

Women Development Dept.

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Women's Development Department (WDD) is one of the seven departments run by the Catholic Eparchial Secretariat of Keren (CESK). This annual report presents the activities done and major achievements obtained in 2013. The Women's Development Department of the Catholic Eparchy of Keren runs three primary programs.

- 1. Income generating.*
- 2. Education and*
- 3. Awareness raising*

The program operated in **39 villages** for **54 groups** within the catchments area of the Eparchy of Keren and reached more than **1,516 women** in 2013.

Statistics

Number of Villages served	39
Total number of women's groups	54
Total number of beneficiary women	1,516
Number of animators	17
Regular full time staff	2

Goal of the department



The goal of the women's development program is to free women from socio-economic and cultural barriers and emancipate them to be self sufficient and contributors in the development of their families, communities and Nation.


Accomplishment

1. Income generating program

This program consists of different activities such as **micro credit** and **saving, livestock** and **cash credit**. It is designed to empower women through economic development, increasing knowledge and skills in small scale business management and developing the self confidence of women. In In 2013 women's development program added two new



sites one in **Gheleb** and the second in **Hagaz** sub zone. The numbers of groups are six and the total number of women is 192.

- **Women initiated credit and saving.** Women in a group contribute weekly between **5-30 Nakfa**. This is subjected to the rules and regulations of the group. Each member of the groups takes as a loan; **five times** of her weekly deposits for three months with 3% interest rate. These three months are taken as orientation to business making by the groups. When they learn how to make a business, as the group's deposit is not sufficient to all group members; they request for revolving fund from the department.
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- **Individual loan.** This loan is given to women who are willing to work individually. In 2013, 15 women from different villages had taken 10,000 Nakfa each on the individual bases. These women will work for one year and return the money to the WDD office without interest.
 - **Revolving fund.** This is a fund given to women by CESK WDD to fill the gap (need) of the group members. The rules and regulation also apply to this fund. This year the department has given the revolving fund for the 23 groups. So far 15 groups has returned their revolving fund and the rest will return it in near future.

Criteria for the Revolving Fund

- ✓ A group must show a work ethic
 - ✓ Group members must have good working relationship.
 - ✓ A group must be six months in existence to obtain a loan.
- **Sharing of the dividend.** The groups share their dividends after working together for one year. Then, they restart the women initiated credit and the revolving funds usage for another one. In this reporting period 11 groups divided their sharing and started new program. Some of the groups shared the dividends for 3rd time and the others for 4th time.

Livestock program. In 2013 Women's Development Department has given **277 female goats** to **177** mothers. The money spent to buy the goats was given as a loan for one year. The mothers are expected to return the money paid to buy the goats after one year. The beneficiary mothers were selected by the group members based on the set criteria. The criterion includes female headed households, destitute, mothers that can take care of the goat etc...



The Women's Development Department has also given **26 donkeys**, one each, to 26 mothers. The selection criteria was similar to the one used for the goats. The donkeys were given for the purpose of transportation, fetching water and firewoods and swage and other domestic purposes.

2. Hand weaving program. A newly established hand weaving program is one the promising activities to the Eritrean rural women. The activity is established with seven locally made machines for one year training and successfully graduated its first batch trainees on May 2013. After assessing the need and completing the pilot project for one year, the Department had added another 15 new machines and is now training 22 mothers for one year.



Trainees during celebration

3. Education Programs. The department conducts regular health education and awareness raising campaigns through the animators and other expert people in the areas. The topics include the following among the others;

- **Health education;** on Malaria, TB , HIV/AIDS, ANC, FGM, Nutrition....ect
- **Awareness Raising:** on gender, women's' rights, and others
- **Capacity building:** The department works hard to develop the capacity of the women and animators. Different workshops and training were given based on their need and women's capacity. Some of the topics include, leadership, community development, micro credit management, home based economics etc... Totally **1469 mothers** had participated in the above mentions sessions. The topics were delivered by the animators, WDD staffs, clinic staffs and others.

Material support. The WDD had been working to empower the rural women both mentally and materially. In 2013, the Women's Development Department has given two big cooking vessels with its big spoons for the villages of Doroq and Bambi to be used celebrations such as weddings. The mothers use the pots for themselves as free but rent it to other villagers, therefore, it serves as a means of income.



4. Women's Day Celebration 2013

8th Eparchial women's day anniversary was celebrated colorfully in 2013 on the theme of: **"Female; Source of Love in a Family."** It was developing from year to year. The main objective of the celebration was to create conducive environment for women to organize themselves to share their experience among themselves, to have their say and convey lessons to the society via cultural show, etc... Different entertaining and informative programs such as cultural show, short comedy, exhibition, and spiritual songs, as well as general knowledge contest and poems were staged on the occasion.

5. Monitoring and supervision works. The Women's Development Department regularly conducts monitoring of its activities and environment and performs supervisory visits to its 54 groups. Additionally, continuous follow up was carried out by the animators in charge of each village. Each group is visited once a week by the animators. During the follow up and supervision the following activities were carried: checking financial registers, analyzing training needs, providing on job training and conduct meetings with animators and women.

Future Plan

- Continue income generating program
- Continue livestock program
- Continue Embroidering program
- Continue education and awareness rising program
- Continue monitoring and follow up of the programs
- Submit report to donors