



Pilot Eco-municipalities in Ethiopia - Summary.

1. Background

Sustainable Sweden Association (SSA) is a non-profit organization formed in 2000 to build bridges between Sweden and other countries in sustainable development, with a special emphasis on eco-municipalities. The association has an exchange with countries on all continents and annually conducts several so-called Sustainable Sweden Tours where interested from other countries are invited to share their experience in Sweden. Host Municipalities of the trips are usually eco-municipality members of the **National Swedish Eco-municipality Association (Sekom)**. In this way, cooperation projects could start in other countries and eco-municipality concept can spread to communities around the world. Members of the SSA are dozens of small businesses who all work with sustainable development in an international environment.

Since some years, the SSA has developed a partnership with a network of Ethiopian communities that have an interest in the development of eco-municipalities. The cooperation has been broadened to include regional and national authorities and a number of universities in Ethiopia. At the same time new Swedish partners has been engaged. To facilitate the continued work there is a sister organization to the SSA established in Ethiopia called the **Sustainable Sweden Development Ethiopia (SSDE)** with the express aim of contributing to the establishment of the Ethiopian eco-municipalities. This will be accomplished with the support of a predominantly Swedish capacity-building network and with funding through the Ethiopian Government's development programs in which many international aid organizations are involved. A project proposal has been submitted to the **Ministry for Urban Development and Construction (MUDC)** which approved the project concept and which has embarked on a dialogue for detailed design and financing of the project. The pilot project is intended to last for five years. Hopefully, the project can be started in the beginning of 2017 .

In preparation for the start of the pilot project, several study trips to Sweden from the participating cities and regions in question has been conducted, and new ones are planned.

2. Ethiopia: Current situation and challenges

Ethiopia is second only to Nigeria, Africa's most populous country with nearly 100 million inhabitants. The population is increasing by about 2 million per year. Ethiopia has a unique position in Africa in that the country has never been colonized, except for a brief occupation of Italy (1936-1941). Since the military regime in 1991, the country has been governed by EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front). The country is formally a federal democratic republic.

The Constitution of 1995 gives the nine regions a degree of autonomy. These are also formed from the basis of cultural and ethnic perspectives. Ethiopia has experienced relatively rapid economic growth over the last decade and has also been relatively successful in poverty alleviation, in particular in education and health.

Population growth combined with climate change, which creates more frequent droughts, further aggravates the supply capability particularly in rural areas where unemployment is high. At the same time new environmental, health and social problems were created in the rapidly growing cities in part because of malfunctioning waste disposal systems and lack of sanitation infrastructure. The generally inadequate landfill sites are polluting the surroundings and downstream water system and create a health problem for humans and animals. Water and wastewater systems are inadequate and poorly developed. Recycling systems are rare and inadequate in addition to the activities that take place in close proximity to landfill sites and transfer to them.

The challenges for Ethiopia are seemingly gigantic: To help lift the country from poverty and ill-health while building up sustainable infrastructures and do it in a way that strengthens democracy and participation among citizens. With the realization that the kind of change needed will take much longer than the project is ongoing, it is still the approach of the project within the framework of the participating municipalities to tackle all these challenges simultaneously.

3. Long-term Vision

Our long term vision is that the pilot project will lead to a dramatic development of both pilot municipalities of the regions concerned. The project will also give inspiration to other regions and municipalities, so that a wide conversion movement can be launched across Ethiopia. The development model that is created can also be used in other countries in Africa and other continents. This makes Ethiopia a model for other countries around the world.

4. Partner organizations

4.1 Ethiopia

The project will be implemented in parallel at three levels: nationally, regionally and locally. At the **national level**, the project has been approved by the Ethiopian parliament and must be integrated into the existing five-year national development programs. Five ministries and agencies are currently involved in the project:

- **Ministry of Urban Development and Construction (MUDC)** is responsible for, among other things, urban development and planning, including housing / construction. MUDC will be the project principal.
- **Ministry of Education (ME)**, which operates a special program **TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)** that targets the unemployed, especially the youth and women. This program will be used as a tool in the project. ME also has the overall responsibility for the participating universities.
- **Federal Health Ministry (FHM)**. Health issues are of central importance in sustainable development and this Ministry is a strong supporter of the project. The Ministry also has extensive operations around the country that can become a source of support for the project.
- **Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT)**. Since Ecotourism/sustainable tourism will be one of the thematic areas in the project MCT will have an important role as a national coordinator of all initiatives within that field.
- **Ethiopian Environmental Protection Agency (EEPA)**. The Agency will secure that the environmental perspective is represented in all activities at all levels of planning and implementation.

At the national level, the project will be directed by a **National Steering Committee - NSC**, with representatives from the above-mentioned ministries and agencies and coordinated by SSDE. The project is implemented in three regions: **Tigray, Amhara and Oromya**. The regional level is very important in the federal Ethiopia and the regional government's active support and involvement in the project, a prerequisite for a successful result. These plus the regional bodies of the above-mentioned ministries and involved universities (5st) forms the core of the regional networks that are built up in the project. The networks organized by the **Regional Steering Committees - RSC**.

In the end, it is at the local level, in municipalities, where the most important work will be done in the project.

The participating municipalities are:

The region of Tigray: **Adigrat** (120 000 inhab.), **Adwa** (60,000 inhab.), **Axum** (80,000 inhab.), **Mekelle** (320 000 inhab.) and **Wukro** (35 000 inhab.)

The region Amhara: **Bahirdar** (294 000 inhab.) and **Lalibela** (39 000 inhabitants).

The region Oromya: **Dodolla** (45,000 inhab.)

Each municipality forms its own local steering groups (**Local Steering Committees - LSC**) that are responsible for implementing the project.

Six new municipalities has signed up to participate. They will be organized in an additional separate project that starts soon after the first pilotproject The municipalities are:

Gondar and *Woldia* in the Amhara Region

Jimma and *Adaba* in Oromiya Region

Arba Minch in South Nations Nationalities people Regional State (SNNPRS)

Jig-Jiga in the Somali Region

Coordination will of course take place among the projects.

Five **universities** are contracted in the project:

- Mekelle University, Adigrat University, Axum University in Tigray Region
- Bahirdar University in Amhara Region and
- Adama Technical University in Oromiya Region

Eight colleges within the TVET-program will be partners in the project:

- Mekelle poly technical college (waste management/sanitation)
- Wukro agricultural poly Technical College (agriculture/greening)
- Adwa technical College (textile and garment)
- Axum business poly technical College (hotel/tourism)
- Adigrat poly technical College (waste management/sanitation)
- Bahir Dar poly technical College (textile/garment and hotel/tourism)
- Lalibella technical College (hotel/tourism)
- Dodolla technical College (hotel/tourism)

4.2 Sweden and other countries

SSA has assumed the responsibility to build a capacity network that can support the processes in Ethiopia. Project themes and priorities are made afterwards in the project will provide guidance for the direction and the search for partners.

Swedish eco-municipality association Sekom, with 104 Swedish member municipalities, is the partner of choice, where the experience of the Swedish eco-municipalities are becoming valuable for the new Ethiopian eco-municipality engines. Via Sekom, it is also hoped that the Ethiopian municipalities to find a particular Swedish eco-municipality where the exchange of experiences can be intensified.

Umeå School of Business - USBE, which is part of **Umeå University** has for some years participated in the preliminary planning discussions around the project. Other parts of the university have also been approached and the idea is to link up institutions at other universities so as to form an interdisciplinary research network on the issues raised in the project.

Cooperation has also been initiated with the consulting firm **ESAM AB**, with its twenty professional consultants in sustainable development. ESAM brings both a strong expertise resource as well as its experience as a coordinator of wide capacity-building networks in both the private and public sectors.

Umeå municipality has been through several administrations and municipal companies as **Viva Resource** and **Umeå Kompetensspridning**, which served as an important sounding board and discussion partners in the preparation.

Contacts have also been made to a number of other Swedish actors and will intensify as the start of the pilot project is approaching. In preparation for the pilot project several study trips to Sweden with the participation of the Ethiopian partners were organized. Thus, interfaces between Ethiopia and Sweden were developed before the project begins. Similar trips to Ethiopia for the Swedish partners will be offered under the project.

Other international networks will be contacted and involved. The idea is also that much of the coordination of the capacity networks will be via the newly web-campus Ecomuna that SSA runs with Sekom.

5. Methodology and approach, integration of eco-municipality concept, national development and municipal priorities

The project is based on the integration of the eco-municipality concept, which essentially developed in Sweden, the Ethiopian Government's development goals (linked to MDGs) and the participating municipalities' own expressed priorities.

The eco-municipality concept as expressed in the concept of eco-municipality 5.0 (described in the book "My Journey With The Ecomunicipalities: How to Change the World through the Local Action", Torbjörn Lahti) has a number of key criterias for a successful process:

- **systems approach** (providing an understanding of what sustainable development is all about, and a definition of ecological, economic and social sustainability). The project places strong emphasis on training in a systemic and sustainable development - something that is very poorly developed, both in municipalities and in society as a whole.
- **visionary planning** with the application of the "back-casting methodologies". This will be practiced, not least in the plans that the municipalities are expected to develop in the project. Long-term planning is generally poorly developed in the Ethiopian municipalities.
- **democratic and learning processes of change.** The methodology proposed to be used ("Open Planning for Sustainable Development") aims to make the broadest possible change with the participation of all target groups, with a particular focus on vulnerable marginalized groups. This type of approach is not common in the Ethiopian society, hence also a challenge for the project.
- **vertical integration.** The project works on several levels of government and society simultaneously and develops an interaction among these. It starts from the beginning of the project and makes it more interesting - thus also interesting for other countries.
- **horizontal integration** (that engage all parts of society in the change) is here assumed to be participation from local businesses, nonprofit organizations, schools and universities, the public sector, etc.
- **building platforms** where processes are divided into three integrated parts: **learning-planning-doing** and where the platforms consist of **capacity centers, sustainable development plans** and countless concrete "**best practices**".

The entire approach is untested in this environment, but also innovative. Network of rising capacity centers at the national, regional and local level will be critical infrastructure for the conversion of the Ethiopian society.

In the dialogue with the Ethiopian authorities, the following objectives are highlighted as priorities for the project:

- **strengthen young people and women.** In the project, special efforts will be made to support youth and women. Not least through the proposed WTC (Working and Training Centers) that will become an important engine and capacity center for the local process
- **increasing the quality of the eco-municipality process.** Emphasis is placed on developing long-term planning and to increase transparency in administration. Officials' involvement in the process will also increase general skills at all levels.
- **increase civic participation in society.** Similar to the eco-municipality objectives(see above)
- **focus on poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods.** The project will have a strong focus on increasing capacity for self-sufficiency and improving quality of life. Strengthening entrepreneurship and identifying new alternative organizational forms that suit the local environment are important components.

The eight participating municipalities have for several years worked together in a network and developed both common priorities as their own activities. Together they have chosen four priority areas to which the project will give priority:

- **Waste**, both solid, liquid and air based. Generally speaking, the issue of waste is an emergency in most Ethiopian communities. The processes will be a combination of, on the one hand, develop long-term management plans to gradually change society in a sustainable direction and on the other hand take immediate action that addresses the most pressing issues. The waste issue is also closely linked to the above government objectives and can be a tool for a better supply capacity and higher quality of life.
- **Urban Greening** is closely linked to waste management and other sustainable social issues, but should be viewed from the Ethiopian municipalities' perspective as a desire to make cities more pleasant, greener, and more beautiful. Waste management must act reasonably for the development of parks and green areas to be meaningful. On the other hand, an embellished cityscape has been part of the development of eco-tourism.
- **Ecotourism.** Many of the participating municipalities already have developed tourism, focused on the cultural and natural experiences. However, eco-tourism or sustainable tourism is not as prevalent. Often tourism is carried out by foreign stakeholders. A

developed eco-tourism or sustainable tourism assumes that the rest of the community is involved, and that, for example, the above mentioned thematic areas are satisfactory. In this context, it is therefore more relevant to talk about the building of **sustainable destinations** where eco-tourism can serve as a means both increasing the livelihoods of local communities that contribute to the promotion of destinations / eco-municipality engines.

- **Capacity Building.** This is undoubtedly the project's main focus. The project is the focus on skills acquisition and training in the other three aforementioned thematic areas and within the knowledge of sustainable development and change processes in accordance with the eco-municipality concept. Since the development of skills is simultaneously done with a clear intention to develop long-term planning to identify and implement concrete immediate measures, all learning in the process is to be action-oriented. This way of conducting a process is poorly developed in general, especially in Ethiopia, and is therefore both a challenge and an innovative model creation opportunity for the Ethiopian society.

6. Implementation, processes and activities

The project is divided into three phases:

- the initial phase of six months
- program building phase in 30 months
- implementation phase of 24 months

In the **initial phase**, the project organization will be decided. Special "kick-off" seminars will be held in each of the participating municipalities and a regional seminar in each of the three regions. These define a project plan for the continued work and roles of the local, regional and national level. An inventory template will be developed at the national level in collaboration with universities and international capacity network. Inventories begin as soon as the template is complete. Special training material is produced nationally and is regionally adapted. Project plans for the four thematic areas are developed locally and coordinated by region. This includes the special training programs for "**sustainable guides**" and "**Green Business**". In each region a working group will be appointed to develop the **WCT (Working and Training Center)** activities in the region and the participating municipalities. An initial training for process managers and trainers begins with participants from all municipalities and regions. The training is conducted partly in Sweden. Both local and regional discuss possible "**Golden Eggs**", i.e., projects that are considered particularly important in the transition but where the implementation process is long and costly. Recruitment of participants for the different programs begins. The initial phase ends with "**Community Workshops**" in each of the participating municipalities. In this the further process in the municipalities is designed.

In the **program building phase**, the development of local long term plans / programs for each of the thematic areas, but also for other themes identified in the process, begins. The programs will follow the intentions of the eco-municipality concept and the national development goals. The programs will ultimately be coordinated and integrated into a **sustainable development plan** for each of the municipalities. A similar plan is also produced for each of the regions.

In parallel, **trainings** are carried out in accordance with the program developed, including training courses in each of the four thematic areas as well as the program of "sustainable guides" and "Green Business". Parts of the training takes place in Sweden and partly via the web-campus Ecomuna.

During the process so far, and not least through the Community Workshops conducted, the need for concrete actions is identified and listed. Working groups are added to fix these Action Lists to be sent also the WCT's established. These are organized at regional level but will have activities in each of the participating municipalities. The WCT will implement numerous programs but also concrete physical activities related to the produced action lists. Target groups are unemployed, with particular focus on youth and women. The WCT is staffed by including the so-called **Sustainable Guides**. These will keep both training supervisors in the workshops. The WCTs will function as **capacity centers** described in the eco-municipality concept.

At the regional level, a regional capacity center is developed in the same way. This center will work closely with the WCT but also be closely linked to universities and other regional bodies.

In the implementation phase, the implementation of the adopted plans / programs begins. These plans and programs shall be conducted within the framework of the participants existing activities, but still with the expertise support from the project. There will also be activities to spread the lessons learned from the project to other municipalities / regions, both nationally and internationally.

7. The partners' roles

The project is implemented as an interactive collaboration between stakeholders at the local, regional and national level with the support of the international expertise network.

Most of the activities are carried out at local level by the LSC (Local Steering Committee) as a responsible actor. The activities mentioned earlier are assumed to be started with the LSC responsible or at least in conjunction with the LSC. Representatives from the LSC are also assumed to be represented in both the RSC as NSC (National Steering Committee).

The regional level with RSC (Regional Steering Committee) in charge:

- shall ensure that the municipalities have the necessary skills to manage the tasks
- coordinate and coordinate the work of the municipalities in the region, particularly with regard to training but also on issues relating to other thematic areas
- collect issues to be resolved at regional or national level
- disseminate lessons learned from the pilot municipalities to other municipalities in the region
- build the organization around the local WTC and the regional capacity center

Here is where the participating universities, as part of the RSC, play a particularly important role. Each community is assumed to be connected to at least one of the universities. The universities, in cooperation, are responsible for the construction of the evaluation system used in the project and who also are set to become a permanent part of the ongoing monitoring that takes place after project completion. Many of the programs carried out shall be conducted by personnel from the universities. They are expected to also participate in the development of courses and educational materials. They are also asked to see how they can integrate knowledge and skills needs of the project in existing or new courses and programs. The universities will also be linked to the network where universities from Sweden and other countries are included. In collaboration assumed are the developing research-related projects that can support the ongoing processes.

At the national level, the NSC is responsible for the overall management of the project with SSDE as the executive body. In each pilot municipality a local project manager will be employed. Moreover, a regional project manager for each region will be hired. These managers will be linked to SSDE which in addition has a staff of five persons including the national project. SSDE and NSC is responsible for a communication plan drawn up including the marketing of the project, national and international conferences, disseminating experiences. In the end assumed a national center of excellence to be built up which will also be a demonstration site for both good examples from the project as sustainable technology and methodology used in the project.

SSA is responsible for the construction of a Swedish and international network that can support the processes in Ethiopia. This will provide direct support in all the activities carried out within the project at the national, regional and local level. A special project will be established.

8. Expected results

- The long term goal is to accelerate the conversion of the Ethiopian community in the direction toward a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society by creating a successful model that can be used in the rest of Ethiopia and other countries as well.

- Knowledge and awareness of both threats and opportunities around sustainable development will be increased at all levels of society.
- A wide participation of citizens in the pilot municipalities should result in which people are given the opportunity to be themselves with designing and creating sustainable solutions that also results in new livelihoods, especially for women and young people
- An infrastructure of knowledge and expertise built up in the country through the centers of excellence created at all levels. This provides opportunities to share experiences and good practices which will also be an inspiration for other municipalities and regions in the country
- Knowledge of long-term planning based on a systems approach strengthened in the pilot municipalities and regions' work and manifested in the plans and programs that are developed.
- The participating municipalities and capabilities become part of an international network of eco-municipalities and expertise.

9. Spread to other municipalities, regions, countries

Takes place through the capability results and the partners that are connected to these capabilities. The local level has the responsibility to stimulate surrounding municipalities in the region. The regional level has the responsibility to disseminate the experience to other municipalities in the region and neighboring regions. At the national level, the responsibility is to encourage other regions to start up similar pilot projects and influence neighboring countries. Through the international network, the Ethiopian ecomunicipality results can experience even global distribution.

10. Monitoring / Evaluation

The participating universities together with Swedish and other universities are responsible for developing methods and models for the evaluation of the project. This is also done in such a way that the participating municipalities in parallel can build up systems for the collection of statistics that can be used in the continued follow-up.

11. Financing

The five-year pilot project is expected to cost around 14 million USD. Most of the funding is done through existing development programs in Ethiopia where the Ethiopian government contributes 30% and the remaining funding by international donor agencies. Projects related and interact with the pilot project will be designed with separate financing. This applies, for example, projects to be developed by the participating universities.