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“Bridging the gap between increasing knowledge and decreasing resources”

## Knowledge Management on Climate Change Adaptation: Communication and Learning Structures in Ethiopia

MAXI DOMKE, JÜRGEN PRETZSCH

*Technische Universität Dresden, Inst. of International Forestry and Forest Products: Tropical Forestry, Germany*

### Abstract

Knowledge management is a challenge for climate change adaptation. Abundant knowledge is available within scientific and traditional knowledge systems. But this expertise is not interlinked and communicated effectively for a successful implementation of local adaptation strategies.

This study contributes to the understanding and assessing of knowledge management on climate change adaptation at the local level particularly in Ethiopia. The research's objectives are (1) the identification of stakeholders and their strategies, (2) the analysis and comparison of prevailing knowledge systems and their compatibility, and (3) the investigation of endogenous perspectives on social, cultural and socio-economic components influencing the effectiveness of knowledge processes.

In the initial baseline study that was carried out in 2013 three instruments were used: a situation, stakeholder and basic social network analysis. Data were collected by reviewing national documents, conducting 15 key informant interviews at the national and regional level as well as 54 semi-structured questionnaires with governmental, non-governmental stakeholders and communities in two districts. Open questions allowed capturing *in situ* aspects that serve to complement indicators analysing knowledge transfer and exchange in detail.

Preliminary findings show idle potentials that can contribute to the enhancement of the knowledge flow. The collaboration of the public and private actors on environmental and livelihood issues is mainly focused on administrative aspects. Main sources for climate related information on the district and village level are governmental authorities and broadcasting whereby especially research institutions are marginalised. Due to gender-related cultural patterns women have limited access to information even though they play an important role in the knowledge transfer within the community.

By shifting the focus to more conceptual and participatory methods the learning effect is likely to increase. Development Agents (governmental extension worker) play a crucial role in the communication and information network of community and local government that can influence local decision making. Their working approaches need attention. For the accomplishment of comprehensive activities at the local level a functioning infrastructure as well as necessary skills and capacity have to be built to ensure an enduring knowledge flow and the sustainability of long-term strategies.

**Keywords:** Adaptive capacity, extension, knowledge systems, social capital