

# Information Sheet

# Governance and Planning Theme

RiPPLE

**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.*

*Readers are encouraged to quote or reproduce material from them for their own publications, but as copyright holder, RiPPLE requests due acknowledgement and a copy of the publication.*

**RiPPLE Office**  
c/o WaterAid Ethiopia,  
Kirkos Sub-city,  
Kebele 04, House no 620,  
Debrezeit Road,  
PO Box 4812,  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## Contact

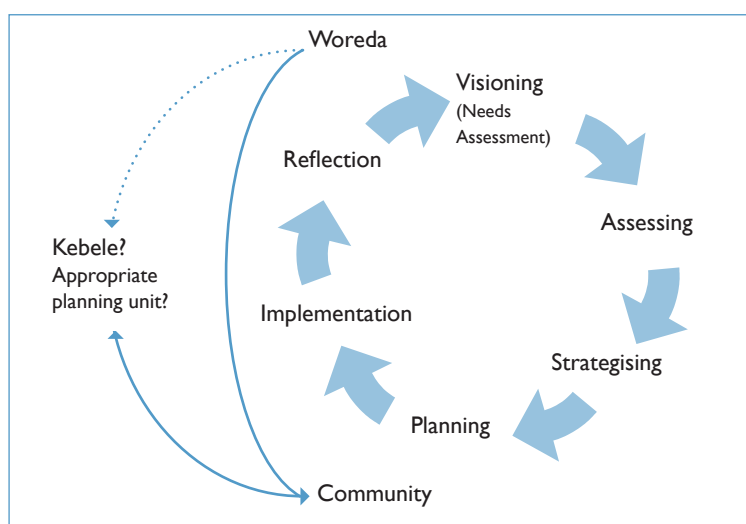
**Simret Yasabu,**  
RiPPLE Media and  
Communication Officer  
t: +251 11 416 0075  
f: +251 (0) 11 416 0081  
e: [info@rippleethiopia.org](mailto:info@rippleethiopia.org)  
w: [www.rippleethiopia.org](http://www.rippleethiopia.org)

## Background

Water governance is about how decisions are made around managing water resources, and providing water and sanitation services. Understanding local governance means understanding local institutions, and the relationships between them. Strengthening local governance involves strengthening their transparency, accountability and effectiveness.

At the heart of strong governance lies planning. Planning is the framework and process by which a problem is understood, possible solutions identified and prioritised, actions undertaken and impacts assessed.

Planning is ideally cyclical, with lessons learned feeding back into further decision making. Participation in planning is important if service users are to feel a sense of ownership over services, particularly if they are expected to finance and manage their upkeep as in rural Ethiopia.



The planning cycle takes place at a variety of levels

## Aims and Possible Research Areas

The challenge for the RiPPLE Governance and Planning (GaP) theme is to identify appropriate and scalable approaches to strengthening local water governance and planning in the context of Ethiopia's Universal Access Plan (UAP) and other development planning frameworks. A particular focus will be on mechanisms for ensuring effective and efficient participation by water users. The following questions broadly outline the research interests of the GaP theme.

- How does planning function in theory and practice, and how are water users involved?
- What are the incentives and barriers to stakeholders playing a more active role in decentralised WASH governance, and what is the potential for more coordinated provision of services.
- What is needed to achieve the goals of the UAP in a sustainable way, in terms of capacity, government roles at different levels, communities and external support. How can all of these be strengthened?

## Activities

Following regional scoping visits carried out in late 2006, a GaP platform has been established within the LPA process in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR). The GaP team together with the SNNPR LPA identified two case studies which are relevant in the region, which will be carried out over 2007-2008:

- **Sustainability of Rural Water Supply Schemes**  
This will focus on the role of users in system maintenance and the relationship between users and external support agencies (government, NGO, and private).
- **The Ambition Level of the Universal Access Plan**  
This will focus on the explicit and implicit requirements for behavioural change, new capacities, and financial resources. This will be carried out collaboratively with the Finance theme.