

***Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TdH-NL)***

**End-term Evaluation Report of the project:  
“Reducing Sexual Exploitation of Girls in Bahir Dar in  
Ethiopia”**

**January, 2021  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

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## SUMMARY

This evaluation report presents the performance of the project entitled; **“Reducing Sexual Exploitation of Girls in Bahir Dar in Ethiopia”**. This project was funded by Terre Des Hommes Netherlands (TdH-NL) and implemented by Forum for Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE) in Belay Zeleke, Fasilo and Gish Abay sub-cities of Bahir Dar City of Amhara National Regional State from Jan 2018- Dec 2020.

The project direct beneficiaries are girls survivors of commercial sexual exploitation, vulnerable school children and vulnerable female headed households. Indirect beneficiaries include relevant government departments and offices, civil society organizations, the private sector, law enforcing agencies like police offices, community members and the community support and care coalition found in the three sub-cities. With the general goal to contribute to reduction of the incidence of commercial sexual exploitation of girls in Bahir Dar town and surrounding areas, the specific objectives of the project are to

- Support girls at risk of/victims to sexual exploitation to protect themselves from sexual exploitation;
- Create awareness and empower families and communities to protect children from commercial sexual exploitation;
- Support local government sectoral offices and police to implement plans and policies for combating commercial sexual exploitation of children;
- Establish CSOs network and strengthen partnership to respond to cases of commercial sexual exploitation of girls in Bahir Dar and
- Engage private sector actors in Bahir Dar to prevent sexual exploitation of and respond to the needs of commercial sex work violence victims

The objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Examine the extent to which the project impact and results have been achieved;
- Assess how the project contributed to the impact including key enabling and/or constraining factors that led to project achievements;
- Identify how the project benefited the beneficiaries (include the two most significant change stories/case studies);
- Examine the unintended/unplanned effects of the project among the target beneficiaries local communities and wider context;
- Examine project components, strategies and activities that can be replicated in similar projects;
- Assess whether project activities can be deemed sustainable at the local level and among implementing organizations and
- Identify main lessons learnt and recommendations for future implementation on CSEC programming in Ethiopia and in projects designed under similar contexts.

Participatory and inclusive evaluation methods were applied to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from primary and secondary sources to achieve the above mentioned evaluation objectives. Two groups of primary data sources were considered. These were (1) direct project beneficiaries that

included girls survivors to commercial sexual exploitation, vulnerable school children and vulnerable female headed households and (2) other data sources such as government, civil society and private sector and community representatives. Representative samples from the first category of beneficiaries were drawn using random sampling techniques while other primary data sources were selected purposely in order to get the most relevant and appropriate data from key sources. Key informant interviews, focus group discussions, observations and storytelling tools/methods were employed to collect qualitative data from purposely selected sources. About 75 (50%) of the reintegrated survivors of sexual exploitation, 86 (8.6%) vulnerable school children and 78 (78%) vulnerable households participated in the socio-economic survey. In addition, 27 experts were interviewed individually and 38 other sources of data participated in focus group discussions and group interviews. Observations were done to individual income generating activities, in-depth interviews are made with reintegrated girls, school children and vulnerable female headed households.

Different secondary data sources, which included yearly project plan and performance, project logframe, annual narrative reports and case stories and pertinent documented sources focusing on the global, national and regional conventions, laws, proclamations, regulations and development plans relevant to the prevention of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation of children, girls and women and respond to the immediate and strategic needs of those victims of sexual violence and exploitation were explored and reviewed. Attempts are made to look into the relevance of the project activities and strategies against such conventions, laws, proclamations, regulations and development plans.

Hence, key evaluation findings are summarized below.

- The project objectives, activities and strategies were very much relevant to the project beneficiaries, government policies and strategies, community and community-based (especially Community Support and Care Coalition (3C) organization priorities, the private sector and civil society organizations concerned about violence against children. The project has made its activities and supports more relevant to the needs of beneficiaries and government priorities through transparent, participatory, inclusive and flexible project planning and management approach.
- The project was also highly effective starting from identifying the right targets through the use of existing beneficiary selection procedures and systems and additional verification methods. It was also effective in a way that;
  - 150 sexually exploited girls were identified, withdrawn, trained and economically empowered and reintegrated into their community. Behavioral changes and promising economic activities were observed in those reintegrated girls. While some left Bahir Dar City and started their businesses in their home villages, most of them were struggling to establish their own businesses in Bahir Dar City and some others were employed in others' business entities. However, the target of withdrawing girls below 18 years old was a bit challenging and the strategy to reintegrate them was less appropriate considering their age. But, the average age of reintegrated girls was about 22 years old so that reintegration was actually the right strategy employed by the project.
  - About 1000 vulnerable children received educational material support. Additional students whose family houses were damaged by fire accident and COVID-19 pandemic have benefited

from the educational material and clothing support. Most importantly, majority of them would have quit their education and exposed to child labor exploitation because of household poverty if the project did not provide such supports. Due to this, the team called it “HOPE” project.

- 100 vulnerable households were provided with various types of training and business startup capital. Among them, there are beggars, majority were single mothers and their monthly household income was below 1000 ETB to support about 4 (four) family members. However, the project support has lifted many of those households from their poverty. Additional five households affected by fire accidents were supported to rehabilitate their houses, and start their business. Therefore, both intended and unintended positive results were registered here too.
- The efforts made to strengthen the systems and capacities of partner government organizations, schools, likeminded civil society organizations, the private sector and community representatives (through the community conversation activity) and community-based structures (i.e. the 3C) were all effective. Of all the successes here, stakeholders’ engagement was paramount.
- Lessons from the project planning, implementation and management include the need to understand the behaviors of young and fresh sexually exploited girls , the need for long term rehabilitation (psychosocial) support before economic reintegration, targeting under 18 sexually exploited girls and the practical challenges associated with their reintegration, inadequate attention to legal awareness and law enforcement supports, the need to focus on preventive interventions and stakeholders’ engagement.

Based on the evaluation findings, commendable recommendations are suggested. They focus on differentiating the legal and practical implications of targeting under 18 sexually exploited children , aligning strategies with national and regional policies, the need for allocating long project period, qualified counselors and provision of in-depth psychosocial and psychological supports for survivors of sexual exploitation and substance addicted ones (many of the sexually exploited girls were substance addicted), the importance of addressing the root causes that push children in general, girls in particular to cities like Bahir Dar, the need to equip business persons with business plan and instituting the appraisal procedures, project activity sequencing and maintaining flexibility and sensitizing community conversation groups to establish social and business groups so that they can sustain their meetings, discussions and self-awareness about themselves, their families and the community.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background

All children are entitled to be protected from violence, exploitation and abuse.<sup>1</sup> Children's basic rights to survival and development of their full potential are confirmed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Despite this assertion, a large number of children globally from all socio-economic backgrounds, spanning all ages, cultures and religions experience exploitation, violence and abuse every day.<sup>2</sup> Research has shown that child abuse has serious consequences for child development and causes disordered psychological development and Behavior problems. Furthermore, there is significant evidence that exploitation and abuse among others can affect the child's physical and mental health in the short and longer term, impairing their ability to learn and socialize, and affecting their transition to adulthood with adverse consequences later in life.<sup>3</sup> Sexual abuse against children remains one of the gross violations of children's rights<sup>4</sup>. Yet it is a global reality across all countries and social groups today. As a result the MDGs have demonstrated that not a single goal can be achieved unless the protection of children from human rights violations such as commercial sexual exploitation is an integral part of programming strategies and plans.

Children at risk and affected by unsafe migration are exposed to several problems due to multifaceted factors such as low level of awareness of the community on the rights of children on the move and protection concerns, lack of basic services including access to school, health care, legal support and shelter, lack of knowledge about protective mechanisms among affected children, lack of coordination among service providers. There is also limited knowledge on best interest determination and case management mechanism, including absence of referral system and standard operating procedures among child protection actors.<sup>5</sup> In addition, most of the children migrating to the urban centers do not have sufficient information about the situation they are going to engage in. Most of them find it difficult to find decent employment opportunities appropriate to their age and ability which is exposing them to violence and exploitation.

The Government of Ethiopia is committed to improving the situation and wellbeing of children as a whole, and has adopted important laws and policies addressing these concerns. Ethiopia has ratified major international laws and policies, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). The government has also taken major steps in harmonizing international laws with the country constitution, family law and other policy documents.

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is one of the worst forms of child abuse that children face and creates multi-faceted problems in the lives of children. CSEC is the sexual abuse of children in

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<sup>1</sup> 2014 [http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929\\_57972.html](http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_57972.html)

<sup>2</sup> 2014 [http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929\\_57972.html](http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_57972.html)

<sup>3</sup> Op cit

<sup>4</sup> 2011 [http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929\\_58006.html](http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_58006.html)

<sup>5</sup> Save the Children (2013). Rapid assessment report on unsafe child migration in South Gondar zone, Estie & Dera Woredas

exchange for cash or in kind favors from the customer to the child or an intermediary. The negative impact of CSEC is profound and often permanent; hence the problem needs urgent attention.

## **1.2. Objectives of the evaluation**

The general objective of this evaluation is to examine the extent to which the project has brought meaningful results for project beneficiaries, and identify key areas that can be replicated in similar interventions. The specific objectives of this end-term evaluation are to:

- Examine the extent to which the project impact and results have been achieved.
- Assess how the project contributed to the impact including key enabling and/or constraining factors that led to project achievements
- Identify how the project benefited the beneficiaries.(include the two most significant change stories/case studies)
- Examine the unintended/unplanned effects of the project among the target beneficiaries local communities and wider context
- Examine project components, strategies and activities that can be replicated in similar projects
- Assess whether project activities can be deemed sustainable at the local level and among implementing organizations
- Identify main lessons learnt and recommendations for future implementation on CSEC programming in Ethiopia and in projects designed under similar contexts

## **1.3. Evaluation questions**

The ToR for this evaluation identified two major objectives (1) to make an assessment of the past performance of the project, and in particular whether the outcomes / outputs and targets envisaged after the project revision have been realized; and (2) to identify key lessons learned and to provide practical recommendations for follow-up actions, for the next phase of the project. Thus the evaluation is required to have both summative and formative elements.

The ToR also contains a number of evaluation questions organized under the OECD-DAC criteria, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. These include:

- How was the relevance of the project to overall policy framework and problem analysis?
- To what extent the expected outputs and outcomes of the project were attained?
- To what extent the costs of the project can be justified by the benefits provided?
- What are the likely impacts of the project?
- How can ownership and sustainability of the project be ensured?

## **1.4. Scope of the evaluation**

**Geographical Coverage:** the end-term evaluation covered 3 sub cities namely Fasilo, Belay Zeleke and Gish Abay sub cities, Bahir Dar Town in Amhara National regional State.

**Thematic Focus:** the evaluation covered all project components, namely: Community sensitization and awareness creation, Economic Strengthening of reintegrated girls and female headed households, Safe Home for CSEC, Strengthening school clubs, Stakeholders engagement and Capacity building



**Evaluation Participants:** the evaluation involved project beneficiaries, relevant government partners (Department of Women and Children Affairs, Police, Finance and Economic, Department of Education), CSO forum and Private partners, FSCE Bahir Dar Project Office and TdH-NL.

**Evaluation Parameters:** the evaluation was conducted based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, consolidated by drawing lessons learned providing the way forward.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Overview of approach and methodologies used

In this evaluation process, participatory project evaluation approaches were used. Project direct beneficiaries i.e. vulnerable school children, children sexually exploited and vulnerable FHHs were randomly selected for the evaluation. Likewise purposive sampling technique was employed to select project partners such as government sector departments and offices; police departments and schools; community representatives and community-based institutions like community conversation groups; conversation facilitators and community support and care coalitions, and civil society organizations.

### 2.2. Sampling and preparations

FSCE provided a list of beneficiaries before the sampling was conducted. During preliminary discussion with FSCE Bahir Dar Program Coordination Office and TdH-NL Ethiopia office, various data sources were collected that clearly show the updated number of direct project beneficiaries (i.e. sexually exploited children, vulnerable children and families), community representatives, child protection committees, CSOs, private sector actors, government and law enforcing partners. Based on the study population size, sample sizes were determined and distributions made based on *proportion to population size* principle. At field level, FSCE Bahir Dar Program Coordination Office availed the list of each beneficiary and partner from who randomly selected reintegrated sexually exploited children, vulnerable children and families were considered. Other data sources, such as government signatories, law enforcing bodies, CSO and private sector actors were purposely selected to get the best information from the most relevant sources. In fact, availability was also considered, for example, in the case of CSO and private sector partners. The following tables summarize the sample size by respondents

Table 1: Sample size by respondent categories

Data sources	Sample	Methods
Rehabilitated and reintegrated girls	75	Girls' Survey
Vulnerable school girls/children	86	Children's Survey
Female headed households	78	Household Survey
Supported girls and female headed households	6	MSC/case stories
Supported girls and female headed households	6	Observation and in-depth interview
Government staffs/experts	15	KII
Project signatories (BoE, BoWCY and Finance)	3	KII
Private stakeholders	9	KII
Partner schools	3	KII (director and girls' club leader contacted)
CSO network members	3	KII
Community conversation group representatives	3	Group discussion
Community support and care coalition	3	Group discussion
FSCE (Project)	1	Debriefing and data collection
FSCE (Project)	1	KII

### **2.3. Data collection tools**

Four major data collection tools were used. They are structured socio-economic surveys (for vulnerable and violence affected children and vulnerable households), key informant interview, focus group discussion (and interview) and storytelling and observation (case story). Document review was another data collection method used at all levels.

### **2.4. Data entry and analysis**

Because offline mobile data collection technology, named KoBoCollect is successfully applied, it was a digital data entry, cleaning and analysis the evaluation team has used. For further analysis, advanced excel statistical data analysis and SPSS v.23 software are applied.

## **3. CHALLENGES**

Despite the strengths of the project, through discussions with the relevant stakeholders, especially at the implementation level, a number of challenges were identified as described below.

### ***Project duration***

Child protection is one of the most critical challenges facing development partners and governments in the world. Studies revealed that Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and related child protection endeavors require interventions that build the capacity of all stakeholders/actors at all levels. Interventions must ensure community sensitization, awareness creation; economic strengthening scheme, education material service, safe home service, school gender club capacity building and direct support services require a substantial amount of time to be able to have a lasting impact. Generally, individual, household, community and structural level supports are necessary in the form of social, psychosocial, economic and infrastructural investments.

The duration of this project was three years (2018-2020), which was a short time in view of the nature of project target groups, wide project components and the subsequent project outcomes. Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE) had to work with partners such as sexually exploited children , vulnerable school children, vulnerable households, partner schools, communities and community-based institutions (like 3Cs, CBOs), government (such as Department of Education, women, children and youth and finance), law enforcing bodies, especially police and likeminded civil society organizations (CSO). Therefore, effective engagement of all these, and partly enhancing the capacities of some of the stakeholders, needs additional project periods.

### ***The project target group and project strategy***

Among the project beneficiaries, sexually exploited children were the primary ones. Rescuing them from the exploitative environment and supporting their economic reintegration through vocational, business and entrepreneurship training, provision of business startup capital, strong stakeholders' partnership **are the strategies employed**. However, economic reintegration of minors **below the age of 15** through these mechanisms would be **especially** a fallacy as well as a **challenging** activity. According to the Alternative Childcare Guidelines of ET (2009), eligibility criteria for reunification and reintegration of children (P.22), reintegration is considered as a viable strategy for those who reach at the age of 18 and an option for

children 15-17 years old when reunification is not a better option for them (best interest of the child). Therefore, TdH NL or any partner is advised to align its strategy with this national guideline. TdH NL targets (children) is broad and open for comment from this point of view. The target groups and strategies need to be clearly spelled in the future interventions. This would be why most of the rescued sexually exploited project target groups were above 18 years old, with an average age of 22. On the other hand, reunification, which can be considered as one of the appropriate mechanisms based on Alternative Childcare Guidelines on Community-Based Childcare, Reunification and Reintegration Program, Foster Care, Adoption and Institutional Care Service of the Government of Ethiopia, Ministry of Women Affairs (2009).

### ***Poverty of the target Community***

Poverty at the community level challenged the ability of communities and families to generate adequate income to support their families and contribute resources for investing in their children's protection and wellbeing.

### ***Insufficient assigned staff***

Insufficient number of staff was assigned to roll out the planned project activities. More critically, there was a lack of professional counselors and guidance officers who would have assisted sexually exploited children and vulnerable households as a fertile ground for their economic reintegration. Specifically, safe-home based life skill training and psychosocial services for the sexually exploited children and other vulnerable groups need female professional counselors.

### ***Budget constraint***

The project budget was inadequate in terms of its objectives. For example, the business startup capital given for reintegrated sexually exploited children and vulnerable female headed households was also very small and uniformly distributed to all beneficiaries regardless of the types of business, beneficiaries' existing assets that can support their new business and other parameters.

### ***Lack of baseline data on major result indicators***

The project did not do a baseline study, which primarily uses to set benchmarks against result indicators. Because of this, it was difficult to compare end-line evaluation findings against the baseline data.

## **4. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT**

### **4.1. The project context**

From the estimated 116, 519, 556 people of Ethiopia<sup>6</sup>, around 22 million are the Amhara people<sup>7</sup>. Bahir Dar city, with an estimated population of 260,577, is the capital of the region located around 547 km North West of Addis Ababa. Bahir Dar is one of the leading tourist destinations in Ethiopia. It is considered as one of the most beautiful, well planned, and safest cities in Africa by many standards, and in 2002 it was awarded UNESCO Cities for Peace Prize for managing to address the challenges of rapid social and economic developments<sup>8</sup>. Bahir Dar city has become one of the rapidly growing cities in Ethiopia since the 1960s, especially because it was chosen as the regional capital in the early 1990s. Gradually, Bahir Dar is not only a center of administration, but also a nucleus of commerce, industry, transport, communication, health, education and tourism<sup>9</sup>.

### **4.2. Main characteristics of the project including budget**

With the overall objective of the project to contribute to reduction of the incidence of commercial sexual exploitation of girls in Bahir Dar city and surrounding areas, the project was originally designed to be led by TdH NL and co-implemented by FSCE in two Kebeles of Bahir Dar City in the Amhara National Regional State. The target geographic areas later expanded to three sub-cities (i.e. Belay Zeleke, Fasilo and Gish Abay) of Bahir Dar city. Primary actors include vulnerable children/girls (below the age of 18 years old) vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitations, families, communities, government, civil society organizations and the private sector. Throughout the project documents, reunification of vulnerable children was put as one of the implementation strategies while reintegration is the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### **4.3. Intervention logic**

Intervention logic can also be called the project logical framework, results-based management and the logic model. The concept often revolves around the logical flow and relationship between and among the project inputs/resources, planned activities and different level results (i.e. outputs, outcomes and impact). With this general understanding, this project has very good intervention logic where the implementation of the planned activities will automatically contribute to the achievement of outputs. Given the risks and assumptions stated in the project documents and onset of COVID-19 pandemic, flood and fire accidents do not affect the project implementation in a negative direction, the achievement of each of the project outputs can lead to the attainment of project outcomes up in the hierarchy. Achievement of the five project outcomes can also contribute to the achievement of the project impact at the highest.

### **4.4. Short description of partner organization (FSCE)**

The project implementing partner, FSCE, is one of the pioneer civil society organizations established in 1989 to fight child labor exploitation, abuse, violence and unsafe migration. FSCE aims to protect and support vulnerable adults and children across Ethiopia. Active in the cities of Adama, Dessie, Bahir Dar, Addis

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<sup>6</sup> Saturday, January 9, 2021, based on Worldometer elaboration of the latest United Nations data, accessed on 9 Jan 2021

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gotera.org/en-US/amhara/>, accessed on 9 Jan 2021

<sup>8</sup> <https://bdu.edu.et/ila/?q=content/bahir-dar>, Accessed: Dec 30/2020

<sup>9</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahir\\_Dar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahir_Dar), Accessed on Dec 30/2020

Ababa and Dire Dawa, FSCE works on a wide spectrum of urban disadvantaged children's issues and has built extensive expertise and experience making the organization one of the leading local child protection organizations in Ethiopia. FSCE prevents family separation through strengthening of families and rehabilitating and reintegrating children in difficult circumstances or those who have experienced serious exploitation. It protects children on the move, neglected children, children in contact with the law and parents at high risk of, or engaged in, abusive or neglectful behaviors<sup>10</sup>. FSCE works focus on<sup>11</sup>:

- Increased income amongst the poorest households in target areas.
- Improving the knowledge and practice of safer migration amongst women and girls.
- Strengthening collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and networking to end risky migration.
- Improved services and support for returnees.

Its projects focus on raising the awareness of the risks, knowledge and skills needed for safer migration. The organization widely operates in Amhara National Regional State. The Bahir Dar Program Area Coordination Office is responsible for the implementation and management of this project. This office operates in a rented office where it has both office facilities and safe-home rooms for rescued girls. The coordination office has well established strong and positive relationships with regional, city, sub-city and Kebele administrations, partner schools, civil society organizations, intervention communities and community-based institutions. Because of its long years of presence and continued project operations, it has other necessary facilities and infrastructures including cars, staff, office equipment and facilities to effectively manage and run development and humanitarian projects.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.familyforeverychild.org/forum-on-sustainable-child-empowerment?locale=en>, Downloaded on Jan 9/2021

<sup>11</sup> <https://freedomfund.org/partners/forum-sustainable-child-empowerment/>, Downloaded on Jan 9/2021

## 5. KEY FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

### 5.1. General profiles of the survey respondents

Under this section, the profiles of sexually exploited children and vulnerable female headed households that have directly benefited from the project are presented below.

#### A) Profiles of commercial sex workers participated in the evaluation study

With the maximum of 33 and minimum of 16 years old, the mean age of sexually exploited children participated in this evaluation study was 22 years old. About 61% of them were rural-urban migrants. Their migration factors are largely (60%) associated with family breakdown and family pressure. Only about 24 percent of the respondents' biological parents were alive and the biological parents of another 24 percent of the respondents were not alive. Educationally, 31 percent of them were either not enrolled in school at all or have dropped out whereas the vast majority (69%) were attending their primary, junior and secondary school education at the time of this evaluation. Immediately before they became project

beneficiaries, 88 percent of them were engaged in sexually exploitative works while the remaining were hotel/bar workers and street vendors. According to qualitative data sources, girls who migrate to Bahir Dar know neither where to stay nor what to do on arrival. They were caught by the brokers upon their arrivals at the bus station. In many cases these brokers are the one who sexually abuse them first. At this incident the girls might contract with STIs including HIV and victims of unwanted early pregnancy. Afterwards they bribe and let them work in Hotels or brothels as cleaners but they end-up by being commercial sex workers. In some cases they are hired as home maids but their employers exploit them and sometimes don't pay their wages.

Most of the girls came to Bahir Dar with misconception and low level of educational status; so they can easily be trapped by the brokers and entered into commercial sex work. Once they get to Bahir Dar the economic problem becomes beyond their capacity and many of them want neither to start small nor do low level jobs; rather attracted by the high paying CSW during their early times of work.

In terms of current living situation, the vast majority (72%) of the evaluation participants were living alone followed by 20 percent of the respondents who are living with their biological parents.

Table 2: Living situation of reintegrated sexually exploited children

With whom are you currently living?		
1.	I live alone (single)	54 72%

According to qualitative data sources, girls migrate to Bahir Dar knows neither where to stay nor what to do on arrival. They caught by the brokers upon their arrivals at the bus station. In many cases these brokers are the one who sexually abuse them first. At this incident the girls might contract with STIs including HIV and victims of unwanted early pregnancy. Afterwards they bribe and let them work in Hotels or brothels as cleaners but they end-up being sexually exploited. In some cases they are hired as home maids but their employers exploit them and sometimes didn't pay their wages.

Most of the girls came to Bahir Dar with misconception and low level of educational status; so they can easily be trapped by the brokers and become sexually exploited. Once they get to Bahir Dar the economic problem becomes beyond their capacity and many of them are lured into exploitation with a promise of higher pay.

3.	My biological parents (mother and father or either of the two)	15	20%
4.	My peers (friends/sharing a room)	2	3%
5.	Relatives (siblings, grandparents, uncle or related)	4	5%

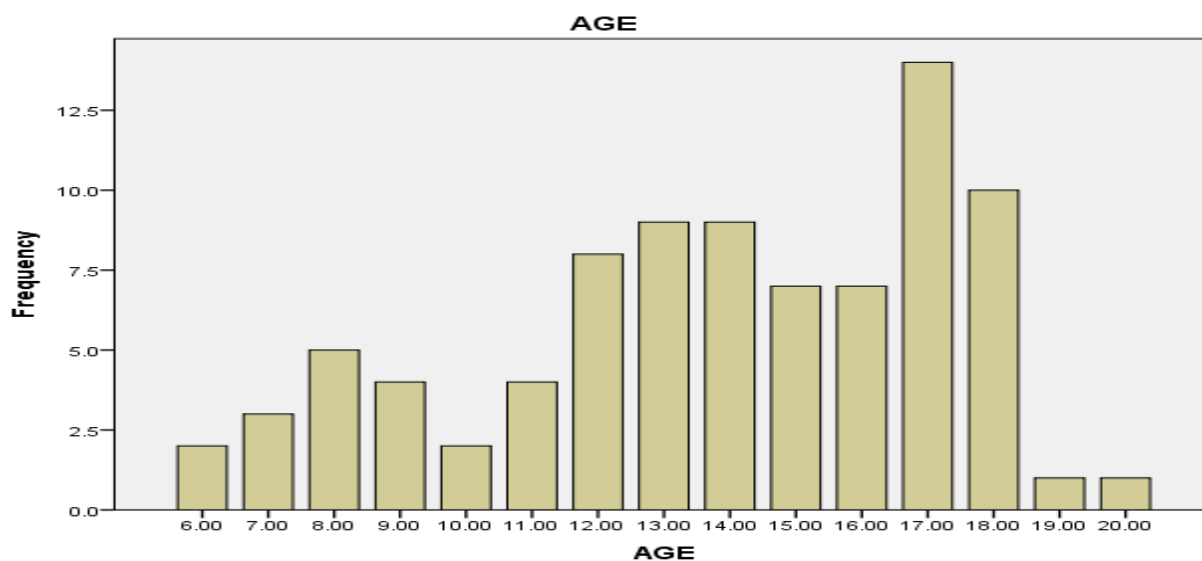
Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

None of the reintegrated target groups established their own family or live with their intimate partners although 33 percent of them have children (minimum of one and maximum of 3 children). Therefore, they are also becoming single mothers who are caring for their children too. A reintegrated sexually exploited beneficiary found in Fasilo, Kebele 04, has confirmed this double burden. She said, “I have a son of four year and seven months old. My intimate partner does not help me; he is very young too and has no income. My son has health problems. I used to leave him with my neighbors while I was in a sexually exploitative work”.

### B) Brief profiles of vulnerable children

Vast majority (98%) of the respondent children were girls. The average age of respondent children was 14 years old with minimum and maximum age of 6 and 20 respectively.

Graph 1: Age distribution of beneficiary vulnerable school children



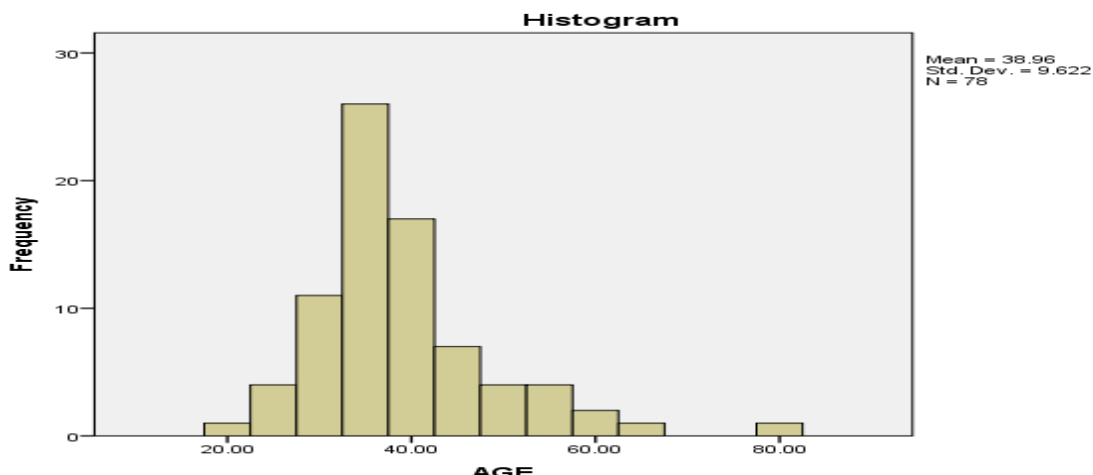
Out of the total 86 valid respondent vulnerable school children who benefited from the project, about 76 percent of them were half orphans (i.e. either their mothers or fathers were dead). On the other hand, the biological parents of 19 (22%) respondents were alive at the time of this evaluation. Full orphans were only two children. About 91% of them were not migrants i.e. children of Bahir Dar City. About 93% of the respondents were living with their biological parents. Three of the respondent children were employees or working children. One was receiving a monthly salary while the salary of the third respondent was being given for his/her parents/guardians.

### C) Profiles of vulnerable households participated in the evaluation study



Out of the total 78 evaluation participant vulnerable households, the minimum age was 20 while the maximum was 80 years old. On average, participants were 39 years old. About 13 percent of the respondents were within the youth age group (29 years old or younger).

Graph 2: Age distribution of FHHH beneficiaries



Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

On the other hand, two of the respondents were male headed while the vast majority (97%) were female headed households. The average household size of the respondents was 3.75 persons. Educationally, about half of the respondents were illiterate. An additional 19 percent of the respondents were only able to read and write basic letters, sentences and compute basic arithmetic.

Table 3: Education of respondents

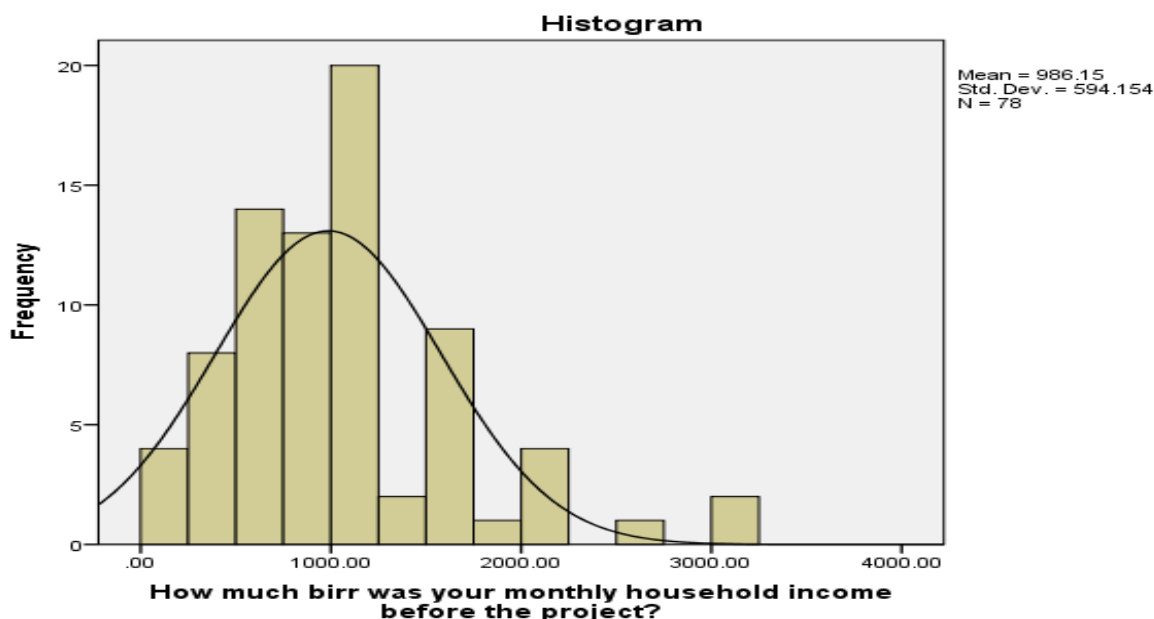
What is your educational status?		
Educational status	Number	Percent
Illiterate (cannot read and write)	40	51.3
Basic (adult) education (able to read and write)	15	19.2
Basic primary (grade 8 complete)	18	23.1
Secondary school (grade 12 complete)	5	6.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

Therefore, the educational status of about 70 percent of the respondents can be considered as very low, indicating their low level of competency in everyday life situations. In terms of occupation, the majority (68%) of them had menial jobs before the project support that included daily labor, domestic service, firewood and charcoal selling. On the other hand, about 24 percent of the respondents had been participating in mini family businesses. Furthermore, income from sexual exploitation was the main source of income for about 24 percent of the respondents.

In terms of the amount of household income before the project support, the average monthly income of the respondents was about 986 ETB.

Graph 3: Household income before the project support (retrospective analysis)



Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

## 5.2. Relevance

The end-term evaluation seeks to answer the extent to which the objectives of the project are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' policies. The analysis of relevance focuses on the following issues: the extent to which the project has been consistent with, and supportive of the policy and program framework of government's policies; the extent to which stated objectives correctly address the identified problems and social needs, the quality of the identification of key stakeholders and target groups.

### 5.2.1. Relevance to direct project beneficiaries

Project direct beneficiaries include sexually exploited children , vulnerable school children and poor households. Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is the sexual abuse of children in exchange for cash or in kind from the customer to the child or intermediary. Discussants were asked about the prevalence of sexually exploitative works and violence against women, girls and children. They responded that early and unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, unsafe abortion and early engagement in sexually exploitative work were common in their areas. Some mentioned that girls give birth at 15 and 16 with unknown men. Sexual violence against boy vending on the streets and rural-urban migration by boys was also reported as one of the community problems. Physical violence that led to child death happens sometimes. The negative impact of CSEC is profound and often permanent and needs urgent attention. As presented in the respondents' profile section, about 88% of the reintegrated girls were engaged in sexually exploitative work facing multitudes of social, cultural and health risks because of their means of livelihoods. None of the reintegrated girls had established their own family though some have burdens of raising their children as single mothers.

Similarly, about 78 percent of the vulnerable school children supported by the project were either half or full orphans. Majority of the vulnerable children received scholastic material supports reported that the supports helped them to continue their education, helped them to properly attend school, reduce their vulnerability to CSEC and saved them from possible child labor exploitations. The scholastic material supports contribute to the prevention of children especially girls from being school dropouts and sexual and physical exploitation. The tutorial classes help these children to become competent and successful in their education. The school mini Medias and girls' club play significant roles to raise school-community awareness about child protection. The Support for the vulnerable children is highly relevant and set critical milestone to ensure the wellbeing of these children.

Families of vulnerable children (i.e. evaluation study participant vulnerable households) used to earn below 1000 ETB per month to support about four (4) persons. The educational status, type of occupation and overall living condition of the respondent households were at the bottom of the ladder. Hence, the evaluation finding has produced sufficient evidence that the target groups were actually most vulnerable that deserve project interventions.

### **5.2.2. Relevance to community needs and priorities**

Sexually exploited girls were not only migrants. About 29 percent of them were from Bahir Dar city. Furthermore, 78 (91%) of the vulnerable school children were originally from within Bahir Dar, not rural-urban migrants. Finally, the vulnerable households who received training and business start-up capital are Bahir Dar city residents. As community conversation groups, community support and care coalition representatives and other qualitative data sources explained, such destitute community groups are on the verge of commercial sexual activities and other forms of violence and exploitation due to household poverty/food insecurity.

According to discussants from community conversation groups, for example, community members meet once in a month to discuss community problems as identified by the group members. They meet on the agreed date, place and time and brainstorming discussion agendas by themselves. There is no agenda imposed by the project, facilitator or any other body. The role of the facilitator is to ensure attendance of community conversation group members (between 25-30 members in a group), encourage them to brainstorm on discussion agendas, guide the group discussion and pass key messages based on the discussion agenda. Although there is no guideline for community conversation groups that direct their attention to the prevention of violence against girls and children and responding to their immediate and long-term strategic needs, the facilitators were trained on how to link community-agendas with such project focus. Due to this, community conversation group discussion agendas included harmful traditional practice, violence against women and girls, child care and protection, environmental hygiene and sanitation and commercial sex works and its consequences. The project has been providing tea/coffee services for the community conversation sessions so that discussants can refreshingly enjoy the community conversation session.

Therefore, in addition to supporting those vulnerable community groups, it is important to create general public awareness on the risk and consequences of commercial sexual activities, street vending, unsafe migration of children and child labour exploitation for any household and community-based

actions. Furthermore, the community actively participates in the identification of sexually exploited and other vulnerable children. Community conversation group members have also started advising immigrant girls and sexually exploited children to go back home and start small businesses from their villages instead of exposing themselves to various forms of violence in big towns like Bahir Dar. Hence, the project is relevant to prevent violence against children as well as to reintegrate and reunify those who are separated. Overall, the community becomes vigilant to violence against children and girls.

### **5.2.3. Relevance of the project support to partner schools**

Partner government schools appreciated the relevance of the project to address the problems of vulnerable school children. High level project flexibility, participatory project management and trustworthy project leadership, as they mentioned, were the factors that make the project relevant. For example, the project asked partner schools to make inventories of their problems related to girls' empowerment and safe school environment. Accordingly, schools make their own assessment and present their prioritized problems for FACE-TdH-NL support. It is based on such participatory methods that the school capacity building supports were provided. Some schools proposed Mini-Media strengthening support, others wanted their girls' clubs strengthened while others facilitated sanitary pads, bedsheets, tea pots (kettle), glass and washing facilities for girls during their menstruation period. Besides the material support based on their prioritized needs, the project has provided a training of trainers (TOT) for girls club leader teachers using existing training materials in the school system. This was relevant to the schools and clubs because the project has built on what they have already. Therefore, the project has given need-based capacity building support.

### **5.2.4. Relevance and complementarities to Government laws, policies and strategies**

The ReSEG Project was considered significantly aligned to the national child protection policies and priorities of Ethiopia. For example, the FDRE Constitution Article 36 is fully dedicated to promote and ensure child protection. Responding to needs of children in difficult circumstances means supporting and complementing the Alternative Child Care Guideline of the Government of Ethiopia developed in 2009. The guideline provides alternatives on direct assistance to children at risk such as reunification and rehabilitation. The government of Ethiopia is also committed to end harmful traditional practices such as early marriage by 2025. The Ethiopia government has also made a number of commitments to promote child protection. Examples included the ratification of the ILO Convention 138 on minimum age of admission to employment, ILO Convention 182 on worst forms of child labor that includes CSEC, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and the OAU charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children (1990), among others.

The Sustainable Development Goals, which Ethiopia is also committed to achieve by 2030, such as (SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing, SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 5; Gender equality, SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities, SDG 17: Partnership) and the GTP II social affairs cluster goals such as health, education and girls, women and youth empowerment are strongly supported and complemented by such child protection projects. GTP II goals and targets were particularly linked with indicators and targets set in SDGs.

Ethiopia has also developed new and revised existing national laws and proclamation to boost child protection and safe migration of people. For example, exploiting others through prostitution directly or by keeping a house for such commerce is punishable by penal code. According to Article 604 of the 1957 penal code; article 636 of the amended penal law Trafficking in women, infants and young persons to make them engage in prostitution is punishable with rigorous imprisonment not exceeding five years and a fine not exceeding ten thousand Ethiopian birr. The offence becomes aggravated with a penalty of three to ten years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of 20,000 Ethiopian birr when the victim is a minor in the amended law. Trafficking in women or minors for labor purposes is punishable under the revised penal code with a rigorous imprisonment of 3 to 20 years and a fine of 50,000 ETB [Article 600]<sup>12</sup>.

According to FDRE, labour proclamation No. 1156/2019, employees that have suffered sexual harassment or violence are entitled to terminate their contracts without notice, and are eligible for severance payment and compensation. The law provides a higher amount of compensation payment for employees who are forced to terminate their contract, without notice, for reasons of sexual harassment and violence. Forced termination of contracts by employees for reasons that are unlawful acts of the employer will entitle the employee to one month compensation payment whereas sexual harassment and violence victims will be granted three months of compensation payment. In this proclamation, sexual harassment includes any act that is made to persuade or convince another through utterances, signs or any other manner, to submit for sexual favor without his/her consent. Whereas sexual violence includes any sexual harassment accompanied by force or any attempt thereof.

As also indicated in SDG 17, partnership is a tool to achieve development targets. Furthermore, partnership makes project implementation cost effective, allows sharing and learning, and promotes sustainability of results and activities. The project has brought communities, children, law enforcement institutions, schools, civil society organizations, private sector actors and other stakeholders together to work as one for the sake of protecting children from exploitation. Referral mechanism was in place that promotes resilience, building life skills among children; provides psycho-social, medical and legal services, intensive awareness raising dialogues at community level, strengthening community support networks to promote community reporting, positive parenting and income generating activities. Stakeholders' coordination and capacity development was another strategy of the government of Ethiopia and regional governments for effective resource mobilization, utilization and management to end violence against children, girls and women. Furthermore, project strategies are aligned with the government child protection, women empowerment, education, and GTP II strategies in a way to ensure complementarity and sustainability.

Thus, the project approach is observably relevant to and consistent with the government policies, strategies and directions set forth to eliminate violence against girls and children including commercial sexual exploitation.

#### **5.2.5. Relevance to use and enhance existing knowledge and skills**

The project has systematically exploited existing knowledge, skills and resources through partnership with the private sector to enhance the knowledge, attitude and skills of vulnerable children and

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<sup>12</sup> MOLSA (2005), Report submitted to the UN Secretary General's Independent Expert on the Study on Violence Against Children May 2005

households. Except for the safe-home based life skills training, the project has attached vocational, business and entrepreneurship training for young girls and women to private sector training centers at subsidized and tuition fee free modalities. School-based life skills training and community conversation activities were rolled out using existing training materials and human resources (in the partner school and communities).

#### **5.2.6. Project flexibility**

The project was also flexible. Although it was not in its original plan, the project has supported poor community members with food and non-food items during COVID-19 period, provided the necessary capacity development training and business startup capital supports for sexually exploited girls being in their homes to prevent COVID-19 in the safe-home, and assisted vulnerable community group whose residence was destroyed by fire accident. All such flexible and need based supports were made in consultation with the local administration and the funding agency. However, the project period was not flexible; at least to make supportive supervision for newly reintegrated targets.

### **5.3. Effectiveness of the project**

#### **5.3.1. Effective targeting**

Project effectiveness starts with the right targeting. In this regard, the project followed the utmost participatory and bottom-up approach. For example, sexually exploited children and vulnerable households were identified, screened and selected using a multi-stage approach. The local community workers assigned by the government and the community support and care coalition structures are the primary actors in the identification process. Police, women, children and youth and labor and social affairs offices were active players in the withdrawal of sexually exploited children from their exploitative working environment. At sub-city level, there is a committee that verifies the proposed beneficiaries and gives the approval. Once this stage is completed, the list goes to the project for further verification and assistance. Accordingly, the project makes its own verification through home visits. The project provides its feedback and comment to the sub-city administration and final beneficiaries are selected in such a manner. Therefore, the project and city Administration have clear steps and procedures of beneficiary selection. Because the procedures are also participatory, there is no doubt on the appropriateness of the selection methods.

Selection of vulnerable households followed similar procedures where responsible government bodies, the 3C and the project were identifying and selecting the most vulnerable households who were engaged in menial businesses such as street vending except sexually exploitative activities and under extreme poverty. Their school children (both girls and boys) were also engaged in evening street businesses such as selling boiled eggs, beans, potatoes, gums, napkins and so on. Because of the existence of functional community support and care coalition structure in all the intervention Kebeles that are entrusted in identifying and registering such vulnerable households and children, right targeting was not a problem for the project. The community support and care coalition structure has the mandate of registering such community groups and referring the same to relevant service providers including FSCE-TdH partnership project. 3C participants from Gish Abay explained the specific roles of the 3C as follows:

*“The role of 3C is to identify poor households with vulnerable children based on specified criteria. We determine the level of poverty, prioritize children that deserve project supports, and link them with different NGOs including FSCE for the support.”* Therefore, there is a system-based targeting that reduces targeting errors.

For the vulnerable school children, the school has the list of most vulnerable children that deserve scholastic materials, school uniform and related support. There is a committee in the visited schools who identify and list vulnerable children for direct support. Therefore, it is based on the school system that the selection is completed.

Coupled with the discussions made on the respondent profile and relevance sections of this evaluation report, it was a success that the project has effectively targeted the most needy and vulnerable community groups following established target identification and selection procedures. If targeting went wrong in any way, it boils down to the government system and structure, not on the project.

### **5.3.2. Effective implementation of planned activities**

With regards to the achievements of the project results, the project has made marvelous progress. The progress can be checked against the project performance in terms of rolling out its planned activities and reaching the planned number of beneficiaries. Summary of project plan and achievement is provided in the following table.

Table 4: Project plans versus accomplishments

SN	Lists of activities	Unit	Plan	Achievement			
				Y1	Y2	Y3	Total
<b>D.1</b>	<b>Outcome 1: Victims of sexual exploitation girls rehabilitated, reintegrated and well empowered;</b>						
<b>D.1.1</b>	<b>Output 1.1: Girls immediately safeguarded.</b>						
1	Conduct area mapping, identify hot spots and facilitate outreach activities	Mapping	2	2	-	-	2
2	Safe house rent	Months	12	12	12	12	36
3	Safe home renovation	Year	3	1	1	1	3
4	Safe home equipment and furniture	Year	1	1	-	-	1
5	Provide food service for SEGs	Girls	150	50	25	25	100
6	Procure sanitary materials/soap, modes, hair oil	Girls	150	25	25	25	75
7	Avail medical service	Girls	150	25	25	25	75
8	Vocational skills training fee including training input	Girls	150	50	25	25	100
9	Transportation fee for the trainees from safe home to the training center	Girls	150	50	25	25	100
10	Arranging free services/ apprenticeship for rehabilitated SEGs	SEG	150	25	25	25	75
11	Provide life skill and Basic Business Skill training for SEG victims	Girls	150	25	25	50	100
12	Provide working startup capital for SEG victims and vulnerable girls	SEG	150	50	50	50	150
13	Facilitate reunification of children based on the best interest of the child	Children	36	8	13	6	27
14	Conduct family tracing	Children	36	8	13	6	27
<b>D.2</b>	<b>Outcome-2 Families and communities protect Girls from sexual exploitation</b>						
<b>D.2.1</b>	<b>Output-2.1 Community members with children vulnerable to exploitation participated in IGA trainings</b>						
1	Organize training on parenting skills for families of vulnerable children	Persons	750	50	172	-	222
2	Provide training on business development and IGA scheme for families	FHHs	150	50	50	-	100
3	Conduct mini market assessment thereby encourage HHs to come up with their respective business plan	Assessment	1	1	-	-	1
4	Organize the FHHH into either saving and credit association or SHGs	Groups	-	-	7	7	17
5	Provide startup capital for selected female headed HHs	FHHs	150	50	50	-	100
<b>D.2.2</b>	<b>Output-2.2 Community members participated in awareness raising</b>						
1	Provide TOT for selected youth volunteers on positive parenting child disciplining skills, CRC, prevention and consequence of SEG and family planning in order to cascade the training to female HHs	Training	2	2			
2	Support groups who took the TOT on positive parenting, child disciplining, CRC, prevention and consequence of SEG and family planning	Discussion	4	4			



3	Organize community conversations and facilitate discussions sessions on issues related to children and SEG in 3 sub-cities (BZ, Fasilo and GA)	Session	12	12	30	6	48
4	Select and provide training for community conversation facilitators	Facilitators	6	11	6	6	23
5	Experience sharing for community representatives	Persons		-	36	-	36
<b>E</b>	<b>Outcome-3: CBOs, CSOs protect the rights and best interest of children</b>						
<b>E.1</b>	<b>Output 3.1: CSO representatives trained on child rights and roles of actors</b>						
1	Establishing a CSO network to better prevent violence against children and girls and respond to the needs of violence affected girls	Network	1	1	-	-	1
2	Hold consultative meeting among CSO representatives for designing referral system and sharing of information	Meetings	4	1	3	-	4
3	Training for CSO forum members	Persons	30	-	19	-	19
<b>E.2</b>	<b>Output 3.2: 1680 community members participated in child protection committees</b>						
1	Organize trainings for child protection committee on GBV and child participation	Persons	50	20	30	30	80
2	Strengthen child protection structures through material support	CCC	3	3	3	-	3
3	Organize review meetings with child protection committees /CCCs	Meeting	12	3	4	-	7
<b>E.3</b>	<b>Output 3.3: 30 private sector decision makers participated in events</b>						
1	Organize familiarization workshop for the representatives of the private sector on the existing national policies and strategies in protecting children from SEG	Persons	30	30	42	-	72
2	Organize consultation meeting with representatives of the private sector on creating decent employment opportunity for girls	Meetings	1	1	-	-	1
3	Training on risky migration and trafficking for the private sector representatives	Persons	90	-	101	-	101
<b>E.4</b>	<b>Output 3.4: Over 3000 vulnerable children participated in awareness raising</b>						
1	Organize sensitization events such as drama, role play, school competitions and mobilize different IEC materials from others	Events	9	2	4	3	9
2	Celebrate Day of the African Child	Events	3	2	1	1	4
3	Provide educational material for vulnerable female students	Students	750	200	250	550	1000
4	Support and strengthen school clubs	Schools	?	-	3	-	3
5	Provide life skill training for vulnerable girls attending school	Students	750	-	900	-	900
<b>F</b>	<b>Government capacity building</b>						
1	Organize awareness raising workshop for government employees	Persons	80	35	35	40	110
2	Training for police officers	Officers	40	30	31	31	92
<b>G</b>	<b>Emergency supports</b>						
1	Educational materials for vulnerable girls affected by the fire outbreak	Girls	66	-	66	-	66

<b>2</b>	Educational materials for vulnerable boys affected by the fire outbreak	Boys	33	-	33	-	33
<b>3</b>	Provide clothes for affected girls	Girls	99	-	99	-	99
<b>4</b>	BBS training for FHHs participated in IGA	HHS	6	-	6	-	6
<b>5</b>	startup capital for FHHs to start IGAs	HHS	5	-	5	-	65
<b>6</b>	Provide psychosocial counseling training for families of affected children	Persons	150	-	150	-	150
<b>7</b>	Support COVID-19 affected households with basic needs (food and non-food)	HHS	50	-	-	50	50
<b>H</b>	<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>						
<b>1</b>	Quarterly review meeting with stakeholders	Meetings	12	4	4	4	12
<b>2</b>	Supportive supervision by project staffs	Meetings	4	4		12	
<b>3</b>	Facilitate project-end evaluation	Evaluation	1	-	-	1	1

Sources: FSCE, Dec/2020

The project has accomplished nearly all of its planned activities. Some of the deviations and under performance are explainable by the problems posed by COVID-19 pandemic and the state of emergency levied by the Federal and Regional Governments. Due to this pandemic, some of the group-based activities such as community-conversation, public awareness raising activities and workshops were canceled and their budgets were transferred to unforeseen emergency community support activities. Considering the results-based management framework and Project Logical Framework, the implementation of planned activities leads to the achievement of project outputs. Therefore, the project performance presented in the above table provides indicative performance in terms of achieving immediate project results (i.e. outputs).

### 5.3.3. Effectiveness in terms of achieving project results

The planned project outputs, as clearly presented in the project document, include the following.

- Sexually exploited commercial sex worker girls received basic need services
- Community members with children vulnerable to exploitation participated in IGA trainings
- Female Headed Households received training on positive parenting and life skills, CRC, prevention and consequence of SEG and family planning
- FHHHs received business startup capital
- Victims of CSEC received psychosocial support at FSCE's safe home.
- Technical and material supports provided for School gender clubs.
- Vulnerable children received school material support
- CSO representatives trained on child rights and roles of actors
- Community members participated in child protection committees
- Private sector decision makers participated in events
- Vulnerable children participated in awareness raising
- Government capacity development support provided
- Emergency supports provided for natural and human made disaster affected community members

Accordingly, the above planned project outputs are achieved soon after the implementation of the planned activities.

### Achievement of project outcomes

The project objectives stated in the project document are to:

- Contribute to reduction of the incidence of commercial sexual exploitation of girls in Bahir Dar town and surrounding areas;
- Support girls at risk of/victims to protect themselves from sexual exploitation;
- Aware and empower families and communities to protect children from commercial sexual exploitation;

#### Project outcomes

Victims of sexual exploitation girls rehabilitated, reintegrated and empowered  
Vulnerable school children continue their education  
Families and communities protect girls from sexual exploitation  
Schools, government, law enforcing bodies, CSOs and the private sector are empowered to prevent violence against children and girls and respond to the social, psychosocial, legal and economic needs of victims of sexual violence, vulnerable children and their disadvantaged families

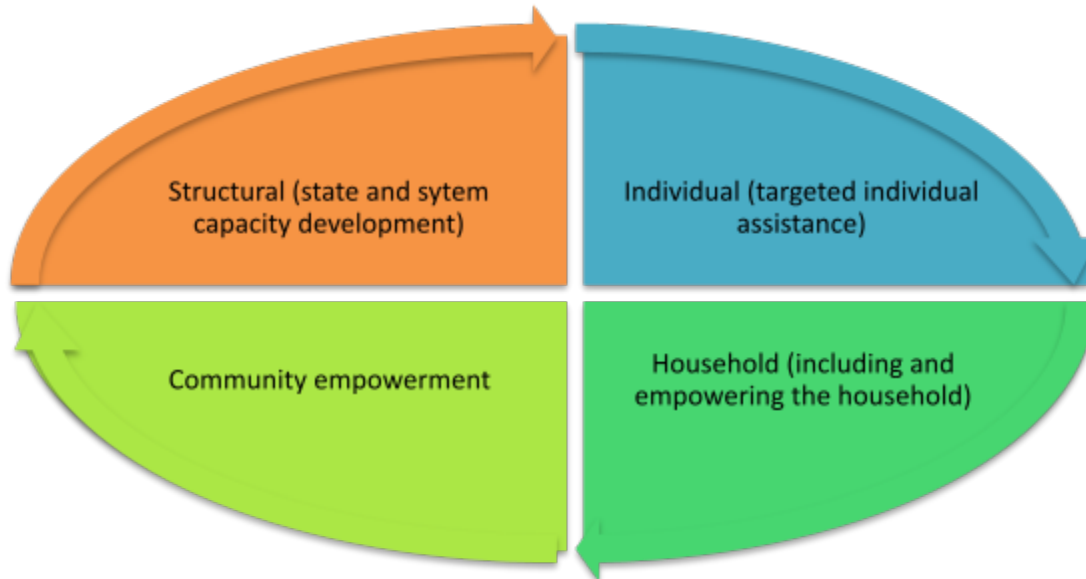
- Support local government sectoral offices and police to implement plans and policies for combating commercial sexual exploitation of children;
- Establish CSOs network and strengthen partnership to respond to cases of commercial sexual exploitation of girls in Bahir Dar and
- Engage private sector actors in Bahir Dar to prevent sexual exploitation of and respond to the needs of commercial sex work violence victims

As understood from the general flow and logical relationships of the project results, the evaluation team considered “Contribute to reduction of the incidence of commercial sexual exploitation of girls” as an overarching goal of the project towards which the achievement of the rest of the project objectives will contribute. Accordingly, this goal level achievement is discussed under the project impact. Therefore, project effectiveness in terms of achieving outcomes and impacts is elaborated hereunder.

### 1. General understanding about child protection framework

In a broader perspective, child protection would mean preventing violence and responding to the immediate and strategic needs of the victims and survivors through successful rehabilitation and reintegration mechanisms. Organizations working in the sector (such as IOM, Plan International and Save the Children International) recommend the socio-ecological model to prevent girls and children from various forms of violence and vulnerability and to respond to the needs of those who are already affected. This socio-ecological model is a matrix that embodies the following elements.

Diagram 1: Socio-Ecological Model of Child Protection



Source: Adopted from IOM (2016)

If one looks at this project from this borrowed comprehensive child protection framework point of view, it has individual assistance for the vulnerable children, economic empowerment for the disadvantaged households who and whose young girls would be at the verge to joint street vending, sexual exploitative work and other illicit and unyielding activities because of their poverty and destitutions, it tried to

empower the school and entire community through various methods including community conversation activities, attempted to empower and engage the civil societies and private sector actors and enhance the capacities of community structures, concerned government agencies from the very local to sub-city and city levels and the law enforcing bodies.

On the other hand, it has touched the social, psychosocial and economic lives of the individuals affected or vulnerable to sexually exploitative work and related risky economic activities. More importantly, reintegrated children of sexually exploited and vulnerable female headed households were the primary project beneficiaries that received social, psychosocial and economic rehabilitation and reintegration support. Having said this, let us look at the performance of the project in detail.

**Achievement of Outcome 1: Girls at risk of/victims to CSEC are supported to protect themselves from sexual exploitation**

**i) The social, psychosocial and economic reintegration of sexually exploited children and vulnerable households**

Because of COVID-19 pandemic, the project was not able to admit all eligible children into the safe-home for social, psychosocial and life skill training. As shown in the following table, only about 51% of the respondent girls had received safe-home based services.

Table 5: Access to safe-home based services and training among reintegrated sexually exploited children  
**What support did the project provide you (multiple answers possible)?**

<b>1. Safe-home based Psychosocial (food, shelter, counseling, cloth, etc.)</b>	38	51%	
<b>2. Vocational skill trainings</b>	53	71%	
<b>3. Business and entrepreneurship skill trainings</b>	54	72%	
<b>4. None of the above supports</b>	0	0%	

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

Among the randomly selected 75 beneficiaries, 38 (51%) of them were admitted in the safe-home and received basic services, counseling and life-skills training. According to the project management, technical staff and the senior safe-home mothers who served over a decade in the center, all reintegrated sexually exploited children had equal access to participate in review meetings, life sharing events, case presentations and market assessments for their own individual business development. The situation creates an opportunity for them to create social networks within the target groups for future partnership, mutual support and cooperation. Therefore, the project is aware about the importance of social and psychosocial rehabilitation and reintegration support prior to economic reintegration of the violence affected girls. However, the counseling service was not provided by trained professionals counselors through the project period and the duration was uniform for all regardless of their possible differential psychological and emotional harms. In addition, project beneficiaries and the project staff believe that the three months psychosocial service is too short to bring behavioral change in many of the sexually exploited children. Project staffs justified that re-entering into commercial sex work is observed due to inadequate safe-home based professional counseling and guidance services.

The safe-home was renovated and furnished in a way that ensures safety and health of the beneficiaries. Admitted vulnerable girls received shelter, food, life skills training in the fields of reproductive health, food preparation and environmental and personal hygiene and related supports for three consecutive months until they reintegrate in the community. The social worker of the safe-home elaborated that the counseling and life skill training mainly target children's emotional, social and psychological states aiming at achieving internal strength, growth in social and interpersonal skills. The aim is to cultivate their personal growth, self-control, behavioral change, and social relations. The guidance and counseling services were provided either in one-to-one or group bases. The psychosocial counseling was serving as an engine that keeps all other project activities to run smoothly and effectively.

In addition, girls received essential rehabilitation support such as medical and health care services, counseling and legal aid in collaboration with pertinent stakeholders like Family Guidance Association, health centers, offices of women, children and youth affairs, police and the Woreda administration office.

On the other hand, about 70 percent of the randomly selected 75 sexually exploited beneficiaries reported that they have received vocational and entrepreneurship skill training as a preparation for their economic reintegration. Although the project has declared that all reintegrated girls received life skills, vocational and entrepreneurship skill training, the remaining 30% of the selected respondents did not confirm this. Whatsoever the difference here, the project has arranged, depending on the nature of the business type they preferred, both vocational, entrepreneurship and business management training opportunities before releasing business startup capital for their economic reintegration. Furthermore, apprenticeship programs, for example for those trained in catering, were arranged to further familiarize them with the work environment and equip them with the necessary interpersonal skills. Safe-home staff revealed that following life skills and vocational training, girls either reunite with their families or reintegrate to their communities.

A project social worker working for the safe-home stated that after completing their skills training course, trainees are given a chance to apprenticeship aiming at developing their mastery of the field. They are encouraged to start the apprenticeship even before graduation to let them be more experienced and competent when contending for jobs. Placements for apprenticeship are facilitated by the project and some training centers facilitate field practice by themselves. Therefore, vocational skill training was supported by practical attachments and apprenticeship facilities. This is useful to make the training practical as often stated by the Government Technical and Vocational Education and Training program.

## **ii) Educational supports for vulnerable children**

Vulnerable school children were also supported individually. All valid 86 randomly selected vulnerable school children have confirmed that the project has given them scholastic materials. Out of these 86 sampled children, only one was not in the education system (dropout) while the other (85) were attending their education. Asked about the importance of the support to their education and life, the

majority (61.6%) replied that they would have dropped out of the school system if the support was not made.

Table 6: Significance of the project support to children's education

<b>If you were not supported by the project, what do you think would be your education and life now?</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
I would have dropped out of school or not enrolled at all	53	61.6
I would have engaged in some street vending and income generating works to support myself and my family	13	15.1
Nothing will happen, I can continue my education as I am doing now	8	9.3
I do not know exactly	12	14.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

As can be seen from the table above, only about 9 percent of the respondents were confident that they can continue their education regardless of the project support. Only one of the survey respondents was a school dropout girl whose age was 20, single orphan and lived with her mother at the time of this evaluation.

A beneficiary girl from Fasilo sub-city asserted that “...I received pens, pencils, uniforms, exercise books and school bags all of which were useful to continue my education... I could not have afforded these educational items **(KII with vulnerable Child, Fasilo Sub city)**).

Government offices confirmed that the project had also awarded a program for excelling vulnerable children to further motivate them that they are actually brilliant in their education regardless of their economic vulnerability. The Department of Education has further elaborated that *the educational material supplies addressed both material deprivations and psychological distances of vulnerable children from their peers coming from better off families. He added that the supplies facilitated inclusive education in the intervention schools.* Individually interviewed beneficiary girls are able to acknowledge the value of scholastic material supplies to their education, improved self-confidence and renewed interest to continue their education (either to higher education or the technical training) as a result of the project.

Hence, the vast majority were sure either to drop out from the education system, engage in some sorts of economic activities that would compromise their education, especially time for study, health and emotional developments. Here, it is important to link education as a child protection system and school as shields where children can not only hide themselves from violent adults but also as a place where they acquire social, intra and interpersonal skills that are useful to protect themselves from violence, abuse and exploitation. Therefore, the project implanted HOPE in the hearts of vulnerable children.

### **iii) Experiences of sexual violence and exploitation among the reintegrated sexually exploited and vulnerable school children**

Reintegrated sexually exploited beneficiaries were also asked if they have personal experiences of sexual violence and whether they have reported the incidence to concerned bodies or nor. First, 41 (about 55%)

of the (N=75) respondents know where to report cases of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation. Second, 13 (31.7%) of the 41 respondents who have ever experienced sexual violence had reported the incidence to police offices and concerned government bodies. This is an encouraging practice of the rights holders. Rights holders' empowerment aims at two purposes: preventing the self from violence or reporting the incidence to law enforcing bodies for any legal measures against the perpetrator and seeking for redress.

Similar to sexually exploited beneficiaries, vulnerable school children were asked about their personal experience of sexual, physical and emotional violence from their family members, peers, school and community. Out of the valid 86 respondents, 4 (4.6%) have experienced sexual violence whereas only one of the respondents experienced sexual violence within the last 30 days. However, a relatively larger proportion of the respondents (11.6%) reported other forms of violence such as physical and emotional abuse from their schools. Nevertheless, only two of those who experienced sexual, physical and emotional violence had reported the case to concerned bodies which include homeroom teachers and school principals. Their main reason for not reporting the incidences of violence was lack of knowledge and information about where and how to report such cases. On top of this, none of the 78 sample respondent household leaders reported sexual violence of their own children in the past one month.

**iv) Knowledge, attitude and practices of reporting sexual violence and exploitation**

Reintegrated sexually exploited beneficiaries and vulnerable school children were asked about their knowledge, attitude and practices of reporting the incidences of sexual violence and exploitation to law enforcing or any other concerned government bodies. The response collected revealed that slightly above average of the reintegrated sexually exploited beneficiaries knew where to report incidences of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation.

**Knowledge and practice**

	Respondents	
	Girls	Vulnerable Children
I know where to report incidences of sexual violence/exploitation	55%	35%
I have reported sexual violence/exploitation cases I knew before	17%	2.30%

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

However, only 17% of those reintegrated girls were able to report the incidences of sexual violence and exploitation indicating that there is an attitudinal bottleneck to report sexual violence cases. On the other hand, only 35 percent of the school children know where to report cases of sexual violence and exploitation. Relatively speaking, this figure is smaller than those sexually exploited children. Furthermore, it was only 2.3 percent of the vulnerable children who reported the sexual violence cases they knew to any concerned body they know. Overall, schools need more attention and support in terms of creating awareness and anonymous methods of reporting attempts and incidences of sexual violence that would happen in the school and community setup.

The project has reached 150 sexually exploited persons in its three year interventions. Among them, 75 (50%) of them received safe-home based social, psychosocial and life skill services and training. The remaining 50% received out-of-safe home services and support. By reaching 150 sexually exploited



children, the project has achieved 100% of its planned activity in terms of withdrawing and reintegrating the victims. According to contacted beneficiaries, those out of safe-home beneficiaries missed life skill training opportunities. They considered life skill training as one of the most important determinants for successful reintegration

For this evaluation, 76 sexually exploited beneficiaries (50% of them received safe-home based services and support while 50% were direct beneficiaries) were randomly selected for the end-line evaluation. Among those randomly selected beneficiaries reintegrated by the project, 47 (63 %) of the 76 samples were available within Bahir Dar City at the time of the evaluation while the remaining 29 (37 %) have reported that they are out of Bahir Dar City as presented in the following table.

Table 7: Current residence and situation of reintegrated sexually exploited persons

Sub-city	Randomly selected samples	Available samples	Percent available
Belay Zeleke	10	6	60
Fasilo	36	26	72
Gish Abay	30	15	50
Total	76	47	63

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

There are reintegrated girls with unique achievements because of the project support. For example, a reintegrated girl said, “...among many other things that I get from the safe home, I appreciate the vocational skills training. After graduating from hairdressing skill training, I worked in a beauty salon for two years. Now, I have become self-supportive, resumed my education and leading a healthy life” (**Rehabilitated girl, Gish Abay**). This kind of reintegration is an exceptional success because the reintegrated girl has also resumed her education program which will add immense value in her future career.

During the telephone conversation with reintegrated sexually exploited girls living out of Bahir Dar, government social workers working at sub-city levels and discussions made with survey administrators, it was learnt that there were the reintegrated sexually exploited persons who s have left Bahir Dar City because of lack of work place, rising house rent and living conditions. They flew to their home-towns and small towns around Bahir Dar City and opened their own small businesses with affordable house rent and living costs. Hence, the decision they made is a kind of wise decision considering their prospective income.

However, there were reintegrated girls living in Bahir Dar City during this project end-line evaluation that are not able to discontinue their commercial works because of inadequate working capital, high rental of workplace from private renters, less feasible income generating activities and health problems.

Qualitative data sources from government, community and beneficiaries indicated that the size of children and women engaged in sexually exploitative work in Bahir Dar City exceeds 10,000. This number may not provide tangible evidence on the trends of sexually exploitative activities in the City. However, respondents reiterated that the number is increasing from time to time. However, the awareness raising activities at community, school and private sector levels were instrumental to reduce

sexual exploitation of children in Bahir Dar city. For example, community conversation participants' advice *women and children engaged in sexually exploitative works in their villages and rented houses* to drop the risky activity and either to reunify with their families or reintegrate in the community through the support of the project. They stated that many of the individuals engaged in sexually exploitative work went back to their home villages following the advice and project support. Specifically, community conversation group members stated that the knowledge and skills obtained from the community conversation sessions are important to inform their adolescent girls and boys to refrain from unsafe sexual activities. Group members also advise young girls in their neighbors to prevent themselves from unsafe and exploitative sexual activities. In addition, private sector actors contributed to the reduction of sexual exploitation of girls by providing them with vocational and business skill training for the survivors. The vocational and business skill training assisted them to join violence free business environments either by opening their own income generating activities or by being employed in safe workplaces.

**Achievement of Outcome 2: Families and communities in and around Bahir Dar town are well-informed and supported and protect children from commercial sexual exploitation**

Vulnerable households were asked about the support they received from the project relevant to their economic empowerment. All of the 78 (100%) randomly selected beneficiaries confirmed that they have received relevant business trainings and business startup capital. In addition to receiving critical business knowledge, attitude and skills from the training and business startup capital from the project, the majority (78%) were organized into self-help groups that run social and economic activities simultaneously as shown below.

Table 8: Membership in economic and social groups

	Are you a member of any self-help (or saving) group established by the project?			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	61	78.2	78.2	78.2
No	17	21.8	21.8	100.0
Total	78	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

This organization into social and economic groups does mean that members of the group can establish an economic and social support system that will support their sustainable livelihood endeavors. Asked about the core activities of their groups, members of the group said that they meet on a regular basis, save money when they meet and provide and manage internal lending from their own sources.

Vulnerable households supported by the project were also asked about their pre-project and after project household income levels and their food security situations. As the following table depicted the finding in detail, there is general improvement in terms of the volume of money or cash the households are getting at the time of this evaluation as compared to the pre-project situation.

Table 9: Household income before and after the project

**Statistics**

	How much birr was your monthly household income before the project?	How much birr does your household get per month after the project support?
<b>Valid</b>	78	78
<b>Missing</b>	0	0
<b>Mean</b>	986.1538	1746.1538
<b>Median</b>	950.0000	1500.0000
<b>Std. Deviation</b>	594.15384	1371.59896
<b>Minimum</b>	150.00	500.00
<b>Maximum</b>	3000.00	6400.00
<b>Quartile</b>		
<b>25</b>	500.0000	775.0000
<b>50</b>	950.0000	1500.0000
<b>75</b>	1225.0000	2000.0000

Source: Field Survey, Dec/2020

The average household income has increased from 986 ETB to 1746 (about 77%) and the median income has shifted from 950 ETB to 1500 ETB. Similarly, the incomes of the lowest quartile of respondents have increased from 500 ETB to 775 ETB and the highest has boosted from 1225 ETB to 2000 ETB. In terms of household food security, there is a general trend of positive development from very poor with high food shortage to mild and from mild to no food shortage levels as presented in the following table.

Table 10: Perceptions and experiences of household food insecurity

**How do you explain your household food security situation before the project?**

Feelings and experiences about food [in]security	Before		After	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
We had no food gap/shortage	1	1.3	9.0	11.5
We had a mild food gap/shortage. We rarely face food insecurity	25	32.1	54.0	69.2
Very poor, we had generally food gaps/shortage	52	66.7	15.0	19.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>78.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

The proportion of households who do not experience food shortage has jumped from 1.3 to 11.5 percent. Similarly, the proportion of very poor households who had generally food gaps dropped from about 67 percent down to 19 percent.

Graph 4: Food insecurity situation of households



Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

The after project food insecurity situation has a normal curve distribution where the majority of the households concentrate at the mild food insecurity level and the relatively smaller proportions hold right and left tails. Additional time and effort are expected to further improve the food security situation pulling the curve to the left direction (i.e. no food shortage). This shape will happen when the economic activities are consolidated through experience, additional working capital and strategic market places are secured by the business owners.

*“Initially I had nothing. I did not have anything and was waiting for peaceful death. However I was given the opportunity to get 8,000 birr with BBS training from FSCE and am now in good economic shape supporting my children with basic needs” (FHHH, Gish Abay)*

Overall, the supports provided for vulnerable households can be considered instrumental in reducing income poverty thereby contribute to reduced vulnerability of girls and children to sexual violence and exploitation. Supported households have reduced household poverty by virtue of which no household members are expected to enter into sexually exploitative works thereby exposed to sexual exploitation.

With regard to community-wide intervention, the project has tried to organize and facilitate community conversation sessions in the three intervention sub-cities, strengthened the community support and care coalition and strengthen schools found in the three intervention sub-cities to improve their humanitarian supports for the very poor and vulnerable children, supply educational materials, strengthen girls’ clubs and the entire school community about violence, abuse and exploitation of girls and children. They focus on creating violence-free communities and schools through various means. For example, some schools have slogans like “One who bullies is a dog”.

*Children feel free to report cases of child abuse either to their teachers, peers or community members. Girls report to us if they experience sexual harassment from teachers and community members. This helped us take actions (School principal, Yedil Chibo Primary School).*

The training and material support provided for partner schools were also instrumental for the reduction of sexual exploitation of vulnerable children from poor families. The support assisted in addressing problems of sexual exploitation in many ways. For example, children were informed about the possibility of sexual exploitation while working on streets during evenings so that the educational materials and school uniform supports are meant for avoiding risky night businesses to cover such educational expenses. Second, schools were assisted to educate their school community about violence against children and girls and ensure continued material support (such as sanitary materials, pants and educational materials) for vulnerable children through their own resource mobilization strategies and partnership building. Third and very important was to make schools violence-free through training, awareness raising events and incident reporting systems. Atse Tsertse Dingil primary school can be considered as one of the best performing schools in this regard. The school had various cases of violence against children and girls. According to the school director, violence was not limited to students. However, this situation has totally changed recently partly because of the awareness raising activities, empowered girls' club, law enforcement in the school compound and availability of sanitary pads, tea and rest room for girls during their menstrual period.

Depending on their choice, there are schools that received club capacity building support. In order to make the school environment child-friendly and violence free, the school community needs to be aware of its roles and responsibilities towards the protection of children. For example, the project had strong awareness raising activities through a gender club in Yedil Chibo primary school. It trained teachers and students on life skills to prevent CSEC. In addition, the project provided sanitary pad, pants, soaps, bed sheets, stove, and canteen materials for the gender club. Support also provided to maintain shower and resting rooms for girls who experience menstruation. Interviewed teachers revealed that due to such support, teachers are not only aware of their roles, but also become important actors in the protection of children. A club coordinator said, *"I have attended more than two trainings organized by FSCE on child protection. We learnt about forms of child abuse, where to report violence cases and what and how to help survivors. We support awareness activities as club patrons where children learn more about child sexual abuse and how to protect themselves (Gender Club coordinator, Yedil Chibo Primary school).*

Gender clubs are capacitary and use music, dance, poems, drama, essay and art while teaching school communities about child sexual abuse and protection issues. For this purpose, school mini Medias have been supported through which children are encouraged to produce poems, posters and theatre to be shared with their peers, teachers and support staff at break time.

The project has worked closely with the community members and local leaders to increase their capacity to protect children from CSEC. Visited community representatives were strengthened and supported through training and awareness creation sessions. Monthly community conversation sessions with families of vulnerable children were organizing. The evaluation team found evidence that these groups are making significant input into protection of children from abuse by watching over their communities to prevent incidences of abuse, facilitating the reporting and timely follow-up of child abuse cases. The trainings organized by the project and community representatives are able to understand issues of child abuse and child protection. Specifically, their roles in preventing child abuse and protecting children were visible in their communities.

*We are trained by the project on issues of child abuse and child protection. The project has equipped us with knowledge on how to prevent and support children who are abused. We are now able to advise our fellow parents on CSEC (**Community member, Gish Abay Sub city**).*

*We have received enough information from FSCE on CSEC and child protection. We are now able to identify and report cases of child abuse in our community to police (**CR, Gish Abay Sub-city**).*

Findings from the FGD discussants showed that community members were well-informed of what CSEC is and its drivers. Explaining why CSEC was prevalent in the community, the community representatives indicated that: “...Poverty is one of the main reasons... [And]...some parents are poor and do not have the money to properly cater for their children... Children are therefore left to feed themselves and sometimes become involved in these social vices...[others include]...Neglect due to broken families, divorce and single parenting,...Peer pressure and the influence of bad children push children to join CSEC ...”

In support of the community awareness and sense of responsibility, a police officer and social worker from Gish Abay sub-city said, “Most of the violence cases we receive are reported by community members. Community members are now more vigilant and aware about child protection issues than ever before. This is because, I think, the project has succeeded in creating a sense of responsibility among the community members”. Therefore, police and other law enforcing bodies are closely working to prevent child abuse and exploitation because of the workshops, trainings and community conversation sessions.

Most of these community-wide interventions, such as community support and care coalition and school support, are well structured and have systems of sustainability. The community support and care coalition is a legally recognized structure established by Regulation No. 92/2012 by the Amhara National Regional State. The community support and care coalition is established to serve the following four objectives directly quoted from the Regulation.

- i. To set up, based on the community, a sustainable collection and utilization system of wealth to be used for the groups of society who are in dire situations so as to ensure self-reliance through eliminating the sense of dependency of the community;
- ii. To ensure the provision of various services for those children who are parentless and are in dire situations as well as to respect and fulfill their basic rights through enacting an activity based on enhancing the capabilities of families of children in dire situations;
- iii. To enhance the capability and participation of the community-based institutions so as to enable them render support and care to those groups of society who are in the life of dire situations and
- iv. To take protective measures prior to the appearance of social problems through studying the source.

Therefore, the project has made pioneering measures in the city to strengthen such legally recognized and multi-tasked community-based structure that has the mandate of mobilizing appropriate resources and utilizing the same for the support and care community groups such as girls, boys, female headed households, elderly and people with chronic health problems, among others. If it is really possible to strengthen this structure, through some fundamental structural changes such as the composition of the

leadership prescribed in the Regulation, no other community-based institutions would have been necessary in the city and region to support and care for the poor and destitute.

The community conversation session has a very high probability of transforming itself into self-help and economic or saving groups so that members can blend social and economic activities that are beneficial for the individual members and their household.

Evaluation participant girls, vulnerable school children and project beneficiary female headed households were also asked about the extent to which their households and the community are free from sexual violence and exploitation. For example, out of the 75 valid respondents, majority (95 and 77 percent) of the reintegrated girls affirmed that their household and community (neighbors) are safe for girls and children.

Table 11: Knowledge and perception of Ex-commercial sex workers about the safety of their homes and the community

1. How do you explain the safety of your house for you in terms of sexual violence?

1	It is safe, there is no sexual and/or domestic violence	71	95%	
2	It is not safe, I personally experience sexual violence by a family member/intimate partner	3	4%	
3	It is not safe, I know a girl who was sexually abused and exploited	0	0%	
4	2 & 3 are my experiences	1	1%	
2. How do you explain the safety of your neighborhood/community for children, especially girls?				
1	It is safe, children and girls feel safe and secured	58	77%	
2	It is not safe, children and girls do not feel safe because they experience sexual violence	16	21%	
3	Because it is not safe, children do not go out alone for education, play and work	1	1%	

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

In the same manner, vulnerable school children who benefited from the project were asked about their relationships, level of confidence to ask personal questions and seek help whenever necessary from adults in their household, neighbors/community and schools. As shown below, vast majority (99%) of the respondents feel and believe that their family environment is sexual violence free.

Table 12: Children's confidence to ask personal questions and seek help from adults around them

SN	Relationship, confidence and ability to seek help	Yes	No
1	Feels her household/family is safe from sexual violence	99	1
2	Feels her neighbors and the community are safe from sexual violence	79	21
3	Feels confident and fearless when asking and talking to her teachers	69	31
4	Feels confident and fearless when asking and talking to adults in the community	64	36
5	Feels confident and fearless when asking and talking with adults in the households	91	9
6	Can freely talk and discuss about sexual violence with peers and friends	58	42

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

Similarly, about 91% of the respondents have the confidence to ask any person in their household about personal questions and seek help whenever necessary without fear and shame. However, children’s confidence to ask personal questions and talk to adults in their neighborhood/community and their teachers show a consistent decline. More importantly, the confidence of respondent students to ask their teachers any personal questions, discuss matters that affect their lives and seek help whenever necessary is lower than their confidence in any other adult in the neighborhood and community. Even worse, children have lowest level of confidence to raise the issues of sexual violence to their peers and friends and discuss on matters related to it. This may raise the issue of concern around the school environment or the awareness creation level made in the school community. But generally, the evaluation finding has shown a positive result in terms of safety of the household, community and school environment for girls and children.

The evaluation finding generally indicates that households, neighbors and the wider community are safe for the majority of the respondents though there are still concerns about the safety of the school and the community for children, especially girls. Children need to be sensitized and feel confident to ask teachers and adults in their community personal questions and seek help and protection whenever they feel necessary. More importantly, they need to talk to and discuss sexual violence issues with their peers and friends as any social agenda. Sexual violence shall not be considered as a taboo for children to raise and discuss. Interventions should also include how to share concerns, feelings, unwanted sexual queries from friends and adults and methods of protecting the self from possible sexual violence, abuse and exploitation, especially through cooperation and transparency.

Randomly selected project beneficiary household heads were also asked about their confidence on their neighbors and the community in terms of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation. As can be seen in the following table, only about 62 percent of the respondents were confident about their neighbors and the community while the remaining 38 percent of the respondents do not feel safe and secured.

Table 13: Confidence of parents and guardians on their neighbors and community

SN      How do you explain the safety of your neighborhood/community for children, especially girls?			
	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	It is safe, children and girls feel safe and secured	62	79.5
2	It is not safe, children and girls do not feel safe because they experience sexual violence	14	17.9
3	Because it is not safe, children do not go out alone for education, play and work	2	2.6
Total		78	100.0

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

When compared with children’s response, parents and guardians were less confident that the community in Bahir Dar city is safe for girls and children. Although above average of the evaluation participant heads of households reported that their neighbors and the community are safe for girls and children, the finding indicates remaining challenges to create a child friendly community.

**Achievement of Outcome 3: Local government sectoral offices and police in Bahir Dar area implement plans and policies for combating commercial sexual exploitation of children**



The project has also included government, law enforcing bodies, private sector actors and civil society organizations operating in Bahir Dar city in its sensitization, capacity building and project management works. By doing so, as government sector offices affirmed, the project is a model project where many other civil society organizations that have better budgets can learn on how to utilize resources for the benefit of the poor in a transparent manner.

Practically again, the project has engaged government and law enforcing bodies at planning, joint monitoring, stakeholders' review meetings and project evaluation periods. This participatory approach is so empowering that the stakeholders can easily learn on how to plan, execute and monitor similar projects. Furthermore, it has provided some material support for the needy law enforcing institutions like the police office so that the office can play its child protection roles with good spirit, motivation and working environment. Stationery material supports were parts of the supports provided for police offices in the intervention sub-cities.

Training for government and law enforcing bodies was another contributing factor for reduced violence against children and girls in the City. One of the major achievements was proper targeting. The second achievement is linked with participatory project planning and management that ensured effective utilization of the project resources for the implementation of project planned activities and achievement of results. Finally, this strategy or intervention has assisted the local administration sections to become more competent in terms of identifying vulnerable community members, organizing beneficiaries and providing work places and monitoring the status of supported beneficiaries. Although provision of work places for the target beneficiaries has its own limitations, there are encouraging attempts in this regard.

Therefore, the initiatives, regardless of the limitations of the project to include law enforcement and policy advocacy in its child protection agenda with government and law enforcing actors and special emphasis on small hotels, bars and informal private sector actors to make their workplace free from sexual and gender based violence, of the project were strategic and impactful.

*Given the efforts made, the law enforcement bodies are not able to take sufficient actions even on the brokers who are doing criminal activities in front of their offices. This is because the problem is immense and requires stakeholders' coordinated effort, time, resource and commitment.*

#### **Achievement of Outcomes 4: CSOs coordinate/collaborate to respond to cases of commercial sexual exploitation of girls in Bahir Dar**

With the civil society organizations, the project has established a network and referral system to better serve children and girls that are affected by violence, abuse and exploitation. The network established is particularly working on child protection issues and promoting effective referral services for violence affected children and girls. Contacted network member organizations confirmed that they started referral services, sharing information and resources for the benefit of the survivors and victims of violence.

Civil society organizations were supported to strengthen their partnership for effective knowledge sharing and referral systems. Because of CSO partnership, those persons engaged in sexually exploitative

activities and who had healthcare needs were assisted by Family Guidance Association for free, beneficiaries who need extended psychosocial and professional counseling services, especially boys, were assisted by AGAR-Ethiopia, Bahir Dar branch and so on. Furthermore, Jerusalem Children and Community Development Organization (JeCCDO) has contributed a lot in terms of assisting women in exploitative sexual activities that are not eligible by FSCE-TdH NL partnership project. Therefore, CSO collaboration and partnership has played meaningful roles in reducing sexual exploitation against children, girls and women.

### **Achievement of Outcome 5: Private sector actors in Bahir Dar town are actively engaged in the protection of girls from commercial sexual exploitation**

The project has also engaged the private sector actors in three different ways that in one way or another promote child protection. First, private sector actors have provided vocational and entrepreneurship training for reintegrated beneficiaries either for free or at a subsidized cost. Second, the project has attached trainees with the private sector, like hotels, for practical skill training, familiarizing them with the work environment and advancing their attitudes and behavior. Third, the project worked to lobby the private sector to give priorities during employment for those trained vulnerable girls and women. The project has promoted the newly acquired skills of the sexually exploited beneficiaries, their desire to leave the exploitative work and ambition to be hired in violence free decent works. Therefore, it has grasped the whole purpose of the private sector and attempted to empower the sector to provide training and apprenticeship opportunities as well as make their workplace free of sexual and gender based violence.

#### **2. Efficiency of the project**

Project efficiency can be measured in various parameters. One of the parameters is an economic use of allocated project resources to rollout planned project activities. As understood from the project signatory government departments and sub-city sector offices, the project has followed transparent, accountable and participatory planning, budget making and monitoring. Project signatories expressed their opinion that the project has used every coin to rollout planned project activities. Quarter review meetings were consistently conducted. During those review meetings, the project has presented its activity and financial performances. Based on such participatory review meeting findings, there was no incidence when the project has used its resources for unplanned activities. Rather, it has used its small budget to effectively support experienced community needs in consultation with government partners.

Furthermore, project efficiency can be measured by the creativity and capability of the project to identify and utilize locally available public, private and community resources. In this regard, the project has made exemplary achievements. For example, the project has strengthened its partnership with the private sector skill training centers that subsidized training costs for the project beneficiaries as compared with training fees paid by other trainees, it has used volunteer community facilitators to spearhead the community conversation session, beneficiary identification and screening were done by community and government stakeholders, referral systems were used to provide specialized services for commercial sex exploitation victims, the project has used existing community conversation and life skill training materials, the life skill training approach was cost effective in a sense that club leaders were first

trained by the project and trained club leaders cascaded the life skill training to hundreds of students without the project budget and beneficiary coaching and mentorship was officially handed over to sub-city level government structure. Therefore, the project has used existing opportunities to advance its efficiency.

The other measure of project efficiency is the ability of the project to timely roll out all planned activities within the given time frame and expected quality. In this regard, the project had no delays in terms of implementing its planned activities.

Finally, the project efficiency can be measured by the amount of money it has mobilized and utilized for the implementation of planned project activities. More importantly, its ability to use the lion share of the project budget for program purposes (such as identification, withdrawal and reintegration of commercial sex workers, support to vulnerable school children, economic empowerment of vulnerable female headed households and empowering government, private and civil society child protection actors. The following table provides this budgetary information.

Table 14: Project financial performance

SN	Budget in EURO	2018	2019	2020	Total
1	Planned/mobilized	95,000.00	110,000.00	60,000.00	265,000.00
2	Utilized	80,368.13	109,229.00	57,409.00	247,006.13
	Percent	85	99	96	93

Source: FSCE, Bahir Dar Program Coordination Office, Dec/2020

As can be seen from the above table, the project has effectively used 97 percent of the mobilized project budget. In fact, the achievements registered have estimated value that exceeds this budget amount.

### **Achievement of Project Impact: Contribute to reduction of the incidence of commercial sexual exploitation of girls**

Project impacts can be measured by the project contribution to improve the lives of the project direct beneficiaries, partnership between and among FSCE-TdH, FSCE and schools, beneficiaries, communities and government. It can also be measured by its unintended and unplanned impacts on the lives of the project beneficiaries, communities and wider context. Finally, project impact can be measured by its influence on the government policies, strategies and child protection systems. Therefore, project impacts are discussed in the following subsections considering the elements above.

#### **i) Impacts on the lives of the project beneficiaries**

The major project direct beneficiaries include reintegrated women and girls sexually exploited vulnerable school children and vulnerable households.

As discussed in the earlier section of this report, the project has equipped these beneficiaries with intra and interpersonal skills, life skills, vocational, business management and entrepreneurship skills. These skills will remain as part of their knowledge, attitude and behavior even after the project phase out. For

example, reintegrated survivors living in Bahir Dar (47 out of the 76 sampled) have continued to save money with the vision to establish the type of business they dream of by overcoming the financial constraints they experience at the time of their reintegration support. A contacted reintegrated mother has said that “Because of my child, I will never rejoin sexually exploitative work. Yesterday, I had an extreme kind of financial problem and I tried to get money in exchange for sexual activity. But, I was not able to see people with confidence and went back home without making money. I will never attempt again”. This same young mother had opened a traditional coffee business by the business startup capital she obtained from the project. Due to high market place rent, she closed it and started another business. With her current business, she is able to earn her living and hopes to advance her small business instead of returning back to sexual exploitation. A number of other reintegrated girls and women moved back to their home villages and started their own small businesses. They are trying to work hard on small businesses not because they have received business startup capital but because the skill training has changed their thinking and business mentality.

Similarly, the majority (99%) of the vulnerable children who received scholastic support were able to continue their education. Had there not been such supports, they reported, they would have either dropped out of their education or joined child labor exploitation that have potential negative impacts on their education, health and emotional development. Enrolling and retaining children in the school system is one of the most constructive methods of protecting children from any kinds of violence, abuse and exploitation including sexual violence. Children now are free to report cases of abuse either by teachers, students themselves or even by members of the community. Empowering schools to become child-friendly social environments and ensure that they can continue supplying scholastic materials and basic services like breakfast/tea for the most vulnerable is another strategy used to sustainably protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation.

The project has also positive impacts on the lives of vulnerable households and their families, especially on the education, health and overall development of their children. For example, heads of households participated in this evaluation asserted that the future of their households will be improving and at least, will not be back to their previous miserable life situation. The finding is presented below.

Table 15: Expectations of supported households

<b>From now onwards, what would your life look like?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Will be improving, I expect to live good life in the future	23	29.5
At least, I will not be back to my previous miserable life situation	28	35.9
I cannot be sure, I do not exactly know my future life situation	27	34.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey, Dec/2020

Majority (about 65%) of the respondents believe that their household living conditions will be better than what they are now or will never go back to the pre-project situation. This confidence is supported by their regular meeting; saving and internal lending that consistently fuels up their social and economic performances. This has also positive impacts on the education, health, play and emotional lives of their vulnerable children.

## **ii) Impacts on stakeholders' capacity and partnership**

Concerned government offices such as Education, Women, Children and Youth and Finance and Economy at city administration level and the Labor and Social Affairs office and Kebele administration at local level are the government partners of the project. In terms of capacity building, the project did little on these government offices. Nevertheless, the project has deployed participatory project management where all stakeholders, including government sector offices, were actively engaged and drew important project cycle management skills. Another local level government partner was a police office. Because of its strategic partnership in child protection endeavors, the project has organized several training; exposure visits programs and provided office materials and furniture for the selected offices. According to contacted police officers, the project has brought positive energy to the police office and officers. Because FSCE is a pioneer police office partner, the support was a showcase for its continued commitment to empower the office.

The other stakeholders include Community support and Care Coalition (3C) and community conversation groups established by the project. These structures received consistent and strategic capacity development support. For example, the 3C has strengthened capacity of identifying, registering, referring and monitoring vulnerable community groups, especially children and women. Because they are mandated to collect and utilize resources in favor of the poor and disadvantaged, they will continue on assisting the right targeting and supervision of reintegrated girls, children and women. This has strengthened the existing and new partnership with the project holder (i.e., FSCE). Due to the technical and materials support provided for the 3C by the project, child protection committees were strengthened and ensured to discharge their responsibilities of protecting children from all forms of abuse and exploitation. Partner schools, private sector actors and civil society organizations have expressed their appreciation and positive partnership with the project holder. The successful completion of the project has also strengthened the capacity of the project holder in terms of renovating and equipping the safe-homes, staff retention and capacity development.

Therefore, all contacted stakeholders have expressed the positive and lasting impact of the project in their partnerships, child protection capacities and commitment.

## **iii) Impacts on creating supportive and responsive community**

Due to awareness raising and sensitization activities through community conversation, community members become well-informed about CSEC, its drivers, consequences and responses. They become aware of community roles in preventing child abuse and protecting children from violence. Evaluation findings, particularly from community representatives, are clear that the project is successful in creating a sense of responsibility on the part of community members and parents as key stakeholders in preventing CSEC and responding to the needs of the victims in partnership with other actors.

## **iv) Impact at policies, laws and systems**

The project did not target policy analysis, dialogue and advocacy. Rather, it has tried to utilize existing policy frameworks including Proc No. 621/2009 that had restricted the sector and financial sources of

civil society organizations like FSCE. Although several changes including the limiting Proc 621/2009 went under extraordinary changes, the revisions have nothing to do with the project. The community support and care coalition regulation was also proclaimed in 2012. Child protection laws, policies and government directions also existed prior to the project. Hence, there is no visible impact on the government laws, policies and systems.

However, this project evaluation recommends future programming to include legal literacy, monitoring law enforcement efforts and generating research evidence on the possible policy dialogue, advocacy and lobby. FSCE and TdH NL can refocus on rights-based child protection interventions.

#### **v) Unintended and unplanned impacts of the project**

Neither quantitative survey nor various qualitative data sources provided evidence on the unintended and unplanned negative impacts of the project on the lives of direct project beneficiaries, staff, other stakeholders and the environment. However, positive impacts are registered on the lives of originally unplanned project beneficiaries whose residence houses were damaged by fire accident. In consultation with the resource provider and local administration, the project has rehabilitated five vulnerable households and 99 school going children found in Fasilo sub-city.

### **3. Sustainability of the project activities and outcomes**

The issue of sustaining project activities and outcomes is one of the most important successes as well as challenges of a given project. It refers to the concept of running project initiated activities in order to sustain desired outcomes. Sustainability of project activities and outcomes requires, among others, empowerment of the project beneficiaries, intervention communities, government, private and civil society actors and creating enabling social, economic and legal environments.

As stated in the project document, TdH NL put capacity building for duty bearers, behavioral change in terms of child protection, participatory, inclusive and empowering project management system, household income improvement scheme, vocational skill training and enhancing the capacity of FSCE as project activity and outcome sustainability strategies. Accordingly, the project has integrated these sustainability strategies and focused on their implementations. As a result of the implementation of these sustainability strategies, the following project activities and outcomes are likely to sustain after the project phases out.

- 1) The community conversation sessions have a very high probability of continuing without external financial support. Some of the visited community conversation groups have already started and experienced regular saving, internal lending and engaging in economic activities to uplift their household income. If proper financial recording and management supports are provided, this saving and credit service will serve as a glue to continue meeting on a regular basis for both economic and social empowerment of the members. For this to happen, committed volunteers can become members of the group and provide continued technical support with very little external supervision from the government sector office. As they expressed, the tea/coffee and refreshment supports that have been provided by the project can easily be covered by the group members.

- 2) The schools supported have good levels of commitment to continue on the awareness raising activities, ensuring their schools remain violence free and serving vulnerable children with sanitary pads, pants and tea for girls in their menstrual period. The schools have also other partners to provide similar support. Furthermore, schools like Tsertse Dingil have rented cafeteria rooms where they collect some income. The income is used to provide breakfast and cash support for vulnerable children. The department of education, one of the project signatories, has similar experiences in other schools. It was also well aware, active player and enthusiastic to ensure the continuity of the activities and outcomes registered.
- 3) The household income generating activities are among the most appreciated strategic interventions to uproot economic problems of sexually exploited women and girls. Vulnerable households and young girls sometimes are pushed into exploitation as a means to escape from poverty and economic deprivation. Visited households supported by the project to start and strengthen their household income generating activities have also exhibited encouraging results in terms of intrinsic motivation, improved household income and courage to continue to strengthen the initiatives. There are survivors of sexual exploitation who started their own small business and earn decent income to lead their own lives. Some of them were employed as experts in their fields of training such as barbering and serving in standard hotels where there is no sexual, physical and verbal violence as a rule of law. The vocational skill training and business startup capital provided for project beneficiaries are among the strategic supports to sustain decent works and decent lives among violence affected girls.
- 4) Duty bearers' capacity building including police and local administrations is a crucial sustainability factor. They will continue preventing violence against children and girls and responding to the needs of the affected young girls through referral mechanisms, law enforcement, provision of work places and community mobilization.

A showcase from Gish Abay 3C member reads as, *"We are here to assure sustainability of care and support to victims of CESC initiated by the project. We mobilize financial and material resources from the community to support vulnerable children and their family meet their immediate basic needs and build community awareness to ensure ownership and sustainability"* (**CCC member, Gish Abay**).

#### 5) Partnership and stakeholders' cooperation

Evidence is generated that the community members, parents and local leaders have developed strong and positive working relationships with the police in sub-cities visited. This was mainly in the area of identifying child abuse cases and reporting to police for appropriate legal measures and making follow-up. Maintaining this close working relationship between actors and players is very critical for sustainability of project interventions. Furthermore, the referral services will continue without the project. As they have been doing even before the project, the 3C will continue screening and referring vulnerable community members to service providers, the family guidance association will continue providing healthcare services for sexually exploited women and girls and vulnerable girls with unwanted pregnancies.

#### 4. Coherence

Coherence, in this particular project evaluation, aligns with project relevance and complementarity to government laws, policies, strategies and efforts. Therefore, the points presented in this report under relevance of the project may have similarities with points presented hereunder.

There are global and national laws and conventions that Ethiopia has ratified and developed to prevent violence against women and girls. The commitment is boldly written in the 1995 Constitution (Article 35 and 36). The Ethiopian Women's Policy (1993) and National Children's Policy (2017) provide fundamental legal backgrounds to work on child protection issues. More specifically, the FDRE Constitution, Article 36 states that children have the right "*--- not to be subject to exploitative practices, neither to be required nor permitted to perform work which may be hazardous or harmful to his or her education, health or wellbeing, ---*". The national children's policy of Ethiopia (2017, p.16) has also specifically noted the importance of "*Creating an enabling environment for the protection of children from inadvertent exposure to harmful drugs, khat, alcohol, inhaling benzene and all sorts of addictions, as well as providing psycho-social support for those who have become victims*". The Life skills training manual (Ministry of Youth Sport, 2010) has also emphasized on the importance of assisting youth to develop personal, interpersonal and social skills. Among the notable global legal frameworks which Ethiopia has ratified and embedded in its national laws, policies and child protection strategies is the UN Child Rights Convention (1990). The convention provides the principles of child protection pillars which includes the right to live, survival and development, best interest of the child, non-discrimination and child participation. The principles of National Children's Policy of Ethiopia reflect these principles.

Other national and regional development programs and strategies including child protection and youth development are emanated from such global and national policies, conventions and covenants. Accordingly, it has become clear that the basic services and scholastic material supports that facilitated children's enrollment and retention in the school system, the life skills training provided in the school environment for school children which have based on existing materials, the government and law enforcing bodies capacity building supports that strengthen their implementation and monitoring capacities, partnerships with the private sector and communities are all relevant to the project objectives.

In the project implementation period, synergies were built, strengthened and accessed to ensure quality and sustainable delivery of outputs. One of the very qualities of the project was its stakeholders' engagement, participatory and bottom-up planning and monitoring approach. The project has also used existing manuals and materials for government and community capacity building support with the intention of utilising existing resources and to enhance stakeholders' capacities. It believes that developing and shelving new materials is unnecessary. Rather, building on what exists and strengthening the synergies was at the heart of the project. The community support and care coalition was strengthened by the project. This has an immense synergy with government and community systems for resource mobilization and management, identification of vulnerable community groups and linking for referral services, monitoring and sustaining impactful project activities and outcomes.

The project has also attempted to establish a CSO network, clarify complementary roles and areas of cooperation in the field of child protection and organized various capacity building events. CSO forum is



not new in Bahir Dar, said the CSO members participated in the focus group interview. However, there was no CSO network specifically established to promote child rights and child protection related issues. Therefore, regardless of the shortage of time and incidence of COVID-19 that prohibited several consultative meetings, the initiative was very impactful. Asked about their level of engagement in the child protection spectrum, the network members focused on referral services while legal literacy, law enforcement measures and stakeholders' capacity building remain far behind their vision and project focus.

Asked about project compliance with government requirements, Government partners at city administration and sub-city levels confirmed that the project engaged government stakeholders during joint project monitoring and produced activity and financial reports on a timely basis. According to discussants, the project was able to adhere with a time schedule for joint monitoring and reporting.

### **5. Child participation**

The project had several platforms that encourage the participation of withdrawn survivors of sexual exploitation in the project cycle management. Experienced safe-home mothers involve children in the market study and procurement of food items, food preparation, hygiene and sanitation activities and related activities that are part of one's life skill. The project organizes life/experience sharing debates three times a week when children act as role players, judges and reporters. They also participate in review meetings and present cases and unmet needs/problems of reintegrating children to stakeholders. Survivors of sexual exploitation presented their success stories for children in the safe-homes.

A reintegrated survivor explained that those girls who did not have safe-home based services have missed such participation and important life skill training. Hence, the project has largely engaged safe-home beneficiaries in the life skill training and participation in various events. The project has also declared that because of COVID-19, admitting all beneficiary children into the safe-home was risky. Therefore, it was an obligation to arrange an alternative rehabilitation mechanism out of the safe-home environment while also trying to engage all target children in different activities. Therefore, project beneficiary children participate in all stages of the project cycle management including review meetings and evaluation exercises.

School children, particularly those who are gender club members, have sufficient spaces to participate on matters that affect children's lives. For example, students are involved in child-led activities such as music, dance, poem and drama making for awareness development programs in their schools. Because of the capacity building supports and motivations, students are also reporting violence incidents. However, schools, such as Atse Tsertse Dingil, have no confidential systems of incidence reporting.

### **6. Knowledge generation**

A number of lessons can be drawn from the project design, implementation and management process. The following lessons and promising practices deserve replication. The lessons and practices can become part of the recommendations for future programming.

1. It can be useful to clearly understand the behaviors, needs and problems of the target groups, especially survivors of sexual exploitation. Qualitative data sources believe that young and new

entrants into sexual activities for economic purposes are needed in the market, earn large amounts of money per night (some exceed 1000 ETB/night) and substance addicted. Whereas experienced ones and those that have children are disinterested to continue the exploitative activity. Therefore, it would be important to focus on those senior, experienced and those who have children for effective withdrawal and successful reintegration as well as prevention; where their children will also not be at risk of being pushed into sexual exploitation. In addition, the withdrawal and reintegration effort will be more effective because those experienced women and young girls want to leave the sexually exploitative and socially ostracized activity based on their painful experiences. On the other hand, addressing the root causes of migration from the source districts, along with the legal literacy and law enforcement interventions would provide better results.

2. Giving little attention to legal literacy, law enforcement, specific capacity development supports to law enforcing actors and partnership among different law enforcing bodies would be considered as a big gap. While some law enforcing offices were not clear about existing laws and proclamations that criminalize CSEC those who know some were not clear about their roles and the specific measures to be taken. Hence, FSCE/TdH and other child protection actors shall use the revised CSO proclamation No. 1113/2019 and work on rights-based policy advocacy and promotion.
3. Focusing on prevention activities, such as by investing on community awareness and enhancing the social and economic capacities of the poor and vulnerable households and schools in and outside<sup>13</sup> Bahir Dar shall be another important area of investment to prevent unsafe migration, trafficking in women and girls and commercial sexual exploitation. Bahir Dar city has become an attraction center for potential migrants and members of its vulnerable community groups would also increase from time to time. Considering such internal and external population, social and economic dynamics, one of the solutions would be focusing on preventive measures.
4. Stakeholders' partnership and referral service was a successful project endeavor.

## **6. Risks and challenges that negatively affected the original project plan and execution**

Government and project staff turnover and inflation were the expected risks at the design stage of the project. However, other challenges and risks have happened that deter the sustainability of project activities and outcomes.

1. Government stakeholders played little role in facilitating the provision of workplaces for the reintegrated project beneficiaries as promised in the project document. There was poor linkage with microfinance institutions for consistent and progressive credit accession, those reintegrated girls started their own business by renting verandah and street sides from hotel owners and there was weak mentoring and supportive supervision by the government actors after the reintegration and provision of business startup capital. A reintegrated project beneficiary complained that, *"The hotel rented the big house for 30 ETB/month from the Kebele. I rented a street side from the hotel for 1000 ETB/month. We pay a large amount of money for rent. That is*

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<sup>13</sup> Although independent survey is required, qualitative data sources indicated South Gondar as the main source of women and girl migrants

*one of the challenges of reintegrated children and vulnerable mothers who aspire to open a new business". A mother of a vulnerable girl who was supported by the project again complained that, "Because of the flood accident, I lost my working capital. Since then, I am not able to get any credit access to restart my household business".*

2. The project lacked comprehensiveness in some of its components. For example, because of the influence of Proclamation 621/2009 that banned CSOs from working on rights issues, the project paid little attention on legal literacy, law enforcement and playing a watchdog role on the execution of existing laws and legal instruments that criminalize the engagement of minors in commercial sexual activities. Perhaps, one of the roles of the CSO network would have been creating an enabling environment through the enforcement of laws. But, this was addressed little or not at all. Some of the police officers and government stakeholders were not also sure about the existence of laws that prohibit minors from engaging in commercial sex works. The second limitation was the entire focus on social agendas in the community conversation sessions. It would rather be better if the community conversation session has encouraged all conversation groups to have some sort of economic activities. They would have been encouraged to save, exercise internal lending and blend social and economic empowerment of the community conversation groups.
3. In the capacity building support, the project would have included rights' holders so that potential vulnerable children, girls and women can identify where to report violence incidences without fear using technologies. The duty bearers like police officers do not have technology supported complaints receiving hotlines and recording systems. Hence, it is observed that the capacity building support has focused on the duty bearers and ignored technology supported complaint receiving mechanisms so that victims can report incidences of violence freely, on a timely basis and without cost.
4. The project strategy has focused on the identification, withdrawal, rehabilitation and reintegration of girls below the age of 18 years old. According to the Alternative Childcare Guidelines of Ethiopia (2009), children below 15 years old are eligible for child-family reunification, those children whose age is 15 or above must be willing and shall provide written consent if they want to reunify with their parents and guardians. On the other hand, the guidelines dictate that children from 15-17 years old can be reintegrated if the necessary pre-reintegration support is provided. Hence, for children below the age category of 15, reunification would be more preferred compared to reintegration approach because of legal and practical matters. For example, young children between 15-17 years old can be engaged in Economic activities to support themselves and their families provided that the work does not have any negative impact on the health, education and emotional development of the working child (Proc. No. 1156/2019). On the other hand, this group of children could be engaged in any work that may compromise their health, education and emotional wellbeing. Ethiopia has also ratified ILO convention 138 (Minimum age for employment). As a CSO operating in a country that has signed this minimum age convention, FSCE may not feel comfortable to organize training and the economic activities of children.
5. While targeting survivors of sexual exploitation , especially those who become substance addicted, it is important to plan for and allocate resources of all kinds (such as professional counselors, rehabilitation shelters and sufficient rehabilitation period) before any attempt to economically reintegrate them in the community. In this regard, the project had inadequate preparations in terms of preparing itself for such in-depth rehabilitation services or working with other service providers through referral mechanisms.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the project was highly relevant to the project beneficiaries, government laws, social and economic development directions and strategies. Its implementation process was so participatory and inclusive that it was empowering on its own. One of the secrets for its relevance and effectiveness is its participatory, transparent and accountable management system. Though there were unpredicted risks and threats that happened during the project implementation period such as COVID-19 pandemic, flood and fire outbreaks, the project has maintained its flexibility, participatory planning and project management strategy that enabled it to accomplish planned activities thereby attain its results. Strong partnership and stakeholders' engagement in the project cycle management was at the center of its strategy.

The project was particularly impactful at project beneficiary and stakeholders' partnership level. Rescuing, training and assisting survivors of sexual exploitation, assisting vulnerable school children to enroll and continue their education, improving the food security situation of vulnerable households whose children were also engaged in evening time risky businesses and were at the verge of school dropout and child labor exploitation would be some of the very impactful achievements of the project. Many of the reintegrated beneficiaries, vulnerable school children and poor households are rescued, started living decent lives and socially included in the wider social system. Poor female headed households including street beggars become productive citizens abandoning their socially marginalized sources of income. Stakeholders' partnership, building on local assets and resources and participatory project management were the other golden sides of the project. As a city finance and economy development department said in the interview period, there was no misused coin from the project budget. This tells the degree of transparency and accountability of the project and key stakeholders' trust on the project management system. Because of this participatory management, many emergency community problems were addressed by the project. Best examples are food and non-food supplies for vulnerable households exceptionally affected by COVID-19, flood and fire accidents.

In terms of sustainability of results and activities, the knowledge, attitude and skills implanted in the reintegrated beneficiaries, vulnerable children, vulnerable households and community members will be long lasting. The economic activities of visited beneficiaries, community conversation groups that transform themselves into saving groups, school community awareness and their child-friendliness and the referral services established by the new CSO network are likely to continue even after the project phase out.

Key lessons during the project management and implementation process would include understanding beneficiaries' behavior and characteristics and preparation to effectively reorient their thinking before economic reintegration supports, focusing on legal literacy and law enforcement capacities to prevent commercial sexual exploitations, investing on migration driving factors and prevention activities (within and outside Bahir Dar) and stakeholders' engagement and participation. Economic activities for vulnerable female headed households, school children support with focus on school income generating activities that sustainably support vulnerable school children, community conversation and stakeholders' partnership are among those replicable project components and strategies.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are generated from the evaluation findings, discussions and overall observations. Some of them are directly taken from the government, community and other evaluation participants while others are drawn from the analysis of the findings.

1. One of the recommendations is to choose between current and potential priorities. For example, FSCE and TdH-NL have been focusing on the identifying, withdrawing, rehabilitating and reintegrating girls below the age of 18 years old. However, it would be good to also focus on older girls who have children that would then easily be pushed into sexual exploitation as their mothers get older and opt out, using their children as replacements. This perpetuates a vicious cycle and targeting them would act as a preventive approach. More importantly, the reintegration strategy seems fallacious with the existing laws, especially for those girls below the age of 15 years old. Instead, it would rather focus on legal literacy and law enforcement to prevent minors from entering into the exploitative economic activities.
2. Rehabilitation of most vulnerable target groups requires more time, professional counselors, strong referral services and psychosocial support before economic reintegration works. Best example is the safe-home psychosocial service for the survivors. This kind of activity will remain hard for paraprofessionals, especially when the project period is limited and equal for all.
3. Private sector engagement, especially small and informal restaurants and hotels, shall include safe workplace for migrant and low profile girls so that sexual violence in hotels and bars will not happen/reduce. Big hotels have their own bylaws and policies to protect their workers from abuse and exploitation. Their employers are also, often, trained young adults, not children. On the other hand, informal and small hotels and bars often employ/allow children to work and lead to exposure to sexual exploitation. Hence, our recommendation is to work with informal and small (mini) hotels, restaurants and bars, which are often the places of untrained and unprofessional hotel workers, to improve their protection systems
4. The evaluation team recommends TdH-NL to extend the project period for some time or agree on the phase over project to make the necessary follow up that were not yet implemented by other stakeholders such as work place provision, credit linkage with microfinance institutions and provision of additional technical and financial supports for those who are not successful in their income generating activities mainly because of reasons beyond their control like flood accident and COVID-19 pandemic.
5. New projects shall consider project activity sequencing as one of the good strategies to avoid late hour training, business startup provision and linkages with service providers. Early project periods shall be allocated for training and basic supports while later years shall be budgeted for supportive supervision, activity consolidation and phasing out through effective linkages.
6. The business startup capital provided for income generating activity beneficiaries is reported insufficient for, at least, some income generating activity types. In the opinions of the evaluation team, making the amount of business startup capital uniform for all business types and beneficiaries was the bigger challenge than the overall amount of money. For well-prepared beneficiaries and quick reaping businesses, the money would be sufficient while for other types and poorly prepared targets, it would be very small and insufficient. Hence, the recommendation

is to strictly demand beneficiaries to develop business plans considering their experiences, field of training and feasibility. Professional business plan appraisal mechanisms that would include government experts would be part of the solution.

7. Focusing on prevention works **in the source districts** that address root causes of girls' migration into cities like Bahir Dar. More importantly, outreach programs in the sending zones and Woredas (like South Gondar) **are** paramount
8. Future community conversations groups can be sensitized to become social and economic groups so that they will be motivated to meet regularly even without the project support. The self-help group model started by the project can be applicable for community conversation groups too.

## ANNEXES

**Annex 1: List of KII participants**

SN	Full name	Sex	Organization	Position (current)	Sub-city
1.	Teferra Mengesha	M	Tsertse-Dingil school (1-8)	Director	Fasilo
2.	Yinesu Teferra	F	Tsertse-Dingil school	Girls' club coordinator	Fasilo
3.	Insp/Tigist Yelay-Lij	F	Police office	Child protection unit head	Fasilo
4.	Atala Abebe	F	Women, children and youth	Expert, Fasilo	Fasilo
5.	Enanu Genanaw	F	Community	Beneficiary	Fasilo
6.	Tigist Amare	F	Community facilitator	Facilitator	Fasilo
7.	Alehubel Almawu	M	HAWI, Bahir Dar	Director, CSO forum	
8.	Mulugojjam Teklu	F	Agar, Bahir Dar	Manager, CSO forum	
9.	Solomon Atnafu	M	FGAE, Bahir Dar	Manager, CSO forum	
10.	Mesfin Asmamaw	M	City administration	Finance, Head	City Admin
11.	Fekadu Sinishaw	M	City Administration	WCY Affairs, expert	City Admin
12.	Zebeay Gashu	M	FSCE	Expert	
13.	Solomon	M	FCSE	Area Manager	
14.	Demelew Girma	M	DoWCA	Social worker Unit Coordinator	Gish Abay
15.	Nebiyu Daniel	M	DoWCA	Women Affair Expert	Gish Abay
16.	D/C Daniel Tilahun	M	Police	Station 2 police Head	Gish Abay
17.	Mulat Teklemariam	M	School	Yedil Chibo School Director	Gish Abay
18.	Gizework Balch	F	School	Yedil Chibo Gender Club teacher	Gish Abay
19.	Banchamlak Eshete	F	School	Yedil Chibo Gender Club teacher	Gish Abay
20.	Geremew Asrat	M	DoE	Head	Bahir Dar
21.	Yeshiworq Chane	F	Community	Beneficiary	Gish Abay
22.	Tazebew Sime	M	Social Affairs Office	Office Manager	Belay Zeleke

23.	Birhanu Azene	M	Social Affairs Office	Expert	Belay Zeleke
24.	Ins. Metaket Ferede	F	Police Office	Children's affairs head	Belay Zeleke
25.	Seid Ousman	M	Eweket Fana School	Principal	Belay Zeleke
26.	Ayale Mulugeta	M	Ye'Ab Sera Hair dressing training center	Owner, Manager	Belay Zeleke
27.	Kokebe Kidane	F	Kokebe Hotel and tourism training center	Owner, Manager	Belay Zeleke

## Annex 2: List of FGD participants

SN	Full name	Sex	Represents	Position	Sub-city
1.	Tilanesh Dagnew	F	CC representative	CC member	Fasilo
2.	Abebu Yismaw	F	CC representative	CC member	Fasilo
3.	Yenealem Yimer	F	CC representative	CC member	Fasilo
4.	Sel'Enat Melese	F	CC representative	CC member	Fasilo
5.	Bayush Aragie	F	CC representative	CC member	Fasilo
6.	Menalu Wudu	F	CC facilitator	Volunteer	Fasilo
7.	Mulu Takele	F	CC facilitator	Volunteer	Fasilo
8.	Ansha Worku	F	Kebele 3, 3C cashier	VOLunteer	Fasilo
9.	Segenet Mekonnen	F	3C Beneficiary screening	Selection	Fasilo
10.	Wubit Asmare	F	3C resource mobilizer	Social worker	Fasilo
11.	Ambachew Getaneh	M	Kebele 3, Social work	Coordinator	Fasilo
12.	Tsega	F		Data collector	Fasilo
13.	Tigist Amare	F		Data collector	Fasilo
14.	Tigist	F		Data collector	
15.	Biruktawit Muhabaw	F		Data collector	Gish Abay
16.	Mussie Bayehu	M	Community conversation	member	Gish Abay
17.	Agegnehush Asmare	F	Community conversation	member	Gish Abay



18.	Kebe Yeshiwas	F	Community conversation	member	Gish Abay
19.	Almaz Tegene	F	Community conversation	member	Gish Abay
20.	Mulu Arega	F	Community conversation	member	Gish Abay
21.	Semenesh Girma	F	Community conversation	member	Gish Abay
22.	Yerome Chane	F	CCC	Deputy Chair	Gish Abay
23.	Hagere Maru	F	CCC	Social Sector	Gish Abay
24.	Adamu Kasahun	M	CCC	Secretary	Gish Abay
25.	Tesfanesh Girma	F	CCC	Member	Gish Abay
26.	Alebachew Anley	M	CCC	Member	Gish Abay
27.	Abebe Wubie	M	CCC	Member	Gish Abay
28.	Admas Gesese	M	CCC	Member	Gish Abay
29.	Yenenesh Belay	F	FSCE	Facilitator	Gish Abay
30.	Ehitnesh Kone	F	FSCE	Facilitator	Gish Abay
31.	Hanna Birhahun	F	FSCE	Social Worker	
32.	Tigist Getachew	F	FSCE	Safe home Mother	
33.	Zerfie Tewolde	F	FSCE	Safe home Mother	
34.	Taye Melaku	M	CCC (07 Kebele)	Chairperson	Belay Zeleke
35.	Wubneh Yefredew	M	CCC (07 Kebele)	Vice C/Person	Belay Zeleke
36.	Tadesse Yigezaw	M	CCC (07 Kebele)	Accounts	Belay Zeleke
37.	Sintayehu Meleke	F	CCC (07 Kebele)	Social Worker	Belay Zeleke
38.	Wubalech Takele	F	CCC (07 Kebele)	Social Worker	Belay Zeleke

### **Annex 3: Selected case stories**

#### **Case 1: Reintegrated Ex-commercial sex worker**

Belaynesh Tamru (name changed), is a 28 years old widow residing in Kebele 12, Gish Abay sub city of Bahir Dar city. Belaynesh confesses that her past was a life full of misery. The downside of her story started when she migrated to Bahir Dar from Debre Tabor (South Gondar Zone capital) while she was 12 years old due to the death of her parents and peer pressure in search of a better life. She was a six grader at the time. Her immediate job was domestic work and stayed two years in a household in Bahir Dar. While she was working, one member of the family raped her. When the employers noticed her pregnancy they kicked her out and she stayed on the street of Bahir Dar and her new born died at time of her delivery. She had to find a way to earn money to live on. But, her limited educational background, age and inexperience hindered her from getting a decent job. As a result, she decided to become a commercial sex worker out of desperation. She continued as a commercial sex worker for about seven years. She was very unhappy and suffered from a sense of guilt. She was also feeling insecure due to the real danger of possible exposure to STIs like HIV/AIDS though indispensable to contract HIV/AIDS anyways. While she was living in such work she got married with one of her customers and got two daughters. She said, *"I strived to work hard but life kept going from bad to worse. My husband could not manage the family. He lost hope and committed suicide when our first child reached at the age of two years old"*.

As was looking for exit strategy from commercial sex work, there was a flicker of hope glimmering. She was informed that 'Yeselam Ber 3C' could help her if she is selected as a beneficiary. Fortunately, she was selected to be one of the ReSEG project beneficiaries. Hence, she received business skills and life skill training and a business start-up capital of 8,000 Birr. Afterwards, she started roadside coffee and tea selling nearby a big restaurant. Currently, She is earning a much better daily income due to the fact that she sells her coffee and tea for the restaurant's customers. She recounted that the lives of her family has improved significantly and she is able to provide support for herself and her children. In addition, she made it clear that she is now much happier and her confidence is improving and able to educate her previous acquaintances involved in commercial sex work to quit and follow her suit. She still believes that her business is at an early stage and needs to be reinforced. She wants to launch a small restaurant and is confident that she will effectively uplift herself from poverty. Finally, she says, *"Thanks to God and FSCE I am now economically self-dependent and my family members are enjoying life"*.

#### **Case story 2: Economically supported female headed household**

Wro. **Almaz Kefyalew** (true name), a 45 year adult woman, was a beggar and homeless living on the street at Fassilo sub city of Bahir Dar city. While she was on the street, she was raped twice and delivered two children. Her life was so miserable and devastated before the project support. After sometime, W/o Almaz was selected as a beneficiary by the CCC and given support from FSCE. She noted: *It was in such a tough time that FSCE came to my rescue, and in that I was provided with 8,000 birr start-up capital. Indeed, this support played a crucial role in improving my life and that of my children. I also took a basic business skill training accompanied by a working capital which helped me to be engaged in micro-business.* With this money, she started petty trading on the roadside shed used to sit and beg in

the past. She claimed that the training gave her a good sense of how to generate more money. Wro. Almaz also mentioned that a ten years old daughter is one of vulnerable children whose problems have been addressed by FSCE. The daughter is a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader. FSCE supported her daughter with educational materials such as exercise book, pen, pencil school uniform and bag. Such educational support was very important as it enabled her to attend her education and focus on her life on education. *“Currently, I have been able to feed children timely and wash their clothes. Thanks God and FSCE and now I can raise my children with the money I earn from the sale of charcoal and firewood”* said Wro. Almaz. She added that *“I know I had no severe health problems and disabilities but my problem was how to think to work and be socially integrated with non-beggars. This servitude is broken by FSCE and now I am happy by the life I am leading now and will never ever be a beggar again. I know I can work and live a better life”*.

### **Case story 3: Reintegrated Ex-commercial sex worker**

Tsedale Bayu (name changed) is a 21 year old girl. She was also a 2nd grader. She came to Bahir Dar 7 years ago and started her employment history as a house maid. Later, she joined the commercial sex work and served there for 4 years. Peer pressure and the flattering economic benefits of the commercial sex business are the main reasons that attract her.

Tsedale expressed her previous life as ‘dirty’ which she didn’t wish for such a kind of life even for her enemy. She said ‘.....some customers don’t want to wear condoms, some refuse to pay afterwards, some physically assault me; so it was miserable’. On average, she gets 500 Br. per night but she might not get customers every night. She used to have various addictions, so she spent most of the money for these and met other basic necessities. Tsedale used to stand on the streets to get her customers. At that time she had her own place to live but she usually didn’t stay over the night. The money she got from this business is not always enough to cover all her expenses, so in most cases she is forced to borrow from her friends. She also has a 3 years old son but his father is not around to help her out.

Tsedale has now totally forgotten about her previous life. It has been closer to a year since she has abandoned the sex business. She is preparing herself for a better future. She began to attend her school

in the evening shift, her health is much better now. She has peace in her mind, can pay her rent easily, fulfil their basic necessities and even current business focuses on selling tea and coffee, peanut, Pasta, firir, Potato, etc. Before was very good but now it slows is okay. Her business area is next to the garage and there are bicycles as well, so these customers don’t violate any ‘...I received life skill and project.’ It has also provided her with the necessary basic materials like coffee and tea cups, glasses, jogs, kittles, cooking and frying pans, knives, plates, etc. The project also provided consumable business goods like SHIRO, BERBERE (pepper), charcoal, house rent for one month etc. Tsedale said, “One’s



health is much better now. She can pay her rent easily, fulfil their basic necessities and even current business focuses on selling tea and coffee, peanut, Pasta, firir, Potato, etc. Before was very good but now it slows is okay. Her business area is next to the garage and there are bicycles as well, so these customers don’t violate any ‘...I received life skill and project.’ It has also provided her with the necessary basic materials like coffee and tea cups, glasses, jogs, kittles, cooking and frying pans, knives, plates, etc. The project also provided consumable business goods like SHIRO, BERBERE (pepper), charcoal, house rent for one month etc. Tsedale said, “One’s

determination is essential for success". The training provided by the organization highly helped her to change her attitude. The desire cultivated in her soul to provide better living conditions to her son is another success factor.

#### **Case story 4: Economically supported female headed vulnerable mother**

Kasanesh Mekwanent is a 32 year young mother. Educationally, she cannot read and write. Kasanesh came from MESHENTI-small town near Bahir Dar-to Bahir Dar when she was a small child. Her first job was working as a house maid. She used to earn 7 birr per month, through time she started to get 14 birr per month. When she turned around 13, the head of her employer household raped and impregnated her. Because the man denied his fatherhood, the life of the pregnant child became hard. The family finally kicked her out of the house. After she gave birth to a baby girl, Kasanesh went to this family's house and put the child at their gate and left. But, she was caught by the police and charged for abandoning own child and sentenced to one year imprisonment. According to her, working while having an infant was very difficult and the solution came to her mind was giving her daughter to the father though he denied. Kasanesh's daughter is now 17.

Kasanesh said that ..... In the past, I was unable to cover the scholastic materials of my daughter. I even let her to repeat 3 grade levels because I was unable to purchase her uniform and books. My child is 8<sup>th</sup> grade now instead of 11<sup>th</sup>. It has been three years since she benefited from FSCE project. Since then, her daughter is provided with scholastic material supports that include exercise books, uniform, school bag etc. Kasanesh is engaged in brewing local beverage called TELLA and AREKI. She also sells foods like SHIRO, boiled beans and the like. Previously she was unable to get all the necessary inputs to prepare the beverage and meal without getting into debt. But once she obtained the economic support from the project, she is able to expand her business. She is now running her business in rented house by paying 1000 Br/month. Kasanesh said that '...the business is not bad; I can now easily cover our daily expenses. I was unable to fulfill my daughter's needs before; but now more than ever I'm capable of meeting her needs. I even began to furnish my home with different equipment'.

The FSCE project provided Kasanesh with training on child protection issues as well as different types of violence happening on girls and children. As much as possible Kasanesh is protecting her daughter from such kind of violence by being prudent and taking necessary preventive measures. She also gives her daughter advice. Kasanesh's biggest desire is to leave a better living condition to her daughter. She doesn't want her daughter to take the same path she took.