I. Background

Ethiopia is a least developed country where decentralization and participatory modes of local governance are still evolving. Having shifted from a monarchy to a centrally commanded socialist economy, the country entered in 1991 into a federal system of government with multi-party system. The Constitution that was adopted in 1995 laid the groundwork for a democratic system of government whereby people at all levels can freely participate in political, social and economic affairs. The Constitution attempts to promote self-rule at all levels and participation of the people in the formulation of national development policies and programmes and stipulates that the government shall have the duty to support the initiatives of the people in the development endeavors.

Since the beginning of its coming to power, the Government has attempted to implement an administration that is decentralized, participatory and accountable. The degree of devolution of power, however, was limited and particularly achieved only at the level of Regional Administration, mainly due to capacity constraints. The degree of participation by the people in articulating and designing their own development initiatives has been negligible thus far due to resource constraints and lack of experience in participatory governance.

The government, however, has taken a series of policy measures to improve the situation. The various reform measures, including the civil service reform, are expected to raise awareness among the political leadership, civil servants, and the wider society of the need to engage non-government actors (civil society, private sector) in the planning and management of development. In this context, the government also initiated a number of programmes which aim to improve the consultation and engagement of local communities in the development process. For example, the District Level Decentralization Programme that was designed by the Government in late 2001 is expected to contribute to the building of the necessary institutional setup and upgrading the necessary skills for local level management of development and improved participation by the people. For effective implementation of the decentralization process, administrative structures have been reorganized in such a way that the decision-making functions are devolved from regional and zonal level structures down to the Weredas (district levels).

A major challenge facing the regional governments of Ethiopia is the severe lack of trained manpower in the area of local and regional development planning and management. In most of these regional states, regional development planners are in short supply, and therefore regional planning activities are often undertaken by personnel who lack the necessary skills and expertise in regional development planning. In this respect, capacity building is required at all levels of
the administrative hierarchy, including at the national, regional and sub-regional levels.

Oromia Regional State is the largest region both in terms of population and geographical size. Like any other region in Ethiopia, the regional state is faced with a growing demand for qualified regional planners with requisite skills in project planning and management as well as techniques of data collection and analysis. There is also a gross deficiency of training and reference materials in the field of regional development, project planning and management, data collection and analysis.

The technical assistance of UNCRD Africa Office in Ethiopia is designed to fill this gap and provide the planners of the Regional State of Oromia with requisite knowledge and technical know-how to design, implement and manage effective regional development projects and programmes. The training course is also designed to provide the planners and development managers of the regional state of Oromia with appropriate and effective data collection and analysis techniques.

Towards this goal, UNCRD Africa Office, in collaboration with Oromia Bureau of Finance and Economic Development (OBFED), has so far conducted nine successful in-country training courses and managed to train two hundred twenty-six professional planners and development managers in project planning and management; and data collection and information management.

The first training course on project planning and management was held in Adama (Nazareth) from 26 April to 8 May 1999, for twenty-one participants drawn from twelve zonal planning departments (three from Oromia Bureau of Planning and Economic Development and one participant each from the Bureaus of Education, Health, Agriculture and Water, and two from Oromia Development Association).

The second training course was organized from 14 February to 7 March 2000 in Adama (Nazareth) for a total of thirty-eight zonal department heads of economic planning and development, education, health, irrigation and agriculture. The second training course was organized and catered for heads of departments. During the evaluation of the first training course, it was found out that there is inadequate utilization of trained regional planners due to lack of appreciation of regional development planning by senior officials and policymakers of the Oromia Regional State. Thus, it was suggested that a short training course be held for heads of departments to sensitize them and introduce to these senior officials the importance of regional development planning in general and project planning and management in particular.

The third training course was conducted from 1 to 24 April 2001 in Adama (Nazareth) for twenty-five participants. During the third training course, a new module on data collection and analysis was added to the course at the request of the participants. Consequently, the third training course consisted of two modules: project planning and management and data collection and analysis. During the first module, participants were trained on concepts and practical skills for project identification, preparation, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation. In the second module, they were introduced to the techniques of data collection, sampling and questionnaire design, measurement techniques, data processing and analysis.

Twenty-nine participants attended the fourth training course, which was conducted from 13 May
to 4 June 2002. The course was organized along the same line as the previous training courses and included a course on project planning and management, and data collection and analysis.

The fifth and sixth training courses were held from 7 to 29 April 2003 and 5 to 27 April 2004 respectively in Adama (Nazareth). Twenty-nine professional planners and administrators attended the fifth training course while twenty-eight participants attended the sixth training course. The seventh training workshop on project planning and management and data collection analysis was organized from 4 to 30 April 2005 in Adama (Nazareth). Twenty-eight participants from various zones and districts of the Oromia regional state attended the training workshop. Since 2005, the structure of the curriculum has been revised and improved from the previous training courses by including a four-day training course on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods. The comprehensive evaluation done by Oromia Bureau of Finance in January 2004 as well as the post training evaluation undertaken by UNCRD strongly recommended the inclusion of PRA methods in the training course. In response to this popular demand, UNCRD revised the curriculum of its training programme and included a session on PRA methods into the training programme. During this session, the participants are introduced to the techniques participatory data collection methods as well as the strategies of community mobilization for development purposes. As in the previous training course, the participants are also introduced to the techniques and tools of project planning and management as well as data collection and analysis. The participants acquired requisite skills and knowledge on project planning and management and data collection analysis not only from the distinguished resource persons, but also from the class discussions and field visits organized during the training courses.

The eighth and ninth training courses were organized from 3 to 29 April 2006 and from 2 to 28 April 2007 respectively in Adama (Nazareth). The eighth training course was attended by twenty-eight participants while the ninth was attended twenty-nine professional planners and administrators drawn from various zones and districts of Oromia Regional Government.

Encouraged and satisfied by the success of the previous training courses, the Regional Government of Oromia has requested UNCRD Africa Office to support further training. In this regard, UNCRD Africa Office in collaboration with the Regional Government of Oromia will organize the tenth training course from 12 May to 7 June 2008 in Adama (Nazareth). As in the case of the previous training workshops, the course will focus on: (1) project planning and management; (2) data collection and analysis; and (3) participatory rural appraisal (PRA) methods.

During module one, the participants will be trained on the techniques and tools of project planning and management as well as methods of managing problems associated with completing projects on–time and within estimated costs. As part of the training course a field visit will also be organized to enable the participants to visit various projects and to learn from actual project implementation and management schemes.

During the second module, (data collection and analysis) the participants will be introduced to the techniques and challenges of data collection and analysis, including the techniques of using computer and information technologies in data processing, storage and presentation. The course will include a significant component of hands-on computer training and information technology (IT) in which participants will be trained on how to use EXCEL and SPSS to analyze and present data. During this module the participants are also introduced to the concept of PRA and
the techniques of community mobilization strategies that would enable the local people to assess their own problems and arrive at action plans that need to be taken to improve their socioeconomic conditions. The participants are trained how to involve the local community at all stages of data collection and analysis to ensure socially acceptable and economically viable data gathering processes. They are also introduced to the rationale and benefits as well as the methodologies of effective community participation.

II. Objectives

The broad objective of the training programme is to strengthen the capacity of the Regional State of Oromia for effective local and regional development planning and implementation by ensuring the availability of skilled and competent manpower in the region. The specific objectives of the training programme are to:

1. Strengthen the institutional capacity of OBFED for effective project planning and management; and data collection & analysis;

2. Upgrade the capacity of the planning staff at the Bureau Head Office for giving technical advice and guidance in project planning and management, and data collection and analysis at regional, zonal and district levels;

3. Build capacity at regional, zonal and district levels for development planning and implementation of projects by providing planners with requisite skills and knowledge in project planning and management;

4. Provide practical skills to enable the participants to gather necessary data and prepare proposals applicable to grassroots level;

5. Introduce the participants to methods and techniques of data collection and information management, as well as PRA methods; and

6. Enable the participants to develop effective survey tools and instruments, and to apply accurate data in planning.

III. Outputs of the Training Workshop

1. Thirty Ethiopian planners and officials trained in practical skills of project planning and management, techniques of data collection and analysis and PRA methods;

2. Institutional capacity of OBFED for project planning and management, and data collection and analysis strengthened; and

3. Understanding of concepts and skills related to local and regional development planning and management broadened among the trained Ethiopian planners.

IV. Training Methodology

The training workshop will utilize the same output-oriented participatory training method used by UNCRD Africa Office in its other training programmes. Lectures are delivered followed by
group work and case study analysis. During the group work, participants will be divided into three groups and will be assigned to examine relevant case studies and solve practical problems. Results of the group work will be presented at the plenary sessions where resource persons and other participants provide feedback and comments on the presentations. This training methodology entails building local capacity for diagnosing the existing situation leading to identification of alternative strategies and formulation of action plans for implementation. UNCRD experts, invited resource persons from Kenya and senior planners from Ethiopia will give lectures and guide discussions, group work and field exercises.

V. Organization

UNCRD Africa Office and the Oromia Regional Government will jointly organize the training workshop. The Head of OBFED, in collaboration with the Coordinator of UNCRD Africa Office, will provide overall coordination and policy guidance. Oromia Regional Government, through the financial support of UNICEF Ethiopia, will cover local costs, including rent of training venue, stipend for the participants, transportation cost for the participants from home-training venue-home and training equipments, including computers, OHP and OHP screen as well as local transportation during field trips. The regional government will also cover the preparation and printing costs of certificates for the participants. UNCRD Africa Office will cover DSA and travel costs of its staff and experts invited to conduct the training as well as the honorarium for local and international resource persons. UNCRD will also cater for miscellaneous training expenses, including the costs of stationery.

Participants will be about 30 senior and mid-level planning experts and officials drawn from the various Oromia regional bureaus, zones and districts.

Four experts invited and sponsored by UNCRD (Prof. Peter Ngau, Prof. Isaac Mbeche, Prof. Francis Lelo and Prof. Henry Bwisa from Kenya), along with UNCRD staff (Dr. Asfaw Kumssa and Dr. I. Mwangi) will conduct the training course. Senior Ethiopian planners and alumni of ATC (Dr. Wasse Berhanu, Haileyesus Dinka and Taye Yadetta) will also take part in the training workshop as resource persons and facilitators.

VI. Administrative Arrangements

6.1 Finance

International as well as local resource persons will be provided with a flat rate honorarium of US$500 each for preparation of training materials and delivery of lectures. In addition, international resource persons will also be paid a daily subsistence allowance (per diem) adequate to meet boarding, lodging and minimum essential services for the duration of the training workshop. The current UN rate of per diem is about US$52 per day for Adama (Nazareth) but this is subject to change without any prior notice. Per-diem will be paid for the period of stay in Ethiopia plus a terminal allowance (US$152), which is meant to cover miscellaneous expenses and transportation to and from airports, etc.

6.2 Travel Arrangements

International resource persons will be provided with a round-trip economy class air-ticket. Air
travel will be through the most direct and economical route.

6.3 Immigration and Visa Requirements

International resource persons, who require entry visa to Ethiopia, are advised to obtain appropriate entry visa from the Ethiopian Embassy in Kenya. Fees, if any, connected with visa and other formalities shall be borne by the resource persons out of the terminal allowance.

6.4 Insurance

Regretfully, UNCRD cannot provide any life, travel, medical or other insurance. Such arrangements shall therefore be at the resource persons’ own expense and discretion. International resource persons are advised to have with them their Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate during the trip as this may be required by the Ethiopian authorities.

VII. Course Certificate

Each participant will be awarded a certificate of completion upon satisfactory fulfillment of the requirements of the course.

VIII. List of Resource Persons

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IX. Annexes

Annex 1: Programme
Annex 2: Budget
Annex 3: TOR for Resource Persons