



Ethiopia's PHE

Spotlight

Integrated Practical Success Stories and
Challenges from the Field

LEM: the Environment & Development Society
of Ethiopia (Lem Ethiopia) PHE Sites

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BACKGROUND

Lem, the Environment and Development Society of Ethiopia (LEM Ethiopia), was founded in 1992 by 29 prominent Ethiopian professionals working in the fields of environment and development. The Society aims to promote sustainable development, and therefore is involved in areas such as natural resource management and appropriate technology promotion, urban waste management and livelihood security in collaboration with donors, government institutions, local and international NGOs and communities. It engages in capacity building, with special attention given to environmental education and awareness interventions that target school children, teachers, farmers, urban dwellers, men, women and development practitioners to impact climate change and advocate for environmental protection policies.

Lem Ethiopia realizes that a history of unsustainable resource use in Ethiopia coupled with a high population growth rate has been putting increasing pressure on the country's limited existing resources. Since its establishment in 1992 the organization has been operating in almost every region to address these problems, using schools as major points of intervention. Capitalizing on gained knowledge and experience, Lem Ethiopia later began to concentrate on a few woredas of the country with projects targeting rural and urban communities with strong linkages between livelihood security and natural resources sustainment. Throughout all of its development interventions, the organization has advocated for a multi-disciplinary approach to address environmental and other developmental issues. It has had a number of remarkable and innovative achievements over the last 19 years, which have resulted in recognition by peer organizations and social groups and awards of merit from many national and international organizations.

In addition, LEM Ethiopia has been a leading organization in the implementation of integrated development approaches that address poverty and sustainable development, having been a co-organizer in the November 2007 Regional Conference on Population, Health and Environment (PHE) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Lem Ethiopia & the PHE Integrated Development Approach

In response to past experiences at Lem Ethiopia and other local and international NGOs with similar interventions, the organization piloted a new "Population, Health and Environment" (PHE) integrated development approach with the financial support of The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The pilot

project was initiated in the highlands of Harro Boki kebele of the Welmera woreda, in the West Shoa zone of Oromiya which is 30 km far away from Addis Ababa. The highlands of Ethiopia accommodate more than 60% of its human population and more than 40% of its livestock¹: population, health and the environment (specifically natural resources) are particularly interlinked and threatened in this area, and need an integrated, multi disciplinary approach to address them. The pilot program was tested in Harro Boki from 2002-2004 and again from 2005-2007. During this time there were more than 400 households in the kebele, but the project focused on 34 households of “model farmers” (30 male and 4 female) who served as champions for replicating project outputs in their villages. The intervention involved capacity building for natural resources management and sustainable utilization, livelihood security, health service provision for reproductive health (RH), family planning (FP) and HIV/AIDS, promotion of appropriate technologies, and supplying of basic materials for natural resource conservation and food source diversification. For example, based on recommendations by Lem Ethiopia, 5 members of the 34 ‘animators’ began providing family planning services after getting appropriate training from the district health center and necessary supplies from NGOs involved in local RH/FP projects.

To supplement Lem Ethiopia’s work and to fill resource gaps, the organization has relied on networking and strong collaboration with local government institutions and other NGOs. Lem Ethiopia believes that, ultimately, the user and owner of any development project or program is the local community and government; it therefore does not have an office in each woreda. Instead, it uses government staff members to coordinate, monitor and implement the projects in collaboration with target communities at a local level. Its purpose is to create local development cadres while providing services to communities and rehabilitation for natural resources. Thus, although the pilot work done in Harro Boki was successful due to the contribution of many key players, Lem Ethiopia was integral in facilitating cooperation and mobilizing these players to work together for a common goal.



Target communities engaged in soil and water conservation efforts

Seven years after project initiation, an assessment made by Lem Ethiopia, other NGOs and the Packard Foundation² showed that it has been successful in addressing the complex problems of high population growth, poor basic health and inadequate natural resources management. At the end of the pilot project period, it was found that income had increased by more than 15% in target communities, family planning service use increased from zero to almost 40%, waterborne diseases reduced by more than 50% due to new availability of potable water, and more than 12 hectares of land were re-forested and rehabilitated with active community participation. The target communities have now organized forestry development cooperation, and have been given a certificate of ownership for these 12 hectares of land. The positive outcome of the project proves that such complex and interlinked problems can be addressed with minimal resources by using an integrated approach.

As a result of the project outcomes, in November 2007 a regional conference was held on PHE integration entitled “Population, Health and Environment: Integrated Development Approach for East Africa.” The conference was hosted by Lem Ethiopia, PRB (Population, Reference Bureau-USA), USAID and its partners, including the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and it validated the importance of the PHE integrated development approach in the region, in Ethiopia, and in other countries with similar problems of population pressure, land degradation and unsustainable resources utilization. In accordance with this conclusion, the organization currently known as PHE Ethiopia Consortium was established 3 months later.

Since the conference, Lem Ethiopia’s has continued to utilize an integrated approach in many of its development interventions to replicate outcomes of the pilot project, and it has been sharing its experiences with various community groups, GOs, and NGOs. Currently, Lem Ethiopia is carrying out PHE integrated projects in Ensaro Woreda (N.Shoa Zone-Amhara region), Girar Jarso Woreda (N.Shoa Zone-Oromiya region) and Wenago Woreda (Gedeo Zone-SNNPR). The first two woreda projects are funded by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and the third one is funded by Sida/SLUF. These sites were selected for their special characteristics regarding population pressures, resources management practices and other development problems: all of them rely on natural resources for their economic viability. Of course, their own need and demand for the intervention has been critical for the projects’ success. During the regional workshop opening session Nov. 2009, Ato Samuel Kekebo, Head of Gedeo Zone Administration has said that “*the Population Health Environment Integration (PHEI) development approach is specifically important to Gedeo Zone where natural resources depletion complementing with high population growth rate is threatening our peoples’ livelihood security is one of the long term solution and thus, will be replicated in different development projects*”.

The main objective of the projects has been to contribute to the realization of sustainable livelihoods in the targeted communities, and to guarantee economic

efficiency, ecological integrity and social equitability through the PHE approach. All projects give due attention to model farmers (male and female), agricultural and health extension workers, teachers and students, as well as decision makers and experts at the woreda level. Overall, they benefit more than 250,000 people.



Experience-sharing visits to Konso/Wenago for model farmers and agricultural extension workers

Major Activities in the Project Woredas

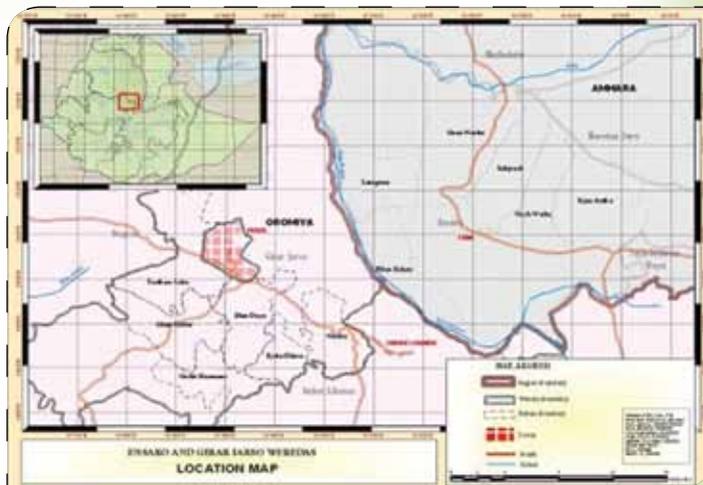
The three woredas where Lem Ethiopia has PHE integration project sites are described in some detail as follows. Although they differ in some ways, they share the problem of socio-economic development that is highly linked with and susceptible to increasing population pressures and the unsustainable use of natural resources. Lem Ethiopia hopes to address these interdependent problems of population pressure, poverty, poor health and unsustainable environment, climate change vulnerability and natural resources management by using the PHE integrated development approach.

As previously mentioned, the main capacity-building activities carried out in the target woredas are workshops and trainings targeting model farmers, health and agricultural extension workers, teachers and students, woreda level decision makers and experts in the areas of education, health and natural resources/agriculture. All programs address natural resource management and their sustainable use, the impacts of a high population growth rate and population pressure, the role of gender in realizing sustainable development, alternative energy and the construction of resources and appropriate technologies, the role of environmental education in promoting the sustainable use of natural resources, the different techniques for enhancing agricultural productivity and natural resources conservation, climate change resilience alternative livelihoods, reproductive health, family planning and household sanitation. These activities are constantly improved as Lem Ethiopia shares experiences and best practices with program implementers in other areas of Ethiopia and the world.

PROJECT SITES AT A GLANCE

Ensaro:

The Ensaro woreda project is more newly established than the others (2006). The area itself is characterized by an undulating landscape, erratic rainfall, severe soil erosion and minimal arable, ploughable land. The average person owns less than a hectare of land, and most kebeles lack food security. Most people rely on livestock rearing or rain-fed crops like sorghum and teff for their livelihoods. However most of the land is unproductive due to the loss of fertile soil. Though the climate is conducive to growing root crops, this practice is not commonly used. Demographically, about 43% of the population is under the age of 0-15 years and the average family size is six³. The population density is estimated at 400/sq. km. Primary schools, health posts and agricultural development sites are available in each of the kebeles, but only a few villages have road access even during the dry season. Water for household consumption and other purposes comes from springs or rivers, but these are not sufficiently available or reliable. Within the woreda, the Lem Ethiopia project has targeted 6 out of 18 villages where these combined problems of population density and land degradation are greatest.



Girar Jarso:

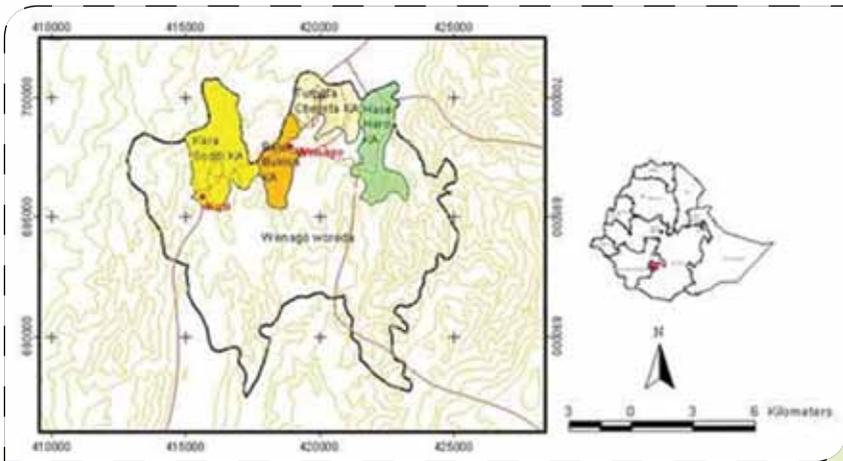
This woreda is in a better situation than Ensaro in terms of its relatively flatter landscape, less soil erosion, better soil fertility and more productive land. Here too the main agricultural practices include cereal crop production (teff, wheat,

barley and beans) and livestock rearing. Vegetables are also grown in backyards for household consumption. Nevertheless, most poor households do experience food shortages at times. In addition, despite the same average family size of six, it is less densely populated (350/sq. km) than Ensaro. ‘Out migration’ is used here as strategy to overcome the increasing stress of population pressure on the average landholding area. The infrastructure situation is also better: it is possible to reach each village by road during the dry season and to a few of them even during the rainy season. Primary schools, health posts and agricultural service centers are available in each kebele.

Wenago:

Wenago woreda is located in the southern part of the country and is well known for its gedeo-indigenous agroforestry system and Yirga Chefe Coffee production. The landscape is undulating, but it is well maintained by the indigenous agroforestry system for cash crop production. The demographic situation is also very unique: more than 30% of the population is under age 14, the average family size is more than 8, the average population density is close to 1000/sq. km (one kebele has a population density of 3000/sq.km)⁴ and the average landholding size is close to 0.5 hectares. All villages are accessible by transport during the dry season, and primary schools, health post and agricultural service centers are available in each village. Here, natural resources management has been better than anywhere else in Ethiopia, and the region has not had food shortages for several hundreds of years. The famous Gedeo-indigenous agroforestry system provides the local community with sustainable produce, and the global community with an intact and precious ecosystem. Despite this, it is currently under heavy threat due to climate change and increasing population pressures. In order to protect it, Lem Ethiopia in collaboration with the communities themselves, partners, and the local and regional governments, has initiated the registration of the system as a UNESCO world heritage site. To protect and ensure sustainable benefits of Gedeo Indigenous Agroforestry System, a forum of governmental and non-governmental organizations has initiated an appeal for the registration of this indigenous system. The forum believes that this indigenous system is serving as a carbon sink, although it has not been well studied and measured.

It has had project sites in 8 target kebeles since 2007, with the support of SIDA/SLUF.



In order to disseminate the knowledge and experience gained from the above activities, Lem Ethiopia demonstrates technologies and lessons in villages based on the needs of target communities, with materials and technical support provided in conjunction with government development programs. The purpose of this is not only for demonstration, but also to address some basic things that target communities need in order to comply with advised natural resources management practices. These include food security, nutrition, sanitation and maternal and child health through interventions such as the promotion of energy saving mud stoves and the introduction of alternative livelihoods. In addition, how the community can adopt and build resilience to the climate to impact.

To better understand the link between baseline resource carrying capacity, climate change vulnerability and high population pressure, Lem Ethiopia conducted research, and presented it for validation to academicians, researchers and social anthropologists in November 2010. Comments made by participants of the validation workshop are being taken into account, and results will be shared with Lem Ethiopia's partners and beneficiaries. Participatory planning and monitoring and evaluation have also been carried out to improve performance and the quality of services and to build eventual confidence and ownership of the project by the target communities and local government offices.



Top: Wenago women undergoing training on income generation, RH/FP & natural resource management



Bottom: Model farmers, agricultural & health extension workers learning about appropriate technologies in Ambo

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

The three PHE integration projects of Lem Ethiopia have been under implementation for only two years thus far. Although it is difficult to measure long term impacts during this short period of time, the project has attained a number of achievements in some of the following areas:



Adde Elfinesh and her husband Obbo Ketema

RH/FP: According to baseline reports from the target communities, RH/FP services were initially used by 14% of reproductive age women in Ensaro, 18% in Girar Jarso, and 25% in Wenago. As the result of Lem Ethiopia's PHE capacity-building activities conducted for model farmers and agricultural and health extension workers (with government partnership), RH/FP issues were addressed jointly, with a corresponding increase in family planning service usage to almost 65% in the Ensaro and Girar Jarso woredas and more than 80% in Wenago over the last two years!⁵ Lem Ethiopia was responsible for promotion and awareness activities, while services were delivered mainly through existing government health posts. According to W/rt Asnakech, a health extension worker in Geza Washa kebele, Lem Ethiopia's PHE approach has reduced her work load, as model farmers and agricultural extension workers are sharing the task of disseminating health messages. RH/FP and HIV/AIDS information has now reached almost all target communities, in addition to hygiene and sanitation services. Accordingly, as reported by target communities during monitoring (though we lack actual figures), disease prevalence has significantly decreased. In addition, more than 400 households have constructed energy saving mud stoves and are using them for cooking. Families report that this not only reduces fuel wood consumption, but it also frees mothers and children from the harmful health effects of smoke inhalation.

“I was lacking knowledge about RH/FP until I gave birth to my 8th baby. I was giving birth year after year. But now, though we are of reproductive age, my husband and I have decided to have no more children as we are aware of the impacts of having such a large family on our own lives and on our community. I now not only use family planning services, but I also share my knowledge about the benefits of FP with other women in our kebele.”

-Adde Elfinesh, community member of Girar Geber kebele, Girar Jarso

Food security: In addition to introducing techniques for agricultural production, soil and water conservation and livestock management, Lem Ethiopia has also started to introduce improved varieties of fruit trees, Enset and root crops to target communities, depending on their climate. This will hopefully result in more sustainable crop production in the future, thus enhancing food security.

In Girar Jarso, despite relatively higher land productivity, households still struggle to satisfy their food demands each year. As previously described, soil productivity is declining due to fertility loss and climate variability, and the number of dependents in each household are also increasing. It is difficult to procure additional farmland and, thus, it is necessary to find alternatives livelihoods for many of the youth. More than 15 million people in the south and southwestern part of Ethiopia depend on Enset for food. This crop can yield more than 250 quintal per hectare⁶ and it is drought resistant. It is therefore recommended as a best option in terms of food security and climate change adaptation by target communities and local experts. In addition, highland fruits like apples are recommended based on prior Lem Ethiopia experiences in other kebeles of the same woreda, where target farmers yielded more than USD 200 from 10 apple trees. In accordance with these recommendations, Lem Ethiopia provided the necessary training of trainers (ToT) for selected model farmers and agricultural extension workers. After carefully laying the necessary groundwork, more than 3000 Enset and 600 apple seedlings were distributed to 66 model households, and all have survived to date. Lem Ethiopia and Woreda experts are providing follow-up and technical support.



Top: Enset seedlings for distribution

Bottom: Enset three months after plantation

In addition, more than 50 kg of multipurpose tree seeds, 15 kg of vegetable seeds and various farm tools were provided to target communities. Overall, over 2.5 million tree seedlings were produced by government and community tree nursery sites in the six target villages of Girar Jarso. These were planted on homestead and communal lands allocated as closure areas, and the survival rate thus far has been more than 60%.

Ensaro woreda has had similar progress. Here, more than 1000 improved and grafted mango seedlings were distributed to 66 model farmers and their neighbors in the target villages. A trial was also started using cassava (another drought resistant root crop), and its results are pending. Lem Ethiopia also plans to introduce Enset and other root crops to some of the villages where the environment is suitable and when social acceptance is gained. Overall, 66 kg of tree seeds, 100 kg of polythene tubes and different types of farm tools were distributed through the Lem Ethiopia project, and more than 1.5 million tree seedlings were raised and planted on private and communal lands. Here, however, the survival rate is low (close to 40%) likely due to moisture stress⁷.



Grafted mango and vetiver grass clumps ready for distribution

As mentioned previously, the farming practices in Wenago woreda are in line with natural resource conservation efforts. In the past, these communities had plentiful food, but these days the situation is worsening due to climate change and declining land productivity, in addition to growing population pressures. Capitalizing on local knowledge and experiences, the Lem Ethiopia project has strengthened Enset cultivation in this woreda by supplying seedlings from highlands to the target communities.

Although the reason remains unclear, Enset seedlings are no longer naturally produced in target communities. Most of our scientists believe that this is due to climate change affecting the growing zone of different plant species of plants. To compensate, more than 40,000 Enset seedlings, 3,400 improved and grafted mango seedlings, and 1,200 quintals of Godere (*Kolacacia Esculenta*) were

distributed to meet food needs. In addition, 120 low income women were also provided with 40 modern mud beehives, 600 bullet chickens, more than 30 kg of vegetable seeds and many farm tools along with the necessary skill development trainings on income generation, RH/FP and household management. The target women have started to generate significant income using these new skills and tools and have already established savings and credit associations. Finally, several soil and water conservation activities have been undertaken as well in the target kebeles, to hopefully improve agricultural productivity in the future.



<< simple molds for bricks to make houses, beehives and energy saving stoves



<< female program beneficiaries with new means to increase household income



Community efforts to overcome soil erosion problems

Research on the link between baseline resource carrying capacity, climate variability and population: as there are a number of debates about the relationship between population growth and resource carrying capacity, most recently including the issue of climate change variability. Lem Ethiopia has conducted research to identify the link between the three areas in order to direct future development planning in a comprehensive and scientific way. Research in the three woredas has been completed and discussed by validation workshop participants in Addis Ababa and Dilla. Incorporation of comments and editing of the report are currently underway, and results will soon be published and shared with relevant stakeholders, as it strengthens to scale up and the community adaptation process.



Model farmer Obbo Mulugeta, with his first child and apple tree

“If I am not sharing the knowledge and experience that I have gained with other people, life has no meaning, and the well-being of the next generation is not guaranteed. Lem Ethiopia’s PHE integration approach is strengthening our capacity to optimally utilize our resources in a sustainable way.”

- Obbo Mulugeta, model farmer in Girar Geber Kebele

It is important to recognize that these successes could not have been achieved without government and target community collaboration and support. In addition, Lem Ethiopia is a member of networks such as PHE Ethiopia Consortium and SLUF. Their contributions in terms of information sharing and resource mobilization have been essential to our success.



Adde Desta, though 80 years old, helps her community and Lem Ethiopia efforts through vegetable gardening

“Although I am eighty years old, and I might not eat the fruits of what I sow, I will do my best until the end of my life. I am highly inspired with what Lem Ethiopia is doing to address our local problems in different ways. I will try my hardest to help the younger generation learn from my experiences.”

-Adde Desta Alemu, Girar Geber Kebele

PHE Achievements:

- An increase in conceptual understanding about the PHE integration development approach and its benefits by target woreda-level decision makers, experts, agricultural and health extension workers and model farmers. They now have a common goal and increased confidence about the possibility of PHE integration
- An increase in the number of reproductive age women using RH/FP services by more than three fold,
- New use by more than 50% of target communities of energy saving stoves, with a number of others showing interest in using them. It is reported that, in those who are using the stoves, their overall health is improving,
- An increase in income for women in the Wenago woreda by more than 5% (this is expected to increase after two years by 20% more),
- Trends indicating that future livelihood security will improve significantly in target communities as the result of new knowledge and experience, plantation of trees, Enset and root crops, and other activities that will support community livelihoods, and climate change resilience.
- The importance of the ownership of the communities and the strong partnership with DA's, HEW and other government institutions.
- The establishment of the PHE Ethiopia Consortium (PHE-EC), which is Lem Ethiopia's strongarm for the promotion of the PHE integration approach and for sharing resources: This is among the remarkable achievements to be mentioned here. It is not only Lem Ethiopia that is benefiting the most from PHE-EC, but also all development actors including the government, NGOs and target communities.

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

The natural resources and livelihoods of our rural communities are being depleted at an alarming rate. Due to resource limitations for all development institutions and practitioners, including Lem Ethiopia, interventions are restricted in their ability to reach a wide target area and to be implemented over a long period of time. For example, rural communities are aware of the negative impact of large family sizes on their ability to satisfy household needs, and they are therefore willing to get RH/FP services. However, the limited skills of health extension workers, the limited available contraceptive options, and the lack of skilled medical practitioners close to each village pose a challenge. Thus, some women are discouraged from continuing to frequent service centers.

The other big challenge is the unpredictable nature of the climate change and the magnitude of its impact.

In addition, there continues to be some misunderstanding regarding the PHE integrated development approach among some development actors. This is a serious issue that requires future attention and interventions by stakeholders.

LESSONS LEARNED AND THE WAY FORWARD

An integrated PHE approach to development has become increasingly important over time as we experience a decline of our ecosystems, high population pressures on communities to use resources unsustainably, and persisting levels of poverty. As local development problems are complex, it is more effective and efficient to address them via a multi-disciplinary approach focusing on livelihood, health (RH/FP, hygiene and sanitation) and natural resources management. Education and participatory problem identification, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation are all critical to achieving the intended goals of improving communities, ecosystems and livelihoods. To be successful in addressing these issues, it is essential for the different development actors in Ethiopia to work together to utilize our limited resources to maximize development outputs and benefits as efficiently as possible. For example, Lem Ethiopia uses existing government offices and experts to conduct woreda-level work, instead of running local offices. It invests in GOs and NGOs involved in service provision, rather than providing these services alone. As we share our experiences with others, we also learn through networks that widen our scope of thought. The learning process is both vertical and horizontal, and includes target communities. Efforts should be aligned with local knowledge and experiences, and should apply appropriate technologies through intensive capacity building activities. Such strong networks and links between stakeholders are one of the main reasons that Lem Ethiopia has been able to attain its intended objectives.

“Bringing together the different stakeholders (from the government, community, schools and others) has made the Lem Ethiopia project and the PHE integration approach meaningful.”
–Ms. Jeanne Lewy, Planned Parenthood Federation America, USA , participant of the Packard Foundation grantees meeting, Feb 2011



Regional workshop on maintaining the indigenous agroforestry system, with government, NGO and community participants

For program success, it is also essential that developmental actors and target communities have a solid conceptual understanding what the PHE integration approach is. As mentioned previously, this continues to be one of the challenges that Lem Ethiopia faces in implementing integrated projects successfully. PHE Ethiopia Consortium is doing a very good job of promoting and mainstreaming the PHE integrated approach, and should continue to be supported in the future to further our collective progress.

Overall, interventions by Lem Ethiopia and its partners have achieved remarkable things within a short period of time. However, this work is merely a drop in the ocean when one considers the complexity and magnitude of the problem at hand. More hard work is needed on the part of the government, NGOs, communities and donors in order to replicate successes and bring our country out of desperate poverty. In order to make this work a success, it is essential to approach developmental problems in an integrated manner, rather than in a sectoral one.

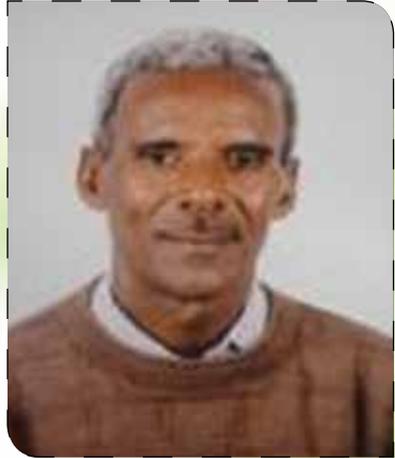


What will be the fate of these children if their agroforestry system continues to be disrupted?

INTERVIEW WITH ATO MOGUES WORKU TECHANE

PHE: Please introduce yourself.

Ato Mogues: My name is Mogues Worku Techane. I am married and the father of two children. I am the Executive Director of Lem, the Environment and Development Society of Ethiopia. I received a BSc in natural science in 1993 and a BA in Development Management from A.A.U & Alpha University College in 2008. I also have an Advanced Diploma in Advanced Watershed Management from Sweden in 1999, a Post Graduate Diploma in Development from 2009, and have attended a number of short term training in the areas of natural resource



management at the local and international level. I joined Lem Ethiopia as a volunteer in July 1992 and continued in this role up to 1993. Since January 1994 I have been a member of the regular staff in different positions and since 2002 promoted to executive director position.

PHE: How was Lem Ethiopia established, and when?

Ato Mogues: Lem Ethiopia was established in March of 1992 as a citizens movement in the area of environment and developments by prominent Ethiopians and high professionals including H.E. Girma W/Ghiorgis, President of the FDRE and current Patron of Lem Ethiopia.

PHE: How does President Girma Woldegiorgis contribute to your organization?

Ato Mogues: His Excellency Girma W/Ghiorgis's contribution to Lem Ethiopia is enormous. Some of his most important contributions include his role in advocating for the environment and development to be prior agenda in Ethiopia when he meets with national and international officials, /heads of states and dignitaries as everybody watch through television and listen to radio. Among his famous advocative role is "two trees for a person" during the Ethiopian Millennium which strongly encouraged the country and the people to focus on environmental issues, which highly contributes to our vision.

PHE: What is the meaning of the Lem Ethiopia logo?

Ato Mogues: The logo of Lem Ethiopia is the colobus monkey, which is a very peaceful animal whose livelihood depends on forests with diverse species of trees and shrubs. The colobus monkey in the logo is sitting on dry branch of a tree, which may soon break and cause the monkey to fall. This symbolizes the precariously unsustainable current management of natural resources in Ethiopia- if it continues this way, the fate of mankind will be the same as the monkey.

PHE: Who are the organization’s board members?

Ato Mogues: The Board members of Lem Ethiopia are elected by the General Assembly. Currently Lem Ethiopia has 7 members of the Board of Directors, two of whom are female, who are contributing highly in the development of the organization.

PHE: What is the special approach that you have to PHE integration?

Ato Mogues: Lem Ethiopia has specialized in applying the PHE integrated development approach from household level to Woreda and Zonal institutions from concept up to addressing foodsecurity, health and natural resources conservation and its sustainable utilization. On the other side its partnership modality with government partners is unique that has given the opportunity to share government staff, office, motor bike and cars as its own resources.

PHE: What is your relationship with the government and community?

Ato Mogues: As our main purpose and interventions are highly interlinked with socio-economic development and sustainable utilization of natural resources, our relationship with communities, government institutions, civil societies and religious institutions is smooth and acceptable.

PHE: What are the characteristics of each woreda?

Ato Mogues: The three Woredas have different characteristics in terms of agro-ecology, demography agricultural practices and the indigenous knowledge. Thus, our interventions are based on existing situation or characteristics. In Wenago Woreda, our intervention has given due attention to impacts of large family size and possible options, increase conservation based land productivity with minimum environmental impact and off farm activities with special attention to women to increase household income. On the other hand in Ensaro Woreda our intervention focus on natural resources conservation that addresses at the same time the issue of food security, promotion of improved varieties of fruit trees and promotion of appropriate technologies including different alternatives of family planning options. In addition to what we do in Ensaro we give due attention to impacts of early marriage, homestead farming/ vegetable gardening and highland fruit tree plantation.

PHE: In general, what are the specialties of Lem Ethiopia?

Ato Mogues: Lem Ethiopia has specialized in an integrated PHE development approach, environmental education and appropriate technology promotion, climate adaptation and mitigation through communities, and policy advocacy, empowering and working through the government institutions.

PHE: Who are your international partners?

Ato Mogues: Other than PRB, Packard, SIDA/Sluf, We have civil society groups in Europe such as South- North Hemisphere Partnership in Germany, Ketu ry (Finland based NGO network) , RainTree Initiative (US based NGO) and locally Embassy of Finland, Embassy of Japan are among the most significant partners.

PHE: What is your main source of funding?

Ato Mogues: So far our main source of funding for the PHE project is The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. To some extent Sida/SLUF is also our donor for the Wenago project, though for less than a year to date. Thanks to the donor, funds have been extended for another year.

PHE: Do you have other projects? What are they, and who funds them?

Ato Mogues: Lem Ethiopia has conducted a research in the three Woredas on ‘The Link between Resource Base Carrying Capacity, Climate Change Variability and Population Growth’ with the financial support of Packard Foundation and Sida/SLUF. Another research was conducted in Wenago Woreda on ‘Coffee Pulp: Compost Values and Potential Uses to Reduce Water Body Pollution’ financed by Sida/SLUF. Both researches are at their final stage for publication to share with our stakeholders.

PHE: Do you do research? If so, in what respect, and what are the results?

Ato Mogues: The link between population, health and the environment is not well defined. Taking initiative, Lem Ethiopia has conducted research on the link between resource base carrying capacity, climate change variability and population growth. Time limitations were one of the main challenges. However, Lem Ethiopia, with the support of the Packard Foundation and Sida/SLUF (Sustainable Land Use Forum) did its best, and the research can be further developed by others in the future. The research outcome is now in its draft stage and will be disseminated as soon as we incorporate comments given by the participants of a validation workshop held in November 2010.

PHE: What are some challenges you face in implementing the PHE approach?

Ato Mogues: The main challenges in the application of PHE integration

and finally bring the required changes are short term projects when it is difficult to measure results even if it is possible to bring changes, the sectoral development approach applied since long time ago, and misunderstanding of the strong link between population, health and environment.

In addition, to bringing change with limited resources and a short period of time. To see real changes and improvement such projects should be longer than three years. Though there are lots of improvements, there remains an inadequate and sometimes incorrect understanding about PHE integration benefits among local decision makers.

PHE: What are some of your PHE integration success stories?

Ato Mogues: The PHE integrated development approach that Lem Ethiopia has implemented in the target woredas has had a number of success stories, which we hope to repeat in the future. Many of them are explained in the main part of this Spotlight issue. Some of the highlights include:

Before the project intervention, RH/FP service users were reached by health extension workers through house visits. Now the situation has changed, and in some cases husbands even bring their wives in for the service. In addition, the number of volunteers working in RH/FP has increased, with agricultural extension workers, model farmers and teachers also serving as volunteers for this cause. These have made the success remarkable.

A number of closure areas have been established in Ensaro and Girar Jarso woreda target project villages as a result of the project intervention. These have created sense of ownership and enabled communities to work proactively for a common purpose of rehabilitating their surroundings.

We have established strong partnerships with woreda offices, are therefore able to share resources. For example we are currently sharing human resources and vehicles/motor bicycles and must only cover the fuel cost and per diem for the drivers.

Today, our project sites in Ensaro, Girar Jarso and Wenago are becoming centers of excellence where we share the success of the PHE integrated development approach and community based climate change adaptations with people from local and international institutions.

PHE: What is your relationship with PHE Ethiopia Consortium? How do you think it can be improved to further your organization's goals?

Ato Mogues: The consortium is our consortium, and we have a good

relationship with it. It can be said that it is our eyes and ears in different ways. If its resource capacity is improved it will be stronger in its ability to promote the PHE integrated development approach, and will contribute more to the achievement of the national and global millennium development goals, and the Growth and Transformation Plan of the country.

PHE: Do you have any final messages to share?

Ato Mogues: My message is that we must bring our hands together to improve the local situation and to change the global sectoral approach of donors to improve the livelihood situation in our country. Let us be practical in our approach to achieving local and international development goals, and let us translate our statements into action at all levels.

At last I would like to thank our development partners who support our programs by financing projects, giving technical and material assistance. Special thanks to PHEEC whose support is beyond expectation.

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