of the ESAP MA can work with community radios to support them broadcast locally relevant information by creating links with social accountability committees and different citizen groups. SAIPs’ project coordinators (contacts are listed below) and woreda social accountability experts can facilitate the following specific activities by supporting community radios to:

1. Organize “Citizens on the Line”, a collaborative call-in program
2. Extra attention to vulnerable groups in message dissemination
3. Connecting community radios to influential local people.

1. **“Citizens on the Line”** is a collaborative project of 15 Community Radios supported by ESAP. In general Community radios serve as a two-way communication platform between the local government and the community. In this project the MA encourages coordinated use of existing call-in programs by community radios. Twice or three times a week community radio stations will broadcast ESAP designed questions to their audience that individual listeners can react to live by phoning in. These questions will always be directly related to how the spread of the COVID-19 virus and measures taken by the government, influence the lives of citizens.

After the show has been broadcast, the radio station will provide the SAIP and the MA all feedback they received from their audience, including feedback that did not make it to the live broadcast. The same questions will be broadcast by all community radio stations in call-in shows, as much as possible at around the same time. The SAIPs will analyze the radio shows in their ‘catchment area’ and, if warranted, inform SAC members in their Woreda’s by means of a concise note for their action. ESAP will collate all responses (per region if possible) and share the results from across the country with the community radio stations for their information and feeding back to their audiences, and with the respective local governments for their action.  An example of a question to listeners could be: “The Government of Ethiopia has announced that one of the best ways to avoid contracting and spreading COVID-19 is to wash your hands with water and soap several times a day. Are you and your family adhering to that advice? Why, or why not? What about your friends and neighbors?”.

Each show will focus on one theme and will always ask the following category of questions:

* Is information reaching citizens and what is their response?
* What does enforcement of measures look like, by local governments, local organizations or citizens?
* How well do service providers adhere to measures imposed by the government?
* What can be done with the feedback from citizens, what action should be taken?

To make this work across all Community Radios, we will follow below steps for each ‘round’ of questions, which takes a total of approximately 5 days:

1. Based on daily developments, the **MA**designs high quality draft questions.
2. Draft questions are shared with all **15 Community Radios** and all **SAIPs** **(PCs)**. Community Radios and SAIPs are situated in the communities they serve and they already have a sense of discussions and views on the ground and their inputs and suggestions will be useful to design meaningful and engaging questions. Other, selected organization can also be consulted when appropriate and depending on the topic. (**1/2 day**)
3. **MA**decides on the questions. Questions are sent to the CRs, cc SAIPs with some key context, basic instructions and deadlines. **(1/2 day)**
4. **Broadcast by Community Radios**. The questions will be fielded in already existing participatory shows by the Community Radios. All Community Radios broadcast are motivated to bring the questions in a way that, in their experience, generates the most and best feedback by citizens, using their own proven means to increase number of call-ins and engagement by listeners. Responses are discussed live during the show. All responses, including those that are not mentioned on air, are recorded (or noted down if recording facilities are lacking) by the Community Radios (including callers names, relationship to the issue at hand [client, provider, owner etc] mobile numbers and Woreda) and forwarded to the SAIPs, cc MA. Immediately after the show, the radio host will be requested to fill a short questionnaire based on the above 4 question categories that presents his understanding of the responses during the show. This will serve as triangulation of the SAIP M&E analysis and will help improve the quality of the questions in future shows. **(2 days)**
5. **SAIPs (WSAE’s)** monitor the radio show live. **SAIPS (M&E experts)** analyze the citizen feedback data they receive from the Community Radios, following a predefined and basic, easy-to-use protocol (See Annex 3 designed by MA M&E). Based on the analysis they write a max 1 page note for each Community Radio, following an agreed attractive format designed by the MA (Annex 4)  **(1 day)**
6. These notes are shared by the **PC of the SAIP** with **SAC members** (cc MA), who on their turn can further investigate and share the concerns raised by citizens with the relevant government offices at Woreda and Regional level (cc-ed to the MA). The **PC of the SAIP**may also share **actionable**notes (or synthesized notes within one region) with the key media houses in the region for their information or possible publication/broadcast.
7. **The MA (Comms, with support from M&E and CD)** drafts one consolidated note which it sends to all Community Stations so they can compare their results with those from other areas in the country and feed that back to their audiences **(1 day)**. The MA will also share the note with different audiences at national level if applicable and relevant.
8. The **SAIPs (M&E expert)**will monitor each round on a few limited key indicators to improve this flow-of-action cycle.

If after 3 weeks this project proves successful, we may add a component of additional data collection on the specific topics by the M&E officers, for instance from the Woreda Water Office (hygiene), or from communities, or traditional leaders. These could be short questionnaires or photographs.

1. **Vulnerable Groups -** SAIPs can connect the community radio stations to members of the community that find themselves in an extra vulnerable position to COVID19, such as persons living with disabilities, elderly, women, persons living with HIV/AIDS and others to ensure active outreach to bring their situation to the attention of the community and the local authorities.

1. Making use of **key influential figures** in the community can help to enforce and support prevention messages issued by the national and local health authorities. SAIPs can provide radio contacts of these people to be featured as part of interviews, public service announcements or programs produced on the prevention of COVID-19. These influential figures could be members of the SAC, idir leaders or those that you have identified through your social mapping exercise.

SAIPs will monitor messages being broadcast by community radios for frequency, accuracy, use of credible sources and inclusive communication (involving all members of the community, including vulnerable groups). This can be done by project coordinators or woreda social accountability experts who are stationed in areas where the community radios broadcast is reachable.

SAIPs should make sure that ESAP is recognized as an organization that is actively responding to COVID-19. During interviews, SAC members should mention ESAP’s activities in terms of creating a platform for citizens and the government to address citizens’ demands and its inclusive process that involves all members of the community including vulnerable groups.

1. **Additional measures**

SAIPs that do not have community radios in their implementation woredas can work with other mainstream media [those that are working on Financial Transparency and Accountability (FTA) radio programs listed below, or others] to support the dissemination of information. Collaboration measures used with community radios can also be applied here – linking influential figures with the media, voicing the issues of vulnerable groups and monitoring messages. As there will be a considerable difference in terms of expenses in using the mainstream media, all activities should be done in consultation with the MA.

In addition, SAIPs can engage in providing information on prevention measures in accessible format, e.g., print-outs to deaf persons in rural areas. The information should use clear, simple and local language. The distribution can be made through associations that SAIPs have identified through their social and institutional mapping exercises. Similar exercises can help to identify idirs which can play a role in denouncing risky behaviors, such as gathering of large groups at mourning ceremonies and other social activities that bring people together in groups. Partners can help these idirs in having clear strategies to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the community.  Idirs should be lobbied to pass practical guidance to their members

to avoid any risky behavior, support those who are economically poor in times of potential lockdowns (for instance, support the meal sharing scheme announced by the Prime Minister), promote social cohesion when families are affected and address stigma around the disease.  Woreda SACs can play an instrumental role in linking SAIPs media activities with these locally embedded community organizations, idirs in particular.

It is also important to address vulnerable people that may not have access to radio or TV. SAIPs can use creative means like using motorcycles equipped with speakers to disseminate messages.

Partners can propose other creative ideas to address the current situation, with the exception of providing commodity support (soap, hand sanitation products, etc.) to communities. All proposed activities should be done in coordination and consultation with local (health) authorities and be based on national instructions and guidelines.  Planned activities are subject to approval by the MA.

The MA urges all SAIPs to take into consideration the safety measures being issued by the government in all their engagements.

# Annex 3 – Engagement Guidelines for Community Radios



1. **Introduction**

The current COVID-19 outbreak is a global crisis and requires the involvement of all stakeholders to be addressed. In light of this, the Ethiopia Social Accountability Program Management Agency (ESAP/MA) will work with the objective of supporting the national effort on the fight against COVID-19 using SA structures at local level. Transparency, facts and accountability, particularly in terms of communicating COVID related information, remain crucial to protect the public’s health. Through its current engagement with community radios (CRs), the MA can support the flow of factual information on local government decisions by supporting these outlets that reach the most underserved communities in the regions. These stations potentially also serve as a platform for voicing citizens’ questions and concerns to the government related to the issue (current practice shows that community radios are broadcasting

phone call queries from the community). This document proposes guidelines on the collaboration of CRs and Social Accountability Implementing Partners (SAIPs) to disseminate locally relevant information to the public.  This is a living document and the MA will monitor the situation on an ongoing basis providing updates on the document as warranted by the evolving situation around COVID-19.

The ESAP MA trained 23 journalists from 15 CRs and 7 FTA sponsored radio/TV programs from Amhara, Afar, SNNPR, Benishangul, Harari, Oromia, Tigray and Dire Dawa in December, 2019. The media outlets were selected based on broadcast reach to ESAP targeted woredas. See the list of trained CRs and their geographical reach (Annex 1).

Most CRs have continued daily broadcasts and are disseminating messages about COVID-19 in local languages in the form of news, drama, phone-in discussions and public service announcements. However, the functions of these radios, which are usually run by volunteers, are under strain. Some of the challenges they are facing are:

* Transport issues to move around to conduct interviews and attend press briefings by local health authorities
* Airtime to conduct phone interviews
* Access to internet to get information in real time
* Lack of commodities like sanitizers for personal hygiene

The MA can provide support to CRs through SAIPs to enable them disseminating accurate and timely information to the general public. SAIPs will assess the community radios’ need for support and with the MA’s guidance, work with them in their respective woredas to follow up on spending of resources and monitoring of messages. To support these activities and contribute to factual and safe reporting, the MA has developed basic guidelines on COVID-19 reporting as below.

1. **Basic recommendations on COVID-19 reporting for community radios**

CRs represent an important link in building community awareness and modeling safe behaviors, including for the prevention of infectious diseases, such as COVID-19. You have the professional responsibility to combat misinformation. Your role is pronounced as you broadcast messages in local languages to communities in remote areas that otherwise would lack access to this information. Broadcasting of factual and timely information to the public is critical, especially where it concerns matters of public health. In light of the current COVID-19 outbreak, CRs are, therefore, well positioned to take on this important role, while taking the following measures that result in disseminating accurate information and maintain your own safety during the provision of this vital public service.

* Refer only to these official sources for accurate and up-to-date information:
* World Health Organization [www.who.int](http://www.who.int/) ([www.facebook.com/WHO](http://www.facebook.com/WHO))
* Ministry of Health - [www.moh.gov.et/ejcc](http://www.moh.gov.et/ejcc) ([www.facebook.com/EthiopiaFMoH](http://www.facebook.com/EthiopiaFMoH))
* Ethiopian Public Health Institute - [www.ephi.gov.et](http://www.ephi.gov.et/) (<https://www.facebook.com/ephipage/>)
* Office of the Prime Minister – [www.pmo.gov.et](http://www.pmo.gov.et/) ([www.facebook.com/PMOEthiopia](http://www.facebook.com/PMOEthiopia))
* Local health authorities (woreda, zonal and regional) and the local emergency preparedness team
* Refrain from reporting anything posted on social media without a credible source listed (see above). Information from sources that are not reputable or credible should be avoided. Make sure to include a source in all of your stories and ensure as much as possible that you are using direct sources rather than from or through social media. In instances where you must use a social media source, make sure that a verified account shared the information prior to covering it. A verified account (an account established as an authentic presence of a notable public figure or organization) has a blue little checkmark that appears next to the account’s username as seen below.



* Practice proper care for staff and volunteers by maintaining at least 1.5m distance between people – obviously, a longer distance is better - including between newscasters and interviewees, cleaning equipment with 60% alcohol sanitizers, and by washing hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds.
* Use two microphones, one for the journalist and another for the interviewee, and clean all equipment with alcohol before and after use. Show or mention on air that you are taking these precautions, as a good example.
* Minimize the number of journalists who are required to stay in the newsroom.
* Remember that the COVID-19 response requires a collaborative effort. Exchange information with your fellow community radio journalists about your efforts in producing prevention messages and implement best practices. For instance, a drama produced by one radio station can be shared with another. A Telegram page (<https://t.me/joinchat/HV2t9xQiHJdg9PpE8UqvYA>) opened by the ESAP/MA can serve as a platform for this initiative.
* Make sure your messages go beyond focusing on prevention methods to including measures to be taken when individuals show symptoms, refraining from accusing people for bringing the disease and attacking them, and refer to risks related to the disease’s economic and social impact based on the issues you see in your local setting.
* The COVID-19 State of Emergency regulation issued by the Ethiopian government states that *“Unless authorized by the Ministerial Committee or sub-committees established at regional levels or local administration levels, neither professionals nor officials at federal and regional levels can give COVID-19 related statements on behalf of the federal or regional governments. This does not include daily updates and information given by the Ministry of Health, comments by professionals or analysis/clarification/elaboration by health professionals/physicians.”*For this reason, we advise community radios to ask all potential interviewees to state a disclaimer at the start of their statements on air mentioning that what they will say is exclusively their own opinion and does not represent the government at federal, regional or any other level.
* Remember to give different community members the platform to raise their issues and ask those in power about matters that affect them with regards to COVID-19.
* Review the situation daily and follow the ad0vice of the relevant authorities.

1. **ESAP’s engagement with community radios**

SAIPs of the ESAP MA can work with community radios to support them broadcast locally relevant information by creating links with social accountability committees and different citizen groups. SAIPs’ project coordinators (contacts are listed below) and woreda social accountability experts can facilitate the following specific activities by supporting community radios to:

1. Organize “Citizens on the Line”, a collaborative call-in program
2. Extra attention to vulnerable groups in message dissemination
3. Connecting community radios to influential local people.

1. **“Citizens on the Line”** - is a collaborative project of 15 community radios supported by ESAP. In general, community radios serve as a two-way communication platform between the local government and the community. In this project the MA encourages coordinated use of existing call-in programs by community radios. Twice a week, community radio stations will broadcast ESAP designed questions to their audience that individual listeners can react to live by phoning in, by SMS or by social media, whichever is the preferred mechanism by the radio station. These questions will always be directly related to how the spread of the COVID-19 virus and measures taken by the government, influence the lives of citizens.

After the show has been broadcast, the radio station will provide the SAIP and the MA all feedback they received from their audience, including feedback that did not make it to the live broadcast. The same questions will be broadcast by all community radio stations in call-in shows, as much as possible at around the same time. ESAP will collate the responses (per region if possible) and share the results from across the country with the community radio stations for their information and feeding back to their audiences, and with the respective local governments for their action.  An example of a question to listeners could be: “The Government of Ethiopia has announced that one of the best ways to avoid contracting and spreading COVID-19 is to wash your hands with water and soap several times a day. Are you and your family adhering to that advice? Why, or why not? What about your friends and neighbors?”.

Each show will focus on one theme and will always ask the following category of questions:

* Is information reaching citizens and what is their response?
* What does enforcement of measures look like, by local governments, local organizations or citizens?
* How well do service providers adhere to measures imposed by the government?
* What can be done with the feedback from citizens, what action should be taken?

1. **Vulnerable Groups -** SAIPs can connect the community radio stations to members of the community that find themselves in an extra vulnerable position to COVID19,  such as persons living with disabilities, elderly, women, persons living with HIV/AIDS and others to ensure active outreach to bring their situation to the attention of the community and the local authorities.

1. Making use of  **key influential figures** in the community can help to enforce and support prevention messages issued by the national and local health authorities. SAIPs can provide radio hosts the contacts of these people to be featured as part of interviews, public service announcements or programs produced on the prevention of COVID-19. These influential figures could be members of the SAC, idir leaders or those that  have been identified through SAIPs’ social mapping exercise.

Interviews conducted with the SAC are opportunities to introduce social accountability and ESAP’s COVID-19 emergency response activities. SAC members should mention ESAP’s activities in terms of creating a platform for citizens and the government to address citizens’ demands and its inclusive process that involves all members of the community including vulnerable groups.

SAIPs will monitor messages being broadcast by community radios for frequency, accuracy, use of credible sources and inclusive communication (involving all members of the community, including vulnerable groups). This can be done by project coordinators or woreda social accountability experts who are stationed in areas where the community radios broadcast is reachable.

**List of trained community radios and their geographical reach**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.**  | **Media outlet**  | **Regional location**  | **Broadcast coverage**  | **Estimated audience1**  |
| 1  | Finote Selam Community Radio  | Amhara   | Finote selam town and areas within 60 km radius on average, part of East Welega and East Gojam   | 2.5 million  |
| 2  | Kombolcha Community Radio  | Amhara   | Kombolcha town and its surrounding to the point of Kemise town  | 1.5 million  |
| 3  | Argoba Community Radio  | Afar  | Argoba woreda Ankober, Semien Shoa, miserak and merab harerge Oromia and surrounding, Afar and Amhara border  | 500,000   |
| 4  | Hawassa University Community Radio  | SNNPR  | Hawassa town  | ---  |
| 5  | Sude Community Radio  | Oromia   | Sude woreda and its surrounding (9 woredas in Arsi zone)  | 900,000  |
| 6  | Welega Community Radio  | Oromia   | Welega town, East Shoa, Ilubabur and Horo Guduru Welega zone  | 400,000  |
| 7  | Kembata Community Radio  | SNNPR  | Kembata Tembaro zone and surrounding, partly in Hadiya zone and Halaba zone  | 700,000+  |
| 8  | Debre Markos University Community Radio  | Amhara  | Debre Markos town  | 3 million  |
| 9  | Wolayita Community Radio  | SNNPR  | Within 150km radius of Wolayita town - Sidama Zone, Gedo, Dawero, South Omo  | 5 million  |
| 10  | Haremaya University Community Radio  | Oromia  | Haremaya town  | ----  |
| 11  | Metu University Community Radio  | Oromia  | Metu town  | ----  |
| 12  | Waghimera Community Radio  | Amhara  | Waghimera community and its surrounding, partly in North Gondar  | 500,000+  |
| 13  | Jimma University Community Radio  | Oromia  | Jimma town and its surrounding  | ----  |
| 14  | Semera Community Radio  | Afar  | Semera town, Asayita and beyond  | 500,000+  |
| 15  | Mekele University Community Radio  | Tigray  | within 70km radius of Mekele town   | 1.2 million  |

# Annex 4 - SAIP Grant Agreements, Disbursement and Expenditure Overview as of 31 March 2020 (see separate worksheets)



1. The MA is unable to guarantee the accuracy of the map details, such as borders and/or exact coordinates. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. It was perceived that some of the indicators were inconsistent with the revised strategy or a weak measurement of the objectives. (e.g., the *number of budget hearings* is not considered to be a reliable measurement of an improved planning and budgeting process). A few indicators did not fall within the scope of the MA (e.g., *% of kebeles and woredas with examples of structures/procedures to ensure SA processes are established within the service provider institutions*). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)