

COWASH launched in Benishangul-Gumuz Region (BSGR).

On March 14-15, 2014 COWASH launch seminar was held in Assosa, Bamboo Paradise Hotel with regional stakeholders. Participants in the launch workshop were from Bureau of Finance and Economic Development (6), Water Bureau (3), Health Bureau (2), Women, Children and Youth Bureau (4), Education Bureau (2), Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy (1), Embassy of Finland (1), FinnWASH (4) and COWASH (5).



Launch Workshop participants in Assosa. Photo by Gezahegn Alemu

The objectives of the launch workshop were

- To officially launch of COWASH in BSGR,
- To increase the understanding of COWASH in BSGR in general,
- To achieve common understanding and awareness of the content of the Regional financing agreement of COWASH
- To increase awareness of the CMP approach in general and its promotion
- To conclude the FinnWASH inputs into COWASH implementation in BSGR
- To increase the understanding on how COWASH is linked and harmonized with One WASH
- To deepen the understanding on the COWASH implementation principles

- To achieve common understanding on the establishment of the RSU, its roles and responsibilities
- To discuss the principles of the COWASH woreda selection
- To increase the understanding on baseline data collection
- To deepen the understanding of the M&E in COWASH
- To increase understanding on the COWASH capacity building principles
- To increase understanding on the core planning process and its applicability in COWASH planning
- To conclude the principles, units, unit prices and scale of the core plan for 2006 EFY
- To finalize the core plan for 2006 EFY
- To draft the road map with major milestones for the coming 3 months

The Agreement between the Benishangul-Gumuz Region and Government of Finland is for 2.5 years (January 2014-July 2016) having following contributions:

- Government of Finland Euro:2,262,629
- Regional Government Birr: 20,800,000

With these inputs the project plans to achieve the institutionalization of the CMP in Benishangul-Gumuz region and to bring 100,000 people to the new water supply services and to change the behavior of 260,000 people in hygiene and sanitation by July 2016.

Several issues were raised by the participants. The discussions were held on

- RSU establishment and RSU staff responsibilities, especially the need of accountant in BoFED
- Financial issues and auditing
- Harmonization with One WASH
- Possibilities with high technology use in CMP approach
- Capacity building package
- Non-functionality of the One WASH committees

One major issue was the channeling of funds to WASHCOs. The following 3 options were discussed:

- a) BoFED---Water Bureau---MFI---WASHCO
- b) BoFED---MFI---WASHCO
- c) BoFED---WoFED---WASHCO

Another issue which needs decision is the modality for the division of investment funds to woredas from GoF and GoE. GoE has allocated 17 METB for investments and GoF 26 METB. It has to be decided how these funds are channeled between the 4 selected woredas in the coming 2 years.

Finally at the end the Core plan was prepared and road map for the next 4,5 months was prepared. The road map is presented hereunder.

Region level Road Map for the next 4,5 months in 2014

