

Meeting proceedings

Climate Resilient WASH – Learning Platform Second Workshop

September 23, 2021

Adama, Ethiopia



WASH ALLIANCE
International



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Background

The WASH SDG programme is a five-year programme funded by DGIS (the Directorate-General for International Cooperation of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and being implemented in four woredas in Oromia and Amhara Regions (Negelle Arsi and Shashamane Woredas in Oromia and Bahirdar Zuria and Lalibela Woredas in Amhara). The programme implementation is led by WASH Alliance International (WAI) in Oromia and Plan International in Amhara. Consortium members of WAI are Amref Health Africa, IRC WASH, Wetlands International (WI), Bole Biblical Baptist Church (BBBC), and Akvo.

Climate resilient (CR) WASH is one of the thematic areas of the programme and ground level implementation is done by WI. In March 2020, an MoU was signed between the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy, Oromia Water, the Energy Bureau, IRC WASH, and Wetlands International to establish the Ziway Shalla sub-basin Climate Resilient Learning Platform. The objective of the learning platform is to share knowledge and experience and to improve WASH service delivery in the sub-basin. National and local WASH actors are involved in this learning platform. Wetlands International and IRC WASH Ethiopia are jointly facilitating. Meetings are held once every quarter.

Wetlands International and IRC WASH jointly facilitated the launching workshop in June 2021. IRC WASH facilitated the second workshop in September 2021.

Opening session

The second climate resilient WASH learning platform took place at Haile Resort Hotel in Adama Town, on September 23, 2021. WASH sector office delegates from Shashamane and Negelle Arsi woredas, West Arsi Zone, WASH sector bureaus of Oromia Region, national WASH sector organisations and non-governmental development partners participated in the workshop.

At the opening, the Country Director of IRC WASH, Lemessa Mekonta said that lots of inputs are expected from the discussion and invited all participants to have an interactive discussion. He also stated that the next meeting will have a follow-up discussion based on the action points to be listed.

In introducing the purpose of the platform Tamene Chaka, WASH Alliance Country Coordinator mentioned that the climate resilient WASH learning platform is part of the WASH SDG programme. The main objective of the WASH SDG programme is to deliver sustainable WASH services in the project areas in Amhara and Oromia regions. Shashamane and Negelle Arsi woredas are the target woredas in Oromia region, and Amref is ensuring WASH service delivery in both woredas, representing WAI. Starting in 2018 the programme has delivered water services to 60,000, sanitation services to 65,000 and improved sanitation services to 35,000 people in two focus woredas, according to Tamene Chaka. The second main objective of the WASH SDG programme is capacity building, therefore through refresher trainings the programme is working to fill the capacity gap. The third main objective is learning and knowledge management. The climate resilient WASH learning platform is part of the learning and knowledge management activities and will meet every three months. According to Tamene, in addition to climate resilient WASH, the platform will also discuss gender equality and social inclusion. It is focused on the Central Rift Valley area and different research activities in the area are being presented and discussed as well as research unknown to the research team. The programme has a budget for research and the learning platform will identify the research topics.

Opening remark

Teshale Bekana from Oromia Water and Energy Resource Development Bureau

Welcome! Today we are going to talk about life. We are here to discuss this because without water life is unthinkable. Therefore, I would like to acknowledge the programme which organised this learning platform, on behalf of Oromia Water Bureau. It is you and us who will sustain this learning platform after the phase-out of the programme. The platform meets every three months, but it does not mean that we have to remain idle until the next meeting, we have to capitalise the action points of the discussion and come up with new ideas and best practices. The Central Rift Valley needs due attention, because groundwater is depleting, the water is salty, and there is also pollution in the area. Therefore, this learning platform is the best place to discuss research conducted in the area and identify future research areas. It will give us the opportunity to implement activities recommended by the research done. Today we are expected to actively participate and give important inputs into the discussion. Thank you!

Climate Resilient WASH Concept

A presentation about the CR WASH concept was given by [Gezahegn Lemecha from IRC WASH](#). Gezahegne's presentation showed the relationship between climate change and WASH. According to his presentation climate change has the following impact on WASH:

1. Exacerbates existing vulnerabilities (drought, flooding, pollution, low WASH coverage, population growth, urbanisation, inequalities, etc.),
2. It can result in increase/decline of rainfall and run-off,
3. Decline of water supply sources,
4. Water use conflict, migration, increased usage of unimproved sources,
5. Lack of water for hygiene practices, increase diarrhoeal diseases,
6. Increases concentration of pollutants in water sources,
7. Non-functioning of sanitation systems (flush toilets, sewerage),
8. Damage of WASH facilities (water supply system, collapse of latrines),
9. Contamination of water sources,
10. Can result in increase of temperature,
11. Warmer temperature can lead to greater transmission of diseases,
12. Outbreak of infectious diseases.

The following are WASH activities that drive climate change:

1. WASH services that produce greenhouse gas (GHG) & contribute to global warming
2. Energy for pumping and treatment of water and wastewater
3. Pit latrines (human excreta)
4. Pit latrines account for 1% of global anthropogenic methane emissions (significant source of GHG)

5. Wastewater treatment process: biological wastewater treatment emits a significant amount of GHG.

To mitigate climate-related risks through human intervention, reducing energy consumption, using gravity-based sewerage conveyance through increased use of decentralised systems, promoting composting toilets, regular emptying of septic tanks, management of wastewater, and using renewable energy sources for pumping water and wastewater are suggested.

To adapt to actual or expected climate change and its effects, and to reduce or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities, managing physical risks, building WASH infrastructures in carefully selected locations, and designing, operating, managing technologies and services that are less vulnerable (deep groundwater source, composting toilets, etc.) are ways to achieve this.

Ethiopia is prone to extreme climate variability. Major climate related hazards in the country are floods and droughts. Seven major droughts happened since the early 1980s, five of which led to loss of human life. Major floods occurred in different parts of the country in 1988, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, and 2006 (World Bank, 2010).

The country's climate trend over the past 50 years has shown a temperature increase of 0.37 °C, while rainfall is almost constant. Projection over the coming three periods, the years 2030, 2050, 2080 show temperature increases of 0.9 - 1.1 °C, 1.7 - 2.1 °C, and 2.7 – 3.4 °C and there will be a small increase in annual rainfall. The net result is a reduction in the amount of available water since an increase in temperature without an increase in precipitation results in more evapotranspiration

The best ways to adapt and mitigate the situation in Ethiopia are the following:

1. Water source focused adaptation/mitigation strategy (Quantity & Quality)
2. Main water source is groundwater which is resilient to climate change
3. Groundwater management is the way to adaptation
4. Increase groundwater recharge (soil & water conservation, green legacy), and increase retention
5. Discharge management (monitoring) and water quality management (water safety plan)
6. Use of low energy demanding technologies and renewable energy sources
7. Multi-village community water supply systems

Reflections and questions from participants:

1. According to the presentation it is clear that climate change is becoming a serious problem in the WASH sector, but we are not responding appropriately.
2. Although in the health sector we are working to improve the sanitation status, we are not achieving the expected change, and climate change has its own impact on that. Therefore, to tackle this problem we have to construct improved latrines that survive the effects of climate change.

3. Negelle Arsi and Shashamane woredas are frequently affected by cholera, and we have to identify the basic source of this problem. We also need to tackle open defecation to improve the situation.
4. A presentation depicting the role of development partners in improving the situation in the area is suggested.
5. Waste from cities and industries is also polluting the environment and diminishing the water quality, therefore attention should be given to that as well.
6. Each sector organisation should take responsibility.
7. Unable to include the community in the environmental protection activities is a shortcoming. Therefore, community inclusive awareness creation is suggested.
8. Wind and humidity are also variables that need attention because humidity is necessary for rainfall. The direction and speed of the wind has impact on rainfall. According to the data there has been a reduction in rainfall in the Central Rift Valley of 10 – 15 % over the past 50 years. When there is a temperature change the agroecology will also change.
9. There should be a strategy document that shows the status of the woredas and the activities that need to be undertaken to improve the situation.
10. Integrated water resource management should be promoted and properly implemented.
11. City master plans should include city-wide inclusive sanitation.

Reflections from the facilitators

Teshale Bekana and Lemessa Mekonta were facilitators of the discussion. According to the discussion it seems that there is a good understanding of the problem and the solution, therefore what is left is implementing what we know, Lemessa said. He also said that since we have the platform to discuss, we need to have a joint plan, there should be accountability, and we should implement our policies and strategies in an integrated manner.

Teshale also raised four major points. Integration, collective planning, a community inclusive approach, and monitoring and evaluation are important areas that need everyone's attention and engagement.

Overview of the enabling environment and current implementation of community resilient WASH in Ethiopia

Tamiru Gedefa from the Water Development Commission presented on the [CR WASH implementation and the enabling environment](#). In his presentation, Tamiru showed that the implementation of CR WASH in Ethiopia started in 2017 with developing a concept paper and a few additional documents. In 2018, a discussion with development partners and the Ministry of Finance, the preparation of a fundraising proposal, the allocation of budget from government, and a discussion with regional water bureaus started. Currently, the policy and strategy are included in the draft water policy, the implementation has started, and the budget from treasury is increasing.

The water supply and sanitation policy and strategy are in their final stage and the objective is to enhance the health, well-being and productivity of the people through provision of access to sustainable, safely managed, and climate resilient water supply and sanitation services. The country identified drought prone woredas based on priority.

It is also stated that inequalities in service delivery and inadequate capacity of water institutions for operation, maintenance and further development of water sources are challenges in the country's CR WASH.

Reflections and questions from participants:

1. What is the engagement on CR WASH at the grassroots level? CR WASH is not known at the zone and woreda level.
2. Research conducted in the area should be presented to implementers working at the woreda and zone level.
3. Shalla is not included in the CR WASH woredas.
4. As WASH is focusing on urban areas, rural areas are being neglected. Therefore, does CR WASH take this into consideration?
5. The finance gap is one of the main challenges that hinders the implementation.

Reflections from the presenter:

1. The CR WASH plan is specifically concentrating on 450 arid and semi-arid woredas in the country. Regions select woredas to be included in the plan and the federal government allocates budget.
2. Water scheme post-construction management is mainly a responsibility of the community; the government supports through capacity building and sometimes logistics.
3. Water quality kits are procured, but accumulate in storage, mostly because of lack of capacity and lack of a standard laboratory, but there are woredas collaborating with universities and water utilities on testing water quality. The Ethiopian Water Technology Institute is completing a specialised water quality laboratory which will be of use to the country. Monitoring should be a basic activity that needs priority.
4. Concerning the implementation of CR WASH at the grassroots level, since 2017 different awareness creation activities have been conducted, especially in regions, but it is not satisfactory, and the government continues the awareness creation and capacity building tasks.
5. City master plans should consider the water sector concerns.
6. The CR WASH progress is continuing, but it is too early to select best practice woredas.
7. The integration of rural and urban water management is guided by a strategy which states that safe water from the source to the destination should be provided to the community.
8. Concerning finance, when it is a grant from donors, we use the latest approach but in CR WASH there is the issue of equity, and the investment is huge, therefore there is a finance

problem. But the government is engaging in priority areas and the woredas should tap into the funding opportunities through developing a proposal.

CR WASH water safety plan implementation experience

Azeb Tadesse from the Water Development Commission shared [the experience with the Climate Resilient Water Safety Plan](#) (CR WSP) implementation approach in Ethiopia. According to Azeb, the Climate Resilient Water Safety Plan is a comprehensive risk assessment and risk management approach that includes all steps in the water supply from catchment to consumer, taking into account climate change impacts. It is the most effective means of consistently ensuring the safety of drinking water supply.

In the Ethiopian context, the CR water supply implementation approach prioritised water quality as one of the five major areas for discussion and action in 2012. The national CR water safety plan's strategic framework and implementation guideline were developed in 2015.

The strategic objective of the national CR water safety plan is to focus on enhancing sustainability, improving all drinking water supply systems, strengthening water quality monitoring, and surveillance, guiding the adoption of a climate resilient water safety approach, and strengthening capacity.

The main financial sources are the federal, regional and local governments' annual capital and operational budget for development and operation for the urban utilities and community-managed water supplies. The sources are to be leveraged from donor and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for the development and support of WASH programmes and projects, and environmental protection such as the One WASH National Programme (OWNP) and WASH projects implemented by NGOs.

Through supervision, regular reporting, and annual review at national, woreda and water supply level, the monitoring and evaluation tasks will be implemented. Periodic evaluation will be conducted two times within a strategy time frame (a mid-term evaluation and an end-term evaluation within a five-year period).

To rate the status of water sources there is a performance status check coded with five colours. For instance, the top colour is green, and it represents an excellent status with a quality score of more than 95%. An audit conducted in ten selected ten towns in five regions showed that the percentage distribution of CR water safety scores in Arbaminch is good, Adigrat, Axum, and Debretabor show an average performance, five of the towns (Butajira, Wolliso, Sodo, Assosa, Bishoftu) have a status that needs attention and Debre Markos has a status of priority attention needed.

Misconception about CR water safety plans (considering it as a limited time project) is a lack of engagement from the regulatory body to evaluate effectiveness of the CR water safety plan. A recurrent turnover of leadership and trained technical staff, inadequate leadership commitment, lack of institutionalisation of CR water safety activities at all levels in the sector strategies, plans, monitoring and evaluation systems, and limited WASH sector stakeholder engagement are the main identified gaps.

Thus, the pilot result created an opportunity to incorporate CR water safety plans in the water policy, strategy, OWP and utility performance measures. A standardised implementation strategy and an implementation guideline have been developed and different partner organisations are

adopting the approach. There are also scale-up activities to 50 cities (20 rural and 30 urban) by mobilising budget for this new approach.

Reflections and questions from participants:

1. The implementation at the grassroots level is not strong.
2. Previously German Agro Action and BBBC had been working on CR WASH as a pilot for three years. How does this differ in content and approach from the three-year project?
3. Is the CR WASH Water Safety Plan aligned to the vision 2030 global document? The climate aspect is magnified, but it needs attention in making water safe from the source to the delivery point.
4. Water quality is a serious problem in woredas and kebeles. So, what is the plan to capacitate these implementers and provide water quality test facilities at these levels?
5. The WASH SDG master plans have been developed by Shashamane and Negelle Arsi woredas, but we don't have the finance. Therefore, the government should pilot the experience and support woredas in financing them
6. Different problems and challenges are reflected and discussed; thus, it is suggested that a team from the Water Development Commission should visit the area.
7. Rift Valley Lakes Basin is one of 12 basins in the country. Ziway-Shalla Sub-Basin is one of the four sub-basins in the Rift Valley Lakes Basin. There are different projects working in the area. Ziway-Shalla: Basin in Balance is one of the projects led by Wetlands International. The project recently conducted research on water potential and demand in the basin and is now developing a water allocation plan. Different stakeholders are participating in the plan.
8. There is a gap in doing impact assessment. But now there is a study being conducted by the Water Basin Authority, focused on the impact of five years of government water resource management activities.
9. From this workshop, participants should take actions that can be implemented and come up with successful activities to improve the situation.
10. Most of the discussion is focused on building infrastructure, but the Water Basin Authority is working on managing the water resource, which means it is concentrating on equity and sustainability of the water resource. In the case of Ziway, as there is irrigation in the area, the authority is working on proper utilisation of water. There is also a rehabilitation effort.
11. Each sector organisation should stick to the plan and implement it properly, most of the time we are good at planning, but not at implementing.
12. Implementers at the woreda level should not always expect a capacity building training from the federal government, they should work on building their own capacity. However, Oromia regional government is working on capacity building, currently working on building basic capacity in Shashamane, Nekemt and Jimma and Adama. The new proclamation allows towns to capacitate each other, and the manual and directive are forthcoming. The region should and will provide water quality measurement toolkits.
13. The Water Safety Plan is not known at the grassroots level, and it should therefore be advocated.

14. Sanitary kits are available in the Zone Water and Health Offices, therefore woredas within the zone should take and use them and towns could self-finance them.

Reflections from the presenter:

1. Concerning grassroots level engagement there are WASHCOs, as the water supply system is led by the community. WASHCOs are members of the technical working group and members take a five- to seven-days training and dive into implementation.
2. Most of the time projects engage for a limited period of time and they mostly phase out if the implementation is not effective. Thus, after the project phase-out sustaining the project activity is the responsibility of the project area. The number of Development Commission pilot woredas has grown from 31 to 50. In planning for the second pilot project, the Commission followed the progress of the first 31 pilot woredas.
3. A technical working group comprising of different partner organisations works on the water quality assessment, from the source to the water tank and sees different problems. To align with the SDG, there is a plan to develop a sanitation safety plan with input from experiences from other countries. This could also be considered as a research area.
4. If we could align the woreda WASH SDG master plan with the CR WASH water safety plan, we could find support programmes and attain the resources. This is done in the regional One WASH Programme planning. But utilising its own resources should be the focus of woredas.
5. The Commission is ready to conduct a support visit, but there should also be readiness from the area. For the advocacy activity the documents will be disseminated.
6. The planning should consider the resources needed and implementation would be easy. A plan without finance /resources is not complete.
7. A laboratory assessment was conducted, and no standard laboratories were found. Therefore, the process of hiring a consultant is in progress, to assess the situation and then a standard laboratory will be recommended.
8. Laboratory kits are stored in different places but are not being used. To capacitate woredas to properly use the kits, a capacity building training is planned.
9. There is a gap in advocacy and leadership, but it is known and there are attempts to try and improve the situation.
10. As a way forward, everything starts from the regional proclamation. Therefore, the organisational structure, accountability, and responsibility should be clearly stated in the regional proclamation. If it is not clearly stated, the organisational structure and the accountability will not be functional, and the implementation will also be a challenge.
11. The CR WASH Water Safety Plan should be owned and implemented by all woredas. A sense of ownership will enable the woredas to develop a proposal and look for financing to fill their resource gap.

Research topics identification:

The discussants reflected on the major research topics. The suggested research topics are collected from the participants, and the platform will create a research team and conduct research based on priority topics. The following research questions have been identified by participants:

1. Opportunities, challenges, and strategies for urban and rural WASH in Ethiopia- the TOR is developed by the research directorate in the ministry.
2. Assessment of national WASH related climate adaptation measures and practices, and future course of action.
3. Assessment of environmental policy and practice at the grassroots level, the case of Ziway Shalla Basin.
4. Environmental pollution and water supply in CR WASH.
5. Assessment of contribution of ODF to CR WASH in case of Ziway Shalla sub-basin.
6. Assessment of water pollution and heavy metal accumulation in fish.
7. Affordable and applicable technology implementation in utilising water resources in the area.
8. Study on bottlenecks to protect Central Rift Valley lakes from environmental degradation.
9. Engagement of different stakeholders and impact on implementation approach of CR WASH.

Plenary session and the way forward

According to Tamene Cheka, WASH Alliance International Country coordinator, the research topics will be selected in a participatory manner, all government and non-government partners will join in the selection process. He also alluded to the need of bringing in other studies conducted in the area to this platform for discussion.

As chair of the plenary session, Teshale underscored the need of properly utilising the research findings. Persevering during challenges is also recommended.

Suggested agenda for the next meeting:

1. For the next meeting, everyone is advised to come with an idea as his/her contribution and best experiences/practices for implementation.
2. Different projects working in the area should be integrated, plus, while a lot of resources are being invested in research and policy familiarisation, the focus should be on implementation.
3. The experiences of the Regional Bureau and Zonal Water Office on CR WASH.
4. A presentation on a detailed study conducted on water potential and demand.
5. Providing a presentation on environmental degradation and natural resource management in the Central Rift Valley is also recommended.
6. Rift Valley Lakes Basin Development is working on a 15-year plan which could be presented at the next meeting.
7. A presentation focusing on WASH implementation.

Finally, Teshale summarised the session and emphasised the need for using previously conducted research. The mandate for selecting the best research should be left to the committee facilitating the platform. If there is any environmental impact happening because of industries, the study should be presented and discussed, and the responsible bodies should be part of the discussion, as Teshale

mentioned. Presenting and discussing challenges and experiences in implementing CR WASH at the next meeting is suggested and if there are any organisations missing from the platform, they should be included, he said.

Annex 1

CR WASH second Learning Platform meeting agenda

Date: 23rd September 2021

Time: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Venue: Haile Resort Adama

Time	Agenda	Responsibility	Facilitator
8:30 - 9:00	Registration	IRC WASH	
9:00 - 9:10	Introducing the Agenda	Gezahgn Lemecha, IRC WASH	
9:10 - 9:20	Welcome speech	Lemessa Mekonta, IRC WASH Country Director	Gezahegn Lemecha
9:20 - 9:30	Purpose of the Learning Platform	Tamene Chaka, WAI program coordinator	Lemessa Mokonta
9:30 - 9:40	Opening remark	Teshale Bekana, OWERDB, Director	Tamene Chaka
9:40 - 9:45	Self-Introduction	Participants	Teshale Bekana
9:45 - 10:15	CR WASH concept	Gezahegn Lemecha	Teshale Bekana
10:15 - 11:00	Discussion, Q&A	Teshale Bekana	
11:00 - 11:30	Health break	IRC WASH	IRC WASH
11:30 - 12:00	Overview of the Enabling Environment and Current implementation of CR-WASH in Ethiopia	Tamiru Gedefa, WDC	Tamene Chaka
12:30 - 12:30	Discussion, Q&A	Tamene Chaka	
12:30 - 1:30	Lunch	IRC WASH	IRC WASH
1:30 - 2:00	CR WASH Water safety plan implementation experience	Azeb, WDC	Tamene Chaka
2:00 - 2:30	Discussion, Q&A	Tamene Chaka	
2:30 - 3:30	Discussion on 3 rd workshop agenda	Leulseged	Leulseged
3:30 - 4:00	Health Break	IRC WASH	IRC WASH
4:00 - 4:30	Discussion on potential research topic selection	Leulseged	
4:30 - 5:00	Plenary discussion & way forward	Lemessa, Tamene, Teshale, Getinet (Dr.)	Leulseged