

# Information Sheet

# Access Long-term Action Research Studies (LARS)

**Research-inspired Policy and Practice Learning in Ethiopia and the Nile Region (RiPPLE)** is a DFID-funded Research Programme Consortium hosted by WaterAid Ethiopia

*RiPPLE Information sheets introduce an aspect of RiPPLE, related issues and references to further resources.*

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## Background

The RiPPLE project has initiated a LARS on access to water, sanitation and hygiene services (WASH) in Ethiopia. It focuses on key processes through which investments in WASH by government and donors are transformed into services for people. RiPPLE's second LARS on Growth, focuses on the second half of the money-water-services cycle i.e. how people derive benefits from the services they access and the impacts on growth.

The Access LARS responds to some key WASH sector problems that were identified during the first phase of the RiPPLE project, which looked at growth, financing and governance and planning issues within the WASH sector, and the needs expressed by key sector stakeholders represented in the Learning and Practice Alliances (LPAs).

## Objective

The overall objective of the Access LARS is to help sector agencies to improve the transformation of investments (money) into WASH services. This will be achieved through in-depth research to better understand problems, promoting sharing of information and ideas, and testing innovations in the areas of WASH financing, monitoring, planning, and information management through action research.

## Main research questions

The Access LARS will be focusing on three main areas, called sub-LARS:

1. **Aid environments:** how can best practices in coordination and harmonisation of donor funding in WASH be scaled up to minimise the potential inefficiencies in dealing with multiple donors, financing modalities and funding channels?
2. **Budget processes:** how can budget formulation, approval, implementation and monitoring be improved to tackle the problem of low utilisation of WASH budgets?
3. **Woreda inventory systems:** how can information on access to services be improved and used to better target new investments and improve the sustainability of WASH service delivery?

## Activities

Initially, action research on Woreda Inventory Systems is focused on SNNPR, whereas Aid Environments and Budget Processes research has started in Oromiya. The first phase to April 2009 is concentrating on better understanding current practices, and assessing and promoting sharing of information between the many other initiatives on similar issues. A second phase of action research from April 2009 onwards will focus on testing innovations, learning between implementing agencies and capacity development.

