

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

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15th Annual General Assembly Meeting of FSS Held

FSS held its 15th Annual General Assembly (GA) meeting on March 16, 2013 at the Ras Amba Hotel, Addis Ababa. As Professor Sebsibe Demissie and Ato Eshetu Bekele who are respectively Chairperson and Secretary of the GA were unable to attend the meeting, the GA before proceeding to the

The annual report that was read out to the participants of the meeting outlined the major programs of FSS focusing on its five core activities namely: organizational affairs, research and publications, public dialogue and radio outreach programmes. The members noted that FSS showed better performance in 2012

as compared to the previous (2011) year. The GA thoroughly discussed issues in the Agenda and approved the 2012 annual activity and audit report and FSS' three-year activity plan. These were earlier endorsed by the Executive Board. The GA also admitted new members to the organization. It also decided on measures to be carried out to strengthen the capacity of the organization to carry out its objectives.



deliberations on issues in the Agenda, elected chairperson and a secretary for the meeting. Accordingly, Professor Shiferaw Bekele and Ato Aragaw Yimer were respectively elected as chairman and secretary.

The GA unanimously elected a new board member, Professor Tegegne Gebre-Egziabher. It also thanked two outgoing members of the Board, Ato Gizachew Abera and W/ro Original Wolde-Giorgis, for their dedication and service.

FSS launched a new Public Dialogue Series on the Delivery of Urban Public Services

Forum for Social Studies in collaboration with the British Embassy has launched a public dialogue series on urban public services delivery. The series includes eight public dialogue sessions on eight topics which are conducted roughly every two months till November 2013. The topics to be presented in the following order, include:

- ⊙ Public Transport Services in Addis Ababa
- ⊙ Liquid and Solid Waste Management in Hawassa
- ⊙ Liquid and Solid Waste Management in Addis Ababa

- ⊙ Green Areas and Parks in Addis Ababa
- ⊙ Pre Elementary and Elementary Education in Addis Ababa
- ⊙ Provision of Health Services in Addis Ababa
- ⊙ State of Housing in Addis Ababa
- ⊙ Ethics in the provision of public services in Addis Ababa

So far, four public debates were held. Brief reports on these four debates follow:

Public Transport Services in Addis Ababa

This session was held on Friday, November 16, 2012 at Ghion Hotel. The public dialogue forum commenced with a welcome speech and brief introduction about the objectives of the public dialogue series by Dr Meheret Ayenew, Executive Director of FSS. Following Dr Meheret's speech Mr. Chris Allen, British Deputy Ambassador to Ethiopia, gave opening remarks. In his opening remarks, Mr. Allen acknowledged the importance of public dialogue forums for the development of the country and for promoting a culture of informed public debates on national issues.

A research paper was presented by Ato Fekadu Gurmesa of the Addis Ababa University. Among other things, the speaker underlined that government policies on provision of public transport are usually reactive in that problems become agendas to governments and/or policy-makers only when things go wrong. He also underscored that problems related to urban transport services are the outcomes of the interplay of multiple factors. Hence, the issue of urban transport should be approached from a systemic perspective.



Following the presentation of Ato Fekadu, a brief presentation was made by Ato Bedilu Assefa, General Manager of the Anbessa City Bus Enterprise, focusing on the operations of the Enterprise and the role it plays in the provision of public transport services in the City. About 133 invited participants drawn from different segments of society attended the public dialogue. Representatives of Taxi associations, associations of Taxi controllers and users also gave their inputs to the discussions. Ato Feleke Haile, head of the Addis Ababa Road Transport Bureau, reflected to the points raised by attending stakeholders. He in particular explained the city government's plans to address the problem of public transport services in Addis Ababa.

The management of solid and liquid waste and its challenges to the protection of Lake Hawassa

The second session of the public dialogue series on urban services was held in Hawassa on December 7, 2012 at Pinna Hotel. Dr Girma Tilahun, a senior academic at the Hawassa University and environmental activist, presented his study paper on the management of solid and liquid waste and its challenges to the protection of Lake Hawassa. In his presentation, Dr. Girma emphasised the importance of an efficient and eco-friendly waste management system for the protection of Lake Hawassa. Moreover, he called for a coordinated and united action by the regional government, Hawassa city municipality, Hawassa University and other stakeholders for the protection of Lake Hawassa.



Participants drawn from different governmental and civil society organizations and academics of the Hawassa University participated in the lively discussion after the presentation. Experts from relevant government bureaus also gave their inputs to the discussion. In addition to the experts, representatives of industries and environmental civil society organizations identified the challenges and opportunities that prevail regarding the management of solid and liquid waste and the protection of the environment. One important issue that was raised by many of the participants was the need to implement policies that exist on waste management and environmental protection. Many participants also underscored the need to launch a house-to-house awareness campaign to teach the community about proper waste disposal system.

The management of liquid and solid waste in Addis Ababa

The third workshop in the Urban Public Services dialogue series which FSS organized in collaboration with the British Embassy was held on Friday, January 25, 2013 at the Ghion Hotel and deliberated on the state of "Solid and Liquid Waste Management in Addis Ababa". The public dialogue was attended by several dozens of invited participants drawn from different segments of the society.

Dr Wondimu Abeje, who has a long practical experience regarding waste management in Addis Ababa and currently a faculty member of the Addis Ababa University, presented a research paper titled “Sanitation in Addis Ababa: Challenges and Prospects”. In his presentation, Dr Wondimu said that even though there were noticeable improvements in the collection of solid waste in Addis Ababa in the last few years, it leaves much to be desired in providing quality sanitation services to the residents of the city. He also remarked that due to the unique positions of Addis Ababa – population size of more than three million, the capital of the nation and home to a large number of diplomatic missions, continental and international organizations – there is an urgent need to devise better ways of providing quality sanitation services. He also provided some policy inputs which he believes could help in addressing the complex problem of waste management in Addis Ababa. He also underscored the need for the city administration to develop targets and benchmarks regarding the provision of quality sanitation services.



Following the presentation, Dr Yeraswork Admassie of the Addis Ababa University commented on the research paper. Among other things, he underscored the adverse impacts that lack of proper enforcement of policies creates in the management of waste in the city. The floor was then opened for comments and questions from the audience. The participants raised a number of issues surrounding the problem of waste management in Addis Ababa, which included: institutional instability, lack of coordination among relevant institutions, lack of attitudinal changes among residents, failure of responsible organs to enforce legislations and others. They also highlighted some necessary measures that must be undertaken by the government, the private sector and the wider society at large to improve the problem of sanitation in the city. These include: attitudinal change, solidarity, coordinated planning, vision and enforcement of laws.

Addis Ababa’s Green Areas and Parks

The fourth session under the dialogue series entitled: ‘Urban Public Services Delivery in Urban Areas’ was held on Friday, March 22, 2013 at the Ghion Hotel and deliberated on Addis Ababa’s Green Areas and Parks. The public dialogue was at-

tended by invited participants drawn from different segments of the society, including relevant offices of the Addis Ababa City Administration.



Dr Kumlachew Yeshitila, Head of Ecosystem Planning and Management at the Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Buildings, Construction and City Development (EiABC) of the Addis Ababa University, presented a research paper titled ‘Green Areas and Parks in Addis Ababa.’ In his presentation, Dr Kumlachew highlightedn, but not limited to, the following:

- ⊙ Addis Ababa faces enormous challenges in providing ecological services to its residents. According to UN World Health Organization (WHO) standards, there should be a per capita distribution of 7 square meters of green areas and parks in Africa’s urban centres. What is available in Addis Ababa (0.3 square meter access to green areas and parks) is very low by international standards. For the city of Addis Ababa to reach the minimum requirement, 2,700 hectares of accessible green areas and parks need to be developed.
- ⊙ Addis Ababa’s just ended ten-year Master Plan (2002-2012) envisaged the implementation of 13 ecological/park development projects. Only one of these projects was implemented in the last ten years. On the other hand, areas which were designated by the Master Plan for greening and urban agriculture were used for different purposes, including condominium housing.

Following the presentation of the research paper, Ato Tesgaye Gebre Mariam, Head of the Addis Ababa City Beautification, Park and Cemetery Development Agency, spoke of the achievements he said his agency registered so far, including the challenges it faces in the maintenance of green areas and parks in Addis Ababa. He said there was a strong commitment on the part of the city government to work on sanitation, green areas and parks.

Next, the discussant, Ato Tekle Wolde Gerima, Executive Director of Gulele Botanical Garden gave critical comments on both presentations after which the floor was opened for comments and questions. The participants raised numerous issues relating to green areas and parks in Addis Ababa. They in particular they emphasized on:

- ⊙ The importance of a strong political commitment from the part of the city administration to implement its Master Plan and other plans for the development of green areas and parks.
- ⊙ The need to ensure better and strong coordination among the different departments of the city and other pertinent government bodies.

- ⊙ The significance of increasing the awareness of the public and other stakeholders about the necessity and the benefits of maintaining and developing green areas and parks in the city and others.

Youth and Development Dialogue series

It is to be recalled that FSS has been organizing a public dialogue series on the theme of ‘Youth and Development’ since July 2012. This dialogue series is set to continue till August 2013. In the period from November 2012 to March 2013, the fourth and fifth sessions of the dialogue series were held.

Youth Values and Aspirations in Ethiopia

The fourth session of the Youth and Development Dialogue Series was held on Friday, December 28, 2012, and deliberated on “Youth Values and Aspirations in Ethiopia”.



A discussion paper titled “Aspirations and Job opportunity Gaps among Young People in Ethiopia” was presented by Ato Yisak Tafere, a senior Researcher at Young Lives, an an Oxford University sponsored international Research centre currently conducting a study on Childhood Poverty. Ato Yisak’s paper was based on a longitudinal study of randomly selected children in Ethiopia. The study, which investigated young people’s educational and occupational aspirations over the course of their life, indicated that the majority of young people demonstrate strong aspirations for high skill jobs. According to the researcher, structural factors, scarcity of job opportunities and young people’s limited preparedness in terms of building the necessary skills and knowledge are the major hurdles that stand on the way of realising their aspirations. Ato Yishak has also underscored the importance of understanding youth aspirations for policy makers. According to the presenter, the experiences of many countries show that policies that encourage the youth to realize their aspiration and potentials greatly contribute to the building of strong economy.

Ato Ezana Amdework, the discussant of the day, commented on the content and methodology of the study presented and then

the floor was opened for discussion. Different challenges that inhibit the youth from realizing their aspirations were hotly debated. These, among others, include structural factors such as lack of adequate resources to provide quality education and training for the youth and difficulty of the economy to absorb graduates at different levels with their talents and interests. In the animated discussion that ensued, it was underscored that the country’s poor socio-economic conditions affect the realization of the aspirations and potentials of the youth.

Youth and Reproductive Health in Ethiopia

On Friday, February 22, 2013, the fifth session of the Youth and Development Dialogue Series was held. The topic for the discussion was “Youth and Reproductive Health in Ethiopia”. Dr Alula Pankhurst, Country Director of Young Lives, an Oxford University sponsored research organization, presented a study paper entitled: Challenges Facing Girls due to Customary Practices: Underage Marriage and Female Circumcision.

The study, which draws on three rounds of qualitative data, gathered in five sites in 2007, 2008 and 2011 from a sample of 25 older children, their peers, care givers and other adults, explored local perspectives on female child marriage and circumcision.



Dr Alula in his presentation underscored that both child marriage and circumcision are widespread practices in Ethiopia and reflect deep-rooted patriarchal values regulating women’s reproduction and transactions between kin groups at marriage. He also discussed the cultural and material logics underpinning these practices. He nonetheless noted the presence of considerable diversity in norms and practices regarding child marriage and circumcision in the country.

Dr Alula's presentation, which brought out different perspectives regarding contemporary understanding of early marriage and female circumcision, provided a ground for a lively discussion and debate by the participants. Several questions were asked and suggestions and comments were forwarded. Among the suggestions which resonated during the discussion included

the role of educating and empowering women and inclusion of the elderly and religious fathers to reinforce the positive changes and to combat emerging challenges.

The event brought together over 120 representatives of Government, local and international NGOs, and individuals working on the issue of reproductive health, including the media.

FSS to get own Headquarters



As part of its plans to ensure the sustainability of its services, policy research, public dialogue and outreach, FSS is planning to build its own headquarters.

FSS currently spends an exorbitant sum on payment of rentals. The planned construction of the HQ is believed to help to significantly reduce its administrative cost.

The new building to be built around Menelik II Memorial Hospital in the Arada Sub-City would also make FSS and its library more accessible to graduate program students in the various faculties of the Addis Ababa University notably, the College of Social Sciences, College of Law and the Faculty of Business and Economics.

The architectural design of the building has already been prepared by a local consulting firm Fasil Ghiorgis Consult, and the first phase of the construction will begin within a few months.

A conference on Ethiopian Development

FSS in partnership with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is organizing a conference on "Development in Ethiopia: Changing Trends, Sustainability and Challenges." The deadline for submission of abstracts is April 28, 2013. For further information about the conference, please visit our website at [<http://www.fssethiopia.org/newsdetail.php?id=39>]

FSS Repository

Many of FSS' Publications are now available at our Digital Repository – please visit FSS website at [<http://www.fssethiopia.org/>] and click the link Digital Repository to have access to the publications

FSS Update:

Send your contributions to: fss@ethionet.et

New Acquisitions

- ⊗ Aalen, Lovise.(2011) *The Politics of Ethnicity in Ethiopia*. Leiden: Brill
- ⊗ Adebajo, Adekeye (2012) *The EU and Africa*. New York: Columbia University Press
- ⊗ Barrientos, Armando eds. (2008) *Social Protection for the Poor and Poorest: Concepts , Policies and Politics*. New York : Palgrave Macmillan
- ⊗ Bereketiab, Redie (2013) *The Horn of Africa*. London: Pluto Press
- ⊗ Boca, Angelo Del (2012) *The Negus: The Life and Death of the Last King of Kings*. Addis Ababa: Arada Books
- ⊗ Ethiopian Economic Association (2010) *Proceedings of the First Conference or the Amhara Regional State Economic Development*. Addis Ababa
- ⊗ Ethiopian Economic Association (2011) *Proceedings of the Second Conference or the Amhara Regional State Economic Development*. Addis Ababa
- ⊗ Ethiopian Economic Association (2012). *Report on Ethiopian Economy 2012*. Addis Ababa
- ⊗ Grugel, Jean (2004) *Democratization : a critical Introduction*. New York: Palgrave
- ⊗ *Harald Aspen et al* (2010) *Research in Ethiopian Studies: Selected papers of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz GmbH and Co. KG
- ⊗ Lim, Li Ching et al (2011) *Climate change and food systems resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
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- ⊗ Robledo, Carmenza (2005) *Tropical forests and adaptation to climate change: in search of synergies*. Jakarta: CIFOR
- ⊗ Ruxton, Sandy ed. (2004) *Gender Equality and Men: Learning from Practice*. Parkston: Oxfam.
- ⊗ Schlee, Günther and Abdullahi A Schongolo (2012) *Pastoralism & Politics in Northern Kenya & Southern Ethiopia*. Woodbridge: James Currey
- ⊗ Aberra Jembere (2011) *An introduction to the legal history of Ethiopia 1434-1974*. Addis Ababa: Shama Books

Latest Publications from FSS

