

# Aid effectiveness in the WASH sector in Oromia region, Eastern Hararghe zone

## The case of Goro-Gutu and Babile *woredas*

This summary is based on Working Paper 20 on [Aid effectiveness in the WASH sector in Oromia region, Eastern hararghe zone](#) available for download at: [www.rippleethiopia.org](http://www.rippleethiopia.org)

**Research-inspired Policy and Practice Learning in Ethiopia and the Nile Region (RiPPLE)** is a DFID-funded Research Programme Consortium led by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in partnership with IRC, Addis Ababa University, WaterAid Ethiopia and Hararghe Catholic Secretariat

Lack of access to safe water and sanitation facilities is an important issue on the development agenda that has caught the attention of political leaders worldwide. The leaders have committed themselves to the endorsement of the MDGs and the actions taken at global level. So far a number of supportive tools have been developed to support implementation of the global targets, including the Declaration made in Paris on Aid Effectiveness.

Ethiopia is one of the countries with low access to WASH facilities, which in turn affect the productivity of its people. Ethiopia's government is aware of the challenge and is putting in place a series of policies and strategies to address the problem, including decentralisation of power and development of macro and sectoral development programs.

This study looked into the implementation of effectiveness of aid management in the case of the WASH sector. The study was conducted in two *woredas* in East Hararghe.

The sector is striving to increase the rate of access to WASH facilities through introducing different policies and development programs and developing guiding tools that help to manage resources, harmonise working modalities and build capacity of implementers on different levels. To improve WASH coverage, the MoWR, MoE and MoH have signed an MoU to jointly push the WASH agenda, and this MoU can be considered a milestone for the sector. A coordination office has been established to pursue the implementation of the signed agreement and bring other stakeholders together with a clear mission of promoting the implementation of WASH programs.

The study carried out in the two *woredas* is not representative, but it sheds light on some important common elements. The overall access to both potable water and sanitation is increasing, albeit at different rates. Access to solid waste disposal is far behind access to water and access to latrines. Comparing the two *woredas*, the rate of growth of access to water and sanitation and resources allocation is noticeably different.

The distribution of donors and NGOs varies greatly between *woredas*. The WASH sector funds in both *woredas* are very limited and do not support the achievement of UAP targets. Only continued efforts might help achieve the MDG targets related to water and those relating to sanitation.

## Study findings

The overall findings of the study show that aid is fully managed by the government. The WASH resources are also managed following guidelines of lead institutions. Aid is aligned with government priority programs. Donors have started cutting some of their procedures to reduce operational burden. As we move to levels below the federal level, there are grey areas that will need further study and fuller understanding.

The mechanism for information flow is not yet in place to account for all available resources flowing to the sector. For instance, although investments made by programmes such as the Productive Safety Net and the food security fund are shown in regional reports and at *woreda* level, this is not reflected as part of the WASH budget. The resources secured from NGOs and others are not predictable at *woreda* level. Reports produced at *woreda* level do not give a full picture of resources available to the sector.

The aid effectiveness rating used to gauge the level of effectiveness shows that the donors engaged at federal government level are much better in aligning their systems and pre-informing the amount of resources they could deploy than NGOs who mainly work at regional and *woreda* level. In contrast, NGOs are better in engaging communities in decision making compared to other donors. NGOs are significant players in funding the WASH sector. The amount of resources they invest was insufficiently reflected in the budget and report of the sector. This may affect issues relating to equity and may distort investment-decisions made at higher levels. This can be related to capacity at lower level, and to issues of ownership, integration and harmonisation.

The start made at federal level towards managing aid better is encouraging but it needs to reach down to all administrative levels. Successful management of available aid resources has a clear added value in bringing additional resources. However, this does not seem to be working at the local level. High staff turnover, lack of mechanism on the ground to coordinate different actors at local level and low capacity of local governments are major concerns that need attention to improve the quality of aid management.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study team has the following selected recommendations:

- Introducing a minimum capacity package for *woredas* to be able to manage the program
- Increasing the sense of ownership at local level through sharing adequate information
- Working on increased aid harmonisation and coordination
- Strengthening integration of different systems
- Importing best practice to the sector (such as SWAP approach)
- Using available platforms (such as the Multi-stakeholder Forum) to improve aid management in the WASH sector.

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