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## A Multi-Sector Approach is Key for Improving Urban Sanitation and Hygiene

*"A boat doesn't go forward if everyone is rowing their own way."  
~Swahili proverb*

With an urbanization rate of 4.7 percent per year, Ethiopia is predicted to become one of the most populous urban nations in Africa by 2050. The Government of Ethiopia faces complex challenges in terms of expanding access and improving quality of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services for its growing urban population, especially for the most vulnerable groups.

Sanitation and waste management and hygiene challenges are among the major setbacks to urban health successes. Diseases associated with inadequate WASH services are among the country's most serious public health problems. Diarrhea is the leading cause of under 5 mortality in Ethiopia, responsible for more than 20% of all under 5 deaths. (USAID/Ethiopia WASH Program Overview, 2015).

There has been a great deal of progress in the sanitation and hygiene sector in Ethiopia during the past ten years and the Government's Health Extension Program has contributed greatly. Yet, urban sanitation and waste management face many challenges including lack of resources, minimal involvement from the private sector, and an absence of sanitary land fills. Gaps in community knowledge about waste management, personal and environmental hygiene, safe handling of drinking water are also problems.

By its very nature, the mandate of urban sanitation and waste management is widely spread among various sectors. Overlaps in duties and responsibilities and the absence of a system to regulate and coordinate the various actors exacerbates an already poor urban sanitation and waste management system. To move forward, cities and towns need to establish forums that bring their respective WASH actors together to plan, implement, and monitor in coordination.

In collaboration with city and town health offices, the USAID-supported Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program plays a leadership role in initiating and establishing an actors forum focused on city/town level water supply, sanitation and hygiene in Addis Ababa, Gondar, Shashamane, Harar, and Mekelle.

In January 2016, Addis Ababa City Administration formed the water supply, sanitation, and hygiene actors forum, which successfully brought various sectors together. WASH actors included the Municipality, Health Bureau, Education Bureau, Water and Sewerage Authority, Environmental Protection Authority, and the Solid Waste Management Agency. The actors signed a memorandum of understanding articulating the role and responsibility of each sector.

Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program has helped establish and strengthen the urban water supply, sanitation and hygiene actors forum to ensure better execution of WASH services in cities and towns.

Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program aims to improve the health status of the urban population in Ethiopia by reducing HIV/TB-related maternal, neonatal and child morbidity and mortality, and by reducing the incidence of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program is supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). JSI is the prime

implementer in close partnership with Federal Ministry of Health, Regional Health Bureaus and city/town health offices. Addis Ababa University and Emmanuel Development Association are national implementing partners.

Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program works in Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa, Harar, Amhara, Tigray, Oromiya and South People Nations and Nationalities.

# UPDATES

## A Revised Implementation Manual Helps Standardize the Urban Health Extension Program

The Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) revised the Urban Health Extension Program (UHEP) implementation manual based on lessons and experiences gained during program implementation. The revised implementation manual was endorsed at a two-day workshop.

The previous UHEP implementation manual was adopted from the rural health extension program and lacked procedures and approaches appropriate for the urban context. The absence of standard operational procedures and protocols to guide UHEP planning, implementation, and monitoring caused a fragmented approach to service delivery.

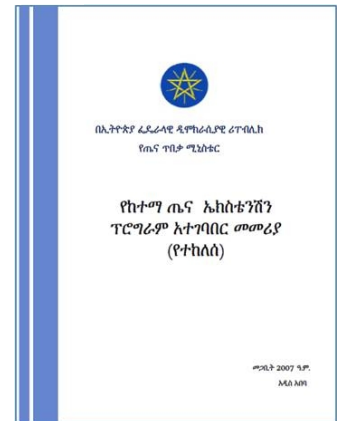
With the aim of alleviating such shortcomings, the FMOH revised the implementation manual based on the country's urban context and included procedures and strategies to address the health care needs of the vulnerable urban population.

The revised manual now serves as a strategic entry point to standardize service delivery models and mechanisms across the country. The manual also standardizes data recording and

reporting, restructures supply management systems, ensures good governance, and ensures improved human resources management.

As a key partner to the FMOH, the Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program supported the revision process both technically and financially.

The program played a major role in initiating discussion and dialogue at the FMOH, developing terms of reference for revising the manual, setting up a team at the FMOH to undertake the revision, developing a protocol to conduct a situational analysis of the current implementation of UHEP, and carrying out a national consultative workshop to assess UHEP functionality.



## Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program to Implement Emergency WASH Interventions in TEN Drought Affected Urban and Peri-Urban Areas

Ethiopia is experiencing one of the worst droughts in decades, affecting an estimated ten million people across the country (Humanitarian Requirements Document 2016).

Approximately 5.8 million people in drought-affected areas are without safe drinking water and basic sanitation or latrine facilities and approximately 800,000 people have been displaced due to shocks (Meher/Post Summer Assessment).

The drought not only is affecting agrarian and pastoralist rural kebeles, but also urban and peri urban kebeles. The drought affects urban residents by contributing to food shortages and subsequent price increases. Also, the population flowing from nearby drought-affected rural areas and looking for feeding centers, treatment facilities, and other social services (e.g., water, sanitation, and hygiene services) is creating a strain in services provided by city administrations. Water is now a scarce resource both in terms of its availability and safety, which impacts the health status of residents in urban and rural areas.

To improve WASH-related basic needs in drought-affected urban and peri-urban areas, the program is preparing to implement emergency WASH interventions in target cities and towns. Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program has already prioritized ten cities and towns to receive emergency interventions. The ten selected cities and towns are in hotspot woredas that the government of Ethiopia has designated as drought-affected.



Villagers at Sekota town peripheral kebele use water from an open and unprotected hand-dug well due to the shortage in tap water supply.  
Photo: Birhanu Genet

To assess the magnitude and nature of WASH-related challenges in drought-affected areas, the program conducted a rapid assessment and designed interventions that are integrated with town administration emergency plans.

Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program will implement the emergency WASH interventions alongside its regular program activities.

## New Partnership with Diageo Set to Fight Underage Drinking

Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program established a partnership with Diageo's Meta Abo Brewery to implement an education program to prevent underage alcohol consumption among 44,000 Addis Ababa youth by enhancing their life skills and confidence.

The partnership was announced at the Capital Hotel in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on February 23, 2016. Stakeholders including the Addis Ababa City Administration Health Bureau and Education Bureau, sub-cities, schools, and the media were present. Diageo signed a memorandum of understanding with the Addis Ababa Bureaus of Education and Health, both of which will support the program in an advisory capacity.

Leveraging its strong partnership with Regional Health Bureaus, Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program will involve urban health extension professionals to reach youth, parents, and schools with tailored messages to prevent harmful drinking practices. Teachers, youth center leaders, and representatives from youth organizations will be trained to engage schools, youth centers, and the community.



*Meta Abo Brewery Managing Director Baker Magunda (center) and Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program Acting Chief of Party Addis Tefaye (right) sign a memorandum of understanding at the partnership launch event.*

Diageo is one of the world's largest premium beverage makers and a long-term investor in the countries in which it operates. Diageo's partnership with JSI is part of its campaign to reduce underage drinking. The campaign employs a three-pronged approach: an education program for youth, retailer engagement for responsible alcohol sales, and stakeholder engagement to advocate for government regulation of under-age purchase and consumption.

## Launch of Center for Urban Health Development and Formation of Urban Health Think Tank Group

Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program and partner Addis Ababa University's School of Public Health celebrated the launch of the Center for Urban Health Program and the formation of the Urban Health Think Tank Group on February 3, 2016. Dr. Zufan Abera, Ethiopian Health Extension Program Directorate Director of the FMOH and representatives from USAID, universities, and other stakeholders and partner organizations attended.

In her remarks, Dr. Zufan Abera recognized the establishment of the urban health think tank group and the center as platforms dedicated to Ethiopia's urban health development, which can draw experiences from global, regional, and country level contexts and use them to inform policy and program implementation. Appreciating JSI's and Addis Ababa University's collaborative effort, Dr. Zufan also expressed high hopes for the think tank group to generate state of the art ideas to contribute to improved urban health programming in Ethiopia.

The Center for Urban Health Development will be a resource pool and knowledge hub for Ethiopia's urban health agenda and will provide evidence for policy and programming purposes.



*Dr. Zufan Abera, Ethiopia Health Extension Program Directorate Director of the FMOH, cuts the ribbon at the launch.*

The Urban Health Think Tank Group will enhance the 'academic-policy-program interface' and serve as a platform to promote research and evidence-based policy and program implementation.



# TSEGANESH WORKU'S STORY

## When She Knows, Her Family's Health Prospers!



*Tesagneshi Worku is a mother receiving health care education and services from an urban health extension professional.*

Tseganesh Worku, 24, lives in Hossana, a city in Ethiopia's South Nation, Nationalities, and Peoples Region. She has two children, a three-year old son and a newborn.

Keeping her children healthy is not an easy task for Tseganesh. Her three-year old son used to be frequently sick with diarrhea and typhoid, serious and deadly, yet common, health threats in Tseganesh's neighborhood. In Ethiopia, diarrhea associated with unclean water and inadequate sanitation and hygiene contributes to 20% of all child deaths.

Tseganesh blames the shortage of clean water supply in her neighborhood for her son's sickness.

*"I didn't know how to prevent my son from sickness. My son was not the only one who gets sick frequently; it was common for all children in the neighborhood. I believe it was the water: we usually didn't have tap water and our alternative source was prone to contamination, I guess."*

Things started to improve for Tseganesh when the urban health extension professional, Marta, started visiting her house. Marta advised Tseganesh on preventive health care measures that she can take to keep her children healthy. Tseganesh now knows how to treat water and adopt creative waste disposal methods to keep the house and its surroundings cleaner. Tseganesh also says that Marta's advice on breastfeeding, nutrition, and newborn health care has allowed her to improve her children's health.

To support urban health extension professionals, Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program has been working to build their capacity to provide quality health care services.

The program provides competency-based core public health training to improve urban health extension professionals' skill, knowledge, and motivation to deliver water, sanitation and hygiene, HIV, tuberculosis, and maternal and child health care services. So far, more than 1,800 urban health extension professionals have been trained in Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program's target cities and towns. In addition, the program recently provided refresher trainings in water, sanitation, and hygiene, HIV, and maternal, newborn, and child health care.

According to Marta, the training has empowered her with knowledge and skills to provide impactful health care services to the 457 families in her catchment area.

The program also has helped institutionalize supportive supervision to strengthen the capacity of urban health extension professionals and their supervisors to deliver quality health services, make referrals and linkages to facility-based health services, build rapport with beneficiaries, and prioritize needs.

Strengthening Ethiopia's Urban Health Program, under its WASH activity, implements various WASH interventions integrated with maternal, newborn, and child health and HIV activities to support better implementation of hygiene and environmental health initiatives under the Urban Health Extension Program.

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