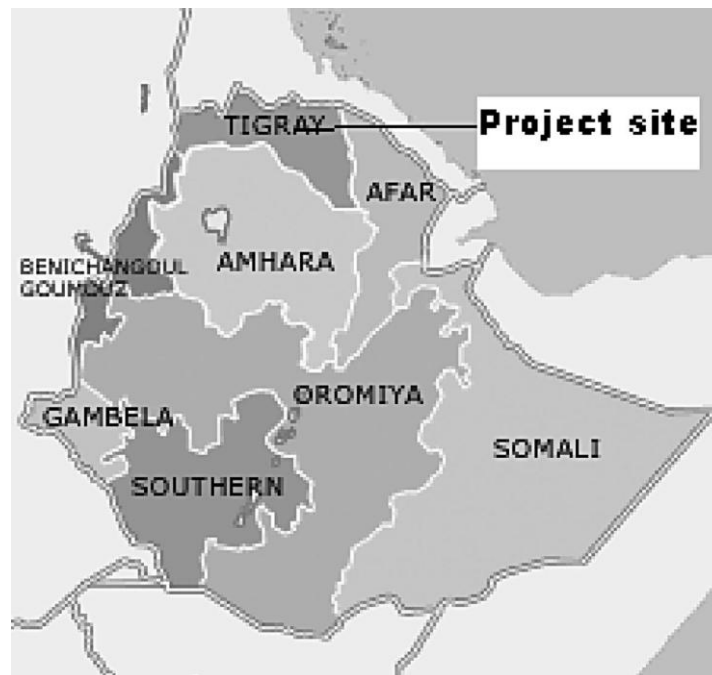


IWRM Implementation Project in Ethiopia

Final Project Report

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Ethiopia Country Water Partnership

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ethiopia has adopted the principles of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in its Water Resources Management policy and has already put in place water legislations, strategy, and program for their implementation. Moreover, the country's five year (2005/2006 – 2009/2010) Plan for Accelerated Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) attaches high priority to the water sector development. The Plan underlines the overall objective of the National Water Resources Management Policy, which is aimed at enhancing and promoting efforts towards an efficient, equitable, and optimal utilization of water resource that would contribute to the country's socioeconomic development on a sustainable basis (MOWR, 1999).

Although the policy environment has been highly supportive of the IWRM, there were considerable constraints in its implementation. The constraints include institutional and financial capacity limitations, lack of coordination among various stakeholders and limited participatory approach in planning and implementation of water development and management activities. The Ethiopian Country Water Partnership (ECWP) implemented the pilot IWRM project in two watersheds, viz. Berki in Tigray region (Northern Ethiopia) and Messena in Amhara region (North-east Ethiopia). The project aimed at promoting IWRM in Ethiopia; establishing the framework for broader stakeholder participation and networking; enhancing IWRM implementation at grassroots level; and contributing towards implementation of the Water Resources Management Policy, Strategy and the Water Sector Development Program of the country.

Since its inception, ECWP has steadfastly grown with over 100 members to the national CWP platform representing a broad range of sectors of government, NGO, international organization, private sector and bilateral aid agency partners. Water Partnerships at the regional, Catchment, Woreda and Tabia/Station levels were established by the stakeholders. Moreover, a regional technical team was established with membership of 9 experts (from government line bureaus, NGOs, and from the University and the Agricultural Research Institute) to technically support the process, specifically to carry out resource assessment and socioeconomic studies of the Berki Catchment. Wereda level water partnerships lead by the Wereda Watershed Committees, were also established with membership of the concerned government line offices, NGOs, and communities. A joint Atsbi-Wukro Wereda Watershed Committee, which is leading the Berki Catchment Water Partnership was established with membership of representatives from the two Weredas.

In the promotion of IWRM, ECWP has continued to reach out to more and more stakeholders through the regular environmental public forums while continuously collaborating with the Forum for Environment, WAE, Ethio-wetlands and Natural Resources Association. This has been in addition to participation and presentations at numerous meetings on Ethiopian river basins and participation in the World Water Day events to popularize ECWP and IWRM messages just but to mention a few. In marking the water day this year, for example, ECWP participated in photo exhibition and conducted an awareness workshop for key media editors, workshop on water and sanitation issues.

There has also been remarkable progress in the pilot sites in both Berki and Messena. The watershed development and management plans (IWRM Plans) have now been prepared based on technical studies carried out by teams in both regional states and reviewed during the general meetings. In Messena, plans are underway to mobilize stakeholders in rolling out the implementation with some components already earmarked by the Wareda Safety Net Program and World Vision, an NGO operating in the area.

1.0 PROMOTING IWRM IN ETHIOPIA

1.1 BACKGROUND

Ethiopia is endowed with huge water resource potential (about 122 Bm³) annual surface runoff and 2.9 Bm³ groundwater) though it is characterized by uneven spatial and temporal distributions. Most of the rivers in Ethiopia are seasonal and about 70% of runoff is obtained between June and August. Irrespective of the huge potential, the country's water resources have contributed very little to the socio-economic development; on average, access to clean and safe water supply is about 50%; Irrigation stands at only 6% of the potential and that of hydropower is at only 2% despite the big potential (2nd in Africa). Most of the rivers that originate within the country flow across borders to neighboring countries, and are transboundary rivers.

The policy environment is highly supportive of IWRM approaches. Ethiopia's five year Plan for Accelerated Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) places water (particularly water supply and sanitation) as a high priority. The Plan references the overall objective of the National Water Resources Management Policy, which is to enhance and promote efforts towards an efficient, equitable, and optimally utilized water resources that would contribute to the country's socioeconomic development on a sustainable basis (MOWR, 1999).

Ethiopia has adopted the principles of IWRM and has already put in place an appropriate water policy, legislation, strategy, and development program (including master plans) that embrace IWRM principles and approaches. Therefore, it could be said that the country has a National IWRM Plan and is at a stage of implementation. However, there are constraints in implementation that include capacity limitations, lack of proper coordination/collaboration among various stakeholders (as sectoral interests dominate), and lack of integrated and participatory approaches in planning and implementation of water resources.

To complement the Government's efforts of addressing the above-mentioned constraints, since 2005 the US Government has supported a project that promotes IWRM in Ethiopia through the Ethiopia Country Water Partnership. The main objective of the project is to pilot the principles of IWRM in two selected watersheds, to conduct national level advocacy and awareness raising on IWRM, and to share lessons from the pilots for scaling up at various levels.

Project Area

The project was implemented in two river basins, Berki and Mesena. The situation summarized in Box 1 below illustrates that water is the scarcest resource in the Berki catchment and cause of conflict among upstream and downstream communities; the administrative authorities; and local businesses and NGOs. The root cause of the complex challenge has been identified to be lack of institutional framework for stakeholders' participation and low level of IWRM awareness among the stakeholders. The biggest challenge was ensuring sustainable and equitable use and management of the water resources of the Berki catchment for all the interest groups.

Box 1: Agula: The illusory border between "scarcity and plenty"

Water is scarce resource in the Berki catchment, and there were various water resource management problems, including conflicts among upstream and downstream communities and between administrative authorities due to the diverse interests mentioned above. The different water use activities have exerted heavy pressure on water availability for different purposes, especially for the downstream users. Inefficient use of water, including application of inefficient technologies was also common practice. Communities downstream of Agula town (outside of the Berki catchment) suffer from lack of water due to the upstream pumps and diversions.

They need to travel long distances to access water especially during dry seasons. Moreover, the upstream water users pollute water that is being used by the downstream users due to their washing and cattle drinking practices. It can be said that water resources of the catchment were being excessively exploited beyond the natural limits of the system and the ability of the regulatory offices to control it. Absence of a land use plan and water regulations have led to the uncontrolled introduction of private pumps, and changes in cropping pattern and land use. Moreover, the water and other natural resources of the catchment were not assessed and decisions were taken without adequate information. Poor communication among various users and stakeholders and low level of awareness also contributed to the problem.

In Messena, most of the inhabitants of the area depend on growing crops for their livelihoods; however, their farmlands are seasonally flooded by the overflow of the Borkena River. Problems of drainage mean that communities often lose their crops and are unable to feed their families. Pastoralists from Oromiya

Zone of Amhara Region and from Afar Regional State, among others, migrate during the dry seasons in search of pasture and water for their cattle. Some people migrate from as far as *Bati*, more than 100 kms and even *Mile* which is more than 200 kms away.

Unlike the Berki Catchment, water in the Mesena watershed is not scarce. The main problems of the Mesena watershed are high floods from the mountain due to deforestation and uncontrolled grazing, and drainage of farmlands due to overflows from the Borkena River. All the stakeholders are working independently without integrating or worrying about the sustainability of the system. There is not adequate knowledge about the water resources potential of the catchment, although it is being exploited by many users.

Implementing IWRM can often seem overwhelming given the scale and complexity of the changes needed. This project has supported great experience on how IWRM is a long and participatory process based on an on-going learning process in Ethiopia. The IWRM pilot project in the “Berki” watershed for example has shown that IWRM involves many changes to the existing system through a step-by step-approach that creates a sense of ownership amongst all stakeholders. The case/project demonstrated that gaining political support at various levels and multi-stakeholder platforms are crucial for the success of the IWRM process. Building stakeholders’ capacities (tailored trainings, awareness workshops and experience sharing activities) also played significant role in facilitating the process.

2.0 ANALYSIS OF KEY OUTPUTS AND RESULTS

Since its establishment, the focus of this project, from the initial phase, has been to build up the institutions (multi-stakeholder platforms, basin level approaches and technical capacity) for an array of actors in the IWRM process from national to local levels, necessary for the successful implementation of IWRM. This has been an investment largely for the long-term, sustainable management of water resources in Ethiopia. The activities in this project have been organized around the following components:

- Analysis of gaps in water management policy
- Awareness raising and training around IWRM
- Strengthening IWRM related multistakeholder platforms in Ethiopia
- Piloting IWRM at region and local levels
- Documentation of experiences for scaling up

3.1 Promotion of IWRM principles and approaches

In 2005, ECWP carried out a study entitled "Identification of Gaps on Water Policy and Its Implementation Towards Developing IWRM Strategies" with input from a range of stakeholders at the national and regional levels. The key findings and conclusions of the study were disseminated to stakeholders through a number of publications and workshops but more importantly, provided the thrust upon which four key issues viz; demand management, conflict management, regulatory instruments and institutional arrangements were identified as key to supporting the water sector in Ethiopia. And while these key findings have been pursued in a multifaceted way within the project, the promotion of IWRM in the country has been a continuous process carried through a number of interventions that have included actively catalyzing and contributing to awareness raising and debate at project sites and national level.

Consultations and Awareness Raising

A number of national level for a have been targeted for awareness raising. These include;

- Forum for Environment public forums on environmental issues. ECWP continuously collaborates with the Forum for Environment, WaterAid Ethiopia and Ethio-wetlands and Natural Resources Association

organizing public meetings on the theme *Towards effective water resources use and management in Ethiopia*. The CWP arranges a number of these meetings and make presentations on IWRM which received wide press coverage. During the first half of this year alone, a total of eight public meetings on selected themes were held. These included Resource Base and National Policy, Wetland Resources of Ethiopia, Water for Life, Water for Food and Energy, Water and Industry, Managing Water Resources in Ethiopia: Concepts and Practices, Managing Conflicts Over Use of Water Resources and Managing Water Resources

- Participation and presentations at numerous meetings on Ethiopian river basins. ECWP also has an observer status in the Steering Committee for the Abay River Basin. In the first half of the year, ECWP attended two such meetings the Rift Valley Basin which were led by the Ministry of Water Resources.
- Played a key role in re-activating the NGOs Water Working Group and is a member of the Steering committee. Currently the Water Working Group is upgraded into a Water and Sanitation Forum where ECWP is still a member of the new Steering Committee.
- Awareness raising events and workshops on key issues (including ToT on conflict management) in Tigray and Amhara at regional and local levels.
- Participation in The World Water Day events to popularize ECWP and IWRM messages. In marking the water day this year, ECWP participated in photo exhibition and conducted an awareness workshop for key media editors, workshop on water and sanitation issues. The event was covered by key media outlets. In addition, Ethiopia Country Water Partnership (ECWP) and Research Inspired Policy and Practice Learning in Ethiopia and the Nile region (RiPPLE) jointly organized training on IWRM and the role of media in the water sector in January in Addis Ababa. The training provided an opportunity for the introduction of water issues to media professionals, develop skills among media professionals to report on water resources issues, and assist the media to play more proactive role than its reactive role of reporting on the effects of disasters. Over 10 media experts from the Ministry of Water Resources, Amhara and Tigray Regional Bureaus of Information, Eastern Harargie Zonal Department for Information and Public relations, Ethiopian Radio, Ethiopian Television, Radio Fana, Ethiopian New Agency, The Daily Monitor, FM-97.1.were involved in this training.
- Use of ECWP Annual Meetings to raise awareness amongst key stakeholder and catalyze actions on the ground. At the 3rd Annual Partners meeting in April, the focus of discussions for partners was

Sharing lessons from the two IWRM pilot watersheds (Berki and Messena); key IWRM change areas for Ethiopia and addressing challenges of water resources management in the Akaki catchment

- Articles written in the Ethiopian Civil Engineers Association Newsletter and the Addis Ababa Highlights. In the May issue of Addis Highlights this year The Third Annual general meeting of ECWP and the issue of Akaki challenges were covered.

At the regional level, the relevant stakeholders at the Tigray regional state level were identified, contacted and sensitized about the need to pursue an IWRM approach and to establish multi-stakeholder forums at various levels to facilitate this process. This exercise was found to be very useful to win the political support of the authorities and to mobilizing the key stakeholders.

The same activity was done at the riparian districts of Atsbi, Wukro and Enderta. This was followed by the launching of the Tigray Regional Water Partnership. A consultative meeting with the high government officials of the Region was also made to further strengthen the regional partnership and to secure their commitment. The meeting brought together the key stakeholder organizations of the regional state, namely; Finance and Economic Development; Agriculture and Rural Development; Water, Mines and Energy; Capacity Building; Women Affairs; Agricultural Research Institute; NGOs; representatives of the riparian Weredas of the Berki catchment and others. This meeting resulted in reconfirmation of the commitments of the Regional Government to support the IWRM approach. It was during this meeting that the Tigray Regional Partnership was agreed to be chaired by the Deputy Chief Administrator of the regional state who is at the same time Head of the Finance and Economic Development Bureau. Moreover, the Regional Bureau of Water Resources was designated to be the focal point at the regional level.

Similar IWRM awareness raising workshops were also organized at the regional level for stakeholders from the regional bureaus, NGOs, Woreda offices, and communities from the Berki watershed.

3.2 Strengthening stakeholder participation for IWRM Implementation

Since its inception, ECWP has now attracted over 100 members to the national CWP platform representing a balance of government, NGO, international organization, private sector and bilateral aid agency partners with over 40 of these members accredited by GWP in Stockholm. The partnership has steadfastly worked through a number of national and regional platforms to shift management paradigms around natural resources management in Ethiopia towards 'basin' and 'multistakeholder' approaches.

About ECWP

Ethiopia Country Water Partnership (ECWP), under the auspices of the Global Water Partnership (GWP), was launched in December 2003 with the goal of promoting and implementing integrated water resources management (IWRM). Its members, among others, include institutions from Federal and Regional Government offices, Local and International NGOs, Donors, Research and Academic Institutions, Women and the Private sector.

ECWP has a General Assembly of members that meets every year. It represents all members of the partnership and is the highest decision making organ. Currently more than 100 members exist representing a balance of Government, NGO, international organization, academic and research, private sector and bilateral aid agencies.

The Partnership has a Steering Committee of 11 members, elected by their constituencies. Steering Committee members are elected for two year terms at the Annual Partners Meetings. The Ministry of Water Resources is chairing the ECWP Steering Committee. ECWP has a small secretariat office (hosted by WaterAid Ethiopia) with two staff.

A primary challenge in IWRM is that each sector has its own mandate and there are very few coordinating bodies within or outside of government to coordinate these often overlapping and, in some cases, conflicting agendas. The effectiveness of the CWP as a neutral platform in the water sector has been useful in breaking ground for the establishment of the new River Basin Organizations in the Abbay as well as the creation of CWP type platforms for the Central Rift Valley and the Akaki River Sub-basin while drawing greater interest among other regions in the country who have expressed interest and requested support for the CWP to support the establishment of Area Water Partnerships. For example, during the Third Annual Meeting, The Southern Region requested ECWP to establish a Regional Water Partnership for their area.

In the case of supporting the development of the Central Rift Valley working group, ECWP was requested to support Oxfam to convene the working group. The four members of the core group currently are ECWP, Oxfam International, the Selam Environment and Development Association, and Forum for Environment. This core group has now formed into sub-working groups, one technical and the other for advocacy. It is an entirely voluntary group working on IWRM principles and is in the process of facilitating a stakeholder dialogue process which includes civil society organizations, academia and most notably, the flower

exporters association which has already adopted a code of conduct of best practices for floriculture in the Ziway. The goal of the Working Group is to “promote a basin wide integrated water resources management approach so as to make certain that adequate supplies of water of good quality are maintained for the people in the area, while preserving the hydrological, biological and chemical functions of ecosystems, adapting human activities within the capacity limits of nature¹”.

In the Akaki sub-basin, challenges of water resources management emerged as a major issue during the 3rd Annual CWP members meeting. Being a major life support mechanism for millions of Addis Ababa’s population, the cause and effect of the increasing pollution level of the Akaki Rivers emerged as a major concern in and

The Akaki Basin

The cause and effect of the increasing pollution level of the Akaki Rivers emerged as a major concern in and around the city of Addis Ababa and Akaki. This problem also extends to downstream Aba Samuel and the Awash basin communities. Untreated Liquid Waste from industries, municipalities, clinics, fuel stations/garages, etc... flows directly into the Akaki Rivers. Unmanaged solid waste from all

around the city of Addis Ababa and Akaki. In order to address the emerging crisis in the governance of the Akaki Sub basin, Stakeholders formed a

taskforce to begin steps to fully develop a platform in which all stakeholders would be Involved in the governance process. The Environmental Protection Authority was nominated to chair this group and ECWP was requested to support its formation first as a Secretariat while providing its knowledge and expertise to ensure the platform kicks off. Other key stakeholders are also members of the task force and include WaterAid Ethiopia, UNEP, UNIDO Addis Ababa water and sewerage authority (AWSA), Addis Ababa EPA, Ministry of Water resources, Ministry of Health, Oromiya Bureau of Water, Addis Ababa Municipality, and Ministry of Agriculture, Media, etc.

At the same time, Water Partnerships at the regional, Catchment, Woreda and Tabia/Station levels were established by the stakeholders. Moreover, a regional technical team was established with membership of 9 experts (from government line bureaus, NGOs, and from the University and the Agricultural Research Institute) to technically support the process, specifically to carry out resource assessment and socioeconomic studies of the Berki Catchment. Wereda level water partnerships lead by the Wereda Watershed Committees, were also established with membership of the concerned government line offices, NGOs, and communities. A joint Atsbi-Wukro Wereda Watershed Committee, which is leading the Berki

¹ Herco Jansen (et al); Land and Water Resources Assessment in the Ethiopian Central Rift Valley, Alterra, Wageningen, 2007.

Catchment Water Partnership was established with membership of representatives from the two Weredas. Much effort has been made to ensure balanced representation of all the stakeholders in the water partnerships at all levels. The forums have laid the foundations for joint planning and implementation of sustainable water resources management, including management of water related conflicts.

The Woreda Watershed Committees are members of the Regional Water Partnership while local communities are represented at Wereda Watershed Committees to ensure strong linkage between the different levels of water partnerships and smooth flow of information. The link between the Weredas and Tabias/stations is maintained by the Agricultural Development Agents who directly work with the community and give feedback to the Woredas.

3.3 Implementation of IWRM Pilot projects

In 2005, ECWP launched two local Water Partnerships, in Tigray and Amhara National Regional States, and two pilot learning sites, one in *Berki* watershed in Tigray, and the other in *Messena* micro-watershed in Amhara. These pilots have been the central nodes of ECWPs work since 2005. The Local Water Partnerships are led by Regional Water Bureaus, in collaboration with ECWP, and are overseeing the implementation of the pilots. They are also working to increase regional awareness through trainings and workshops.

In both Berki and Messena, watershed development and management plans (IWRM Plans) have now been prepared based on technical studies carried out by teams in both regional states and reviewed during the general meetings. In the long run, the IWRM Plan implementation strategies/approaches and a participatory management structure was agreed upon by key stakeholders-roles of each actor defined by the end of the project. Key implementers of the IWRM Plan for Messena expressed their interest, also with indicative commitments. For example, the Food Security Coordination Office is considering implementing the Messena IWRM Plan as part of the Wereda Safety Net Program. World Vision has also accepted to undertake its projects within the framework of the plan.

In Messena, collaboration between different stakeholders has now led to the catchment being spared from pastoralism and human settlement with the catchment being considered as a model catchment in the region. The stakeholders have also used the opportunity to develop a plan that responds to the catchment's

short term, medium term and long term needs with the short term needs being addressed through the life of the current project over the next one year.

In Berki, the finalization of the technical study has been done and an elaborate infrastructure for developing and implementation of the plan is underway. Within this framework, the technical team has identified an array of primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders from all the *sub-kebeles*. Immediate results that have however been realized within the participatory framework of the stakeholders in the region include development of rules on water abstraction in a consensual manner, community capacity building and awareness raising and planning. This consensus has heavily contributed to the reduction in conflicts in the region and led to the revision of a number of decisions taken by the regional government such as the approval of the installation of up to 250 water pumps downstream which has now been stopped.

The Tigray Regional Water Partnership (TRWP) also provided a policy support at the regional state level and facilitated the IWRM process in the region. The Woreda level watershed committees were established with membership of the concerned government line offices, NGOs, and communities. A joint Watershed Committee was also established in Atsbi-Wukro with membership of representatives from the two Woreda watershed committees.

This laid the foundation for the establishment of the Berki catchment water partnership. Effort has been made to ensure balanced representation of all stakeholders in the different water partnerships. Serving as forums, these water partnerships brought together different sectors and stakeholders for discussion, networking and coordination. The forums have also enabled to jointly plan and implement sustainable water resources management, including management of water related conflicts. Identification of stakeholders, their interests and roles was an important step that facilitated the participatory process of IWRM in the watershed. The process also included awareness creation, empowerment, and confidence building.

4.0 OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT

4.1 Potential conflicts are being turned into opportunities for cooperation

Water users and other stakeholders in Berki Catchment are now in a position to speak about equitable water allocation, conflict resolution, and integration of different water uses. For example, before the intervention, local communities used to think that any water that flows through their fields, was their own property. That thinking has now changed and they see water as a resource that has to be shared among all the users in the watershed. One clear indication of the enhanced awareness is the interest shown by the downstream Woreda to contribute to the conservation program at the upstream Woreda. Atsbi Weredas' plan to introduce about 100 more water pumps was also revisited as a result of this process. Moreover, water efficient technologies like drip systems are being introduced and plan has already been finalized for artificial groundwater recharging.

4.2 Decline in local level conflicts

Water related conflicts in the catchment have been minimized as a result of establishing multi-stakeholder platforms and holding various consultations. There is now recognition of the importance of the partnerships at the local level and working together is viewed as the best means to resolve water conflicts. For example, two key conflicts in the catchment were resolved without any legal or administrative intervention.

4.3 Improvement of National Framework for sustainable water resources management

ECWP's experience has shown that political will exists to invest in IWRM in Ethiopia. The Ministry of Water Resources, the chair of the ECWP Steering Committee, and others have shown a high level of commitment, as have an increasing number of NGOs, such as WaterAid, to expanding their view of the water sector beyond simply water provision and sanitation (taps and toilets) to a wider basin scale management approach. At the level of regional governments, the leadership, particularly in Tigray has been supportive of IWRM. The Vice President of Tigray has chaired ECWP meetings and significantly accelerated the developments in Berki catchment with potential for regional scaling up. The experiences have also shown that when time and resources are invested, it is possible for government to work across sectors of water, agriculture, energy and health, and to engage with nongovernmental stakeholders.

This process is already begun in Messena. The case of World Vision, an international NGO that had been operating in the area since 1990 and attending the IWRM meetings since the beginning of the Messena pilot project, provides a clear example of the value that IWRM has already brought and how a

multistakeholder planning and implementation process might work. Before the pilot began, World Vision had been working on agricultural and food issues in the area through irrigation development, technical capacity building, livestock and poultry assistance, and seed distribution. After the IWRM management plan was adopted, based on the needs outlined the plan, they committed to providing irrigation equipment, other agricultural inputs and technical assistance based on pre-existing activities. The critical element of this role has been that these activities are now coordinated with a wider, basin-scale plan, multi-stakeholder management plan. Before, related activities from NGOs such as World Vision in the area were essentially ad hoc.

At the federal level, WaterAid has now begun to prepare draft guidelines for IWRM to guide its operations countrywide. As a major player in water supply and sanitation, the national office has now begun sensitization of its staff and partners on the integrated approach to managing water resources – protecting the resource in order to ensure sustainable supply. Other individual partner institutions who are embracing IWRM in their programs include Ethiopian Kale Hiwot Church, Intermon Oxfam and SNV.

Within the context of supporting the institutional context at the federal level in water resources management, ECWP has been at the forefront in providing technical support in the process of establishing the Abbay River Basin organization as a pilot for other RBOs in the country. This process is aimed at building on the WSDP and the 2007 *Proclamation for Establishing River Basin Organizations* (RBOs) which declares the intention of government to manage water through catchment units. The proclamation requires that all basins prepare, and legally adopt, IWRM plans through a multi-stakeholder process that includes federal government agencies (water, agriculture, energy, finance, environment, etc.), regional governments, technical representatives, international organizations and major water users, including farmers and communities.

5.0 LESSONS LEARNED

In February 2008 the CWP participated in the GWP Eastern Africa ToolBox Training workshop. The workshop provided an opportunity for ECWP to capture the lessons learnt, experiences and highlights of the project which will be shared with members, stakeholders in Ethiopia and within the GWP network as a whole. Already, the first such case study has been developed and will be published by the regional office. The case study among others highlights the process and challenges of creating these area and local water partnerships in Amhara/Messena and Tigray/Berki which were done in the following steps:

- a. The national steering committee, which input from the regional governments, selected the pilot sites.
- b. Once the regions and key stakeholders were selected, the regional steering committee with ECWP commissioned studies, lead by leading regional university such as Bahir Dar University for the case of Messena on stakeholder mapping, water status resources and potential water conflicts, status of other land resources, and socio-economics in the two watersheds.
- c. With the status reports complete, consultation forums were organized with watershed stakeholders to discuss the implications of the findings and steps forward to developing a integrated watershed development and management plan. The management plans were developed by technical teams in the two regions based on the initial studies and the stakeholder consultations.
- d. Once a draft of the plans is completed, another consultation forum was organized to discuss the plan and mechanisms for its implementation. It is at this point that the detailed decisions were made as to the water allocation priorities, conflict management and financing of the implementation of the plans.

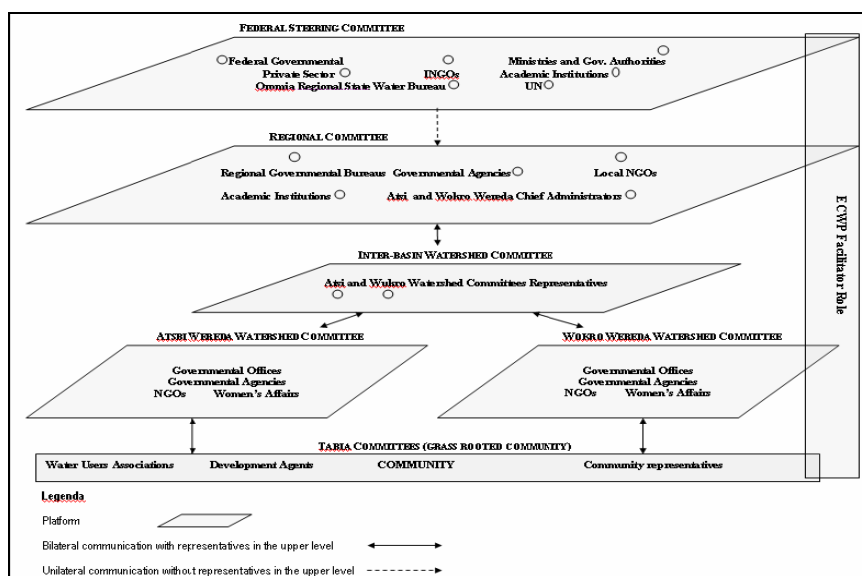


Fig 3: Multi-stakeholder platform for WRM in Berki Catchment

- **Ownership of the change:** The IWRM change process needs to support people's livelihoods. Water resources management should not be done for its own sake, rather for sustaining the livelihoods of communities. It is only when people understand that their livelihoods depend on sustainable management of water and land resources that they can own and meaningfully participate in the change process. The challenge faced by ECWP in piloting IWRM was a long planning process, which made it difficult for the local communities to understand its linkages to their livelihoods. There was a high level of expectation around a quick fix physical infrastructure that would address their practical problems.

- **Political commitment: Government commitment to IWRM process is crucial.** IWRM requires an enabling environment (policy, legal and institutional framework) at the national level. Existence of an enabling environment facilitated the IWRM piloting process in Ethiopia as the process was owned by government and other stakeholders. A high level consultation meeting with government officials of Tigray Region raised the level of awareness about IWRM and the challenges of water resources management in Tigray and Berki watershed. The meeting also increased the interest of key institutions that further strengthened the regional partnership. The Tigray Regional Government reconfirmed its commitment to support the IWRM approach by delegating the Deputy Chief Administrator of the Regional Government as the chair of the Tigray Regional Water Partnership (TRWP) Steering Committee. Stakeholders in TRWP have designated focal persons and also contributed free expertise by designating their technical staff to the Technical Team. Ethiopia operate under a decentralized government and local authorities have decision making power and authority over resources. They have the power to manage water and other natural resources within their constituencies. The wereda authorities are responsible for the preparation of development plan and coordination of development activity in the Wereda. They are also given a budget to execute their plans. Thus, any activity in the wereda must be approved by the wereda government and the role of weredas in the Berki pilot IWRM watershed was significant. Practically nothing could have been done without their interest, willingness and mobilizing role. The weredas played a key role in mobilizing all stakeholders in their respective weredas for participation in the process, in establishing wereda watershed committees, in contributing experts for the IWRM process and in owning the whole process.

- **Communication among stakeholders:** IWRM requires participation and ownership by all stakeholders at all levels and communication facilitates participation. People down the chain often do not get enough information, do not get it in the right ways or do not have direct lines of communication available to them. Relationship building takes time and this was one of the challenges that ECWP have to overcome. Even though

it is not an easy task, facilitating communication among all stakeholders at all levels by adapting local situations is crucial, as is the adaptation of traditional knowledge systems to spread information about IWRM.

- **Multistakeholder partnership building is time consuming:** There is a critical need to move away from the large, top-down infrastructure building mentality. It must be recognized that strong institution/process building is not immediate, but rather a long and tiring process. Participation, ownership and trust building was a challenge but it was achieved through investing efforts and energy in establishing the partnership described above.

- **Capacity building and awareness raising as an integral part of the IWRM change process:** IWRM is a participatory process and it requires capacity building of stakeholders' for proper participation. ECWP's approach of combining awareness raising /capacity building with piloting was a helpful approach. It was mostly done through a training of trainers (TOT) program where experts from federal and regional levels were trained outside of the country to train other experts at country level, particularly regional experts. This was followed by training of regional and wereda experts by the trained national/regional experts. The wereda and regional experts, in turn, trained the communities.

- **Capacity building on IWRM cannot be handled by an organization or an individual.** The approach followed by ECWP was to mobilize individual stakeholders by training them to assist with the capacity building process in the country. Academics and the regional water resource bureau professionals played a key role. They participated in various training programs and also in carrying out technical studies (both water and other natural resources assessment and socio-economic studies). They have also contributed a lot in replicating the trainings down the line for different decentralized partnerships. Most of all, the training has been instrumental in the introduction of knowledge-based decision making.

- **Promoting IWRM principles,** approaches and experiences to various stakeholders, including non-water sectors, needs to be done on a continuous basis until changes in the ways actors think and behave occur. To this end, the project has promoted and demonstrated the benefits of IWRM through organizing training courses, awareness workshops and the provision of knowledge and advice. Local adaptations to suit local conditions, including the use of local languages were important contributions.

- **Piloting and scaling-up approach:** ECWP is now in a phase where it will be moving from institution building to implementation on a larger scale. The experiences so far from ECWP's activities are being fed into other national programs as a way of promoting IWRM, especially at a river basin scale. For example, due to increasing environmental degradation and investment opportunities at the same time, the Central Rift Valley is a basin of national importance and at the top of the government agenda. The Ministry of Water Resources has appreciated the inputs from other stakeholder groups in river basin master plan development (to broaden the focus from water resources development to more integrated development and management of water resources), and to establish a Rift Valley Lakes Basin Organization. ECWP also involved and shared its experience during the establishment of the River Basin Organization for the Blue Nile.

- **Build on existing systems and link with key water resources management problems/issues:-** ECWP takes advantage of its having many stakeholders together to present different issues and initiate dialogue around key issues of national concern such as on challenges of water resources management in the Ethiopian Central Rift-Valley sub-basin, and the Akaki catchment. As a result of such discussions, a multi-stakeholder working group (the Central Rift Valley sub-basin working group) was formed which, with ECWP support, plays a key advocacy role within the Ministry of Water Resources towards establishing river basin organization for the Rift valley Lakes basin and highlighted the importance of multi-stakeholder involvement in water resource management. Similarly another Task Force was recently formed to address the water resources management of the Akaki catchment in the Awash river basin which is being compromised by urban and industrial pollution from the City of Addis Ababa and its surroundings

- **IWRM as an approach for managing water conflicts:** In Berki, water resources are scarce and there are actual and potential water conflicts. A clear case was the destruction of an irrigation diversion weir on the Berki river by downstream traditional irrigation water users. The partnerships played a facilitating role in conflicts resolution by organizing a joint visit program for both downstream and upstream users/stakeholders. This visit helped all concerned stakeholders to understand the problems from both sides, and also contributed to the management of conflicts. Awareness raising and training also contributed to the development of a shared visions for the watershed and the building of trust among stakeholders. In this regard, the establishment of the partnerships played key role in the management of conflicts through shared vision planning and consensus building.

6.0 ENABLERS AND CONSTRAINTS

6.1 The advantage of political will

At the local government level (in the regions), the second regional consultative meeting with senior government officials in Tigray Region was organized in May 2007 which brought together key sectors in Tigray regional state. The participants included the office of the regional state, Regional Bureaus, Research Institutes, NGOs, and the two target Wereda Administrators. This meeting was very instrumental in confirming the political commitment of the regional government and helped in passing the political decision and direction regarding IWRM and the pilot project. The meeting was concluded by assignment of the Deputy Chief Administrator of the regional state to chair the water partnership at the regional level and the formation of the regional technical team for coordinating the study in the watershed. Similar IWRM awareness raising workshops and consultative meetings have now continued to be held with key stakeholders at the woreda, watershed, Kebele and village levels in the region with ease.

6.2 Sustainable management of water and land resources

ECWP's experience, in particular in the pilot projects, have demonstrated that there is wide understanding from the Minister of Water Resources down to local farmers and land managers that practically all of Ethiopia's livelihood opportunities are linked to the sustainable management of water resources. Most also understand that actions far away from them can affect their access to water resources in positive and negative ways. There is wide agreement among stakeholders that water must be managed at a basin scale. For example, in Messena community groups is self organized a corps of forest guards to protect the tops of mountains from deforestation and erosion due to overgrazing. Anyone found cutting a tree as their axe taken away. And the forest guards are compensated by being allowed to cut grass in these areas to keep for themselves. This understanding at the community level all through to the federal level in government has provided great impetus for the project and in deepening the understanding and relevance of IWRM.

6.3 Low technical capacity.

Understanding natural systems requires long-term commitments in technical capacity-building. Much of the data required for water resources assessments are unavailable. For most of Ethiopia, there is not reliable data on surface or groundwater quantity which makes water basin planning and negotiation very difficult. In addition to data gaps, local governments must have the resources to develop and utilize their own water

management tools. Very few areas currently have the resources to develop these capabilities. This lack of capacity is particularly at the local level, as the technical capacity gaps widens moving from federal to regional to local government.

6.4 High staff turnover

A significant challenge to developing this capacity is the high rate of staff turnover among government officials in the federal ministries, in the regions, woreda and kebeles. This poses problems not only for skills development, but also for personal relationship building and institutional memory. For example, there have been multiple changes of the MoWR and Ministry of Agriculture focal people on the ECWP steering committee since its inception. The turnover of staff is not however limited to government alone. In ECWP, the project support officer who was recruited to support the two pilot sites left before the end of six months and in Massena, the World Vision representative liaising with ECWP is the 3rd since the projects inception in 2005.