

3. SOUTH WEST BETHEL SYNOD

South West Bethel Synod has in the year 2006/2007 passed through several challenges. Thanks to the Lord almighty, regardless of so many ups and downs, the synod is continuing to grow. The following sections provide an overview of activities that have been accomplished in the Synod over during the year.

I. Evangelism work.

The synod has some 250,000 members , 178 congregations organized in 16 parishes, over 200 preaching places and 8 outreach areas; ministered by 82 pastors and over 100 evangelists. Currently the synod is in a process of organizing the parishes into Presbytery—for the purpose of administrative effectiveness.

1.1. Rural/Low Cost Church Construction Project.

In January 2007 the Synod received the total of Etb 179,419:68 from Outreach foundation through BSCO. Various construction materials have been purchased, transported, and distributed to most of the construction sites (congregations).

It is planned to construct 9 Low Cost Church Buildings in the parishes and outreach areas. The type pf building is roofed with corrugated iron sheet, wooden wall plastered with mud and later on to be smoothed, wooden doors and windows. The beneficiaries are the key actors to construct the buildings. The estimated total number of people to benefit from this project is 7,650.

Income and Expenditure as of March 31,2007 follows:

INCOME	ETB
Grant from Outreach Foundation	179,419: 68
EXPENDITURE	
Purchase of construction materials	143,656:00
Mileage Charge (transportation of building materials)	5,645:34
Loading and unloading	170:00
Per diem	1,475:00
Office Supplies	352:00
Labor work Payment	18,049:00
Utilities	131:46
Administration charge	12,559:00
Photo Copy	100:00
Miscellaneous	<u>180:50</u>
TOTAL	<u>182,318:30</u>

EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME (2,898:62)

The provision of money for LCCB has helped the SWBS to enhance the kingdom of God amongst the marginalized, forgotten, and unreached people in its areas of operation in the southwestern part of Ethiopia. On behalf of the benefiting congregations, we extend our appreciation to the Outreach Foundation—may God bless all who have graciously donated. We also thank our Creator God for giving us a helping hand such as Outreach Foundation that continues to actively take part in God’s Mission in Ethiopia.

1:2 – Charles Haspels Bible School (CHBS).

Charles Haspels Bible School is the only training institution that the SWBS owns to train ministers. The Bible School at present has three permanent teachers. The school admits students alternatively (1st year and second year) second year students to potentially be ordained when called by their respective congregation. In 2006/2007 academic year 20 students of 1st year class are on training.

The school has planned to construction a chapel, a Library, and girls dormitory but has not been able to do so due to lack of funds—God willing the plan will be fulfilled over the coming years.

The synod continues to train leaders at various levels—degree diploma both in theology and Leadership. Though the demand is so high it has not been possible to provide the needed level of qualification for the Synods leadership.

2. Tent-making Ministry Project.

The synod has received the total of Etb 166,657:87 from the Outreach Foundation, through BSCO. Though it is a little short of what we had requested the money has been so useful to address the immediate needs of our pastors and evangelists who are serving without any regular income to sustain their families.

The technical committee appointed by the Synod Management Committee has screened 68 beneficiaries—30 pastors & 38 evangelists) from 14 parishes according to a set selection criteria for the purpose.

A one-day workshop was conducted in which all the 68 beneficiaries and all parish leaders actively took part. The purpose of the workshop was to equip the beneficiaries as to how to fatten and ox and to take care of it until it is ready for sell. The fattening and selling of an ox is to be actualized in one year period.

After the workshop, the beneficiaries have received ETB 2,000:00 each to purchase an ox. Many have praised the Lord and the Outreach Foundation for this great provision. Some have already started to purchase oxen at their respective market place.

Our initial plan was to support 100 beneficiaries and we designed the project in such a way. However, due to the soaring price of an ox from Etb 1,300 to 2000 we were forced to reduce the number of beneficiaries from 100 to 68. The remaining ones were told to wait for another opportunity.

The technical committee will continue to supervise and provide required support so that each recipient of this support may succeed as intended. Though the fruit is not yet seen we hope and pray that the beneficiaries will make good use of the support to improve their livelihood.

Income and Expenditure of the project follows.

INOCME	ETB
Grant from the Outreach Foundation	166,657:87
EXPENDITURE	
68 Beneficiaries	136,000:00
Travel & Transportation	13,715:50
Refreshments during the workshop	1,001:50
Stationeries	374:58
Supervision	4,665:05
Administration Charge (7%)	10,901:24
TOTAL	<u>166,657:87</u>



Tent Making Ministry—Training Workshop conducted by a professional from Local Government

II. Development and Social Services:

SWBS continues to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ through its Development and Social Services. The efforts to bring about improvement in the life of the people within its operational area has in most cases succeeded. The following are some of the money activities that have been performed over the past years.

The year 2006 has been a blessing one to the Synod and communities to whom development and social services have been rendered.. The SWBS-DASSC also shares the blessing with the beneficiaries, and has faced challenges from different angles.

With the smooth relationship and cooperation between the local government offices (both at Zonal & Woredas level), project stakeholders, and beneficiaries, EECMY Partners/Funding Agencies, EECMY-DASSC and SWBS-DASSC made the implementation of project programs possible. All the above-mentioned parties deserve appreciation and thanks.

In addition, with the help of the Almighty God and the afore-mentioned parties and EECMY-DASSC, it was possible to implement the under-mentioned major and minor project/programs and achieve remarkable results.

A. HIV/AIDS Prevention & Control Program

Major activities carried out during the Year were:

- ❑ Awareness Creation
- ❑ Support Anti-AIDS Clubs with First Aids materials
- ❑ Providing Care & Support to home-based HIV/AIDS patients (PLWHA) and Orphans

❖ Awareness creation:

Despite the fact that many people have heard about the deadly disease, still thousands need to be taught about the impact of HIV/AIDS now and then. Teaching about HIV/AIDS, Awareness raising and community mobilization have been given to the total number of **38,453** people from different group of the communities until October 2006.

❖ Support Anti-AIDS Clubs

During the Year, six Anti-AIDS Clubs were supported with first Aid materials in 6 elementary schools of Guraferda and Shae-Bench Woredas.

❖ Providing Care & Support

It was possible to render Care & Support to 10Orphans and 10 PLWHA with a small grant from C-DASSC HIV/AIDS PCP.

B. Surma Integrated Rural Development Project (SIRDP)

This Project has now phased out its fourth Phase (2004-2006) and will entered in to fifth phase (2007-2009) and the document with a Total Project Budget of ETB 1,761,860 is going to be signed by the concerned stakeholders and the EECMY/SWBS in the beginning of the coming new year in Mizan Teferi, Bench-Maji Zone, SNNPRS.



A. Holistic ministry in SIRDP

- According to SIRDP's 2006 Annual Plan of Operations (APOO), the total Project Budget was ETB 1,991,860(2004-2006). So far, it was observed that in the project area, the project coordinator (Mr. John M. Haspels and the Health coordinator (Mrs. Gwen Haspels have expended their personal money more than the initial plan of the project money for air plane transportation to Addis and medication support for injured Suri communities.
- The Project has four components: ***Agriculture, health, education, and water development***. Many a time, ***workshop*** for vehicle maintenance etc is also considered as one of the components of the Project.
- Compared to its Annual Plan of Operations, the overall achievement of the Project is very encouraging.
- In ***Agriculture***, the demonstration plot at two plots has been implemented. The achievement was 200%. In a component more emphasis has given to ox plow and



C. Cattle Vaccination at Tulgit, SIRDP

Dr. Haile Tola, SIRDP manager, has given vaccination to Suri cattle.

- demonstration plots. Now in the fiscal year 12 Suri farmers have started plow by ox and rent their ox to create income from their ox labor.
- The existence of a **health station** in the area does mean a lot to the Suri people. Besides rendering curative service, EPI, MCH and Health Education at the Health Station (static service), the same services have been rendered at outreach sites. Since the people are semi-nomads one has to go where they are. This situation created a mobile health service in the project and now one health post/ mobile health service site is constructed at Moga in the physical year.

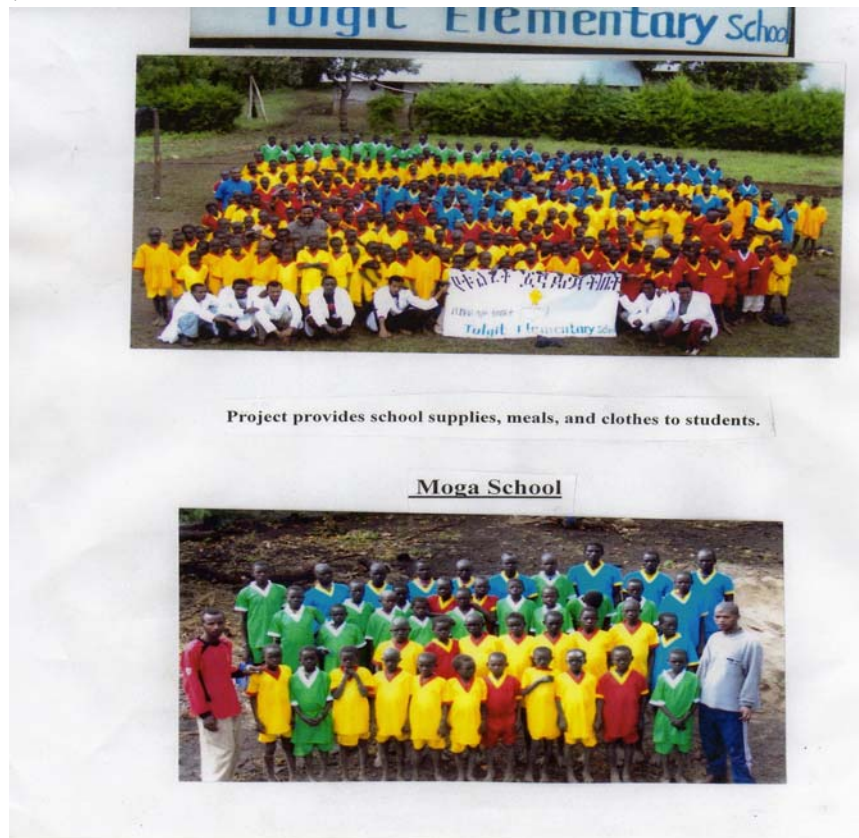


D. Sister Cohen M. Haspels, SIRDP health coordinator has given the vaccination to Suri children at one of the village vaccination center.

- As far as **Education** is concerned, 608 students provided with food and material support have learnt at Tulget and Moga Primary School. In addition, 13 students at Mizan High School have followed their studies. The Suri Literacy Project (SLP) supported by the PC-USA has greatly contributed to the development of formal education in the area. In this LP, children of different age and adults (male & female) took part. The Project continues to teach the three groups (children, men & women classes) in three sessions/day for 5 days each week. In this regard, an expat advisor of the Project from Germany is doing a great job!
- **Water** and road construction work were among the major activities carried out by the Project. Feeder road construction to Baale-Suri (new project site) covering 55 kms has been constructed and functioned. In providing clean drinking water to the Balle /Suri/ community, the Project has constructed water cistern / which the reserve tank of rainwater is newly introduced by the project.



Picture IV. Suri Literacy students learning about personal hygiene practically by their rural literacy teacher.



Tulgit Elementary School Students.

E. Health Program.

Prevention and curative services have been rendered to seven PAs (17,920 people) and people live in and around Gatchub Nucleus Health Center in one way or another.

- Besides EPI program, *two springs* have been developed and *one VIP pit latrine* has been constructed in order to prevent water borne and communicable diseases.

- **Health Education** (health information dissemination, health education in schools, health education activities in communities' sites) on different subjects was given to 21,723 people. As compared to the initial plan to educate 18,664 people, the achievement in this activity is 116%.
- **Building the capacity** of the staff has been given due attention this past year to. Accordingly, 1 person was sent to Addis Ababa (Central health College for training as a Laboratory technician for Gathcub Nucleus Health Center, Two suri people and one junior nurse were training at Tropical health College as Clinical nurse and to serve at Suri Nucleus Health Center and Moga Health Post for their people. In addition, another one person is studying in Addis to serve as a Pharmacist in GNHC and the Synod HIV/AIDS program coordinator is also studying at Central Health College as a clinical nurse to capacitate the DASSC HIV/AIDS PCP section.

C. Gatcheb Nucues Health Center.

This center has a concrete ground for the synod development and gospel work. It established by the first missionaries from the State, fifty years back and taken away from the church by communist regime for 17 years until the current government took place. The synod again handed over from the government and was running it as a clinic in its 1st. and 2nd. Phase and has run it in the Nucleus Health Center base currently its 3rd. phase (2006-2008.) According to the current government policy of MOH the health institutes should have a structure of three, Hospital, health center and health post. During its terminal evaluation (in 2005) the evaluation team including the targeted groups recommended that the Clinic to be grown up to health center in its 4th. Phase and until that some extra building should be built and staff should be capacitated. According to this recommendation the synod sent some staff for training and the technical staff on working will be trained in summer or in correspondence base. The mid term evaluation will be conducted in June, 2007 and the expected recommendation will be the extra two blocks to be build before the 2009. This issue is the obligation's that the GNHC should be fulfilled before the end of its 3rd. phase life.

Therefore, the SWBS DASSC badly needs the attentions of the Church DASSC, Partners and Communities for support in financial and in kind to keep this story cal and the church property with us in stead of hand over ring to the government and we also do not want to see the institution to become down graded institution, health Post level.

So that, we are producing the building project document and will be submitted to partners and the church for supporting early June 2007.

Picture V. The synod new building inauguration program at Mizan Tefferi on October 20, 2006 which was lead by EECMY President.

F. .Congregation-led Literacy Program

1. Rural Literacy Program.

The money that has been granted by the Outreach foundation is the only resource for carrying out rural literacy program in our area. The total amount of money received from the Outreach foundation through BSCO was Etb 48,171.

There are three centers opened to launch the program. These are:

Pinta – Located in Yemisrach Bethel Parish.

Gaygay Bala – Located in Genja Zuria Bethel Parish

Contingencies
TOTAL

4,087:00
48,171:00

G. Self-support Initiatives

To avoid dependency syndrome, the SWBS-DASSC has initiated parishes and congregations to work towards self-support. In this respect, some parishes have started planting **coffee**, different kinds of **fruit seedlings**, growing **vegetables**, planting **Korerima** and the like. Government workers (DAs and HAs) living with the farmers are behind all these endeavors. They give technical advices to the congregations as to how to deal with various activities. Some congregations have started earn incomes from their farm productions.

II. CHALLENGES

Despite the achievements recorded, there have been many challenges encountered during the Year.

A. Lack of Peace/Security

Situation, especially in the Suri area has been one of the major challenges to SIRDP. For unknown reasons, unrecognized and irresponsible individuals have murdered (Suri and Dizi) SIRDP daily and contractual workers on separate occasions. Thus far, no one was held responsible for these murders. Due to the deteriorating situation, especially expatriate personnel Mr. John M Haspils and Cohen Haspels have pushed to expend their personal money by taking wounded people to Addis for better treatment. The issue has been taken up and discussed at length with concerned government staff during the terminal evaluation of the fourth phase of the project conducted from November 22-25/2006 at Tulgit (the project area office station) in Surma woreda, Bench-Maji Zone, but solutions have not yet seen.

B. Frequent Breakdown of Project Vehicles

Due to the rough road in and outside the Project (SIRDP) area, the Project vehicles frequently breakdown. Consequently, a large portion of project fund goes to repairs and purchase of spare parts.

C. Lack of a Vehicle for SWBS DASSC

The SWBS-DASSC does not have a vehicle for its office hence; it was very difficult to monitor the activities of the projects/programs that have been carried out at different sites.

D. Care and Support

A need for care and support to PLWHA and Orphans is ever increasing and very demanding. Many needy people shown up to our office, almost daily, to get some support. However, we were

not in a position to respond to their dire needs. However, we trust in the Lord that God may provide us with some to help the needy in the coming year.

E. Phasing out of SWDP and Laying-off of SWDP technician.

The SWBS-DASSC has encountered another major challenge in phasing out of SWD program and lying off the technician. Two years before the Program discharged three SWBS-DASSC SWDP workers. Among these three former SWDP workers two of them have received their benefits and left the Synod for good, while one worker (store-man) refused to collect his benefits and took the Synod to court and after the Synod expends the money and its working times with court case, the court allowed him to restart his work with the Synod and he has started work at the Synod with out the budget line from October, 2006.

In meanwhile, the Synod could not pay the benefits of the current technician who has been worked for more than 17 years in the Synod by the very little fund that it received from C-DASSC.

F. Project and program staff's request for more salary.

As most of the EECMY Units experienced the SWBS is also in a financial/economic constraint. This influences the SWBS DASSC programs and projects staff not to have a better salary than the local government staff paid. Due to this reason, the project and programs technical staff has applied to leave the job for better benefits.

In the meantime, the Synod prepared the new salary scale, which is not much differing from the DMT and General office staff of the Synod.

3 Health Services

The Synod has been providing medical and public health services to a total of 22,000 people, through Gatcheb Nucleus health Center, formerly known as a clinic. The new Government policy requires that the Health Center should be upgraded and that several additional buildings have to be built. This is the most troubling challenge that we are facing these days.

The Health Center has been focusing more on preventive treatment (80%) which involve clean water provision, dry latrine projects, EPI program and so on. Recent reports have shown that the Health Center stands as a model throughout the province.

4 HIV/AIDS.

The Bench Maji Zone and particularly Mizan and neighboring towns stand the first in the whole region in HIV/AIDS prevalence. This happens due to high traffic of refugees that come all the way from Uganda, the former SPLA constituting the highest number. In the past few years it claimed thousands of life in Mizan, Aman, and Teppi towns.

The Synod has been doing its level best but resources limited our capacity to make meaningful difference. At the moment an emphasis is made on awareness raising and in future we seek to do more.

5: Youth and Child Care.

SWBS so far has not had any institutionalized child and youth program. A year ago we submitted our plan to set up a Community Based Child Care Program, which has got approval for funding by KNH. The program has not yet been actualized but some preparations are underway to have the program launched later this year or early next year.

6. Suri Integrated Rural Development Project.

Suri Integrated Rural Development Project (SIRDP) is fully supported by Presbyterian Churches and individuals in the US. The project has been in service for several years, now launching the fifth Phase. The project is cited among the most successful and impact-making projects in the whole Mekane Yesus. Suri is a semi nomadic tribe

numbering some 40,000 people. The project has covered almost all areas inhabited by the Suri and at its fifth phase it is planned to extend its service to a place called to a particular place called Zelmamo/Moga.

Education is one of the activities that have impacted the life of the people. One of the Suri boys, for the first time, has now joined a university (1st year now). The people which, years ago did not have anyone who reads and writes among itself has now several thousands of children at school, some in primary school and some at elementary level. Several of them have been granted scholarship through the project and are attending high school education in Mizan town. The project provides the students full living cost, clothing and housing.

In an attempt to increase agricultural productivity among the Suri, ox farm has been introduced and has made a big difference. The people have now enough to feed their families as well as for sale. Different crops, suitable to the area have been introduced—and trainings on nutrition is constantly given.

Health is another area of service that the project is engaging and significant impact has been made in this aspect as well.

While, development and social work is given emphasis, spiritual services have equally been given attention. Several Suri members have accepted Christ as their personal Savior. As a result there are at present 3 established congregations and several preaching places are being nurtured to be upgraded to congregation in future.

II. Income Generation Building.

As part of the synods initiative toward financial self-reliance, a one story building has been built and completed. Most part of the room has been leased out and the rest is going to be designated to the would be Community Based Child Care Program, on lease basis.



SWBS Income Generating Building Inauguration event, led by Rev Itefa Gobena, EECMY President.