

An e-newsletter
to facilitate networking and information exchange among CSOs and researchers

In this issue:

FSS- ATOS collaborative Research on Tracking Trends in Ethiopia's Civil Society (TECS)



FSS Workshop on Textile and Clothing industry in Africa



FSS book project- Edited Book on Food Security, Safety Nets and Social Protection: The Ethiopian experience



National Conference on Agricultural Sustainability: Opportunities and challenges



National Workshop on People's Movement on Development Effectiveness in Climate Financing in Wolayita (12-14 November 2011)



New FSS Staff

FSS- ATOS collaborative Research on Tracking Trends in Ethiopia's Civil Society (TECS)

The Forum for Social Studies and the British based ATOS Consulting signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in June 2011 to collaboratively undertake research on current trends of civil society in Ethiopia. The several studies which are going to be undertaken under the framework of Tracking Trends in Ethiopia's Civil Society Project are expected to provide fresh insights and recommendations on civil societies to Ethiopian policymakers and development partners.

According to the MoU, researches will be undertaken on the following topics:

- Disadvantaged Groups and CSOs/NGOs' Engagement;

- CSOs/NGOs Engagement with Community Based Organizations (CBOs);
- Mass Organizations: Prospects and Challenges
- CSOs/NGOs and Women's Economic Empowerment

The FSS will be responsible for the implementation of the research projects. From among the envisaged four topics – research has already been started on two of them – Mass Organizations: Prospects and Challenges and CSOs/NGOs and Women's Economic Empowerment

FSS Workshop on Textile and Clothing industry in Africa

The FSS in partnership with African Clothing and Footwear Research Network organized a workshop on the textile and clothing industry in Africa on November 15, 2011 at the Ghion Hotel, Addis Ababa. The workshop was attended by industrialists from the sector, government officials and others.

The workshop was officially opened by Ato Sileshi Lemma, Director General of the Ethiopian Textile Industry Development Institute. In his opening remarks, Ato Sileshi underscored the significance of the textile and clothing industry for Ethiopia's national development. According to the Director General, there is an important realization among policymakers and scholars about the potential of the sector to

serve as leaping stone to industrialization for the developing countries like Ethiopia. Recognizing this, the Ethiopian government has been working over the last





several years to massively expand the sector. To this end, the Ethiopian Textile Industry Development Institute works closely with manufacturers and other stakeholders to support the development of the sector. According to the Director General, the foreign exchange that the sector currently brings annually is estimated around 63 million USD. The government is determined to massively expand the foreign earning capacity of the sector. In this respect, the recently launched Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) aims to expand the revenue generation of the sector to one billion USD by 2015. Materializing this objective, Ato Sileshi underscored requires closer collaboration between the government and industry and other stakeholders. The Director General concluded by underscoring the necessity of such forums where government, manufacturers and researchers come together to discuss about the development of the sector. He also thanked the FSS for organizing the workshop.

After the opening remarks, Professor Dorothy McCormick from the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Nairobi presented her paper entitled “Adjusting to the Chinese Ascendancy in the post-MFA Global Clothing Industry”. Professor McCormick explained that the main objective of the research that was undertaken by scholars coming from different African countries was to examine how the Chinese ascendancy in the global clothing industry affected Africa’s textile and clothing sector. The research

examined how the textile and clothing industry in such African countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Madagascar, Lesotho and Swaziland adjusted to the Chinese ascendancy in the sector. It in particular focussed on such issues as industrial specialization, resources, and policy and stabilization trends.

According to Professor McCormick, while the Chinese ascendancy in the textile, clothing and apparel industry negatively affected the sector in Africa, there are now trends that show changes. In some countries there is growth. The growth has been, however, spurred by the American Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The AGOA provides selected African countries duty free access to the American market. The dependence of the sector on the AGOA is, however, worrisome. Professor McCormick in this regard emphasised that the industry needs to create high value markets regionally and internationally and reduce its dependence on the AGOA.

The second presentation was made by Prof Tegegne Gebre-Egziabher of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies of the Addis Ababa University. His paper was entitled ‘The Ethiopian Clothing Industry in the Post-MFA Period—An Investigation of Export Performance and factors influencing the sector’. In his



presentation Professor Tegegne underscored that the government’s industrial strategy focuses on textile and clothing as the sector has the potential for mass employment. However, the performance of the sector, as compared to other African countries is dismally low. For instance, in 2010, the sector brought to Ethiopia a total of 23.3 million USD, while during the same year Mauritius and Madagascar earned 101.4 and 278.8 million USD re-

spectively. Ethiopia's performance has also been low in the utilizing the opportunities which the AGOA created for the sector. Even if the sector could be potentially a major employer, at present it only hires one-fifth of the labour force in the industrial sector. Regarding capacity utilization, the sector also fares low as even compared to the average of the manufacturing sector in the country. Regarding exports, most of products (close to 80%) go the European Union (EU). The share of the US is about 12.8 %. As compared to other African countries, there is less dependence on the AGOA.

Professor Tegegne examined the state of the sector by focusing on ten selected firms. Some of the major findings of his research include:

- regarding policy there is consultation between the government and businesses. But businesses voice the need to implement the policy framework on the ground. While there is the political commitment from the part of the government for the development of the sector, there appear to be limitations on the implementation of policies.
- Problems regarding fiber – the fabrics available in the country are of poor quality. While internationally the sector uses more than 400 types of fibres, only 5- 6 varieties of fibres are available in Ethiopia. As a result, the clothing industry depends on imported fabric and accessories. But the 35 percent tariff that is levied on fabric and accessories hurts the sector and appears to reduce its competitiveness.
- The sector suffers from shortage of trained human resource. Particularly there is a severe shortage of skilled personnel on technical expertise.
- There is a severe problem of absenteeism and lack of incentives.
- Poor investment on research and development. Very few firms have their own designs.

After outlining the state of the sector, Professor Tegegne raised some of the issues that need to be tackled to realize the ambitious plan of expansion. He among other things said that the sector should not only be directed towards export – but also meeting the demands of the local market. If the industry is going to be in a position to satisfy the local



and perhaps the regional market, it could become competitive internationally.

Participants who came from the industry commended the research report of Professor Tegegne. They said it captures the challenges and opportunities that the sector faces. They also pointed out the need to effectively implement government policies on the ground. They in particular emphasized the need to lift (or substantially reduce) the 35 percent tariff levied on fiber and accessories. They also complained that as the government levies 35 percent tariff on finished clothing items, the same tax level on fabric and accessories, it has been extremely difficult for them to be competitive in the local market.

Dr Meheret Ayenew the Executive Director of the FSS thanked the presenters and participants of the workshop and promised that the FSS as a policy research and think tank would organize similar events on industrial policy in Ethiopia. He also promised that the FSS would disseminate the findings of the research to the industry and policymakers.



FSS book project- 'Food Security, Safety Nets and Social Protection: The Ethiopian experience'

This book stems from the Linking Emergency Assistance with Food Security (LEAFS) research project, a collaborative programme between the Wageningen University Disaster Studies and the Bahir Dar University Department of Disaster and Risk Management and Sustainable Development. With the objective of understanding linkages in food security policy and practices at global and local levels, the Wageningen and Bahir Dar Universities have undertaken several researches from 2008-2011.

The book seeks to bring together perspectives on Productive Safety Net Programs (PSNP) and LEAFS research program in dialogue with other researchers and policymakers. The edited book seeks to reflect on the current thinking on the PSNP in a wider context by looking at community level (grass root) experiences. The book will be edited by Alula Pankhurst and Gerrit-Jan Van Uffelen. The FSS will be responsible for the administration of the book project and the dissemination of the end product.

National Conference on Agricultural Sustainability: Opportunities and challenges

The 2011 Green Forum Conference, organized by the Heinrich Boll Foundation, Melca Ethiopia, Panos Ethiopia, Enda-Ethiopia and the Forum for Environment, was held from 9-10 November 2011, at the Hilton Hotel in Addis Ababa. The conference was organized on the main theme of "Agricultural Sustainability: Challenges and Opportunities". More than 150 participants drawn from government offices, the Parliament, public universities, research institutes, CSOs, the private sector and the media attended the conference.

The Green Forum is a network of environmental NGOs working in Ethiopia. The Forum organizes annual conferences with the aim of raising environmental consciousness and improving environmental communication between experts, decision makers and the wider public. Since 2006, the Forum has been organizing annual conferences on emerging environmental challenges including Climate Change, Renewable Energy, Biodiversity, and Bio-engineering and GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms).

The challenges facing agriculture today are immense. Climate change and food and energy crisis are growing threats to the sector. Feeding the growing population of Ethiopia through improving productivity and ensuring sustainable production are important challenges for the country. The Ethiopian agricultural production system is at a crossroad. On the one hand, the sector is facing climate change, biodiversity erosion, and land degradation. On the other hand, there is a growing concern and risk for the sector from unsustainable interventions from com-

panies and agri-businesses. The 2011 Green Forum was organized to assess the future of agricultural production in the face of all these challenges.

In the two-day conference, four discussion papers on the theme of Ethiopian Agriculture, Sustainable Agriculture, Agro-forestry, and Pastoralism were presented and discussed. Following the individual paper presentations, a half-day debate on Genetic Engineering with the theme "Is Genetic Engineering opportunity or threat to biodiversity and Food security? (For and Against GMOs)" was held.

At the end of the two-day conference, participants issued a declaration stressing the need to promote sustainable agricultural production, promoting indigenous agricultural technologies, conducting environmental and social impact assessment for large-scale agricultural projects, and considering bio-safety, food security/sovereignty, and following a precautionary principle while considering genetic/seed engineering in the agricultural sector. At the conference, FSS was represented by Mr. Alebachew Adem.

በቅርብ ተን የሚወጡ

ባህልና ልማት በኢትዮጵያ

በፎረም ፎር ሶሻል ስተዲስ የወይይት መድረክ ላይ የቀረቡ ጥናታዊ ፅሁፎች

አርታኢ:- ሺፈራው በቀለ

የአየር ንብረት ለውጥ፣ የአካባቢ ጥበቃና የዘላቂ ልማት ትስስር በኢትዮጵያ

አዘጋጅ:- አለባቸው አደም

FSS Update

Send your contributions to:

fss@ethionet.et

National Workshop on People's Movement on Development Effectiveness in Climate Financing in Wolayita (12-14 November 2011)

The workshop was organized by Ethiopian Consumers Protection Association in Collaboration with Better Aid, Wolayita Self-Help Association and World Vision Ethiopia. The main objective of the three day workshop was to mobilize more voice from people at the grassroots level and to further strengthen people's movement on climate change in the global South to influence mechanisms of climate finance.

It was convened in Wolayita Gutara Training Centre and participants were drawn from various governmental and non-governmental organizations. The major discussion of the workshop was focused in:

1. Evolution of climate finance in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and climate financing architecture.
2. Climate finance and the need for adaptation fund in Ethiopia.
3. Building development effectiveness in climate financing.
4. Experience of climate finance watch in the world and the need for similar watch in Ethiopia.
5. Challenges of sustainable development and needs and expectations on Rio+20 (Durban) Convention on climate and development.

A renowned climate expert from the Philippines, Ms Maria Teresa Nera-Lauron shared her insights about the current debate on world climate finance system, various conventions on climate financing and climate change adaptation.

The participants discussed the need for a country level finance watch in Ethiopia. After sharing the experience of different countries, the participants agreed on the general principle of establishing a climate finance watch in Ethio-

pia. As the number of the participant organizations was limited and because of the need for more involvement of other organizations, a three member committee that would study the way forward was established. The organizations which were represented in the committee include: the Ethiopian Consumers Protection Association, Forum for Social Studies (FSS) and MELKA Ethiopia .

There was a half day field visit to Christian Aid Ethiopia supported Humbo 'Carbon' (forest) project. In the field visit briefing was made by leaders of forest associations, farmers and project workers. The Humbo project is one of the few in the world and the first of its kind in Ethiopia to get revenue from the new carbon financing scheme.

FSS was represented by Dr. Zerihun Mohammed, Principal Socio-economic researcher.

FSS welcomes two new staff

Two new research staff joined the FSS recently:

Dr. Asnake Kefale joins the FSS as Research and Publications Director. He has a long and rich experience in research, teaching and administration at the Addis Ababa University where he held different academic positions before joining the FSS. He has widely published on issues of civil society, governance, conflict and federalism.

Dr. Zerihun Mohammed joins the FSS as Principal Socio-Economic Researcher. Dr. Zerihun has worked in various governmental, non-governmental and academic institutions. Before joining FSS, Dr Zerihun was serving as a lecturer and researcher at Hawassa University, Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural resources.

FSS is glad to express its belief that the joining of the two scholars will boost its capacity in the endeavor to achieve its mission and objectives.

New Publications from FSS



Forum for Social Studies

