

“The Rights of the Child and Minimum Levels of Learning as a Fundamental Right”

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Summary of the project

The main purpose of the project was to raise awareness and train staff, students, teachers and stakeholders on the CRC. The project was implemented in two separate regions, the Amahara Region and SNNPRS. In the Amahara region the focus was at school level. One school in a poor area of Bahir Dar town was selected to implement the project. In this school teachers, students and parents were trained through handouts created by the participants. In SNNPRS the project was implemented at a TTC in Awassa. The focus was to make sure that teacher trainees knew about the CRC and its effects in classroom behaviours. Specific material was designed for this purpose.

We are working on exchanging experiences between the two regions on:

- Accomplishment of child rights missions.
- Implementation’s success.
- Approaching regional authorities.
- Cooperation from the region.
- Problems confronted
- Solving these problems.
- Activities implemented that can be used as examples of good practice.
- School practices observed in the Region.

Impact on the personal and professional levels

The training we participated in Sweden and Sri Lanka has contributed to our appointment as heads of organizations. This is because of our contributions to child rights in our respective Regions. We took advantage of the skills gained in the training while we were in our respective national Regions. We imparted several trainings programmes mainly to the college community, teacher, leaders, district education offices, women associations, directors and members of the School Child Clubs and the regional police. While we were in the regions we did not miss any type of conference conducted on educational affairs to convey the message of child rights and HIV/AIDS. The Training helped us personally to develop instructional materials (Modules) on child rights for college teachers. Thus the training had a positive impact on the personal and professional levels.

Impact on the organizational level

At the Regional Education Bureau, colleges and the ministry of education the training had many positive impacts. For instance, the two heads of the education bureaus are highly convinced and devoted to help the change agents whenever there is a need to implement child rights. The two bureaus are cooperative in facilitating the conditions to the change agents.

Different packages were designed and implemented in the Ministry of Education. In each package Child Right ideas were included. At college level, a curriculum was designed to include child rights. This started at Awassa Teacher's College and transferred to the colleges in the rest of the country. Every student teacher is trained in the concept of child rights before his or her graduation. Almost all schools in both regions have accepted the program and have started to implement it in their respective environments. All schools have established Child Right Clubs and the Children have started to ask about their rights.

Impact on the country level

The training also had a great impact at the national level. Different organizations were established and started to implement the CRC. The Ombudsman and the Human Right's Commission are two organizations established at national level. In the Human Right's Commission there is a commissioner who is a former participant from the Sida programme. This is a good step to guarantee the Rights of Children in the country. Also from my new position as the head of Education Quality Assurance under the Ministry of Education, I have a better opportunity to introduce the implementation of the CRC as quality criteria for the inspection of schools. It is clear that the implementation of child rights has improved, starting in the family and the communities. We have also changed our previous inaccurate attitudes towards our families. Some of the benefits obtained at the country level are:

- Early marriage is drastically decreasing.
- More children have started to get education.
- Corporal punishment is banned in schools.
- Quality of education is becoming a main point of discussion.