



executive report

2003

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7 th General Assembly of the Founding Members will be held Dec 20 th 2003

Message from the Chairman of the Board of Director

As in previous years, 2003 was a turning point for Lem Ethiopia. It was a year of many successes in building civil society coalition for environment and development and the achievement of our strategic objectives. It was also a year of many lessons learned. The Society is grateful to the communities, participating schools, and donors who have made it possible for us to drive our mission objectives to fruition. Special thanks goes to members of our Society, Packard Foundation, and Embassies of Finland and Japan who have devoted their time, expertise and finance to help communities meet their aspirations of sustainable livelihoods.

Subsequent to the decision of the 6th General Assembly, its strategic plan (year 2003-2005) has been reviewed and finalised by the Board of Directors. To implement its strategic plan effectively, the Society assembled three task forces. The task forces consist of members of Board of Directors and other founding members based on their professional experience and commitment.

- (1) Advocacy, awareness generation and lobby
- (2) Sustainable livelihoods
- (3) Membership drive, resource mobilisation and management

In accordance with the 2nd strategic plan and the annual operational plan all ongoing activities have been implemented. Among the major activities were environmental awareness development through schools and promotion of appropriate technologies through model site establishment. Both activities are focussing on sustainable livelihoods and advocacy.

An increased awareness of our weaknesses has led us to question the nature of our partnership; providing significant impetus for change in our network development consciousness and practice. As a result, we are increasingly paying attention to the question of development - people nexus. By publishing our strategic plan, we have taken a first bold step in gearing individual groups and networks into action, and generating the momentum required for a true process of collaborative development. Let this stand as a testimony to our open invitation to government, business, NGOs, and civil society organisations of our commitment to contribute to the development of communities of practice in environment and development.

Costantinos Berhe Tesfu
Chairman of the Board of Directors

**LEM THE ENVIRONMENT AND
DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY OF ETHIOPIA**

EXECUTIVE REPORT 2003

Presented to the 7th Annual General Assembly

1. Major Activities

1.1. Phased out Activity

Promotion of Biogas Technology through schools: This has been a project targeting four high schools of Addis Ababa. The idea of generating biogas from the school latrines has been a problem solving intervention that addresses problem of energy for cafeterias and laboratories, environmental health and supply of organic fertilizer. As the result of our approach about 50 biogas digesters were constructed by different institutions in different parts of the country during the last 10 months period which indicates that our effort in promoting the technology has brought significant impact. The Embassy of Finland, our partner in the promotion of biogas technology, provided additional funds for the construction of two biogas digesters.

1.2. On Going Activities

- **Towards a People Based Environment and Population Integrated Project:** This is a continuation of the project funded by David and Lucil Packard Foundation up to year 2004. The main objective of this project is to create and develop environmental awareness with regard to the interrelationship and inter-dependence between people, development, and the environment/natural resources. 10 Selected schools in 3 Zones of Amhara Region and 3 Zones of Oromia Region have been the entry points. The annual operational plan consisted of 4 major components; organizing workshops on environment, population and sustainable development issues as per region, conduct training on appropriate technologies, demo site establishment on appropriate technologies, and follow up of previous initiatives, material provision to schools under the project and monitoring and evaluation.

95% of planned activities have been accomplished. 19 schools (10 high schools and 9 primary schools) and their surrounding communities have benefited from the project. 20 young farmers (3 were females) and their

families were among the beneficiaries outside the schools. According to monitoring and evaluation reports the achievements were encouraging in comparison with the resources utilised.

- **Promotion of Mud Technology as an Alternative Construction Resource:** The main objective of this project is to show that there is alternative construction resource without affecting the forestry resource, i.e., construction of modern mud houses without using wood for wall, construction of energy saving mud stoves from mud with an efficiency of 25-30%, and construction of mud beehives with the capacity to produce 14-16 kg of honey per annum. The project has planned to train 20 members of homeless families in Ambo town with due attention to female headed households and to construct 10 modern mud houses for each 10 households after the training.

Accordingly the committee composed of representatives from Ambo town council, popular Edirs, selected beneficiaries, Lem's Ambo Mud Technology Training Center and selected Kebeles was established and selected beneficiaries. Among the 10 households 8 of them are female-headed households and among the 20 trainees 16 are women. Each household has an average family size of 6, thus 60 people are direct beneficiaries. The training was completed in October 2003 and productions of construction materials that are mud bricks are going on. So far bricks required for 4 households have been produced. Yet it is late because of the change in government structure and staff turnover in the municipality, which delay the allocation of land. The construction is expected to be completed in the coming June 2004.

- **Promotion of Biogas Technology:** Finland Embassy decided to provide additional fund to construct 2 model biogas digesters in Amhara Region; one in Bahir Dar and the other in Kombolcha both in secondary schools. Both digesters have been constructed and the institutions handed over the plants.
2. **Partnership and Networking:** a number of institutions have interest to be partner with our Society and want networking. This is starting from the grassroots as a result of our intervention through schools and to the higher level. We need to further leverage on this strength to achieve an environmentally sustainable development.
 3. **Budget Utilization:** We are using our resources effectively and efficiently. Though the limitation in resources is there the overall performance is very good. According to the audit report of year 2002 there is nothing commented in our accounts standard system and performance. The following are the income and expenditures of year 2003 including payments up to end of December 2003.

Title	Income			Source	Expenditure	
	BBF	Transferred	Total		Project	Overhead
Environment and Population Integrated Project	33638	275474	309112	DandL Packard Foundation	223589	66786
Low cost mud-house construction Project	--	261500	261500	Japan Embassy	63623	14203
Promotion of Biogas	37778	69012	106790	Finland Embassy	78664	24640
Miscellaneous	--	2135	2135	Members	--	--

Total	71416	608121	679537		365876	105629
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NB. Some expenses to be effected until end of December are included here and figures are rounded to the closer number.

4. **Planned Activities: Environmental Policy Advocacy** (Task Force on Advocacy and Lobbying)

4.1. **Advocacy targeting parliamentarians:**

- Identification of critical policy issues related to natural resources conservation and realization of sustainable livelihoods/development up to March 2004,
- Selection of best audience within the parliament – up to end of June 2004
- Opening dialogue with the selected audiences using different media channels July 2004-Sep. 2004
- Continue the dialogue with selected regional parliament Oct-Nov. 2004
- Evaluate activities - December 2004

4.2. Advocacy targeting local authorities and communities on systematic implementation of the Environmental Policy of Ethiopia June 2004-Oct. 2004

4.3. Media tools (Radio, TV, Newsletters publications, etc.): - Buy air time to transmit selected issue dialogue and electronic media June 2004-Dec. 2004

5. **Sustainable Livelihoods** (Task Force on Sustainable Livelihoods)

5.1. Environment and Population Integrated Project: This is an ongoing project and effected on previous agreements with donors and regions. If additional resources are available it will be further strengthened.

5.2. Promotion of alternative technologies (solar, mud, biogas, tree planting)

5.3. Promotion of mud technology: Apart from the ongoing project it is intended to train people from new settlement areas very who have settled closer to natural forest reservations in the western and southern part of the country.

5.4. Promotion of the biogas technology: This is our most successful intervention area and we will continue establishing demonstration sites up on demand resources availability.

5.5. Solar Energy Promotion: Through partnership with German civil societies it is planned to establish a solar pumping and water supply project around Debre Zeit. The budget seems available from the civil societies. This is a testing project and it will be extended to solar electrification in the same village.

5.6. School Environmental Education and Protection Club (SEEPC) Members Development Initiative:- This is a project target university/college and high school SEEPC members and intended to involve them in useful activities during long vacation. The 2004 program (July-Aug. 2004) is limited to Addis Ababa and based on the lessons to be learnt it will be expanded to other regions in the

future years. Accordingly SEPC members of respective institutions will select 60 students and Eth. Birr 33,000 is earmarked from US Embassy.

6. **Resource Mobilisation** (Task Force on membership, resource mobilization and management)
 - 6.1. Capacity building of the Society:-If the Society is required to meet its objectives it must be strengthened resources wise at least to the minimum. The office is understaffed, has a problem of office venue, etc.
 - 6.2. Membership expansion:- To realize what the 6th General Assembly has decided that is self reliance or depend on local resources it is essential to recruit potential members and establish a mechanism to involve grassroots and institutions.
 - 6.3. Fund raising:-To satisfy the financial resource requirement a strong and systematic approach must be developed

Our Society is in better position to deliver on its participatory and people-based environment and development agenda more than ever. On the other hand the country's environmental problems interrelated with poverty is getting worse. Thus, we need much to do to increase our contribution towards improving the situation working with communities, policy makers, the private sector, donors, and other civic organisations. The situation requires more commitment and considerable effort individually and in-groups.

***The way forward:
Networking to create communities of practice***

The environment and development networking faces many limitations in the sphere of institutional development. As networkers, we have yet to establish a clear and coherent voice regionally on issues which are crucial to our work, or to the interest of the communities we profess to serve. This contravenes the ideals, standards, and rules of effective networking management process. It also encourages well-meaning individuals to alienate themselves from the process, rather participate in it and work to improve it. Having weighed these challenges carefully, we are determined to address the following issues that have hitherto hampered good networking

1. We have on several occasions raised the question as to whether we have so far been effective in promoting and institutionalising empowerment among the people we profess to serve through lived experiences gained within the continent.
2. It is also argued that we do not show sufficient awareness of the difficult socio-political choices facing us if we are to become more involved in addressing the development challenges of sustainable livelihood insecurity and poverty.
3. These difficulties are further compounded by the poor relationship existing between and among ourselves. There is too much readiness for uncoordinated and unilateral action without meaningful and adequate understanding, let alone agreement, on critical issues with other organisations and constituencies.

While many proposals for remedial action have been formulated, real commitment to collaborative processes at the inter-organisational level has always been limited. Mobilising the action required has also remained a daunting challenge, as many practical and

structural constraints militate against commitment by individual groups to inter-organisational initiatives nationally and regionally.

An increased awareness of this problem, has led us to question the nature of the relationship which has existed between ourselves; providing significant impetus for change in our network development consciousness and practice. This, we hope, would be a major opening for the mutual incorporation of strategies and process in a more dynamic and complex articulation of professional work. As a result, we are increasingly paying attention to the question of development - people nexus. By publishing our strategic plan, we have taken a first bold step in gearing individual groups and networks into action, and generating the momentum required for a true process of collaborative development of Lem. We foresee a need for periodic review of this process to encourage Lem to open up forums for such initiatives, as they pave the way towards consensus and alliances for empowerment. Let this stand as a testimony to our open invitation to governments, business, NGOs, and civil society organisations of our commitment to contribute to the ethical standards of networking.

The main objective of such a collaborative effort is the development of an organic network that will cement the Lem ideals in every Lem network, members, facilitators, networkers, community of persons and institutions we network with. It is a statement of institutional principles and ethics for practice, designed as a reference document for all Lem Networks and practitioners, to enhance the forests, trees and people nexus at the intra-organisational and inter-organisational levels. It encourages qualitative improvement in our relationship

- contributing to on-going efforts by Lem Networks and practitioners commitment to the use of high standard of networking management practices;
- encouraging Lem Networks and practitioners to develop a collective capacity for advocacy, so as to effectively articulate the needs of the constituencies we serve;
- *servng as a guide document for improving the partnership between professionals and practitioners and our collaborators, by setting out institutional modalities aimed at enhancing the present pattern of pluralistic networking as an instrument of multi-track communication;*
- back up the establishment and operation of an effective process of institutional strengthening and horizontal linkages among network partners ;

This should ideally foster a genuine commitment on the part both of Lem networks and practitioners and our partners to a locally-driven approach to the challenges of the nexus, and help in focussing the attention of resources to improving the human environment by eradicating the grinding poverty witnessed in many quarters today. The following programme objective will help us achieve this important networking agenda

1. **Share knowledge systems, tools, technology, and adaptive strategies that people had developed on their own** long before donors, NGOs, and political powers came into being. The outputs are: (1) an interactive continental database on institutions, publications, case studies, and planned activities set up. (2) National programmes take lead in capitalising on the wealth of information generated in national programmes and develop Lem disciplines through out the African Network

2. **Design programmes to overcome cultural and language barrier by institutionalising cost-effective but determined capacities** that would enable easier communications. The outputs here is training needs analysis and identification of trainees and training packages and modalities in language lessons for all regions identified.
3. **Initiate immediate advocacy networking, research collaboration, and interregional consultations** activities on all existing information in national Lem activities. The outputs are: (1) Compiled listing (however irregular) of all existing publications, institutions, on-going activities in all Lem networks. (2) Governments, IFI, donors, multinationals sensitised on key issues affecting marginalisation of local communities in plans that they have not participated in their formulation. (3) Interregional co-operation and consultation improved through exchange visits to study specific issues and formalising relationship between network collaborators.
4. **Develop information communication mechanisms** on key initiatives a view to co-ordinate activities that reinforce each other for a meaningful. The outputs are: (1) tracks, channels and levels of communications identified. (2) clear designations of tracks of co-operation, dependency, services and conflict, where one may arise, among interregional network stakeholders identified.

As a minimum goal, we in the Lem network accept professional networking management as a specific but dynamic body of knowledge. We see our networking structure within the context of relationships that are established both by the 'voluntary contracts' between Lem partners, participating institutions and more importantly the nodes and "reporting" chains within the network management. The Lem organisational structure of networking needs to be developed without due regard to grassroots networking to perform the tasks defined by its strategy in the best possible manner. These include the relationships in the allocation of authority and responsibility, the reporting relationships, and the mechanisms for integrating the different components of the NW project.

In asserting to an enabling nexus for organisational process, we, as Lem Networkers and practitioners, must commit ourselves to clearly demonstrate our professionalism; with our testament of commitment to excellence, prudence in our modes of communication, transparency in our operational relationships, accountability to all stakeholders and predictability of their actions. We need to demonstrate their commitment to empowerment, taking trouble to mention some of the areas in which our intended work would enhance such a process. Networks should endeavour to promote participation and as a system-wide input to networking management development, African Lem Networks and practitioners should actively support and mobilise all collaborative efforts possible for the establishment of acceptable standards of networking management systems in Africa's fledgling environment sector and popular organisations such as in our respective constituencies.