

National Workshop in Integrated Management on Gilgel Gibe I, 23-25 December 2010

01 January 2011

Summary report

The national workshop has been organized by PHE Ethiopia Consortium in collaboration with Jimma University, Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation, Sustainable Land Use Forum and Heinrich Boll Foundation. The session has undergone in Jimma University (Agriculture College Campus) with a theme of an “integrated watershed management on Gilgel Gibe I”. Gilgel Gibe-I Hydro Electric Power which was built in 1998 has a catchment area of more than 4200 Sq.Km and worth 191 million USD total cost of construction. It generates 184MW electric power.



Fig.1 Participants in the workshop

The workshop was comprised of more than 150 participants from different Federal, Regional and woreda government offices, all Universities, Development practitioners, CSOs and PhD fellow students. The workshop was officially opened by H.E. Kebede Gerba, State Minister for the Ministry of Water and Energy. He keynoted that research is paying off to identify and introduce good practices which in turn used to make sound decisions in implementing integrated watershed management on Gilgel Gibe I sub-basin. Jimma University President, Dr Fikere Lemessa in his welcoming speech marked participants direct stake and role to play in the various aspects of integrated watershed management, with particular emphasis to sustaining important dams of the country.

Following his speech, Ato Mekuria Lemma, Corporate Planning Director, Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCo) delivered his emphasis saying for maximum service output delivery of the dam, protecting the dam from siltation and from any other possible problems should be priority to all multi-sector stakeholders.



Fig.2 Ato Mekuria Lemma delivering his speech

He called the concerned Ministries, regional governments, environmental protection offices, sector offices, international financial institutions, CSOs and development practitioners to fill the gap in sustainable catchment intervention.

Ato Negash Teklu, the Executive Director of PHE Ethiopia Consortium has announced to the participants that organizing such workshop that gives focus and priorities to national issue has tremendous benefit to the economic growth and development of the country and expressed his strong desire to involve actively in any development related issues with other stakeholders that directly and positively contribute to the fulfillment the GTP and MD goals. He also noted that it is time to undertake community based climate change adaptation and mitigation activities in an integrated manner in the Gilgel Gibe basin catchment area by government, development practitioners and researchers.



Fig.3 Ato Negash Teklu, PHE Ethiopia Consortium delivering speech

In addition to this, H.E. Ato Seleshi Getahun, State Minister for Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Dr. Teweldebirhan G/Egziabiher, Director of Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) have been moderating and facilitating the workshop sessions as the the workshop was directly related to the mandate of their respective offices. Their great contribution, concern and active participation add extra value to the workshop.



Fig.4 H.E. Seleshi Getahun, H.E. Kebede Gerba and Dr. Teweldebirhan G/Egziabiher

The objective of the workshop mainly focuses on the joint effort that should be taken before becoming late to exert pressing actions. The discussion is based on the outcome of the researches conducted by Jimma University. The research initiative on the catchments indicates that siltation problem is the main threat to the dam in the future which in turn reduces the life span of the dam to below 30 years. According to the environmental impact assessment of EEPCo, the dam initially was supposed to serve for 50-70 years.

During the workshop, two separate researches conducted on the upper and lower catchment of the dam were presented to the participants.

One of the researchers from Jimma University has been presenting the landslide and the siltation problems in the study entitled with “rainfall-runoff dynamics, source and yield of the sediment in Gilgel Gibe catchment”. The study shows that there has been as high as a total of 83 landslides where 72% of the landslide occurred during the research period. The study area constituting 2% (275000 m²) is occupied by the landslide which displaces about 1 million m³ of slope materials. The soil loss that is registered in the area amounts to be 50 t/ha/yr which could create severe sedimentation problem to the dam.



Fig.5 Ato Endalkachew and Ato Amsalu from Jimma University (Researchers)

Different presentations have been offered on vetiver grass, the importance of integration, the role of Oromia Forest & Wildlife Enterprise (OFWE) and Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and REDD+ (Reducing Emission from Deforestation & Forest Degradation) opportunities as well as Institutional Universities Cooperation (IUC) partnership program collaborative research activities in Gilgel Gibe catchment. Dr. Habtemariam Abate, Director of Sustainable Land Use Forum (SLUF) has presented the importance of vetiver grass which can be the best solution to minimize the magnitude of siltation problem in the catchment areas.



Fig.6 Dr. Habtemariam explaining about vetiver grass

It's potential to control soil erosion that causes siltation to occur in the dam possibly been treated with intensive planting of the "Miracle Grass" in the upper catchment. The multipurpose grass has tremendously benefiting South East Asian Countries to stabilize highway sides, huge dams, farmlands and landslides. Film supported evidence of vetiver were also presented to the participants. Moreover, the organizing committees has displayed book exhibition to the participants.



Fig.7 Partial view of the exhibition

Five discussion groups from Federal Ministries, Higher educational institutions, Regional, Zonal and woreda levels, CSOs and development practitioners formed and discussed on policy issues, on research and development, implementation, advocacy and supporting mechanisms and presented to the plenary.



Fig.8 The different group discussion sessions

Based on the urgency and special attention the final outcome of the workshop has jointly decide to establish a “National Taskforce on Gilgel Gibe I” that take responsibility to undergo further steps in implementing sustainable preservation mechanisms. Members of the National Taskforce are Ministry of Water & Energy, EPA, MoA, MoFED, EEPCo, MoH, MoE, CSOs represented by PHE Ethiopia Consortium, Oromia and SNNP, where MoWE took the chairing position. The last day of the workshop has been accompanied by a field visit to the dam and to vetiver multiplication site of Gilgel Gibe I as shown in the photo.

This national issue has been given special attention and many Media and Press crews from different agencies were participated, among these are: ETV, Ethiopian News Agency, Radio Fana, The Daily Monitor, Ethiopian Herald, Reporter, Addis Lissan, Ethiochannel, Panos and Media from Oromia. Live NEWS was transmitted by Ethiopian News Agency during the session and others released reports, NEWS and Programs. Some of the NEWS released by press can be accessed from the following websites: www.ethiochannel.net.et [26 December 2010],

www.ethiopianreporter.com [29 December 2010, 02 January 2011], The Daily Monitor issued on 28 December 2010, www.ethpress.gov.et [01 January 2011].

As a continuation of the workshop, PHE has organized a round table discussion at Harmony Hotel on 22 December 2010 with concerned Ministries and organizing committees to propose the next course of action of the national taskforce which is to be led by Ministry of Water & Energy.