



Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Associations (CCRDA) with the Support of EU-CSF

## Panel Discusses the Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam

A panel discussion organized by the Water and Sanitation Forum (WSF) under the auspices of CCRDA has deliberated on the Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam project with the objective of creating awareness on the purpose of the dam and potential role of CSOs based on their comparative advantage.

Opening the panel discussion, Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, Executive Director of CCRDA, noted that CCRDA organized the panel to raise awareness and create an opportunity for shared learning among its members on issues related to the Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam.

CCRDA, which is chairing the CSO Support Coordination Taskforce for the Grand Renaissance Dam, together with other sister networks is working to generate support from the civil society sector for the realization of the project, Dr. Meshesha said.



**Dr. Meshesha making opening remarks**

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## GO-NGO partnership said vital to tackle current food insecurity

Strong partnership among governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as donor partners is essential to address the current food insecurity in some parts of Ethiopia, representatives of CSOs said.

The over 40 representatives of various Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) made the remarks in a recommendation they made as a way forward at the end of a consultative meeting held here at CCRDA's Secretariat on 12 August, 2011.

The half-day consultative meeting was organized to discuss the current drought situation in the Horn of Africa in general and in Ethiopia in particular.

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## CCRDA Participates in UN General Assembly Special Session on AIDS

Executive Director of CCRDA, Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, attended the High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly Special Session on AIDS held in New York, U.S.A, from 8 -10 June, 2011.



**Dr. Meshesha attending the meeting**

In his mission report, Dr. Meshesha indicated that the UN General Assembly, in its resolution 65/180 of 20 December 2010, decided to convene a high level meeting in June 2011 to undertake a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on the disease.

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## About CCRDA

It is the first legally registered umbrella association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Ethiopia. It has been the voice of the Ethiopian civil society for over 37 years now.

It grew from a mere relief coordinating office formed to respond to the humanitarian crisis of the 1973/74 famine to a complex organization engaged in a multi-dimensional development endeavors. Over the years, its services and membership have expanded by leaps and bounds.

It is credited for promoting collaborative working relationship between the government and the NGO community in Ethiopia. Its contribution towards enhancing the role of the civil society in the nation building process has been quite remarkable. Strengthening NGOs/CSOs execution capacity is one of the multitude tasks that it is well known for.

This organization is none other than the Consortium of the Christian Relief and Development Associations (CCRDA), which is reputed for striving indefatigably for societal transformation and emergence of a vibrant civil society in Ethiopia.

Restructured from CRDA to CCRDA in 2009, the Consortium is ready more than ever before to redouble its efforts to build a robust Ethiopian civil society that is strong enough to influence and make a difference in the recent efforts of development.

our vision is to see vibrant charities and societies that contribute to the development and prosperity of Ethiopia. Be a member of CCRDA and join a wide network of NGO/SCO sector.

If you have any news items and features from members and non members, please send us. You are also welcome to use articles or excerpts from CCRDA Newsletter with due credit to the newsletter and the contributor.



## Forum Holds General Assembly Meeting

Voluntary Sector Social Accountability and Partnership Forum (VSSAPF) under the auspices of CCRDA held its general assembly meeting here at the Secretariat on 1 July, 2011.

Welcoming participants of the Forum, Ato Regassa Aboma, Director of Membership Development and Networking Core Team, said VSSAPF is an expression of CCRDA's commitment to embrace CSOs in the process of ensuring social accountability and inward looking governance system.

The Forum is one of the seven thematic forums organized under the aegis of CCRDA on November 5, 2002, he said, adding that after that time it has undergone through a process of reorganization based on the new Charities and Societies Proclamation.



The Meeting in Progress

New steering committees were elected during the VSSAPF general assembly meeting in May, 2010. The Forum members are also reregistered as the Forum Membership Assembly after the re-registration process of CSOs, Ato Regassa said.

He further noted that the goal of VSSAP Forum is to encourage CCRDA members and the wider civil society at large to ensure their social accountability in their respective sectors and improve their own governance system.

The general objective of the Forum is to facilitate partnership, dialogue and the creation of a strong functional relationship among and between members of the Forum, according to Ato Regassa.

VSSAPF, he added, is also aimed at building the capacity of CSOs through trainings and information exchange workshops.

Enhancing the engagement of Forum members in strategic endeavors such as social accountability, ethics and inward looking governance system is yet another specific objective of VSSAPF.

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## CCRDA/Sida Project Planning Workshop Conducted

CCRDA/Sida program 2011/12 project planning workshop for Sida supported environmental development and protection projects was held here at the Secretariat from 5-7 July, 2011.

In his introductory remarks, Ato Mesfin Mengistu, Sida HIV/AIDS and Environmental Protection Program Coordinator, said that the purpose of the meeting was to jointly review and plan the first draft plan proposals of each project implementing partners (PIPs) submitted for the 2nd round CCRDA/Sida program support.

The meeting was also aimed at developing common understanding on project implementation modalities and sharing experiences of each other in the course of the planning exercises, he said.



**Ato Mesfin highlighting background of CCRDA/Sida program**

Speaking on the background of the Program, Ato Mesfin said, the program started in October, 2004. The total number of PIPs had been 28 until 2007 and became 22 starting from 2008.

The program, he said, has two sub-components; namely, HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control and Environmental Development and Protection projects.



**Ato Abebe Bekele, Director of PDMCT, addressing the gathering**

The projects are being implemented in Tigray, Amhara, Afar, Somali, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's regional states as well as in Addis Ababa City Administration.

Three presentations on issues related to environmental protection and development were made in the due course of the meeting attended by 32 participants drawn from pertinent PIPs.



**Presentations being delivered by representatives of PIPs**

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## PIMCT offers IT training

The Publications and Information Management Core Team (PIMCT) conducted IT related training on 14 July, 2011.

The training focused on using internal mailing system, managing external e-mail from outside of the office and efficient use of server based public folder and security.

Fourteen staff of CCRDA attended the half-day training.



**Training in progress**

It is to be known that PIMCT has been providing similar IT related trainings to staff aimed at ensuring smooth internal communication and exchange of information through intranet, e-mails and public share folders.

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## CSOs urged to make their employees beneficiaries of pension scheme

Ato Getachew Belay, Director General of the Private Organization Employees Social Security Agency called on civil society organizations (CSOs) operating in Ethiopia to ensure their employees' right to benefit from the provisions of the proclamation issued to provide for pension of private organization employees.

The Director General made the remarks at a half-day workshop organized by CCRDA to enhance the awareness of CSOs on the newly enacted Private Organization Employees Pension Proclamation No. 715/2011.

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## CCRDA Participates in UN General Assembly ... (...Contd. from p.1)

From Africa’s perspective, he said, this meeting built on the earlier continental consultations on the Disease and articulation of Africa’s position within the framework of the African Union General Assembly Special Session on AIDS held in Windhoek, Namibia.

In this meeting, member states were expected to adopt a new Declaration that will reaffirm current commitments and commit to actions to guide and sustain the global AIDS response, Dr. Meshesha noted.

He further said that the High-Level Meeting focused, among others, on: analyzing the universal access achievements to date; reviewing existing best approaches and practices to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

The Meeting was also aimed at defining strategies to accelerate progress where it is lagging; and coming up with new UN General Assembly Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS to intensify efforts of member states against the pandemic.

On the sidelines of this High-Level Meeting, which CCRDA attended for the first time, the Executive Director made relentless efforts to seek new partnership possibilities with multilateral organizations and NGO Consortia and revive those started but not yet finalized in North America.

Accordingly, Dr. Meshesha held fruitful discussions with officials of the World Bank on the recent pledge of the Bank to create a separate non-loan facilities to CSOs that would help them play a meaningful role in policy advocacy and poverty alleviation ventures.

He also met and held talks with officials of INTRACTION most notably with Ms. Lindsay Coates- Executive Vice President of INTRACTION, which is the leading and older USA NGO Consortium for those engaged in relief and development pursuits.

This discussion is very crucial due to the fact that this consortium is well networked with the US government particularly with the USAID and the Department of State, Dr. Meshesha stated in his Mission Report.

The present discussion with INTRACTION officials mainly focused on reviving the previous deliberations that were halted due to change of contact person from INTRACTION that reversed the whole efforts to a rudimentary start.

Similarly, Dr. Meshesha met and exchanged views with officials of the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC) on ways of reviving the unfinished quest for partnership started in 2009 in tandem with ED’s visit to Washington DC.

In a related development, Dr. Meshesha took part in the international consultation on Land Conflicts and EED Transfer and/or Program Adjustment conducted in Berlin, Germany from 4-12 July, 2011.

According to Dr. Meshesha, the Berlin Consultation of EED was intended to foster the exchange of information and experience on land conflicts among EED partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America.



Dr. Meshesha with EED officials here in Addis in 2010

Taking advantage of being in this Consultation, Dr. Meshesha held discussions with EED officials regarding the existing partnership to resolve some issues related to the preceding program plan, which has been concluded six months ago.

Moreover, the Executive Director gave update on new developments in the operating environment and the progress of the current CCRDA-EED partnership program.

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### *Congratulations!!*

CCRDA is pleased to announce that it has launched its dynamic and versatile web portal ([www.ccrdaethiopia.org](http://www.ccrdaethiopia.org)) as of 30 May, 2011.

Thus, you are cordially invited to browse through this state-of-the-art and rich web portal to get latest information on the regular and program activities of CCRDA as well as its membership, donors and partners.

Widen your knowledge of the civil society sector just by surfing through [www.ccrdaethiopia.org](http://www.ccrdaethiopia.org). It is simply a click away!

## Forum Holds General (...Contd. from p.2)

In addition, Ato Regassa said, the Forum strives to ensure the prevalence of governance in the operation of CSOs by way of enforcing the NGO Code of Conduct.

Currently, VSSAP Forum has 54 member organizations and 7 steering committee members.

Ato Biresaw Sime, VSSAPF Steering Committee Vice Chairperson, delivered on the occasion a presentation on social accountability.

Social accountability, Ato Biresaw said, is an approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, in which ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability mechanisms



**Meeting in progress**

He further noted that social accountability enables, among other things, to bring about improved governance through better service delivery, increased development effectiveness as well as enhanced awareness and credibility.

In addition, Ato Tafese Refera, Director of PIMCT and chairman of the Planning Committee, made a presentation on CCRDA's 5<sup>th</sup> Program Plan.

In his presentation, Ato Tafese elaborated in detail the goals, core objectives and milestone activities of the 5<sup>th</sup> Program Plan that would serve the Secretariat as a guiding compass for the next five years; i.e., from 2011-2015.

He said in-depth background works such as documentary review, environmental scanning, benchmarking studies in planning exercise and rapid assessment of the 2008-10 program plan through SWOT analysis were carried out before drafting the Plan.



**Presentation on CCRDA's 5<sup>th</sup> Program Plan**

Ato Tafese also extensively discussed the six core objectives of the Program Plan. Some 20 participants drawn from VSSAP Forum member organizations attended the half-day meeting.

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## GO-NGO partnership said...

(...Contd. from p.1)

The representatives stressed that government organizations, CSOs, development partners and donors should exert coordinated efforts with a view to mitigating the adverse effects of the prevailing food insecurity in Easter and South Easter parts of Ethiopia.

Such harmonized endeavors would help facilitate the exchange of in-depth information on the drought situation and the subsequent emergency operations among the aforementioned stakeholders, they said.

Participants further indicated that the partnership is instrumental to identify required needs and gaps in the all-rounded efforts targeted at ameliorating the current food insecurity and drought situation.

Synchronization of efforts is also helpful to circumvent unnecessary redundancy and duplication of resources in the ongoing relief operation activities, the participants added.

Government organizations, NGOs and donor partners need to work in unison to avoid the loss of human lives and livestock as well as protect the environment from degradation as a result of the looming drought.

Wz. Rahel Asfaw, a senior resource mobilization officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, said on the occasion that according to latest figures in July, 2011 some 4.5 million people, mainly pastoralists in Eastern and South Easter parts of Ethiopia need immediate humanitarian assistance.

The government of Ethiopia in collaboration with concerned partners is doing its level best to curtail the drought situation through the provision of relief and aid to the drought affected people, she added.

She also noted that several taskforces have been established under the Disaster Prevention and Food Security Sector of the Ministry to the civil society sector and other partners to join the relief activities.



**Wz. Rahel (middle) speaking on current food insecurity in Ethiopia**

The taskforce include Food Management, Nutrition, Water & Sanitation, Public Health, Agriculture and Education taskforces, she said and urged the civil society sector to join these entry points based on their respective areas of engagement and contribute their shares towards tackling the food insecurity situation.

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## Team gives trainings on PCM and transformational leadership

The Capacity Building Team under the Program Development and Management Core Team of CCRDA conducted two separate short-term trainings in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> weeks of July, 2011.

The first training on Project Cycle Management was given for ten days starting 18 to 29 July, 2011.

Topics such as project cycle, principles and characteristics of PCM, participatory community development and stages of PCM were covered during the course of the training.



**Partial view of training participants**

The training, attended by 40 participants, was jointly given by Ato Teshome Shiberu, staff of CCRDA and Ato Tewodros Wendmneh, Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Coordinator in Water Aid.

In a related development, the Capacity Building Team organized and conducted a 5-day training on Transformational Leadership from 18-22 July, 2011.

The training focused, among others, on organization leadership, personal leadership development and managing organizational change.



**A highly participatory training on transformational leadership**

Over 40 trainees drawn from CCRDA's membership attended the training offered by Ato Seife Fekade, staff of CCRDA.

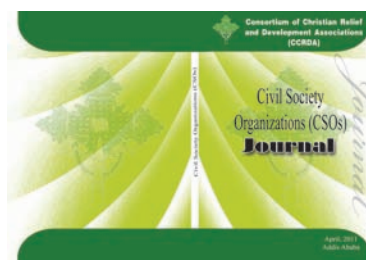
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## CCRDA Publishes CSO Journal

The Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Associations (CCRDA) has published for the first time a CSO Journal with the support of Action Aid- Ethiopia.

The Journal entitled "Journal of Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)", was officially launched in a ceremony held here at CCRDA's Secretariat on 11 August, 2011.

It was stated on the occasion that the Journal contains seven scientific and research-based articles that deal with the major activities and services of the Civil Society Sector as a whole.



Articles of the Journal focus on wide ranging issues including, among others, general concept and definition of the Civil Society Sector in the Ethiopian context and the contribution of CSOs in the efforts geared towards attaining economic development and social progress in Ethiopia.

The implication of the new Ethiopian Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009 on the current operations of CSOs/NGOs is also another area addressed by the Journal.

In addition, the Journal dwells on internal challenges in the Ethiopian civil society sector including observance of the Code of Conduct and other ethical issues.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, Executive Director of CCRDA, said it is the firm conviction of CCRDA that the researches in the Journal will have a paramount significance in motivating all pertinent bodies to take practical actions to fill the development gaps identified by the studies.

The Executive Director also thanked Action Aid-Ethiopia for the generous support it extended for the publication of the Journal. He also encouraged contributions for the upcoming volumes of the Journal.

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*Together For a Better Future!*

## CCRDA gives orientation to its new members

An orientation program was organized for 14 new CCRDA members here at the Secretariat on 3 August, 2011.

In his welcoming remark, Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, Executive Director of CCRDA congratulated the new members on their joining of CCRDA, which is the first and largest umbrella organization of CSOs in Ethiopia.



**Dr. Meshesha warmly welcoming new members**

He also gave highlights on the background history, vision, mission, objectives, governance structure and general activities of CCRDA.

Directors of the various Core Teams under the auspices of CCRDA also made presentations on the duties and responsibilities of their respective units.



**Team Directors orienting members on their respective units' activities**



Ten of the newly enrolled members are local organizations while the rest are foreign based.

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## CSOs urged to make ... (...Contd. from p.3)

Ato Getachew said CSOs are duty bound to raise the awareness of their employees on the importance of this new social security scheme and enable them to be beneficiaries of the same.



**Ato Getachew (to the left) addressing the**

He said one of the focus areas of the five year national Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of the government is enhancing citizens saving culture and expanding their access to social security systems.

Accordingly, the Director General noted, the government is exerting utmost efforts to expand social security system and reach citizens step by step.

Since the start of modern social security service in Ethiopia in 1961, it was only government employees who had been beneficiaries of such services, Ato Getachew recalled.

However, he said, given the ever-rising number of employees in private and civil society organizations, it has been found necessary to effect a pension scheme for employees working in such institutions.

Putting in place pension scheme in private organizations and CSOs is essential both to the employers and employees, he said, adding that it greatly contributes to social justice, industrial peace, poverty reduction and development.



**Meeting in session**

*Cont'd to page 8*

### Team gives trainings on PCM,... (...Contd. from p.6)

In a related development, CCRDA in collaboration with the Danish Church Aid (DCA) conducted a training program on NGO Good Governance in Bahirdar and Diredawa towns from 30 May- 3 June, 2011 and 4-8 July, 2011 respectively.

Ato Yahilem Babile, training officer in the Capacity Building Team of CCRDA, told this *Newsletter* that the trainings were aimed at improving the capacity and awareness of the leadership of CSOs in NGO good governance; ethical practices, legal resource and financial principles, accountability, transparency and effective leadership strategy in line with the new legal framework.

The trainings were designed for the leadership and senior management staff such as Members of Board of Directors, Executive Directors, Program Managers / team leaders/, supervisors and senior program officers, Ato Yahilem noted.

A total of 48 trainees participated in the two separate training programs.

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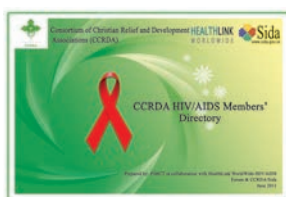
### CSOs urged to make ... (...Contd. from p.7)

According to Private Organization Employees Pension Proclamation No. 715/2011, employees, who have pension scheme or provident fund before the coming into force of the Proclamation, may either decide to continue to benefit from the pension scheme or the provident fund or agree to be covered by this Proclamation.

Two relevant study papers were presented at half-day meeting attended by over 250 participants drawn from various CSOs.

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### CCRDA Publications coming soon



### GO-NGO partnership said... (...Contd. from p.5)

In his welcoming address to the meeting, Dr. Meshesha Shewarega, Executive Director of CCRDA, said to address the drought risks in a more sustainable way concerted efforts must be made to timely identify, coordinate, and react to drought and food security problems in the Horn.

Dr. Meshesha underscored that the international community should respond faster and better to the drought situation in the Horn of Africa.

He also appreciated the commendable efforts of the government of Ethiopia in mitigating the risks of drought and vulnerability and improve human livelihoods through various mechanisms.



Ato Feleke expatiating Oxfam's humanitarian intervention

Ato Feleke Tadele, Country representative of Oxfam Canada in Ethiopia, said on his part that Oxfam has already begun providing emergency life-saving support to those worst-affected by the drought, meeting their immediate food needs.

Oxfam is also supporting Somali refugees, who came to Ethiopia fleeing conflict and drought in the refugee camps of Dolo Ado, according to Ato Feleke.

Through its humanitarian intervention, Oxfam targets to reach over 1 million beneficiaries, including 120,000 refugees, he said, adding the focus will be on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and emergency food security and livelihoods.

Senait Arefeayene, from UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) gave updates on the current drought situation in Ethiopia and the magnitude of response from the international community in addressing the problem.

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*Together For a Better Future!*

## Panel Discusses CSOs contribution towards .... ( ...Contd. from p.1)

He added that the Taskforce has also been organizing national awareness creation programs, which were attended by senior government officials, leading experts on the Nile River and representatives of the civil society sector at large.

In a presentation he made on the occasion Ato Fekahmed Negash, Basin Administration Directorate Director with the Ministry of Water and Energy, said that in addition to extending financial contribution CSOs can play a considerable role in advocating and lobbying in favor of the construction of the Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam.

The civil society sector can also assume an important place in creating national and international dialogue platforms targeted at raising general awareness on the benefits of the grand project, Ato Fekahmed stated.

He further indicated that CSOs have an immense potential to mobilize the public towards preventing environmental degradation around the project area through rigorous environmental protection and development engagements.



**Ato Fekahmed speaking on CSOs role in Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam**

In addition, he said, CSOs are able to provide technical assistance for the implementation of the grand project and cooperate with pertinent government offices in circumventing unfair campaigns against the dam.

Ato Imiru Tamrat, Managing Director of Multi-Talent Consultancy plc., also delivered a presentation entitled “The Nile Basin Cooperation Framework Agreement: Negotiations History, Future Scenarios and the Role of the Civil Society.”



**Ato Imiru speaking on Nile Basin Cooperation Framework Agreement**

After hearing the presentations and having heated deliberations on the papers, participants of the half-day panel discussion adopted a 7-point recommendation as a way forward.

The participants noted in their recommendation that the government needs to lay a fertile ground whereby CSOs can play an active role in issues related to the Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam in particular and the Nile basin in general.

They stressed that CSO Support Coordination Taskforce for the Grand Renaissance Dam needs to organize continuous awareness raising forums on the issue at a higher level.



**Participants expressing opinions**

The participants also capitalized on the need to carry on regular and organized advocacy and lobbying activities by the civil society sector towards facilitating the realization of the renaissance dam project.

CSOs, they said, should also bolster their ongoing financial contribution for the national cause and actively involve in undertaking researches concerning the Nile Basin together with concerned government organs.

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CCRDA

*Newly Arrived  
Reference Materials*



- ◇ *UNAIDS Report on Global AIDS epidemic 2010.*
- ◇ *The Africa Comparative Report 2011- World Bank.*
- ◇ *World Development Report 2011: Conflict Security and Development: World Bank.*
- ◇ *Female well-being Toward A Global Theory of Social Change.*
- ◇ *New Protection Manual for Human Rights Defenders.*
- ◇ *Sharing Innovational Experiences: conservation and case use of indigenous and medical plant.*

## RCOs Corner

*This corner highlights the major endeavors of CCRDA's Regional Coordination Offices (RCOs) over the past two months*

A policy dialogue workshop that discussed on CSO-Government partnership was held in Bahirdar town on June 30, 2011.

The workshop dwelt, among other things, on future direction of the regional GO-NGO forum and the role of NGOs in the region.

Gaps and challenges associated with the regional NGO guideline, the experience of zonal level GO-NGO forums and NGOs experience on partnership were also high on the agenda of the workshop.

Representatives of sector offices in the region, NGOs working in and out of Bahirdar town and government organs attended the workshop organized and facilitated by the Northern Regional Coordination Office.

In a related news, the Harari region CCRDA members' platform General Assembly Meeting was convened in Harar town on June 28, 2011.

The Annual Report of the Eastern Region Coordination Office, area of collective engagement of the platform, core objectives of the 5<sup>th</sup> Program Plan of CCRDA and future engagements of the platform members were some of the major issues deliberated upon during the course of the Meeting.



**Ato Nardos presenting annual report**

**Partial view of meeting participants**

All CCRDA members working in the region attended the meeting organized by Eastern Region Coordination Office.

In a related development, the Dire Dawa City Administration CCRDA platform members conducted their General Assembly meeting on June 30, 2011 at Dire Dawa Ras Hotel.

Discussions and exchange of views were made on annual report of the Eastern Region Coordination Office of CCRDA, future engagements of the Dire Dawa platform and the 5<sup>th</sup> Program Plan of CCRDA.



**Partial view of participants**

Similarly, General Assembly Meeting of CCRDA Members of the Oromia Platform was held here at the Secretariat on May 27, 2011.

The Meeting discussed at length the annual report of the Central Regional Coordination Office and Status of the Oromia GO- NGO forum.

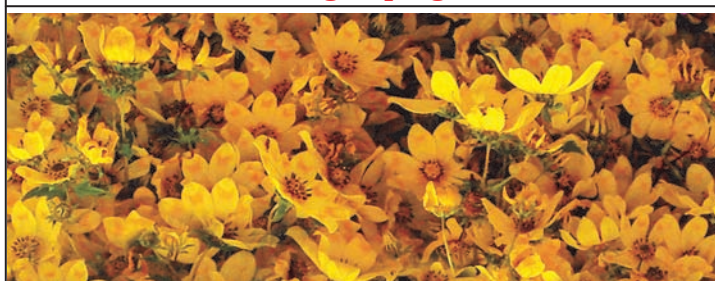
The Assembly also heard briefings on the 5<sup>th</sup> Program Plan of CCRDA and drafted action plan of the platform.

The Meeting was attended by 27 Platform members.

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**Meeting in progress**



*Happy Ethiopian New Year  
2004 E.C*

*CCRDA wishes you a Happy and Prosperous  
New Year !!*