

Information Sheet

Growth Theme

Research-inspired Policy and Practice Learning in Ethiopia and the Nile Region (RiPPLE) is a DFID-funded Research Programme Consortium hosted by WaterAid Ethiopia

RiPPLE Information sheets introduce an aspect of RiPPLE, related issues and references to further resources.

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RiPPLE Office
c/o WaterAid Ethiopia,
Kirkos Sub-city,
Kebele 04, House no 620,
Debrezeit Road,
PO Box 4812,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Contact

Simret Yasabu,
RiPPLE Media and
Communication Officer
t: +251 11 416 0075
f: +251 (0) 11 416 0081
e: info@rippleethiopia.org
w: www.rippleethiopia.org

Background: Water, livelihoods and growth?

How does investment in water supply and sanitation contribute to the government's wider objectives of economic growth and poverty reduction? What are the implications for sector policy and programming? These are important questions which RiPPLE's Growth theme is seeking to address.

Prospects for economic growth in Ethiopia centre on agriculture, however this potential is severely constrained by risk, vulnerability and chronic food insecurity. Various factors such as access to markets and inequalities in assets (such as land, water, livestock) can affect whether growth in a given location is "pro-poor" – i.e. whether that growth brings particular benefit to the poor. Access to water supply and sanitation (WSS) is a major form of asset inequality in Ethiopia, where less than 40% of the population has access to safe water and less than 20% has access to sanitation facilities. It not only affects the health, welfare and productivity of rural households, but also impacts on their ability to engage in available market opportunities, through savings of time and labour and small scale productive uses.



Improved access to water can increase market opportunities for rural households

Our Aims

The aim of the RiPPLE Growth theme is to support implementers to develop WSS interventions which help protect poor households against livelihood shocks and promote food security and productivity. RiPPLE is addressing these issues through a range of research and learning activities designed to strengthen the linkages between high level policy debates and lessons learned through implementation on the ground.

Activities

Four case studies are currently planned:

Macro level

- Analysis of links between levels of access to WSS and patterns of growth and poverty reduction in Ethiopia
- Water resources management, development and growth in Ethiopia and the wider Nile region

Micro level (focusing on East Harerge Zone, Oromia Region)

- The relationship between access to WSS and improved food security at household level: the costs and benefits of existing food security interventions
 - Sustainability of multiple use water services which also provide for small scale productive uses of water (e.g. for irrigation): costs and benefits of existing multiple use interventions
- These will form the basis for long-term action research developed in conjunction with regional LPAs and linked to ongoing WSS programme implementation.