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Save the Children



COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION FOR INCLUSIVE AND QUALITY EDUCATION

MELKA DHARE SCHOOL

Melka Dhare school is one of the schools supported by the project. It is found in the Sawena district of the East Bale zone, 595 KM from Addis Ababa. The school was established in 2005 with the enrollment of 320 children (70F). Its current enrollment has grown to 1396 (691F), and 45 teachers (23F). Like most other peripheral primary schools, conditions in the school were not conducive for the learning-teaching process.

The school infrastructure was dilapidated, school furniture and teaching aids were in short supply, classrooms were overcrowded, teachers didn't get

adequate training, and aspects of inclusion, equitability and quality of education left much to be desired in terms of enrollment and making the school environment child friendly.

Moreover, the PTSA of the school, which was meant to serve as a bridge between the school and the local community whereby sensitizing the community, mobilizing resources, contributing to school improvement, etc., was barely functional, and didn't live up to expectations. With a view to attaining better learning outcomes in the school, the project, over the last two years, undertook a number of activities, having the PTSA as one of its entry points. Among other things, the project supported the

school with the revitalization of the PTSA, and developing its capacity. Moreover, participatory capacity assessments were conducted, and school improvement plan was developed on the basis of the findings.

In line with this, material support such as furniture, stationaries, teaching aids, and personal student items such as pads for girls, and school bags were provided. Training was provided to teachers and others on various topics such as quality education, special needs education, quality gendered primary education, disability responsive mainstreaming, social and behavioral change communication, and the like. Moreover, processes of advocacy, local resource mobilization, and student support mechanisms were promoted.



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**“THANKS
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Furthermore, the PTSA facilitated the establishment of safe space for the management of menstrual hygiene, and helped break the taboo regarding same. It helped in the identification of out-of-school children with disability, and facilitated their inclusion in education, with the provision of the required support. The school management witnesses that such contributions of the PTSA emanating from the empowering technical and organizational capacity development initiatives of the project, have contributed to better enrollment and retention, better speaking of

EMERGING RESULTS

As a result of these and other related interventions, progressive change is being observed in the teaching-learning environment of the Malka Dhare school, creating conditions for quality and inclusive learning outcomes. The PTSA is now closely engaged with the school, entailing better impact on children. Among other things, it has mobilized Birr 130,000 from the local community, and invested on school facility development such as student desks and feeding centre for children. It, moreover, secured farm land for the school, and initiated income generation activities, beside planting trees for the greening of the school premises. Through efforts of behavioral change communication, it brought about attitudinal changes on girls education and early marriage, resulting in near-gender parity in enrollment. At the pre-primary level, more girls are enrolled than boys.

the enhanced contribution of the PTSA, the Chairperson, Mohamud Salis testifies, “The project has enabled us to manage well what we have. The various trainings and support we were provided with have raised our awareness and changed our attitude towards the Malka Dhare school. We no longer consider the school to be the property and affair of the government. Thanks to the project, we have now developed a sense of ownership, and a duty of contribution to the continued improvement of our school, making it a child friendly centre

for quality and inclusive education. Building on our achievements, we will continue to inspire and deliver change in our school community, and beyond”.

Encouraged by such positive grassroots changes, the BOE project will continue its work with PTSAs so as to support them in realizing their capacity development plans, and empower them for better learning outcomes through equitable, inclusive, and quality education for deprived children.