

### **5.3. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation, consistent with the planning procedures and typologies is both participatory and conventional. At regional level, monitoring and evaluation function is a separate entity from planning and budgeting functions to empower program supervision and monitoring and to facilitate rigorous and responsive project monitoring, implementation, timely feedback and decision-making. At this level monitoring and evaluation has two sub processes: the economic and social sector monitoring and evaluation responsible for the follow up and supervision of the respective sector performances. The monitoring and evaluation, as such is important particularly when duties and responsibilities for planning and budgeting is decentralized to the lower jurisdiction with low capacity in both planning and implementation. The aim of such type of monitoring is capacity building, learning by doing and progressive capacity building of the various government institutions responsible for implementation of development programs. Similarly, monitoring and evaluation is a tool for linking inputs to outputs in logical framework to achieve meaningful outcome and changes in livelihoods and well-being. It also enables the proper utilization and management of scarce human, material and financial resources to achieve the common goal of development and targets of short, medium and long-term development plans. Thus, the structure and organizational linkages of monitoring and evaluation functions are both horizontal and vertical in line with the structure of current economic planning and budgeting exercise in the country. The vertical monitoring and evaluation structure refers to the planning structures from the kebele to the regional planning and related institutions mandated in allocation and planning of scarce resources, management and proper utilization of human, material and financial resources over a given period. The horizontal structures on the other hand refers to budget owners or institutions mandated for the implementation of development programs and projects on the one hand and those who fed data and information to the planning systems on the other. The collaborative working relationships between the two structures determine above all the effectiveness and efficiency of planning targets, reliable and adequate information flow, rational allocation of scarce financial resources and effective implementation of development activities and materialization of the overall goals of sustainable development.

#### **5.3.1. Levels and Methods**

Similar to the planning levels, monitoring and evaluation of programs and plans is undertaken at four levels. The kebele level monitoring and evaluation is undertaken by sector offices active in the kebele and the inspection and supervision committee organized from women's and youth association (each two members) and members of the kebele council (five members). The inspection and supervision committees are responsible for monitoring and supervision of all development and non-development activities in the kebeles and organized in line with the mandates of wereda administration. According to the BPR of BOFED the virtual committees and the planning and data worker at kebele level is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of activities. The virtual committee in almost all observed kebeles was not established and considered adequate to mandate the inspection and supervision committee organized by the wereda administration and the wereda capacity building offices. The expected assignment of the planning and data worker at Kebele level is also not in place and currently the kebele managers employed by the wereda administration are mandated for the compilation of monitoring and supervision reports. The inspection and supervision committee regularly monitor and supervise all programs and accountable for inspection of performance of sector office staff active at kebele level through regular weekly meetings and fortnightly progress reports. The committee is also responsible for reporting to the kebele council. The kebele sector offices are also responsible for monitoring and reporting of the progress of the programs in the year on monthly basis to their line

offices at wereda level. Some sectors such as health and education have organized a network of supervisors per five facilities responsible for regular weekly monitoring and supervision, technical support and reporting of progress to the wereda offices.

At wereda level, WoFED is responsible for the overall monitoring and evaluation of annual programs and plans. The PME team, which at this level mandated both for planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation conduct regular supervision at field level and regular progress monitoring reports. In most of the WoFED this team contains 3 to five technical staff members. The monitoring and evaluation at wereda sector offices is conducted by the PME and individual staff members of the sectors responsible for the follow up, technical support and implementation of the planned programs. The PME in these offices include 1- 2 staff members who are usually responsible for compilation of progress reports submitted by different sections of the sector offices. Monitoring at this level is weak and most of the time conventional and technocratic. Inadequate skilled manpower, transportation facilities and poor linkages between the field level staff and the wereda weakens the overall monitoring and evaluation systems. The linkages between the WOFED and that of the sector offices is also weak further accumulated the potential constraints.

The zonal level institutions, both the planning and sector offices are considered transitional institutions and vested minor technical support and monitoring and evaluation responsibilities. The monitoring and evaluation at this level limited to periodical and irregular often infrequent field level monitoring and evaluation of programs at wereda and zonal levels. The main function however is compilation of monitoring progress reports of weredas. Whenever fund and transportation facilities are available, ZOFED and groups from zonal sector offices arrange a quarterly field observation, which also considered technical support to wereda sector offices and WOFED. However, this field observation and technical support is inadequate and in most areas limited to one or two time monitoring visits to weredas mainly constrained by shortage of budget and transport facilities.

As indicated above, both conventional and participatory monitoring and evaluation system are used at all levels. The conventional monitoring and evaluation methods are more of quantitative, focus on planned targets and achievements over a specific planning period, and lack participatory approach. As a result conventional methods are considered more technocratic, narrow in scope (focus only on viable and quantitative indicators), objective and inefficient in qualitative ideas, perceptions and involvement of various stakeholders. The participatory monitoring and evaluation on the other hand is result based, qualitative, facilitate and favor the inclusion of ideas and perception of stakeholders, give due credit for the participation of beneficiaries, value action research and clearly separated from the functions of auditing and interrogation. The participatory monitoring and evaluation is also important where shortage of skilled manpower and financial resources are critical. It is also favored in participatory development, and grass roots empowerment and planning exercises.

The majority of the observed weredas claim adopting the participatory method in supervision, monitoring and evaluation of development plans, programs and projects. However, the information from various documents and interviews and discussion with various key informants indicated that participatory approaches have been effective only at kebele level particularly with regard to the involvement of community and community representatives. The wereda level monitoring and evaluation, on the other hand is more of conventional approaches with main focus on regular tabular forms of plan, achievement and ratio interface which is organized by the planning, monitoring and evaluation team at WOFED and similar teams in sector implementing institutions. The participation at this level limited to a quarterly and bi-annual meetings of the

council, cabinet and institutions at wereda level for progress report hearing, delegation of responsibilities, identification of key implementation constraints and decisions to solve these problems.

Viable monitoring and evaluation relies on results, SMART indicators, guidelines and user friendly manuals and formats to track progress of programs and plans as well as workable time tables and schedules as well as procedures. It also clearly depicts the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholders and beneficiaries in various levels and steps of monitoring and evaluation, modalities of participation as well expected contribution. It also favors multi-disciplinary technical approach, clearly differentiates the variations between monitoring and evaluation and list basic monitoring indicators and that of evaluation. Participatory monitoring and evaluation in principle is learning by doing, and a capacity building instrument for lower level jurisdiction which often lack skilled manpower. Continuous and progressive training and capacity building is central to such approach.

Eventhough some elements of participatory monitoring and evaluation are available at kebele and wereda level, there is no clear distinctions between monitoring and evaluation, its modalities and degrees of participation of various stakeholders, are not clear and not in line with the principles of participatory approaches. Regardless of the typology of monitoring and evaluation, weredas currently adopted two types of formal program follow up and supervision modalities. The filed monitoring and evaluation of development activities against the planned targets and the regular report based tracking methods. The field monitoring and evaluation, is conducted in specific periods (usually the third month of a quarter for most weredas) with a group of technical staff organized from various implementing institutions and led by the PME of ZOFED and WOFED. Implementing institutions also conduct regular on field monitoring of their development projects and programs with varying periods depending on the type of projects, the capacity of the institutions, availability of budget and transport facilities. Due to shortage of budget however, most of the weredas depends on quarterly field level monitoring and evaluation. Few wereda institutions particularly health and education have a monthly field monitoring eventhough the schedule varies with the availability of fund and transportation facilities as well as the degree of workloads and attention given to the programs.

This field observation and monitoring of projects involves many stakeholders including PME staff of WOFED and ZOFED, zonal and wereda offices (project owners), communities, contractors, key informants, inspection and supervision committees at kebele level, supervisors (education and health sectors), various teams and operational departments of offices (wereda and zone sector offices), the kebele and wereda administrations. The discussion, group observations, the data and information collection, the recommendations and other results of this monitoring is an input to flexible implementation modalities, adherence/or change to schedules, identification of resource and planning gaps, relocation and modification of activities, delegation of responsibilities, identification of critical constraints as well as a lesson for future implementation and planning. The findings of this monitoring report is an input for the project owners, the decision makers and the planners to consider vital issues in planning, implementation of projects and programmes, and enable fast feedbacks and other technical, and management decisions for improving the progress of the activities planned for the year.

The strategies of field monitoring activities are the following

1. On site field observation of critical projects and programs (both constraints and good achievements)
2. Analysis of reports of the sector wereda and zonal progress and field reports conducted by the planning and budgeting as well as virtual teams at both levels

3. Short survey
4. Discussion with relevant stakeholders,
5. Meetings with communities and implementing agencies or bodies
6. Questionnaire and secondary data collection formats and analysis of information obtained through these tools
7. Inquiry of all concerned and relevant bodies involved in planning, budgeting and implementation
8. Occasional follow up in case of suspicious projects and programs, and finally
9. Provision of supports wherever needed though capacities were not developed at all levels. (BoFED, 2008c)

In addition to monitoring, field observation and visits have also the role of capacity building and technical support especially for the kebele government structures. However, the schedule for group field level monitoring is irregular and inadequate due to shortage of manpower, transportation facilities and budget for almost all sector offices and WOFEDs.

The other strand of monitoring and evaluation system is regular monitoring and evaluative meetings at various levels. At kebele level, the inspection and supervision committees organize weekly meeting. In this regular meeting all committee members, the kebele manager, the kebele administration and sector office staff participate and present their progress in the week. This weekly evaluative meeting is relevant to curtail some implementation problems, capacity limitation and to facilitate fast feedback, recommendations and sharing responsibilities and duties. Such meetings further incorporate monthly general meetings of the kebele cabinets, sectors and other relevant organs at this level to evaluate the ongoing projects, programs and annual plans. Finally in most of the weredas, the kebele council meetings is undertaken every two to three months with participation of the general public which also have an evaluative role. Quarter reports are presented, discussed and major problems are identified, decisions are made to enhance the pace of implementation in the remaining part of the year. At wereda level, similar meetings were arranged by sector offices to discuss on major achievements and problems in the month. The monthly meetings include all sector offices at kebele level, the management and technical staff of the offices. This meeting is important not only for monitoring and evaluation but also a forum for grass roots staff of the offices to share their experiences, technical expertise and communicate between systems of the organizations. It also considered effective in solving implementation problems, capacity and technical limitations faced by the majority of the kebele level institutions. Mainly the health, education, agriculture and rural development offices of the weredas adopt this system of monitoring. Despite its significant contributions in enhancing the pace of implementation and solving problems, such meetings are recently weakening due to critical limitations of budgets. At zonal level, eventhough sector offices arrange meetings; it is irregular and based on the availability of fund.

The third form of monitoring and evaluation is regular monitoring reports. The number and types of reports produced varies from wereda to wereda. The reporting structure, similar to planning, extends from the sub kebele structure to zonal level. The type of reports also ranges from fortnight to annual reports. The following progress reports are common in all weredas: fortnight reports, monthly reports, quarter, bi-annual and annual reports.

The fortnight reports are submitted to the weredas within 15-20 of calendar months. The purpose of these monitoring reports is to strengthen supervision and inspection and to enhance timely information flow and feedback for the weredas who have little chance to conduct field monitoring, observation, and on site data collection. At kebele level, each development group and committees (parent teachers committees, health committees, peace and security committees and others)

should report the progress of their programs every 15 days to the kebele cabinet. The reports are compiled by the kebele manager and submitted to the wereda administration, WOFED, capacity building offices and other relevant wereda organizations. WOFED and other sector line offices also compile these reports.

The monthly reports are cumulative of the fortnight reports produced at kebele level by sectors, committees and other relevant organs. The reports are submitted to the wereda administration, WOFED and line offices regularly. Sector offices at kebele level submit also their monthly progress report to wereda sector offices (agriculture and rural development, health, education and others). The structure of report and information flow for health, education, agricultural extension extends from the development group and committees to extension workers to supervisors and finally to wereda sector sub teams. Each supervisor is responsible for inspection and monitoring of five schools, health posts and extension areas. Each supervisor therefore produces cumulative monthly report to the wereda line offices. Different sections of the offices share the reports and finally compiled by the planning, monitoring and evaluation sections of the organizations. These reports are also regularly submitted to WOFED, wereda administration, wereda council, office of capacity building and zonal sector offices. The WOFED monitoring and evaluation team on the other hand compiles these reports and submit to similar institutions in the wereda and to ZOFED. The reporting period for most of the WOFED to relevant organs is between 20-25 every month. Zonal sector offices and ZOFED compile the monthly reports from weredas and WOFED and submit to the regional bureaus and BOFED between 25-30 calendar days of a month. The monthly progress reports are usually prepared to track the performance of projects funded by capital budget.

Each institution also produces quarter, bi-annual, and annual progress monitoring reports and submits to relevant organization from the wereda to the regional level. These reports are also supported by field monitoring reports, regular quarter meetings of relevant organizations at kebele, wereda and zonal levels. Feedback is more or less adequate at each level due to frequent monitoring at kebele level and follow-up of the wereda institutions. The outcome of the quarter monitoring and evaluation reports and meetings is relocation, modification, budget adjustment and other technical and management considerations.

In both cases, the main instruments used for monitoring purposes are reports of previous years, annual plan documents of the year, action plans of the sector offices (disaggregated into quarter and months). Despite significant technical gaps and poor communications and transport facilities for effective technical support from the upper hierarchies, training on participatory monitoring and evaluation as well as comprehensive user friendly monitoring and evaluation guidelines are not available to the kebeles, WOFED, and sector offices. Thus, monitoring and evaluation reports are based on a common sense of measuring achievements against planned targets without considering the scope, variability and strategic environments in which these goals are achieved. For almost all kebeles and weredas, the available monitoring and evaluation instruments are inadequate and inefficient. At kebele level, only their previous year achievements and current action plans are the only tools used for progress monitoring and in some supported by operational guidelines produced by the capacity building bureau. Sectoral offices are better off in availability of monitoring and evaluation guidelines particularly that of health and education offices.

Participatory planning requires participatory monitoring and evaluation and tangible and objective training and other capacity building. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is a learning process and not fault finding. People learn from their mistakes and apply new ideas and working procedures from what they learn. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is new to all structures from the kebele upwards to the regional level. According to the discussions with kebeles and

weredas, training was not in place and in some inadequate. Nevertheless, the training was inadequate to inculcate and apply the basic principles and actual practices of project monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation requires understanding and knowledge of project cycle management, planning and planning methodologies and related subject matter. Considering the complicated nature of planning, social, and economic activities, it is difficult to assume that the monitoring and evaluation system equipped its staff with important practical professions. As a result, the monitoring and evaluation function follows similar procedures and methods applied in pre-civil service reform periods.

Monitoring and evaluation most of the time focuses on physical activities which could be measured, and observed such as construction activities (schools, health posts and center, vet clinics, irrigation infrastructure, etc). Monitoring and evaluation incorporate in principle all the processes from planning of the activities to its completion, procedures, accountabilities, material and financial inputs that constitute a development project. Exclusion of these issues in monitoring leads to incomplete, wrong decision-making and unreliable future planning. Evaluation though claimed by the majority of the wereda, it was not in place, and there is no clear understanding and distinction between monitoring and evaluation.

### **5.3.2. Processes and Procedures**

The processes, procedures, stakeholders, schedules, structures and manpower requirement of monitoring and evaluation core function was detailed in the BPR of BOFED of 2008. According to this BPR document, monitoring and evaluation is an independent and separate functions from planning and budgeting and structured as an independent core process. The aim of the separation of the monitoring and evaluation from planning was detailed in similar studies. At zonal level and wereda level monitoring and evaluation is part of the planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation team having separate case teams mandated for the monitoring of social and economic sectors. In some weredas, there is no separate case team at all.

Monitoring and evaluation at sub regional level is conducted at three major levels as indicated above. The kebele level monitoring and evaluation is undertaken by active sectors in kebeles and inspection and supervision committee organized by wereda and kebele administrations. The WofED have a direct supervisory role at this level through these committees and kebele administration as well as its own monitoring and evaluation team. Similarly, a team organized from various wereda sector offices and WOFED is mandated for periodical field level supervision, which often scheduled every quarter.

According to BPR studies of BOFED, monitoring and evaluation begins with preparation, duplication and dissemination of various reporting formats, action plans (disaggregated into quarter and months) and some simple indicators organized from annual plans in early August. The main monitoring and progress reporting formats are developed and sent to the weredas via ZOFED. Weredas on the other hand disseminate the same formats with modification to the kebeles. However, in the majority of the weredas such procedures are inadequate. Most of the weredas suffer from critical shortage of budgets and none of them has clear and mandated structure from the kebeles. As a result, most of the kebele level reports were forwarded directly to the wereda administration and capacity building offices, from where WOFED has to collect for its own consumption. Lack of budget for kebele administrations and managers (for re-production of reports) and communication also limited the opportunities of having reports directly from the kebeles. The formats are also developed to capture monthly and quarter activity performances with outlines of reports. The data collection and routine supervision is the mandate of the institutions active at kebele level together with various committees established at similar level.

Eventhough the BPR outlines a clear reporting schedule for each level, most of the kebeles submit their monthly report within the 1-10 calendar month and quarter reports from 19-23 of the last month of each quarter.

The weredas on the other hand compile reports from the wereda sector offices and submit to ZOFED and other relevant wereda offices within 30-05 calendar months and the last month of a quarter. The schedule at this level also varies from wereda to wereda depending on the strength of linkages, capacities of kebeles and sectors, budget and logistic supplies, and coordination of WOFED and wereda cabinets. The kebele level reports in the majority of the weredas are used as additional information sources and as a result, the wereda level monthly and quarter reports did not include kebele level monitoring inputs. Furthermore, WOFED considers and believed that wereda sector reports are cumulative of kebele inputs/ reports and it is unnecessary to include in the reports of WOFED. The ZOFED compile the wereda and zonal sector reports and submit the BOFED between 30<sup>th</sup> of the month and up to the 5<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month. Similar to the weredas, in some zones only zonal sector offices' reports are compiled for the same reasons indicated above.

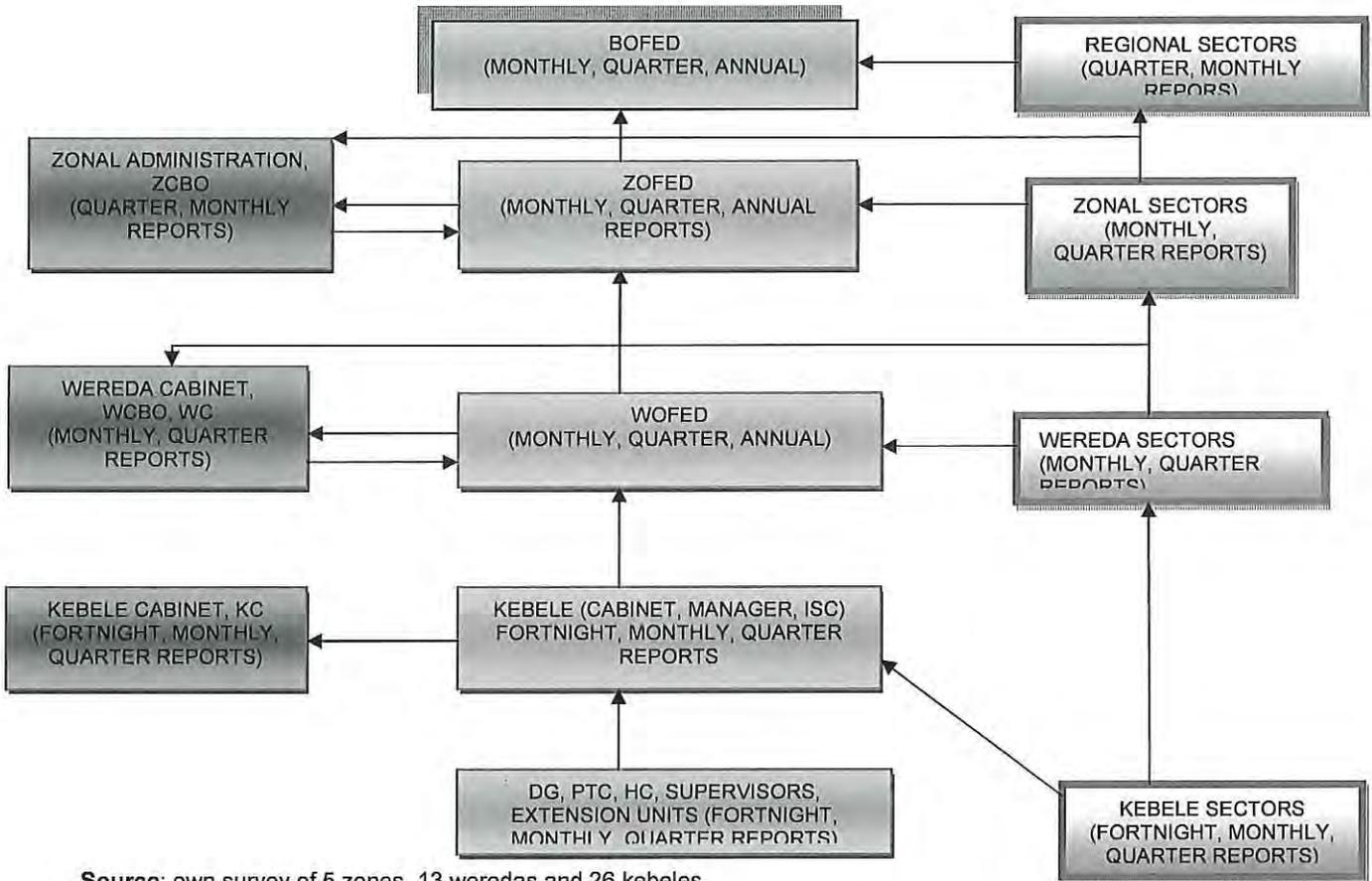
Table 3: Current progress monitoring report flow between kebeles, weredas and zones

activity	Duration (BPR)	kebele	wereda	Zone
Preparation, modification and dissemination of formats	July 1-August 30	none	Up to 25 <sup>th</sup> of August	Up to 20 <sup>th</sup> of August
Fortnight reports	-	12-15	-	-
Monthly progress reports	1-10 calendar days of next month	20-23	20-25	1-5
Field monitoring	Last month of a quarter up to 30	weekly	sometimes	rarely
Quarter reports	26-30 of last month of a quarter	19-22	30-05	5-10
Bi-annual and annual progress reports	January and May up to 20	19-22	January-May	January-may

Source: Observed kebeles, weredas and zones, Sept 2009.

The quarter reports are cumulative of the monthly reports and sometimes incorporated field level monitoring. At wereda level, quarter reports are reviewed with the main purpose of identifying major implementation problems, delegation of responsibilities and forwarding alternative solutions. Most of these regular quarterly meetings come up with modifications of project alternatives (particularly in early quarters), relocation, adjustment, transfer and reallocation of budgets from other projects and sectors and contingency funds. The Bi-annual and annual general meetings are arranged by the wereda council to deliberate on mid-term and terminal progress monitoring reports. Major stakeholders, sector offices, kebele representatives and others will participate on these meetings. The bi-annual reports and council meetings are important to forward solutions to implementation problems and delegation of responsibilities, while the terminal meetings in May will facilitate future planning and learning.

Figure 4: Monitoring and Evaluation Information Flow from Kebele to Zonal Level



Source: own survey of 5 zones, 13 weredas and 26 kebeles.

The sector offices, also follow similar procedures from the kebele to zonal level even though their modalities varies from one to the other. The four pro-poor sectors have a well established structures at all levels, despite significant capacity and structural gaps particularly. The number of staff for planning, monitoring and evaluation is two in most offices except the water resources offices at wereda level who have no structural consideration for this important task. Current situation however is that, most of the offices have no or less than 50 percent of the total requirements of manpower necessary for planning, monitoring and evaluation. As a result, most of the monitoring and evaluation tasks were undertaken by responsible sections of the offices and experts responsible for implementation follow up and technical supports at each level. Where some PME staff is available, they compile monitoring reports from each section of the offices on monthly and quarterly basis. In addition to significant shortage of technical staff for PME, the task in general suffer from lack of computers for reporting and data processing, transportation facilities (for technical support and observations) fax and other communication (internet) to facilitate information flow between kebeles, weredas and zones. Most of observed weredas have no computer and vehicle. Similarly, the ratio of computers and telephone lines to staff is more than 10. Shortage of operating budget also limited the monitoring and evaluation and technical support at all levels. Though there is relative growth in operating budgets for the four sector offices, the proportion of operating budget to total budget and per quarter is low.

Despite such critical problems, the sector offices are benefited from the availability of semi-skilled manpower and a well organized and relatively committed community and political organizations at kebele level. The office of agriculture and rural development has three development agents in all kebeles who have multiple responsibilities (including development activities, training farmers, technical support, planning, and supervision, monitoring and reporting). Similarly, the wereda health office assigned two health extension workers in all kebeles working on preventive health care system, awareness creation, maternal and child health care and others who are also mandated for planning, monitoring and supervision and community mobilization together with the health committees established at kebele level. In addition, the health extension workers are also supported by health supervisors assigned for each five health posts who give technical support, supervise and report to the wereda health office. Staff mobility of this office is relatively better due to availability of external fund for many public health programs. The education office has also one school in each kebele with three to more than 10 teachers. One supervisor is also assigned for each five schools with the responsibilities of technical and management support, supervision and regular reporting. The parent teachers committee, who regularly work with the schools, the communities, the kebele administration and manager in school management, planning, resource and community mobilization, also supports the education sector. Such structure not also facilitated relatively better flow of monitoring information, but also reduced the burdens of shortage of finance, transport and communication facilities for effective supervision and monitoring of regular programs at grassroots level.

### **5.3.3. Technical support**

Effective monitoring and evaluation relies on genuine participation of stakeholders and beneficiaries, intensive and progressive capacity building and technical support, training and strong linkages and common understanding between different levels. The nature of the programs and projects implemented in each level and the degree of decentralization and responsibilities vested in each level also dictates not only the type but also the technical capacities of technical staff. Training at current situation is inadequate and limited to orientation meetings. Practical, intensive, objective and regular training on various disciplines of planning, monitoring and evaluation and project cycle management is essential to improve the performances of plans and development programs as well as staff who are regularly supposed to supervise program activities. With decentralization and current structural organization, most of the technical staff at wereda and kebele level is semi-trained and semi-professional with limited educational background, skill and experience. Some of them are working on areas beyond their qualification. With the absence of significant training and technical support from hierarchies, which supposed to have relatively well trained staff, their performance is limited to the scope of their knowledge and common sense expertise. Recognizing the limitations of staff experience and skills, the BPR recommended a continuous and regular technical support to kebele and wereda staff in addition to various capacity building activities. Technical support, though could not replace training and skill acquisition, it is important to improve technical capacities of semi-professional staff.

Despite its importance, technical support is inadequate at all levels. Technical support is only viable and possible with the existence of technical, financial, human and material capacities at each level. Much technical support in various disciplines of planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and information management have been placed on WOFED and ZOFED. Both institutions however have no capacity in all aspects to technically support various institutions at kebele and wereda level. Information from the observed 13 weredas and 26 kebeles indicated that WOFED provided an orientation workshop on the procedures and modalities of monitoring and evaluation, the outline, contents and formats of monitoring and evaluation for sector offices and very few kebele representatives. The evaluation of the sector offices is therefore the

technical support of WOFED is inadequate and for some none existent. Similarly, the linkages between sector offices and WOFED are only limited to periods of planning, budgeting, reporting and field supervision and on demand information flow. The major reasons, as stated above is capacity limitations in terms of communication facilities, skill, experience, manpower, transport facilities and budget. Technical support during on field monitoring and evaluation, which have substantial contribution in information exchange and experience sharing, is also limited due to shortage of time and budget. The linkages and technical support between kebele manager and WOFED is almost inadequate and below expectations for various reasons. The technical support for kebeles is left for sector offices, wereda capacity building and administration offices. The technical support between wereda administration and WOFED is however strong for various reasons

1. The WOFED is the technical arm of the wereda administration and member of the wereda cabinet, with much responsibilities for technical issues and decision making
2. WOFED is responsible for planning and budgeting which are also policy instruments for wereda administration and council who due to capacities relies on WOFED
3. Allocation of budget need technical knowhow and extreme care whose technical expertise is in WOFED than other sector institutions
4. In addition to meager budget allocation along various competing institutions in the weredas, the WOFED is mandated for administration of wereda sector budgets, which is also a decision instrument for wereda cabinet.

As a result, the linkages between WOFED, the cabinet and council are strong and encouraging particularly in coordination, facilitation for information flow, reporting and feedback.

The linkage and degree of technical support of wereda sector offices and the kebele institutions is improving eventhough it is inadequate to solve management and technical problems at kebele level. Training is irregular and technical support is still limited to solving implementation and management problems. The existence of field supervisors (though consumed a lot of financial resources) in sector offices improved degree of technical support for some institutions such as health and education offices. Yet the overall observation and responses is that technical support is inefficient, inadequate and irregular for kebele level institutions. There are also no well planned and reliable and achievable technical support schemes in the annual plans of all sector offices and WOFED.

One of the major reasons for the existence of ZOFED is technical support for the WOFEDs and sector organizations on regular basis particularly for those weredas who lack skilled an experienced manpower. Yet due to shortage of skilled manpower in almost all ZOFED, shortage of budget, transport facilities and communication services, its technical support is limited to irregular and limited field visits, experience sharing and information exchange. Training by ZOFED is also inadequate and for most not available for the last two years.

In some weredas, there are some linkages between the wereda sectors and kebele level institutions and NGOs. NGOs support the kebele administration, sectors and managers in provision of stationeries and office materials and in some fund for running their regular duties. Some large and international NGOs also support the construction of water supply points and irrigation schemes as well as monitoring and evaluation of programs financed by them. Training is also part of their technical support packages for education, health and water resource offices.

#### 5.3.4. Expectations and Gaps

The BPR on monitoring and evaluation clearly states the processes and procedures, structural organization and requirements, schedules and other important factors for the successful monitoring and evaluation. Similar document also describes the importance of adopting approaches to facilitate participatory local level development planning, participation of stakeholders and communities. With decentralization of functions to grassroots levels, the shortage of skilled manpower, inadequate capacity building and technical supports become critical particularly where government unable to fulfill the standard requirements of monitoring and evaluation. The participatory approach is one method of tackling short-term capacity limitations through capacitating grassroots institutions and communities. Beside, significant requirements for capacity building to strengthen monitoring and evaluation functions at wereda and kebele level, technical supports are necessary to upgrade the skill and experiences of existing staff.

Effective monitoring and evaluation system also needs clear distinctions between monitoring and evaluation, viable development and program indicators, applicable schedules and structural organization. The BOFED, assumed the importance of separate team at regional level, zonal, wereda level. At kebele level, there will be a virtual committee, who facilitates and conducts regular monitoring and evaluation activities organized from different groups of institutions within the kebeles. In addition, the Bureau will have a planning and data worker at kebele level who organizes planning, monitoring, evaluation and data collection and coordination. Similarly, the planning and data worker will be capacitated with training, offices and office materials, transport and communication facilities and also will have direct support and linkages with and from the WOFED. At wereda level, monitoring and evaluation will be under the planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation core process, but with separate responsibility for supervision, monitoring and evaluation. The monitoring and evaluation team of WOFED will have two staff who regularly follow up program implementations, monitoring data collection, reporting, technical backstopping and other activities relevant for effective monitoring and evaluation. Similarly, the assumption is that the sectoral offices will have similar monitoring and evaluation structural organization, skilled manpower, reporting, monitoring and supervision data collection procedures and schedules. Furthermore, the sector offices and WOFED will have strong working relationships with regard to planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. Technical support of WOFED to sector offices also assumed a cornerstone for strengthening monitoring and evaluation teams.

As indicated above, monitoring of plan and program implementations are through regular reports channeled from the sector offices and on field observation. Reports will be produced and submitted to WOFED on monthly, quarterly and annually consistent with procedures and schedules for preparation and submission timelines. The ZOFED is also charged with the responsibility of technical support, compilation and dissemination of progress monitoring reports and field monitoring. The expected outcome of effective monitoring and evaluation assumed also through regular training of existing staff, assigning adequate manpower (three at zonal and wereda levels), fulfilling transport and communication facilities, offices and office materials as well as adequate operating funds.

In general, the anticipated monitoring and evaluation of BOFED, to some extent was adequate to lay a foundation for regular and up to date system of supervision and strong linkage between vertical and horizontal structures. Despite the many wishes of BOFED to establish strong and viable monitoring and evaluation and linkages between different structures at kebele, wereda and zonal levels, the overall outcome was not to the expectation. There are, however, some

progressive developments in recent years. Some of the gaps are structural and others are capacity limitation. The following are some of the major gaps and limitations of current monitoring and evaluation system at the three levels

1. Eventhough the monitoring and evaluation at kebele level is the responsibility of planning and data worker, and virtual committees, there is no such structures in almost all kebeles and weredas covered in this study. Current monitoring and supervision rather mandated to the inspection and supervision committee (ISC) organized from the youth and women association and the kebele council<sup>5</sup>. The problem with this committee is their inclinations to politics and good governance packages rather than other development activities, which have significant role in changing livelihoods. The skill in monitoring and evaluation is also lacking and most of them are below the second cycle primary school education with no or little training. With lack of technical support from the weredas, they depend on their common sense and experience. The capacity of evaluating the performance of various sectors in the kebeles and more or less semi professional staff of health, education, agricultural extension services and NGO activities is limited. It is also worth nothing that most of these committees focus on evaluating people than the performance of development programs. Participation is also limited to staff and other committees in the kebeles than the broader communities who have much say on the development programs affecting their life. The kebele managers have no role in monitoring and evaluation except compiling available report from various committees and sector staff active in the kebeles. Structural fatigues and lack of commitment in most of the ISC at kebele level is another hurdle to participatory monitoring and evaluation. Similarly, lack of budget for monitoring and evaluation, communication and production of reports is also a constraint to smooth flow of monitoring information between levels. As a result, in most of the kebeles, reports are submitted only to wereda administration. The WOFED collects this information from the wereda administration and as a result, most of the kebele level monitoring and evaluation were not included in the wereda monthly or quarter monitoring reports.
2. At wereda level monitoring and evaluation is conducted by different sectors including WOFED's monitoring and evaluation staff, adhoc committees organized from different sectors. Even though most of the weredas struggle with strict schedules, most of them fail even to conduct field monitoring once per year. Adhoc committees not well organized in most of them and where there is some attempts lack of staff and workloads limited the field monitoring tasks. Sector offices have no or one staff member for monitoring of activities who actually limited to compiling monitoring information from line departments in the sectors and from the kebele sector offices. The majority of the wereda sectors and WOFED have no transport vehicles and motor cycles. There is no separate budget for monitoring and evaluation either. Operating budgets on average was only 7.1 percent of the annual budget of the weredas. Therefore, field monitoring and technical support is limited to less than five days per quarter and only limited programs are monitored and very few kebeles are visited. Similarly, most of the sector offices and WOFED have inadequate access to telephone services even to communicate with kebeles and zones for technical support, problem solving and periodical online reporting. As a result, the BPR

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<sup>5</sup> Eventhough the composition varies from wereda to wereda, in most areas the inspection and supervision committee is organized from two members of youth association, two members of women's association and five members of the kebele council. In some areas such as in the west the committee also includes members from model farmers, security and administration, kebele manager. In the majority of the kebeles however, the kebele manager is not a member of this committee and involve only in compilation of reports from the kebele sector offices.

recommendations were faulted and inconsistent with the existing capacities. Table 4 below indicate some of the existing infrastructure for monitoring and evaluation.

Table 4: Ratios of some logistic Supplies to existing staff in WOFED, ZOFED and sector offices

Items	Kebele <sup>6</sup>	WoFED	Wereda/zone Sectors <sup>7</sup>	ZoFED <sup>8</sup>
Vehicle	No	No	1:17.6	1:30
Motor Cycles	No	1:50	1:11.1	1:38
Telephone Lines	No	1:15	1:51	1:10
Fax Machines	No	1:497	1:37.1	1:38
Computers	No	1:11	1:5.7	1:9
laptop	no	No	1:66.8	1:23
Printers	No	1:15	1:6.4	1:7
Photocopiers	No	1:50	1:17	1:23
Operating Cost/capita/month	No	62	NA	NA
Manuals	No	No	Some	No
M&E Guidelines	No	No	FEW	No
BPR Guidelines	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
No. with inadequate furniture (% weredas)	no	53.8	50.0	0.0

Source: Observed Kebeles, Weredas and Zones, Sept 2009.

- Eventhough most of the WOFED claimed having monitoring and evaluation guidelines, the guidelines are BPR documents limited to operational and management procedures rather than technical inputs important in guiding the principles and practices of participatory monitoring and evaluation. In view of the existing critical gap in number, skill and experience of staff in participatory monitoring and evaluation, these guidelines and manuals are important to narrow the gaps between theory and practices. Most of the monitoring guidelines and indicators are also annual plan targets and allocated budget detailed in action plans. Both long and short term monitoring and evaluation for regular large-scale development programs and short-term construction activities are almost the same. There is no distinctions between monitoring and evaluation on the one hand and benchmark indicators of outputs and activities on the other. Outcome and impact monitoring of ongoing and completed programs is not in place mainly due to critical gaps even in understanding the importance and variations between monitoring and evaluation. With regard to developing indicators sector offices, are better than WOFED<sup>9</sup>. There is no common understanding on monitoring and evaluation and indicators within the staff of the WOFED and ZOFED and they depend on the indicators developed by sector offices, who have relatively better skill in project cycle management and indicator development, and linking indicators with time tables, resources and other variables in materialization of effective projects.

<sup>6</sup> BoFED/WOFED has no structure at kebele level. The kebele manager employed by the WOA serves all tasks in the kebeles. The logistics, office supplies and others currently serving the manager is that of either the WOA or the kebele administration.

<sup>7</sup> Includes 20 wereda and zonal sector offices such as agriculture, education, water and health

<sup>8</sup> Data on Jimma and east Wellega zones only. For others data is inadequate because it was not compiled at the zonal levels.

<sup>9</sup> Evaluation is understood as those supervision activities undertaken at field level while monitoring through regular reports. In some, every attempt to reporting is either monitoring or evaluation. Where the WOFEDs claim they actually practice evaluation, the indicators are activities, budget and schedules.

4. Regular refreshment training and technical support at all levels is also inadequate. WOFED has no training and technical support capability at all. ZOFED is crippled with structural rigidities and lack of mandates as well as capacity limitations. BoFED has inadequate connection with the weredas and kebeles. Sector zonal and bureaus has little technical and management connections with their field level offices. Yet they developed plans and achievement indicators for weredas with inadequate knowledge of the implication of their plans on budget, capacities and local circumstances. Training has been given for five days once or twice since the early 2000 EFY. Most of these trainings were focused on the contents of reports, the procedures and processes of BPR, good governance package, which is no more important than orientation workshops. Technical applications of planning, monitoring and evaluation are not in place. As a result, the evaluation of the observed weredas on training is below expectation and inadequate. Some of the staff have no training at all and unfit for the position according to the recommendations of the BPR. Some wereda sector offices undertake monitoring and evaluation through delegation of posts for extension workers with long experience or any relevant staff members. In some of the wereda sector offices' management committees are responsible for production of monitoring and evaluation reports. Technical support from zonal offices is also limited to 1-2 day field visit which most of the time charged with the purpose of inspection than technical support, experience sharing and information exchange. Bureaus have inadequate relationships with the weredas except regular information exchange through reports.

Table 5: Responses to Current Linkages Technical support and Training between WoFED, ZoFED and Sector Offices

Between	LEVELS (responded to inadequacy)				
	Linkages	Technical support	Training	Material support	M&E
Sectors → Kebeles	Medium	Medium	medium	none	good
WoFED → Kebeles	Weak	Almost none	Almost none	none	None
WOFED → Sectors	Weak	inadequate	inadequate	none	inadequate
WOA → Kebeles	Strong	Good but inadequate	inadequate	sometimes	frequent
WoFED → WOA <sup>10</sup>	Strong	good	None	none	None
WOFED → kebele Manager	Weak	none	None	none	None
Zonal → sectors wereda sectors	None	inadequate	inadequate	inadequate	Inadequate
ZOFED → WoFED	Weak	inadequate	inadequate	none	Inadequate
BOFED → WoFED	None, almost	Almost none	None	none	none

Source: Observed Kebeles, weredas and zones, Sept 2009.

5. It is also frustrating for most of the monitoring and evaluation staff that budget for all activities (capital and operating costs) is inadequate to provide supports and to evaluate development programs. Furthermore, the digression of the amount of budget and plan targets and indicators pose an inquiry on the importance of monitoring and evaluation. None of the wereda development indicators and targets has relations with the amount of budget allocated for various institutions each year. Thus, monitoring and evaluation is limited to lip-service and a culture of reporting what has been performed at various levels.

<sup>10</sup> WOA = Woreda office of Administration

6. The linkages between the WOFED, ZOFED and sector offices are inadequate and below expectations of the BPR. The linkages between these levels of organizations are in planning, reporting and budgeting. However, the relationships between the wereda and kebele level offices are adequate and satisfactory eventhough the modalities of relationship are based on information flow and reports. The existence of supervisors for some sectors also improved the linkages between the kebeles and the wereda sector offices particularly for education and health sectors<sup>11</sup>. Periodical supervision and monitoring meetings (scheduled on fortnight and monthly) also add an input to strong linkage, experience sharing, and information flow and to capacity building. The linkages between the kebele and WOFED is inadequate and in most none.
7. Seventh, though the zonal structure as planning, monitoring, and evaluation organ is not resolved., It is meaningless to constrain the direct relationship and information flow between the weredas and the bureaus. There is no adequate justification for why weredas cannot provide information directly both for the zones and region at the same time. There is no technical, managerial and administrative hurdle with the adoption of such system. The system saves time, provide opportunities to obtain detail and adequate information, enable to build wereda and kebele level database, which can also be used for planning and data management system at the regional level. Similar problems appear in sectoral bureaus.
8. The expansion of institutions and organizational structures in the weredas and kebeles also eaten up most of the budget that could have been allocated for the development activities and improved livelihoods of the majority of the poor and the destitute. With expansion of institutions, which are at minimum about 27 government organization)also impose heavy burden on the already weak monitoring and evaluation structure of the WOFED and ZOFED. This is also one main reason for the limitation of monitoring and evaluation activities to only few sectors such as agricultural extension, health, water supply and education sector projects and programs. Similarly, the issue is also a cause for extreme reliance of regular reports from these institutions without critical justification for reliability and consistency.
9. Low awareness for monitoring and evaluation, as linked functions with planning, also observed in major sectors. For example, the water resources offices have no manpower at all and in agriculture and education offices only two staff is supposed adequate for monitoring and evaluation of the vast programs implemented by these institutions. Similarly, the health offices have only one staff for overall planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and information management. The overall consequences are that poor monitoring and supervision of projects, planning, budgeting which leads to poor project performance with low and intangible outcomes. In addition, the individual staff members who are responsible for implementation of programs undertake the monitoring and evaluation of programs of these institutions. The role of the monitoring and evaluation staff, where available, is limited to compiling periodical reports from the line staff members within these institutions.
10. There is also redundant structure within the WOFED and wereda administration with similar duties and responsibilities even time tables. Eventhough such double structures

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<sup>11</sup> For education offices, there is one supervisor on average, for five schools and for health and agriculture and rural development offices one per five health posts and three development centers respectively.

have some advantages particularly in improving the reliability of monitoring progress reports across institutions, their existence is unjustifiable in the face of critical shortage of budget in all weredas. Sector offices have to submit their monthly reports to wereda administration, the house of representatives (of weredas), wereda capacity building, zonal line offices, WOFED, and information and public relation offices, other innumerable institutions. The costs for preparation, duplication and dissemination of the monthly, quarter, bi-annual and annual reports is substantial and could not be justified in view of current rising prices of stationeries and materials, transport and communication costs and shortage of skilled manpower. In almost all wereda sectors and WOFED, stationeries are inadequate and in kebeles almost none existent where the kebele managers often purchase some from own pockets. Computers are in short supply and skill is limited to facilitators (one secretary in every office).

11. Field level monitoring is also limited and where available it is not in line with the BPR recommendations. One of the main problems is that there is critical shortage of transport vehicles and motorcycles. Average availability of vehicles and motor cycles is only 1 per 20 weredas and motor cycles 2 per 10 weredas. Similarly, telephone line important for online technical support and supervision is within the ratio of 1: 30. Budgets are not available even to finance some of the staff with their own mobile phones. The sector offices also suffer from critical gaps.
12. Monitoring and evaluation suffers also from structural digression from the BPR recommendations and the modalities of the BOFED and WOFED monitoring and evaluation structure. In some weredas reports from the wereda sectors to zonal sectors, wereda sectors to WOFED, kebele sector offices to kebele committees and managers are dissimilar. Furthermore, it is also observed that report flow is far behind the schedule of BPR recommendation<sup>12</sup>.
13. The monitoring and evaluation (objective) relies on short term and inadequate indicators with long-term vision, which dictates and link resources to desired goals and plans to achieve significant impact in the medium to long term. Some wereda sector offices such as health and education have some indicators projected five years ahead. Other sector offices such as water supply and agriculture depended on activities and outputs. The horizon of indicators is limited to annual plans either due to the nature of their programs and activities or lack of budget to dream even short-term development indicators. Thus, in general the monitoring and evaluation as well as planning system of all sectors at wereda level have limited linkages with MDGs, national and regional medium term development goals.

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<sup>12</sup> Most of the kebele structures manage to submit their reports according to the schedules. But wereda offices are far behind the schedule due to lack of capacities to compile reports from all kebele institutions.

#### **5.4. Information Management**

Data collection, analysis, compilation, storing and dissemination are a cornerstone for reliable development planning. The availability, reliability and consistency of socio-economic data determines the accuracy of planning that meant for improving livelihoods, income and wellbeing. Dynamic economic planning is difficult without adequate and reliable information if not impossible. Cognizant with the importance of data in local economic development planning, the BPR study of BOFED gave due attention for the restructuring and capacity building of the information management functions from the bureau to the kebele level. The current structure eventhough broader at the regional level, it gave also due attention for all levels from the kebele to the zone consistent with the short-term goal of information management. The kebeles are now better aware of the importance of data than ever and able to organize some socio-economic data and information. The capacities in collecting more viable and accurate information for planning and budgeting purposes however vary from kebele to kebele and wereda consistent with their implementation capacities. Regardless of their accuracy and consistency, the weredas able to collect various sets of socio-economic information, demographic data by sub villages, physical and geographic information such as soils, water supply structures and sources, school and education statistics, landuse and landuse practices and other a number of data. The usability of these data is also increasing at kebele, wereda, zonal and regional level with the emergence of budget allocation criteria among hierarchies of jurisdiction and government organizations.

##### **5.4.1. Levels and Methods**

The structure of information management follows similar lines of organization of planning and budgeting. The power and responsibility of data management is vested in the center of data preparation, analysis and dissemination center organized at bureau level with the responsibility of collecting, compiling, organizing, storing and disseminating in various forms. It is also responsible for coordinating and managing data flow system in the region between different hierarchies. In addition, the center is considered as a center for data and information with adequate staff, commitment and capacities in all modern information technologies.

At zonal level the data preparation, analysis and dissemination function is structured under the planning, monitoring and evaluation team with three technical staff responsible for similar tasks of data collection, compilation, dissemination and coordination. The zonal information management process is also expected to build the capacities of the wereda government offices in information management and to provide technical support for the wereda government offices. The zonal information management team has also three technical staff.

At wereda level, the information management team is organized under the planning, monitoring and evaluation team responsible for collection, analysis, preparation, analysis, storing and dissemination of detailed wereda information and data to relevant organs. The structure of information management at this level shrunk to a two staff case team with too many responsibilities in addition to information management.

Kebeles are foundations of all data sources. The reliability and consistency of data at this level also determines the reliability of development plans, monitoring and evaluation indicators, and all information compiled and disseminated to various organizations and stakeholders. The reliability, consistency and adequacy of information flow from this level are consistent with the capacity built, skills and experience accumulated. The structure of information management at kebele level is deficient and could not get due consideration. The BPR document stated that one data and

information worker will be assigned in each kebele responsible for all data collection, compilation and dissemination. The data worker is also responsible for planning, monitoring and evaluation, coordination, reporting and other functions. All sectors and institutions should submit available information on regular basis to the data worker in the kebele. Such structure however is not in place, and the kebele manager employed and answerable to the wereda administration undertakes rudimentary information management activities. Thus, there are almost no technical and management linkages between the kebele managers and the WOFED.

There is also a comprehensive plan to revitalize the information management system in sector offices at all levels consistent with the modalities of the finance and economic development institutions at each level. This structure will have adequate manpower, access to modern information technologies, strategies for collection and dissemination of reliable and consistent information.

Eventhough most of the stated institutions are weak at all level in information management, flow and adequacy of information is improving from time to time. The data collection methods however heavily depended on the secondary sources such as statistical abstracts, annual and medium term plan documents, monitoring and evaluation reports, digital maps, survey outputs and other sources. Most of the geographic information for zonal statistical outputs are obtained from BOFED who have at least relative capacity in interpreting satellite images, digital maps and have access to some organizations specialized in geo-information systems. The main users of this information are the zonal sectors, zonal finance and economic development offices. The WOFED on the other hand depends on kebele data and sector information. The sector information also includes the kebele data after many manipulation based on their experiences, figures collected and reported regularly to their sector line offices, annual progress reports, and rarely their own survey. The main sources of information and data for sector offices are development agents, supervisors, health extension workers at kebele and sub kebele levels. The education office has the most dynamic and accurate information system at all level. Standardized educational data collection formats were developed by the Ministry of education, (adapted by the bureau of education) and disseminated to each school in the region. The format is comprehensive and incorporated all type of educational information and statistics by school with commendable data cleaning, reliability check, analysis and dissemination strategies. The data will be collected and submitted in four copies to the bureau following the usual school (kebele), wereda, zone and bureau flow channel<sup>13</sup>. Such organization found to be feasible for data reliability check at each level. The health management information system though currently established, it has some practical contribution in managing all health related information at facility and institutional level. Currently the health information at wereda and zonal level is implemented by the planning, monitoring and evaluation (a one man team). The information management has assigned one staff for managing all health related information for each wereda eventhough most of the positions are vacant. Both the PME and the information management workers in almost all wereda institutions are accountants, environmental science and nursing graduates. The sources of data for these institutions are also secondary such as annual progress reports submitted by line institutions at kebele level derived information from the population and housing census, estimated figures of WOFED, BOFED and ZOFED for planning purposes.

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<sup>13</sup> The raw data is compiled in four copies, each level (school, wereda, zone and bureau), retain its copy and forward the remaining to the next level. At each level data is checked for reliability and consistency. The data collection will be completed in October every year and submitted to the Bureau for analysis and compilation. Weredas and zones could not develop capacities to retain and compile their data for planning purposes however.

The data sources at kebele level are more or less primary and qualitative for some type of data. The agricultural data such as volume of crop production is estimates of development agents and development groups. Livestock population is assumed head counts of each household clustered into villages and sub villages coordinated by a sub kebele committee organized for administrative and development purposes. Population is also relatively primary data from each household registered at kebele and sub kebele level. The landuse, distribution of soils are mere estimates of the kebele committees and development agents. Other data sources at kebele level are either estimates or head counts. The major problem at this level is lack of experience and skill in data collection, lack of attentions to details, data analysis and reliability checking, manipulation and lack of access to processing technologies. The sector offices collect various socio-economic data and submit to the kebele manager. The kebele manager compiles these data in a kebele roster and sometimes compile and organize in tabular form and posts in the kebele offices for easy reference. The reliability of these data and the awareness created is encouraging not only for planning purpose but also for contributions and participation in development activities and above all for taxation purposes.

The major problem of information management with regard to methods is heavy reliance on secondary data, which often claimed for poor reliability, consistency, adequacy and usability. There are now many opportunities to collect and access primary information at household level with significant sample size and low costs. The web of government structure in smaller units of villages and knowledge of each households as well as the availability of semi-trained manpower is an opportunity for collecting primary data at household level than ever. Information and data collection has got secondary attention at all levels and the purpose is to provide whenever requested by stakeholders and individuals. Therefore, the data and information management system in the sector offices is not institutionalized. As a result, information flow to ZOFED and BOFED is on demand particularly during planning seasons to establish budget allocation criteria. Flow is rare and data is inadequate in terms of reliability, scope, coverage and consistency.

The collected data is organized in the form of statistical abstracts and profiles. However only very few of the observed weredas managed to produce statistical abstracts and profiles on annual basis. Capacity limitations particularly in access to computers, processing methods and skill and experience are lacking. Of the total observed WOFEDs, only few able to produce either statistical abstracts and profiles or submit their outputs to ZOFED consistent with the recommendations of the regional center. The data flow from kebeles and wereda sector offices is inadequate and possible only through repeated requests. The data management system of some large offices such as agriculture and rural development, health, and water resources is inadequate. The agriculture and rural development offices have no information management desk and staff. Currently the task is mandated to the team of the planning, monitoring and evaluation with two technical staff. Some of the weredas have no such staff at all. Various information are collected and stored by individual technical experts for own consumption and monitoring and evaluation. Where there is PME staff, they collect and compile these data in soft copies in an organized manner. The water resources office has neither the PME nor the information management specialists. Water resources inventory are carried out on irregular basis with inadequate level of disaggregation and indicators. Responsible technical experts also keep patchy information on irrigation schemes. In all wereda institutions the available computers is in ratio of 1:6 for sectors and 1:11 for WOFEDs. The data if available are stored on common purpose computers or in hard copies with individual experts.

#### 5.4.2. Processes and Procedures

The data collection process starts with production and dissemination of data collection formats by the regional center of information. These formats include demographic and socio-economic section, economic, social and cultural sectors, natural resources and physical geography (climate), service sectors. The formats are more or less standardized, comprehensive, and produced by the socio-economic team in the core process of regional data and information management center. The secondary data collection formats are sent to the zonal offices with a brief orientation on the method of data collection, organization of the formats and schedules for completion and submission of the zonal information to the region. The zonal offices in turn adopt the same step and submit the formats to the wereda with a brief orientation. The wereda Finance and Economic Development Offices disseminate the formats to the wereda sector offices, and the kebeles. Finally, the kebele and wereda sector offices collect the necessary data and submit to the WoFED for compilation, analysis and submission of the compiled information to the ZoFED. The ZoFED, also compile, analyze and organize the data from the weredas and zonal sector offices and produce statistical abstracts, maps, profiles and other data outputs and submit to the Regional Data and Information Management Center.

Following similar procedures, WoFED will disseminate the formats from BoFED and ZoFED without significant modification to the wereda sector offices and the kebeles. The wereda sectors and the kebeles should in turn fill the formats and return to the WoFED for analysis, compilation, production and dissemination in the form of statistical abstracts and wereda profiles to stakeholders and ZoFED. Technical support is also recommended during data collection for the sectors and kebeles. However, for the majority of the observed kebeles and weredas there is no as such standard data collection formats disseminated by WoFED in the last three years. Orientation, training and technical support are also inadequate. Critical shortage of budget limited not only the collection and compilation of data but also for the duplication of complex formats and production of outputs. The operational study of the center also indicated the procedural requirements, the type of outputs to be produced by each planning institutions and its stakeholders. According to this study, the kebeles and sector offices collect data. The WoFED is charged with the compilation, analysis and production of statistical abstract and wereda profiles as indicated in table below. ZoFED on the other hand is mandated for the editorial work, production of zonal statistical abstracts and profiles, production of geo-information studies, maps and other information outputs. The regional center of information management on the other hand produce all possible information and data outputs including regional income accounts, data for budget allocation criteria and others. Similarly, to improve information flow, quality, and adequacy of data from all level capacity building activities and assignment of skilled and trained manpower was recommended. The kebele level data worker will be equipped with transportation facility (motorbikes), adequate office space, and office materials, telephone lines, type writer and other facilities. The data worker is also answerable to the WoFED and work closely with the information management workers assigned for WoFED with significant technical support and training task to build capacities of sectors active in the kebeles. At wereda level, the information management function will be equipped with relevant and adequate number of computers, data processing software and facilities, transport and communication infrastructure, and other facilities of modern information technologies. Capacity building, technical support, training, socio-economic study and research is also mandated to the information management workers of WoFED. ZoFED is also charged with similar tasks but with broader technical responsibilities and capacities.

Despite such promises, the information management system at all levels is poorly structured and not to the desired level of expectation. A number of WoFEDs and sector offices have either no

manpower or inadequate skilled staff. Coordination between sector offices, WoFED and kebeles is inadequate and in some not to expectations. Almost all wereda government institutions have inadequate computers and processing technologies, communication and transport facilities as well as budget for information management tasks. Capacity building activities are not in place. Technical support is limited due to extremely weak capacities of the information management staff of the WoFEDs. Guidelines and manuals on the theories and practices of data collection, analysis, and compilation methods are not available to all responsible bodies. Attention given to information management among the sector offices is inadequate and below expectations. Information flow is restricted to periodical repeated requests of WoFED, which often ends up with the unreliable and inconsistent data. Communications and linkages between the WoFED and ZoFED, WoFED and sectors, Kebeles and WoFED are extremely loose particularly with regard to information flow, use and management.

In general, the information management system currently operating at sub regional level is not in line with the recommendations of BPR documents of the regional BoFED

Table 6: Procedural sketch of information flow for Profiles and statistical Abstract

	Procedure (activity)	mandate	Period (EC)	days
<b>A</b>	<b>Wereda and Zonal Profiles (every 2 years)</b>			
1	Need assessment	BOFED	July 1 - 30	22
2	Preparation of data collection formats	BOFED	August 1 - 15	11
3	Disseminate formats to ZOFED	ZOFED	August 16-30	11
4	Duplication and dissemination of formats to WOFED	ZOFED	Sept 1-30	22
5	Duplicate and disseminate formats to sectors/ kebeles	WOFED	Oct 1-15	11
6	Follow up the data collection undertakings	WOFED	Oct 16- Nov 30	33
7	Analyze, compile and prepare profiles of kebeles/ wereda	WOFED	Dec-May 30	132
8	Edit kebele and wereda profiles and prepare zonal profiles	ZOFED	June 1- Oct 30	110
9	Submission of zonal, and wereda profiles to BOFED	ZOFED	Nov 1 -Mar 30	110
<b>B</b>	<b>Wereda and Zonal Statistical Abstracts</b>			
1	Need assessment	BOFED	July1-24	18
2	Prepare data collection formats	BOFED	July 25-Haga.15	16
3	Disseminate formats to ZOFED, and sector Bureaus	BOFED	Aug 16 – Sept 10	19
4	Duplicate and disseminate of formats to weredas/ sectors	ZOFED	Sept 15 - 30	11
5	Duplicate and disseminate formats to kebeles and sectors	WOFED	Oct 1-15	11
6	Filling the formats and submit to WOFED	SETORS	Oct 16- Nov 15	22
7	Prepare wereda statistical abstract and submit to ZOFED	WOFED	Nov 16 - Jan 25	52
8	Prepare statistical abstract and submit to BOFED	ZOFED	Jan 26-Mar 30	49

Source: Translated from BOFED, Preparation, Analysis and Dissemination Core Process. operational manual, 2008. PP 30-32.