



**Issues Paper**

**Water Governance Capacity**

**Awash Basin, Central Ethiopia**



**review on**

**Content, Institutional, Relational layer**

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# PART 1: WATER ADMINISTRATION IN ETHIOPIA

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

In the period 2013-2014 Dutch Regional Water Authorities and Water Governance Centre (WGC), together with the Ethiopian Awash Basin Authority (AwBA) and Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE), are executing the project: “Set up of a Water Governance Program for Integrated Water Resource Management in the Awash River Basin, Central Ethiopia”. This paper is the first output of the project and describes the key issues that need to be addressed in the program approach for enabling equitable access to water resources and setting up Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). It serves as a basis for conducting a water governance capacity (self) assessment and for identifying water governance priorities.

Part 1 gives a summary of the general water administration in Ethiopia. Part 2 focuses more on water governance capacity for water resources management in the Awash Basin respectively on Content, Institutional and Relational layer. On each of these layers obvious water governance gaps are identified.

For the purpose of the program approach *water governance* is defined as *the social, political, financial and administrative systems that are in place to regulate development and management of water resources and provision of water services in the Awash Basin. This should be done in a participatory approach and in a sustainable and equitable way for all water users, and in order to foster the social-economic development of the basin.*

Core elements of *good water governance* in the Awash Basin are:

- The equitable and sustainable use of water resources;
- A multi-stakeholder process to bring together all interests and to facilitate cooperation;
- A catchment approach that facilitates the realization of integrated solutions; and
- The possession of the right instruments to carry out tasks and responsibilities.

In writing this paper, the following primary and secondary sources were used:

- Ethiopian Water Resources Management Policy (1999)
- Ethiopian Water Resources Management Proclamation (2000)
- WaSH Implementation Framework (WIF)
- River Basin Councils and Authorities Proclamation
- Background Information for a Program Approach IWRM Upper Awash River Basin, Central Ethiopia, Henock Belete Asfaw, Paul van Essen and Tegenu Zerfu Tsige (2011)
- Identification Mission Report 16–21 June 2012: Towards a program for IWRM in Awash Basin, Central Ethiopia
- Overview and analysis of institutional capacity for IWRM in Awash River Basin, Central Ethiopia, Tegenu Zerfu Tsige, July 31 2012
- Report mission December 2012: Set up of a Water Governance Program in the Awash Basin, Ethiopia
- Policy, Legal and Institutional Framework for Water Resources Management in the Aash Basin, FAO, January 2013
- Water Partnership Agreement 1 March 2013.

## **2 ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION FOR WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN ETHIOPIA**

### **2.1 OVERALL ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK**

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) consists of the Federal Government and nine Regional States (Afar, Amhara, Benshangul/Gumuz, Gambella, Harari People, Oromia, Somalia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, and Tigray) and two City “States” (Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa). The member states of the federation have legislative, executive and judicial powers over matters falling under State jurisdiction, including enacting their own State Constitutions. All powers not expressly given to the Federal Government alone, or concurrently to the Federal and State Governments, are reserved to the States.

According to the FDRE Constitution, the management of water and other natural resources in Ethiopia falls within the federal jurisdiction. To effectuate the regionalization and decentralization policy, however, the Federal Government may delegate all or some of its powers and duties in the field of water resources management to Regional States or River Basin Organizations (RBOs).

Formally, there is no such power delegated to any of the five Regional States and two City States in the Awash Basin, but in practice the Regional and Town Water Bureaus (respectively the Zonal and Woreda Water Offices) exercise a multitude of the water management duties.

Recently, however, the Council of Ministers established a specific RBO for the Awash Basin and the Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) delegated a substantial portion of its administrative power in the Awash Basin to the Awash Basin High Council and Authority (AwBA).

### **2.2 FEDERAL LEVEL**

#### **2.2.1 Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE)**

The powers and duties of the MoWE focus on overall water resources management, such as promoting the development of water resources and energy, policy setting, construction and administration of dams and water structures, and prescribing quality standards for waters to be used for various purposes as well as supporting the expansion of potable water supply coverage.

The Ministry is also mandated to direct and coordinate the activities of institutions with mandates and activities relevant to water resources management. These include: the Water Resources Development Fund Office and the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation.

#### **Water Resources Development Fund Office**

The Fund is instituted as a permanent source of finance for water resources development including irrigation, water supply and sanitation services. The objectives of the Fund include enabling self-sufficiency among water and sanitation service providers, and ensuring the sustainability of irrigation development through grants of long term loans on the basis of the principle of cost recovery. To this end, the Fund draws upon resources allocated by development partners in the form of grants and loans, budgetary allocations by the Federal Government, and other unspecified sources. In practice, the Fund mainly focuses on drinking water supply and only provides loans and assistance for town water supply operators.

## Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation

The public Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation has the monopoly to build and operate hydropower plants.

### 2.2.2 Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

The MoA has the powers and duties to: formulate and facilitate the implementation of a strategy for sustainable agricultural and rural development, food security and watershed management; initiate extension programs for water harvesting and small-scale irrigation; and ensure the proper execution of functions relating to conservation of biodiversity and natural resources protection (forest and wildlife resources).

### 2.2.3 Ministry of Health (MoH)

The mandates of the MoH has been granted more extensive powers and duties under the substantive law dealing with public health issues. These relate to, among others, water quality control, waste management, and regulation of sanitation facilities.

### 2.2.4 Ministries of Industry (MoI)

The MoI is mandated to issue the required licenses and permits for investments and business establishments. The environmental license is based on national standards for the water quality.

### 2.2.5 Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA)

The EPA is an autonomous Federal institution accountable to the Prime Minister. The powers and duties of the Authority include: carrying out studies to combat desertification and the effects of drought, and research on environmental protection; preparing and monitoring the application of environmental cost-benefit analysis and accounting systems; preparing of standards that help in the protection of soil and water as well as the biological systems they support; review and approval of environmental impact assessments (EIAs) of federal projects; evaluating EIA reports regarding projects subject to federal licensing and for projects likely to create inter-regional impacts and for auditing such projects.

### 2.2.6 Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED)

The MoFED is the key institution in Ethiopia's national policy to initiate macro-economic and fiscal policies.

On the federal level a Block Grant Formula is used to decide on the amount of annual budgetary resources for each State. The very principles are also adhered by all States to transfer budget to lower government levels. The ultimate purpose of the formula is to ascertain every citizen's access to basic public services, including water related services.

The budget for the Federal Ministries, inter alia the MoWE, is separately allocated. The budget for MoWE also includes the budget for public bodies falling under its umbrella, such as the Water Resources Development Fund and the River Basin Organizations (RBOs).

## 2.3 REGIONAL LEVEL

### 2.3.1 Regional Water Resources Bureaus

Regional Water Bureaus (RWBs) are the focal institutions responsible for water resources management at the regional and local levels. Each of the nine Regional States as well as Dire Dawa City Administration has a RWB. Initially, the roles of most RWBs included project implementation and scheme operation, but this has changed to one of program planning, management, coordination and

capacity building in the region. In most regions, RWBs are currently responsible for approving programs as well as consolidating monitoring and evaluation reports of local structures, namely the Woredas, for submission to MoWE. A case in point is the Oromia WRB, which was established explicitly to develop and implement regulatory and policy frameworks related to water resources management and provision of water supply and sanitation.

Usually, RWBs have subsidiary structures extending to lower levels in the form of Zonal Water Offices, Woreda Water Desks and within Kebeles. RWBs also provide technical and financial (for capital investment) support for local Water Resources Management (WRM) and WaSH projects.

The regions have revenue sources of their own, such as income tax, agricultural tax and land use tax and fees and charges from service providing public bodies. Despite this, the revenue raising capacity is limited in relation to the expenditure responsibilities. So the bulk is coming through the Block System.

### **2.3.2 Other regional administrations**

Regional States are given significant mandates in relation to the management of fishing, aquaculture, environmental protection, cooperation over trans-boundary and trans-regional fisheries resources, and issuance of implementing laws.

In many cases Regional States have set up institutions responsible for irrigation development activities, mainly the establishment of irrigation construction works. A case in point is the Oromia Regional State Irrigation Development Authority established to undertake the study, design and construction works of irrigation schemes in suitable areas of the Region in order to secure food self sufficiency. The Oromia Regional State has also established a separate institution named Oromia Regional State Water Works Construction Enterprise for the purpose of constructing water supply and irrigation development schemes in the region.

Regional Environmental Protection Agencies are responsible for evaluating and giving a go-ahead for EIA reports on projects that are licensed, executed or supervised by Regional States.

## **2.4 SUB-REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

The management and delivery of water and sanitation services (including watershed management) is the major responsibility of regional and local institutions, with most functions concentrated at the Woreda. The Woreda Water Desk (WWD) is generally responsible for planning and managing its own programs; financial and procurement management; and for contracting and supervising local service providers at district and community levels. In most cases, WWDs also take a role in initiating, facilitating and providing motivation for community management of rural water services, the application of cost recovery principles, and the monitoring and evaluation.

The planning and management of town water supply and sewerage services are the responsibility of Town Water and Sewerage Boards (TWSBs) who are expected to contract out operation and maintenance services to Town Water Utility Operators under performance or service contracts. The duties and responsibilities of the TWSBs include: providing urban residents with clean drinking water of acceptable sanitary standards in sufficient quantity; operations and maintenance of infrastructure; and collecting revenues emanating from the provision of water supply, sewage and other services.

An exception to the usual practice in the management of urban water supply and sanitation services is the Addis Ababa Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (AAWSA), which has the responsibility for management of water and sewerage services in Addis Ababa City Administration.

## 2.5 SUPRA-REGIONAL: AWASH BASIN HIGH COUNCIL AND AUTHORITY (AwBA)

As mentioned in section 2.1 the Council of Ministers recently established a specific RBO for the Awash Basin and the MoWE delegated a substantial portion of its administrative power in the Awash Basin to the Awash Basin High Council and Authority (AwBA). Central objective of the RBOs is “to promote and monitor the integrated water resources management process in the river basins falling under their jurisdictions with a view to using of the basins' water resources for the socio-economic welfare of the people in an equitable and participatory manner, and without compromising the sustainability of the aquatic ecosystems.

The AwBA should thus be the supra-regional organization to implement IWRM and to foster sustainable an equitable use of the water resources in the Awash Basin. The main responsibilities of AwBA are:

- Knowledge-building to allow informed decision-making;
- Information exchange and networking with stakeholders to build a shared vision;
- Coordination of planning to ensure a framework for IWRM;
- Regulation and enforcement of water use for sustainable and equitable development.

The AwBA is mandated to establish a financial framework for service fees and permit based charges for irrigation and waste water discharge. The charges have to be paid to the Federal Government.



## PART 2: GOVERNANCE OF WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN AWASH RIVER BASIN

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### 3 APPROACH



For revealing the water governance issues in the Awash river basin, use is made of the WGC designed three layer approach.

This approach is a practical elaboration of the water governance capacity assessment method, developed by the academic round table of the WGC.

This method contains nine aspects of water governance capacity:

1. Water System Knowledge
2. Values, Principles, Policy Discourses
3. Engineering and Monitoring
4. Trade-offs between Social Objectives
5. Responsibility, Authority, Means
6. Regulations and Agreements
7. Enforcement
8. Stakeholders Involvement
9. Conflict Prevention and Resolution

## 4 CONTENT LAYER

### 4.1 AWASH BASIN

The Awash river rises on the high plateau to the west of Addis Ababa, at an altitude of about 3000m. It is fed by several major tributaries. The river flows in an easterly direction through Amhara, Addis Ababa, Oromio, Afar, Dire Dawa and Somali territory and has a length of about 1,250km. The part of the catchment situated in the east, accounting for some 40% of the total basin area, does not contribute any surface runoff to the river. The Awash Basin covers an area of 110,000km<sup>2</sup> and contains two lakes, namely Besaka and Gedebe Lake. Besake Lake is highly saline and rapidly expanding, threatening residence areas, arable land, and the water quality of the Awash.

The Awash Basin is the most utilized river basin in Ethiopia with a number of small, medium and large scale irrigation schemes; industries located along the river; urban and rural water supply schemes (both from surface and groundwater), etc.

Some 200,000ha of suitable land could be available for irrigation. The net area currently commended by irrigation is estimated to 89,000ha. Approximately 70% of the irrigable land is owned by the Federal Government, 5% by Afar Regional State and 7% by Oromio Regional State. The remaining 18% is owned by private farms. Some 3% of the land is known to have been abandoned as a result of salinity problems (is increasing Lake Besaka).

Many of the big industrial hotspots in the country are found inside the Awash Basin. These include the industrial corridor extending from Addis Ababa to Adama town, Metehara area, and Dire Dawa City. For several industries the Awash river is used as source for water consumption and for disposing of their waste. Awash river is the most polluted river in the country. The release of untreated waste water from industries, waste from households and soil erosion from the upper watershed critically hampers the water quality of the river. Awash river is also used for generating energy in Koka 1 and 2 hydropower plants.

The Awash river and its tributaries are sources of drinking water for large and small cities such as Addis Ababa, Adama, Awash and Metehara town. As a matter of fact it is also the main source of domestic water for the majority of the (nomadic) people in the eastern Afar Region.

**Management gap.** Watershed management is shabbily carried out. This may further exacerbate the environmental degradation and pollution of the river having negative consequences in terms of both water quantity and quality in the basin.

### 4.2 POLICY DISCOURSES

#### 4.2.1 Water Resources Management Policy

Central objective of the Ethiopian water resources management policy is “to enhance and promote all national efforts towards the efficient, equitable and optimum utilization of the available water resources of the country for significant socio-economic development on a sustainable basis”. The fundamental principles of the policy are:

- water is a natural endowment commonly owned by all the people of Ethiopia;
- every Ethiopian citizen shall have access to sufficient water of acceptable quality to satisfy basic human needs;
- water shall be recognized both as an economic and social good;
- water resources development shall be underpinned on rural-centered, decentralized management, participatory approach as well as integrated framework;
- management of water resource shall ensure social equity, economic efficiency, system reliability and sustainability; and

- the participation of all stakeholders, user communities specially that of women, shall be promoted in water management.

These principles emphasize the necessity of an IWRM approach, including the management of surface and groundwater resources, and water quantity and quality issues. They also call for upstream users in the basin not to deny downstream users the ability to exercise these rights.

**Administrative gap.** The policy implicitly recognizes the integrated management of water with other natural resources within a river basin. This is made more explicit in the Environmental policy. It does not however address the administrative linkage of water resources to land management and spatial planning, while this has an important bearing on the availability and quality of water resources within a given basin.

#### 4.2.2 Environmental Policy

The environmental policy of Ethiopia has incorporated sector specific environmental policy provisions for water resources and related sectors. The specific policy guidelines pertinent to the management of water resources aim to:

- involve water resource users in the management of water policies, programmes and projects;
- ensure consideration of environmental health hazards in the design, construction and use of dams and irrigation systems;
- integrate the rehabilitation and protection of wetlands and upstream forests into the conservation, development and management of water resources;
- promote the protection of the interface between water bodies and land; and
- subject all major water conservation, development and management projects to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

More importantly, the Environmental Impact Assessment Proclamation (2002) requires an EIA for any planned (private or state) development project where it is likely to have a negative environmental impact on the environment. It also provides that no person shall commence implementation of a planned project without first passing through the EIA process and obtaining authorization from the competent authority.

**Policy gap.** The fact that EIAs are not conducted prior to the implementation of water resources projects, for instance, *in a river basin context such as the Awash* may further exacerbate the environmental degradation and pollution of the river having negative consequences in terms of both water quantity and quality in the basin.

#### 4.2.3 Water, Sanitation and Health (WaSH) Policy

The WaSH policy is thoroughly elaborated in the WaSH Implementation Framework (WIF). The WIF is a fully integrated and harmonized program to achieve the relevant Millennium Development Goals set by the National Growth and Transformation Plan.

### 4.3 WATER SYSTEM KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION

The water resources management policy dedicates a section to water resources management information systems, monitoring, assessment and auditing. Within this section, the policy provides for the management and administration of water resources information on the basis of project and sector information, management information system, technical information and public information systems. The focus of the policy is on the development of a coherent, efficient and streamlined process of information management in the water sector consisting of: defining and incorporating data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination; determining the requirements of human,

technology, data and financial resources; identifying users' typography and defining users information requirements; and, identifying sources of information. The policy also provides for the establishment of the Ethiopian Water Resources Information Center (EWRIC) to develop a practical, coherent, well designed and smoothly functioning Ethiopian Water Resources Information Systems (EWRIS).

**Information gap.** The AwBA has also been given the mandate to establish a basin-wide information system and to develop river basin models. There is no question that establishing such knowledge base and analytical methods at the basin level are important as a planning tool and decision-making as well as for effective water resources management and development. However, huge investment is required for the collection and processing of hydrological data and for monitoring the impact of water resources developing in the basin. Currently, most of this function is done at the Federal level by the MoWE. There is still lack of knowledge on the available water resources in the basin and the amount of water is currently being utilized by various users.

## 5 INSTITUTIONAL LAYER

### 5.1 ORGANIZATION

As we can see from the above several important mandates that were under the Federal MoWE have now been delegated to the AwBA.

The Proclamation provides for a two-tier organizational set-up for the RBOs to be established, namely, River Basin High Councils (BHCs) being the highest policy and strategic decision-making body and River Basin Authorities (RBAs), which will be the administrative/technical arm of the respective BHCs.

The members of the BHCs are to be designated by the Federal Government and their accountability is also to be determined by Federal regulations. The fact that the composition of the BHC is not provided by the law means that it is left to discretion of the Council of Ministers. The BHCs will be shared by the vice prime minister. Members will be the state presidents and some (other) key stakeholders.

The Proclamation gives the following powers and responsibilities to the BHCs:

- Provide policy guidance and planning oversight to ensure high level coordination among stakeholders for the implementation of IWRM in the basin;
- Direct the preparation of the river basin plans and submit same for approval to the Federal Government;
- Propose to the Federal Government the rate of water charges to be paid by water users in the basin;
- Examine and decide on the appropriateness and prioritization of constructing major water works in the basin;
- Examine and decide on water allocation rules and principles in normal times and in times of water shortage as well as in times of drought or flooding;
- Manage water use disputes between Regional States in the basin;
- Establish standing or ad-hoc committees necessary for discharging specific activities.

The above mandates given to the BHCs indicates that the BHCs will be involved in the deliberations and decision-making of some of the major issues that are required for IWRM in a specific river basin and to be the forum where decision making involves all major stakeholders at the Federal and Regional level.

**Decision making gap.** The Awash BHC, which is the highest policy decision-making body regarding most of the functions of the Basin Authority, has not been established yet and may prove a constraint for the AwBA to discharge its newly mandated regulatory functions since it needs the approval of the BHC.

Most of the matters to be deliberated upon and/or decided by the BHC are to be submitted to it by the RBA which is to serve as the secretariat (administrative and technical arm) of the BHC. The RBA will have dual accountability, firstly, to the BHC on matters that fall within the mandate of the latter. Secondly, it is accountable to the MoWE on matters falling under its jurisdiction.

The powers and responsibilities of the Basin Authorities are *inter alia* as follows:

- Initiate policy measures for implementation of integrated water resources management in the basin and submit same to the BHC for approval and subsequent follow-up
- Prepare and submit the basin plan to the BHC and monitor its implementation upon approval

- Issue permits applicable to the basin's water use, and ensure that the terms of the permits are complied with.
- Give advice and technical support to the BHC and the Ministry on dispute resolution in relation to the allocation and use of water resources of the basin
- Set up a forum for effective networking among stakeholders
- Collect water charges from users.

**Target gap.** While being aware that the AwBA is newly mandated to play as regulatory body, the authority has not so far prepared any forum to introduce its new mandate and discuss on how to discharge its responsibility. The AwBA still continues largely to focus on its operational functions such as the maintenance of and the collection of water charges from some large scale irrigation enterprises.

**Capacity gap.** The AwBA is still far from being considered as a full-fledged basin authority because of several constraints it is faced with to discharge its newly mandated regulatory functions under its establishment regulation. Most of its new mandates require that it has sufficient capacity both in terms of manpower and financial resources as well as logistics to carry out its functions adequately.

**Location gap.** Another major constraint of the AwBA is the current location of its Head Office in Melka Werer which is quite remote from the major city centers in the Basin and that communication networks such as the internet are lacking thus posing difficulties to effectively communicate with the relevant regional bureaus and other stakeholders in the basin. Not only communication but the location of the Head Office does not also attract professionals. To solve this problem it may be recommended to change the Head Quarters to a convenient place which has the required services and would be an ideal venue to network with the necessary stakeholders in the future. Another option is to establish hubs in the main city centers.

## 5.2 PERMIT SYSTEM

For most water resources use, and waste water discharge a permit is required, with priority to be given to domestic use (the use of water for drinking, cooking, sanitation, or other domestic purposes). There are also provisions relating to settlement of disputes regarding the permits. A point that may require particular attention is the administration and enforcement of the permit system.

**Target gap.** The AwBA has not yet been able to implement a basin-wide permit system for allocation of the water resources of the basin and for waste (water) discharge to the river.

The Oromio Water and Energy Bureau (OWEB) has already started issuing water use permits to flower farms operating in the region by delegation given by MoWE including issuing permits for groundwater use in the region.

## 5.3 FINANCIAL AND FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS

The sources of budget of AwBA will be from funds allocated by the Federal Government, and from water charges to be collected from the permit holders.

Because the AwBA has not yet been able to implement a basin-wide permit system it also could not put in place a charge for water use and discharge which may enable it to be financially viable to carry out its regulatory functions.

The determination of water use charges for different purposes is left the Council of Ministers by subsequent regulation. The amount of water charges to be paid by water users has not yet been issued as law. Two types of water charges are envisaged, namely, charges for water use payable annually and charges for the discharge of treated wastes which are allowed by permits. However,

what type of water users shall pay such water charges is not yet clear and is expected to be clearly defined in the regulation to be issued by the Council of Ministers. The Authority requires a substantial source of income for it to function sustainably and independently in the future.

**Financial gap.** One of the most challenging aspects for the AwBA would be to ensure its financial stability and independence by having their own source of income. One of the major source of their income is from the water charges they levy from water users in the basin. However, this is unlikely to be significant in the short term since there is as yet no well functioning system. Thus, the RBOs may have to depend on the budget that will be allocated from the Federal Government for some time in order to operate effectively.



## 6 RELATIONAL LAYER

### 6.1 COORDINATION AND DECISION MAKING

The effective implementation of IWRM is largely dependent on coordination because water resources development is largely related with the appropriate management of land, other natural resources, and spatial planning.

The use of water resources in the Awash Basin for multiple purposes will inevitably give rise to competing, and sometimes conflicting interests and claims of entitlement among the different users within the basin. In the absence of IWRM at the basin level potential conflicts over water use among the different water uses in the basin may emerge. The conservation and management of natural resources such as land, forests, wildlife, and aquatic resources is inseparably linked with water resources management. As such, institutions mandated to manage the former are per se key actors and stakeholders in the water sector.

The first task is to establish a planning framework to coordinate the plans of the various sectors and Regions in the basin. AwBA will coordinate the plans of the stakeholders, whether the plans are compatible with other sector plans or whether there may be some conflicts of interest. It may occur that further hydrological or environmental impact studies are needed. In other cases conflict resolution and trade-offs will have to be made resulting in necessary adjustments of the sector plans.

There should be an equitable allocation of the water resources of the Awash Basin among the Regional States and the water users within the basin based on a basin-wide master plan. A master plan study was prepared for the Awash Basin previously but it has to be updated to reflect the current reality. It requires to be supported by substantial information both from the Federal and the Regional Ministries and a strong collaboration and active involvement of the relevant sectoral bureaus and other stakeholders in providing essential information on their water related activities to the AwBA. In light of this, effective inter-sectoral coordination both vertically and horizontally is vitally important for the AwBA to effectively discharge this function.

The Awash Basin cannot be effectively managed without the full participation of the concerned Regional States sharing the basin. Moreover, they would require a strong technical support from both the MoWE, the Regions (including EPAs), and the sub-regional institutions for the preparation of basin plans, establishing an adequate data and information system etc. Due to the lack of experience, particularly at the initial stages, it is crucial that they maintain a strong link at all levels with all stakeholders in order to create a sense of ownership by all stakeholders of what is being performed by the AwBA. Creating a strong forum for stakeholders' participation from the outset is therefore essential.

**Coordination gap.** There is as yet no coordination mechanism established between the AwBA and the respective Regional States and other stakeholders within the Basin to manage the water resources of the Awash in an integrated manner. In the absence of inter-regional coordination and also lack of coordination within the respective bureaus of the regions themselves, there is bound to be conflict among water particularly between upstream and downstream users.

### 6.2 COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION

The AwBA still has a very weak relationship with stakeholders in the basin. Most of the stakeholders in the basin are either unaware of the existence and mandates of the AwBA or even those that are aware of its existence are mostly aware of its operational functions such as flood control and not of its new regulatory mandates. They feel that they have currently no links with the AwBA and that

there is no IWRM in the Basin and that this has led to fragmented water resources development throughout the basin as a whole.

**Communication gap.** Many of the water users in the basin or regional water related government bodies are not yet aware of what the mandates of the AwBA or, in some cases, even of its existence.

This calls for a two-way communication flow with stakeholders and the inter-institutional cooperation.

It also calls for cooperation at project / implementation level. AwBA should be involved in all major projects and developments: RWBs, sub-regional institutions, NGOs, other stakeholders such as government and private commercial farms; community-based WUAs, etc. In the case of unwillingness to cooperate, the BHC may intervene.