

PHE Ethiopia Consortium

Population Health and Environment Ethiopia Consortium (PHE-EC) is a non-governmental non-for-profit organization established in 2008. The consortium was established with a vision **“to see Ethiopia with a sustainable use of resources, resilient ecosystems, sustainable livelihoods, and a healthy population”**. The organization has also a mission **“to contribute to sustainable development in Ethiopia by promoting and enhancing the integration of population, health and environment through multi-sectoral approaches”**.

In pursuing its vision and mission, the consortium has been striving to advance a multi-sectoral PHE integrated approach to contribute to sustainable development through addressing family planning, reproductive health, gender issues, environmental conservation, and climate change resilience locally and globally. The consortium currently has 58 member organizations that are working in all regions of Ethiopia. It is also a member of Global Population and Sustainable Development Alliance (PSDA), and the PHE Eastern Africa and African PHE Network.

PH-EC is also striving for a more ambitious achievement guided by its second strategic plan developed for the years 2015-2020 with six major strategic goals (http://www.phe-ethiopia.org/pdf/Stratagic_plan_all_pages.pdf).

What is PHE?

Population, health and environment (PHE) approaches acknowledge and address the complex connections between humans, their health, and their environment. PHE has evolved from the recognition that communities cannot exercise adequate stewardship over their natural resources and environment if their health, nutrition and economic needs and resilience to climate impacts are not met. In addition, population growth and unsustainable use of natural resources can lead to loss of ecosystems services, exacerbating poverty and adversely affecting health outcomes.

Central to the PHE approach is improving access to family planning information and services, which works in a complementary fashion with health, environmental management, climate adaptation and mitigation, and alternative livelihood activities to enhance rural development and preserve local ecosystems. The underlying philosophy is integration and multi-sectoral partnerships which create synergies to a more effective achievement of health and environmental conservation outcomes, building resilience of communities, and promote strong community participation and ownership.



PHE approaches have been successfully implemented in a number of countries in Africa and Asia. They have been found to be more effective and gain support from target communities than single-sector interventions due to their integrated and comprehensive approach¹. For instance, a study conducted in Ethiopia on the effectiveness of PHE integrated approach has showed that the approach was 17 times more effective than non-PHE approach on family planning use². Additional indication for the support towards PHE approaches and its implementation include the incorporation of PHE five year strategy by Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) (<http://www.lvbc.com.org/index.php/mediafiles/our-news/item/100-lvbc-staff-develop-phe-strategic-plan>) and the East African Community (EAC). In addition, a network advocating for Africa as African PHE Network has been established to promote PHE approach.

How Does PHE EC Operate?

PHE-EC works closely with a diverse range of member organizations and partners at different levels to promote and cultivate comprehensive and collaborative responses to the multi-dimensional challenges associated with poverty and vulnerability. It has played and will continue to play, active role to achieve sustainable development and for an effective implementation of Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) in the country. This includes supporting the implementation of PHE interventions through fund acquisition and technical assistance, conducting research and knowledge dissemination activities to identify and raise-awareness of good practices, advocating for improved policies and programs to build an appropriate enabling environment, and actively engaging in global conferences and networks.

PHE-EC has also played an important role on the climate change agenda including participation in COP15-20, Rio+20 and ICPD beyond 2014. It has also contributed to the Ethiopian Government's Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy (CRGE) through its membership in the CRGE Facility National Advisory Committee, technical committee member of the National REDD+ and engaging in national

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and international policy dialogues on the linkages between climate change and population growth through research and advocacy.

PHE and Climate Change

The multi-sectoral PHE integrated approach, with its emphasis on addressing several issues in a coordinated manner, is considered a very appropriate mechanism for responding to the multi-faceted challenges associated with climate change, which inherently requires a coordinated and cross-sectoral response. The PHE approach has many similarities with community-based climate change adaptation (CBA) programs. The primary difference is the emphasis of CBA approaches on reducing vulnerability to climate change while limited focus is given to population and health issues, such as family planning and reproductive health³. Therefore, integration of PHE and CBA approaches can help for a better result of achieving inclusiveness in building resilience to climate change.

In addition, PHE-EC also puts effort to address the link between climate change, food security and population growth. Modeling undertaken by the Futures Group in partnership with PHE-EC has demonstrated that the expected negative impacts of climate change on agriculture and food security in Ethiopia would be offset by 2050 by reducing the current rate of population growth⁴. As such, PHE-EC is strongly advocating for rights-based family planning to be considered as a key strategy for adapting to the effects of climate change and for it to be incorporated into relevant national and global strategies and programs including the climate negotiations.

Current PHE EC Initiatives and Projects

➤ Building institutional capacity and participatory leadership for resilience, mitigation and adaptation to climate change in the Simien Mountains and Awash National Parks, **funded through the Strategic Climate Institutions Program.**

➤ Partnering with Farm Africa and a consortium of organizations to conserve the biodiversity and ecosystems services in the Bale-Eco Region and increase the resilience and well-being of local communities, **funded through supporting the Horn of Africa's Resilience program.**

➤ Strengthening and scaling up reproductive health and family planning interventions through the development of a PHE learning center and mainstreaming reproductive health and family planning across sectors at national level, **funded by the David Lucile Packard Foundation.**

➤ Supporting network creation and capacity building in the Yayu Biosphere Reserve to improve the management of conservation and development interventions for environmental sustainability, **funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.**

➤ Social Assessment of Protected Area (SAPA), **funded by IIED.**

➤ Strengthening and sustaining self help organization to enhance livelihood and population, health and environment outcomes, **funded by Australian Aid: Direct Aid Program.**

➤ The role of floriculture sector in empowering women in Ethiopia: a situation analysis, **funded by the Netherlands Embassy in Ethiopia.**

For further information please check our website: www.phe-ethiopia.org

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1. Population Action International 2014, *Integrated Population, Health and Environment (PHE): More than the Sum of its Parts*, Washington, USA

2. Makeda Sinaga, Ahmed Mohammed, Negash Teklu², Kristen Stelljes and Tefera Belachew (2015). *Effectiveness of the Population, Health, Environment Approach in improving Family Planning Outcomes in Gurghe zone, South West Ethiopia*. Bimed Central

3. Hardee, K, Bremner, J and Mogelgaard, K 2010, 'Is there a Link between Population, Health and Environment (PHE) and Climate Change Adaptation?', *Balanced Newsletter*, Vol. 1, Iss. 2.

4. Moreland, S and Smith E 2012, *Modeling Climate Change, Food Security, and Population: Pilot-Testing the Model in Ethiopia*, MEASURE Evaluation PRH: Chapel Hill, USA.
