



**Professional Alliance for Development**

**(PADet)**

**Good Practice Document on Improving  
Quality of Education in Argoba Special  
District**

**Addis Ababa  
December 2020**

## **Introduction**

### **Education Overview**

Education is one of the means that helps human beings to transfer their experience, knowledge and scientific innovation to the new generation. As Graham, (1978: 6) stated "education is in a way of developing desirable habits, skills and attitudes which makes an individual a good citizen, that will be able to participate in the overall development of the society." Therefore, educated citizens are important for economic, social, cultural and political development of any society. From this, we can understand that for a country's development people must be educated. This reflects that without education no one country has been developed. Due to this reason, many nations in the world have been taking strong measures and giving special attention for education to fight against poverty and illiteracy. Ethiopia for the past some years has done many activities to provide quality education for all and introduce the new decentralized educational administrative system.

According to the MOE, decentralize educational administrative system has the following advantages.

- It develops community participation and encourages self-reliance at local level;
- It encourages working with governmental and non-governmental organization cooperatively;
- It enables to gain additional resources from local community to support education;
- It reflects the need of local community and reduce the central government budget which donated to the local community;
- Authority can be divided with responsibility and accountability towards the lower level; etc.
- This indicates that the new decentralized educational administrative system has brought many school supportive structures. Through this; school supportive structure, the principle of decentralized educational management has been realized, the community

has been involved directly in educational affairs. Therefore, the most known school supportive structure is Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) which has been introduced since 1994 EC, in a new form. This Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) has been established in each school as one of the main school supportive structure. PTSA in each school has its own duties and responsibilities in order to carry out and support the teaching learning process properly.

### **Geographical location**

**Argobba** (or **Argoba**) is one of the Woredas in the Afar Region of Ethiopia. The name Argoba was emerged from the Amharic language called "Areb geba" when Arab people migrated to the country which means "Arab entered". This Woreda is named for the Argobba people, whose homeland lies in this district. Located on the eastern escarpment of the Ethiopian highlands, Argobba is bordered on the south, west and north by the Amhara Region and on the east by Dulecha. Settlements in this Woreda include Gachine.

The average elevation in this Woreda is 471 meters above sea level. As of 2008, Argobba has 10 kilometers of all-weather gravel road and 77.5 kilometers of community roads; about 41% of the total population has access to drinking water.

### **Demographics**

Based on the 2007 Census conducted by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia (CSA), this Woreda has a total population of 21,794, of whom 11,645 are men and 10,149 women; with an area of 393.93 square kilometers, Argobba has a population density of 55.32. While 2,166 or 9.94% are urban inhabitants, this Woreda is usual for the Afar Region in having pastoralists. A total of 3,195 households were counted in this Woreda, which results in an average of 6.8 persons to a household, and 3,397 housing units. 83.38% of the population said they were Muslim, and 16.26% were Orthodox\_Christians.

## **Agriculture**

A sample enumeration performed by the CSA in 2001 interviewed 540 farmers in this woreda, who held an average of 5.28 hectares of land. Of the 2.85 square kilometers of private land surveyed, 84.92% was under cultivation, 3.89% pasture, 9.72% fallow, and 1.47% was devoted to other uses; the percentage in woodland was missing. For the land under cultivation in this woreda, 88.71% is planted in cereals like maize and sorghum, 24.06% in pulses, 10.52% in vegetables, and 2.07% in root crops. Permanent crops included 1 hectare planted in coffee, 4 in gesho or hops, 1 in sugar cane, 12.79 in fruit trees, and 9.96 in bananas. 10.37% of the farmers both raise crops and livestock, while 50.74% only grow crops and 38.89% only raise livestock. Land tenure in this woreda is distributed between 81.59% own their land, 16.35% rent, and the remaining 2.07% are held under other forms of tenure.

## **Project Overview**

PADet-PCF works in Argoba special Woreda of Afar region of south direction starting from July 2018. Argoba community religion and culture are similar to Afar but different in language and the community income depends on agriculture and cattle.

PADet Argoba project works in collaborating with PCF, REB, DEO and school community to improve quality of primary education in ten targeted schools depending on the project schedule and priority.

Among the project activities includes providing active teaching learning process, EGRA (early grade assessment), school leadership and child safe guarding trainings to be applicable at each targeted school to increase students learning motivation and the school environment or to make sure class setting arrangement is comfortable for peer group discussion for students and teachers. In addition, the project works to make the school environment comfortable for students and teachers by mobilizing the community to enhance the teaching learning process. Generally, the project has three main focuses i.e improving teaching and learning process,

improving school environment and increasing community awareness on the importance of education.

### **Best Practices: PTSA**

Among the best practices of the project includes PTSA members have been an active participants in supporting the target schools in different areas such as sending the dropouts to school, involved in handling the discipline of students, filling the gaps of the school, etc.

### **Objectives of Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA)**

Even though PTSA has a global theme objectives, from one country to another, the objectives of PTSA has slight difference in terms of educational polices and strategies. Hence, in Ethiopia, both in urban or rural schools PTSA address the same purpose which makes congruence and a harmonious with the world-wide one. The major objectives includes:

1. Strengthening the relation between parents and schools, enhance community participation in educational activities
2. Creating favorable learning environment in the school
3. Promoting a cultured relation between teachers and students in which the former understand the problem the latter and offer them the necessary academic psychological support

### **The Role of PTSA**

Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) is organized at school level to further strengthen the relation between parents and teachers. It enables parents to actively participate in the teaching-learning process and jointly seek remedial solutions to the problem encountered. Likewise, it enables teachers to take part in other co-curricular activities apart from teaching. The consolidation of this association would have a significant contribution to the enhancement of the quality and the provision of education. PTA participation in school play a pivotal role concordance with the best way a community can participate on matters of effecting education.

On the other hand, PTA is an important sources of financial and material support essential for the development of school. Similarly, it can be source of resource persons to help in a wide variety of school projects. The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) works in close collaboration with the school administration to make the ideal places, and to produce disciplined and capable citizen. In addition, it strives to alleviate the problems of teachers and creates favorable conditions where by the teachers properly execute their responsibilities. In general, PTA is expected to contribute a great deal in the academic and administrative activities of schools. It plays a facilitation role in coordinating the efforts of school and the community.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of the Parent-Teacher-Students Association (PTSA)**

*PTSA shall have the following duties and responsibilities:*

- Equip students with good ethical values,
- Encourage students not to disrupt their education and sees solution along with parents to students who had already quit class,
- Ensure that teachers and the school directors are properly executive their teaching, and managing responsibilities,
- Advise and correct those teachers who failed to discharge their duties properly;
- Refer to the director those teachers who could not be corrected through advice along with a punishment proposal,
- Ensure that teachers are teaching in accordance with the interest, demand and rights of their students,
- Make sure that the program of the school are properly implemented according to the schedule; provide the necessary support to the implementations of the program;

- Advice and reprimand students with disciplinary problems, punish those students who could not desist from their wrong doings", and submit dismissal proposal to the director. Follow up the implementation of the decision,
- Parents" representatives in the PTA, conduct teachers" performance evaluation,
- In consultation with director, give incentives to teachers and other staff members with an exemplary performance,
- Mobilize community and raise funds,
- Organize parents" day once or twice in a year,
- Manage and administrate school finance, etc.

### **Situations prior to the project intervention:**

The project has been focusing on improving school environment and increasing community awareness on the importance of education in ten primary schooles and the schools are found in remote areas of the Kebele and it is not accessable for follow up due to bad road condtions and mountains terrain. During the intiation time of the project, the schools have many internal and external problemes which includes:

#### **Externally:**

- less community participation
- Untrained PTSA (parents teachers students association) members
- Uncomfortabel school compouned

#### **Internally:**

- Uncomfortable classrooms for teaching learning process due to windows and doors were broken
- All classrooms have no ceiling and students are very much affected by hot weather condition
- Old method of teaching learning process

- At lower grade levels /1-4/, students reading competency level was very poor
- Unorganized library and laboratory classrooms
- Shortage of teaching aid preparation materials and uncomfortable for teachers to prepare teaching aids
- Absenteesim and drop out of students
- Child labor and early marriage

### **Changes after the project intervention:**

The project works to enhance the community awarnes on the importance of education and increase their participation to suport the school by kind, money and labor by providing trainings on MOE and regional PTSA school leaders and finance guideline. The project enhanced the community and PTSA member participation to support the school and to make for positive changes by collabortating with DEO and managed to work for positive internal and external changes of the schools. Among others, the following major activites were done through PTSA members:

- All target schools equipped with basic teaching and learning materials/reference books collaborating with PTSA and school community. The community in turn sent the students to schools who used library during their free time /night time too/
- Four Schools (Gachene, Abali, Metqelya and Debreko primary schools) are renovated by mobilizing the community and PTSA in collaboration with district education office and government in targeted schools. The schools were old and have no ceiling before renovation time. For instance, the community contributed and painted the external parts of the school at Gacheni primary school (93,751 birr contribution)
- child friendly environment created by enabling the students develop and apply their by-laws and establish harassment reporting system and counselling service provisions in the schools



- Community education workshop organized to tackle early marriage and child labor as well as to create awareness on the value of education in close collaboration with community leaders, school directors and PTSA. For instance, 23 child labor and 2 early mirage cases canceled in Geberoch primary school
- Community ownership on education is enhanced through participation of different actors to decrease student's dropout rate. In Goze primary school, for example, in 2020 calendar year 19 drop out students returned to school by PTSA and teacher's active participation
- The project provided PTSA giudeline and community mobilization training to increase the community in supporting schools with labor, kind and money and a total of over 900,000 birr was contributed by the community to target schools after the project intervention



*Photo 1: PTSA memebers partcipating in trainings*

- The school compounds are now more or less comfortable for primary and pre-primary students fulfilling out door games /in Gachini, Sofiager ,Geberoch and Goze primery schools/.



*Photo 2: O class facilities*



*Photo 3: Library facilities*