

# FSS Update



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An email newsletter

to facilitate networking and information exchange among CSOs and researchers

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## Spotlight



FSS Bulletin  
(Vol. 3&4, no. 2 August 2006)

### Articles:

- *Eritrea and Ethiopia: In Quest of a Culture of Peace and Dialogue* (Bahru Zewde)
- *Poverty Reduction in China: Some Observations from a Recent Visit to Beijing and Gansu Province, Western China* (Dessalegn Rahmato)
- *Linkages between Tef, Food Security and Environment in Ethiopia* (Daniel Kassahun)

Book Review by Shiferaw Bekele

## FSS Partners Day

The Forum for Social Studies (FSS) launched its first ever “Partners Day” on 26th October 2006. The event was held on the FSS premise from 3.00 – 7.30 pm. Present on the occasion were representatives of the FSS donor consortium (Embassy of Ireland, Netherlands Embassy, Norwegian Embassy, DfID), Friedrich Ebert Foundation, government policy and decision makers, higher education institutions, partners from the private sector, sister organizations from the civil society, FSS Board members, the media, researchers and other invited guests.

The FSS Partners’ Day is aimed at creating an informal platform for exchanging views on the Forum’s achievements and for reflecting on its future directions. The occasion was also aimed at exploring new areas of partnership among other non-state actors.

The main events during the occasion included the display of FSS advocacy posters on the environment, publications, and newspaper clippings showing media coverage of FSS programme events, photographic displays, and screening of FSS documentary film on the environment. The main showpiece of the occasion was the screening of a documentary film about FSS which highlights the Forum’s major activities and growth over the years.

Following the screening of the FSS Documentary Film, a short discussion was held on FSS and its activities.

Discussion was kicked off by Ato Misganaw, cabinet member of the Addis Ababa City Administration and Head of Information and Culture Bureau, who wanted to know if FSS has attempted to approach

and influence legislators. Prof. Bahru Zewde, the Executive Director of the Forum, explained that so far FSS’ focus has been on involving policy makers in the public dialogues. However, FSS has also been striving to facilitate an informed policy making process by disseminating its Policy Briefs among legislators and counselors. The FSS Policy Briefs provide digests of the research findings and recommendations presented in user-friendly format and national language.

Ato Mengesha H/Meleket, project manager of Friedrich Ebert Foundation, raised the issue of financial sustainability of FSS. He stated that the European Union (EU) has availed a substantial fund to strengthen civil society programmes in the areas of governance and asked if FSS has attempted to access such resources. Dr Taye Assefa, Research and Publications Director of FSS, replied that in response to EU’s Call for Proposals, FSS has submitted two project proposals. While the first project proposal has been accepted, the second one is under review.

The issue of sustainability was also raised by Ato Sahlu Haile, Board member of FSS, and Dr Assefa Admassie, Director of the Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute. Prof. Bahru admitted that currently FSS is exclusively dependent on donors, and he underlined the Forum is in the process of exploring alternative strategies of self-sufficiency.

Ato Zegeye Asfaw, board member of FSS, also stressed the need to depend more on own resources and wanted to hear the opinion of private investors who were present in the meeting in respect to their civic responsibilities in strengthening organizations such as FSS. Ato Tadesse Tilahun, CEO of NOC, and Ato Tsegaye Abebe, president of the Horti-

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cultural Association, were present on the occasion. Ato Tadesse, after appreciating FSS for its commendable effort, stressed the importance of extending FSS' coverage on a wider scale and the necessity of tapping the emerging issues. He stated that as the private sector is happy to associate with institutions such as FSS and discharge its responsibilities of making inputs into the policy processes, FSS should involve the private sector, for instance through corporate membership. Ato Tadesse declared his readiness to contribute to FSS programme activities in this respect. Ato Tsegaye, too, expressed his readiness to take part in the FSS activities.

Dr Meheret noted that in the past FSS had involved the private sector in various dialogues, and stated that some individuals were very active as is witnessed in the documentary film. He stated that FSS is indirectly helping the private sector through research and inputs into policy.

Ato Teshager, representative of the Netherlands Embassy, suggested that apart from conducting research and publication activities, FSS has to go directly to the government body and demonstrate what FSS is doing and ask for assistance, for instance, for office building. He further noted that foreign aid may not always be there and suggested the need to explore domestic sources of funding.

Finally, Ato Mengesha, from Friedrich Ebert Foundation, appreciated the importance of FSS' IGTK program to the nation and asked whether FSS is planning to create similar knowledge sharing mechanisms through the establishment of regional centers or chapters. Prof. Bahru replied that FSS has been working very much in that line and there are plans to identify contact persons in Oromia, Amhara, Southern and Tigray regions, which would serve as a nucleus for future establishment of regional branches.

The event was concluded with a cocktail reception.

**FSS Partners Day in Pictures**



**Symposium on  
Sustainable Water Resources  
Development**

The Arba Minch University (AMU) held its 10<sup>th</sup> Symposium on “Sustainable Water Resources Development” at Arba Minch town on October 9 &10, 2006. About 24 papers on various issues of water resources were presented and discussed during the two-day meeting. Attending the conference were water resource specialists drawn from AMU, Ministry of Water Resources, Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, higher institutions and other organizations. Representing FSS at the symposium was Dr Daniel Kassahun, who presented a paper titled “Appraisal of Household Level Rainwater Harvesting Practices in Ethiopia: Issues for Policy Intervention”. This presentation sparked a heated debate and useful feedbacks were obtained. During the general discussion, participants have expressed that various stakeholders, such as policy makers, legislators, civil societies and the private sector should be invited to take part in future symposia.

**የፀረ ፌስታል ቀን ተክበረ**

ቅዳሜ ጥቅምት አስራ አንድ ቀን ኤስ.ኤስ.ኤስ አዲስ - ተፈጥሮን በማልማት ብክለትን ማስወገድ ማህበር በተሰኘ አገር በቀል መንግሥታዊ ያልሆነ ድርጅት አስተባባሪነት “ፌስታል የክፍለ ዘመናችን ታላቅ የአካባቢ ስጋት” በሚል መሪ ሃሳብ በዳግማዊ ምኒልክ ሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ቤት አዳራሽ በህዝባዊ ውይይት ተክብሮ ዋለ። በዝግጅቱ ጥሪ የተደረገላቸው እንግዶች፤ በፌስታል ፅዳትና ቅየራ የተሰማሩ በርካታ ሴቶች፤ ዩኒቨርሲቲና የሁለተኛ ደረጃ ት/ቤት ተማሪዎች ተገኝተዋል። በዕለቱ ሙያዊ ገለጻ እንዲያደርጉ የተጋበዙ ምሁራን፤- ዶ/ር ብሩክ ለማ ከአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ፤ ዶ/ር ዳንኤል ካሳሁን ከማሕበራዊ ጥናት መድረክ፤ ዶ/ር ዮሃንስ ገ/ሚካኤል ከአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ፤ አቶ መሃመድ ከፌደራል የአካባቢ ጥበቃ ቢሮ አጠር ያለ ገለጻ አቅርበዋል። በውይይቱም የፌስታል ብክለት ከጊዜ ወደ ጊዜ በመበራከቱ፤ በሰውና በከብቶች ጤና፤ በአካባቢ ብክለት እና በአካባቢ ውበት ያለው መጠነ ሰፊ ተፅዕኖ በዝርዝር የቀረበ ሲሆን ፌስታልን ለመቆጣጠር በተለያዩ ሃገራት የተገኙ ልምዶችን (በተለይም በፌስታል ላይ በሚጣል ቀረጥ ጉዳይ) በመቃኘት በኢትዮጵያ መንግስት በኩል እየተደረገ ያለውን ጥረትም ለመረዳት ተችሏል። በገለጻውም የፌስታል ውፍረት ከ30 ማይክሮ ሜትር ያላነሰ ውፍረት ሊኖረው እንደሚገባ የሚያስገድደው የፌደራል ደረቅ ቆሻሻ ረቂቅ ደምብ (ፌስታሉ ወፈር ያለ ከሆነ በተደጋጋሚ ጥቅም ላይ እንዲውል ስለሚረዳ) ለሚንስትሮች ምክር ቤት እንደቀረበ ለማወቅ ተችሏል። በከተማው ፅዳት እንቅስቃሴ የጎላ ሥፍራ የያዙት

አርቲስት ስለሺ ደምሴ (ጋሽ አበራ ሞላ) ልምዳቸውን እንዲያካፍሉ ተጠይቀው የፌስታል ብክለት ዙሪያ ትልቁ ችግር የአመለካከት ችግር መሆኑን በአጽንኦት ተናግረዋል። ከተሳታፊዎችም በርካታ ጥያቄዎች ተነስተው ሞቅ ያለ ውይይት ተካሂዷል። የውይይቱ አስተባባሪዎች ወ/ሮ ወዴ ሀሩይ እና ወ/ሮ እሌኒ መኩሪያ ከጥቅምት 11 እስከ 19 የሚዘልቅ ታላቅ የፀረ ፌስታል ብክለት ዘመቻ ሳምንት በአዲስ አበባ እንደሚካሄዱ ገልጠዋል።

**“Society, State & Identity in African History”  
Call for conference papers**



**FOURTH CONGRESS  
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN HISTORIANS  
Addis Ababa, 22-25 May 2007**

Conference jointly organized by

- **Department of History** (Addis Ababa University) and **Forum for Social Studies** (Addis Ababa)

In collaboration with

- **the Executive Committee of the Association of African Historians**

And with the support of

- **The African Union Commission**

The issue of identity has been one of the most central in human society. Africa has been no exception to this global phenomenon. Particularly since independence in the 1960s, the Continent has been rocked by both intra-state and inter-state conflicts, many of them concerned with the issue of identity. The post-colonial state has not been particularly successful in establishing a pluralist order that could accommodate multiple identities. Indeed, identity has tended to be manipulated by the political elite in the service of political power. This partly explains the persistence or even virulence of identity-based conflicts side by side with the formal declarations of African leaders to forge regional and continental unity.

Yet, pre-occupation with the all-absorbing and often oppressive present can easily obfuscate both the deep-rooted character of the problems of identity and the mutations they have undergone over time. It is the task of historians to investigate those roots and delineate the mutations.

A recurrent feature of the pre-colonial history of Africa is the movement of peoples from one part of the Continent to an-

other. These population movements were often attended by considerable destruction and dislocation. A more benign feature of the pre-colonial African past is the importance of long-distance trade. A third outstanding element in the pre-colonial period was the rise of a number of empires that brought under a common political umbrella divergent peoples and principalities.

Colonial rule not only diverted the historical path outlined above but it also shaped the nature of post-colonial African society and polity in more ways than one. The first major innovation of the colonial order - indeed, one of its distinctive marks - was the drawing of relatively watertight boundaries, where previously there had only been almost imperceptible borders. A corollary of this innovation was the emergence of new states that combined hitherto independent peoples within the newly defined territorial limits.

Independence opened a new chapter in African history. The nation-state, a creation by and large of colonial rule, continued as the dominant form of political association and the main vehicle for the expression of identity. Colonial boundaries came to be regarded as sacrosanct.

Far from ensuring peace and security, the life of the post-colonial state has been attended by conflict and dislocation of unprecedented magnitude. Both intra- and inter-state conflicts have littered the landscape. Xenophobia and ethnic cleansing have reared their ugly heads, in Africa no less than in many other parts of the world. It is not an exaggeration to state that many of these conflicts are the outcome of contestations of identity or the failure of African states to accommodate multiple identities.

It is in recognition of the contemporary salience and the historical depth of the issue of identity that the Association of African Historians has decided to dedicate its Fourth Congress to the theme of "Society, State and Identity in African History". The Association thereby hopes to marshal the expertise and knowledge of African historians and historians of Africa into examining the issue of identity **from a historical perspective**.

#### Sub-themes

Papers are being solicited to address various facets of the central theme. The following sub-themes are suggested to ensure the maximum possible participation as well as a multi-faceted treatment of the subject:

- pre-colonial identities
- migration and acculturation
- colonialism and identity
- urbanization and multiple identities
- conceptions of the nation-state and identity
- identity-based conflicts
- perceptions of the other and xenophobia
- the challenge of writing regional histories
- heritage and identity
- trans-national artistic and literary expressions
- federalism and devolution
- lessons of regional integration organizations

(ECOWAS, SADC, etc.)

- the challenge of creating a pan-African identity.

#### DEADLINES

**Submission of Abstract (1-2 pages) – 30 November 2006**

**Submission of Paper (max. 20 pages, 1 ½ space) – 28 February 2007**

There are limited funds for participants to cover the travel and accommodation costs of selected papers. Participants are thus strongly urged to help us achieve the maximum level of participation by raising their own funds.

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**New Acquisitions of  
FSS Documentation Centre**

#### Publications on Ethiopia

Fassil Nahum. 1997. *Constitution for a Nation of Nations: the Ethiopian Prospects*. Lawrenceville : The Red Sea Press, Inc.

Getnet Tadele. 2006. *Bleak Prospects: Young Men, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS in an Ethiopian Town*. Leiden: African Studies Centre.

Mengistu Woube. 2005. *Effects of Resettlement Schemes on the Biophysical and Human Environments: the case of Gambela Region, Ethiopia*. Florida: Universal Publishers.

Nash, Durrenda, Onolemmehen, and Kebede Gessesse. 1998. *The Black Jews of Ethiopia: The Last Exodus*. London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc.

J.O. Adésinfa, Yao Graàham, and A. Olukoshi. 2006. *Africa and Development Challenges in the New Millennium: The NEPAD Debate*. London : Zed Books.

Rose, Pauline. 1997. *Gender and Primary Schooling in Ethiopia*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

The World Bank. 2005. *Education in Ethiopia: Strengthening the Foundation for Sustainable Progress*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

#### Other Publications

Berman, Bruce, Dickson Eyoh and Will Kymlicka, eds. 2004. *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*. Oxford: James Currey.

Browne, Stephen. 2006. *Aid and Influence: Do Donors Help or Hinder?* London: Earthscan.

Cudworth, Erika. 2003. *Environment and Society*. London. Routledge.

Hall, John, *et al.* 2003. *Sociology on Culture*. London: Routledge.

Nieumoudt, Lieb, and Jan Groenewald. eds. *The Challenge of Change: Agriculture, Land and the South African Economy*. Scottsville: University of Natal Press.

Pollard, Amy, and Julius court. 1995. *How Civil Society Organizations Use Evidence to Influence Policy Processes: A literature review*. IDS Working Paper 249. London. Overseas Development Institute.

#### Audio Visual

IRIN. September 2006. *The Shadows of Peace: Life after the LRA*.

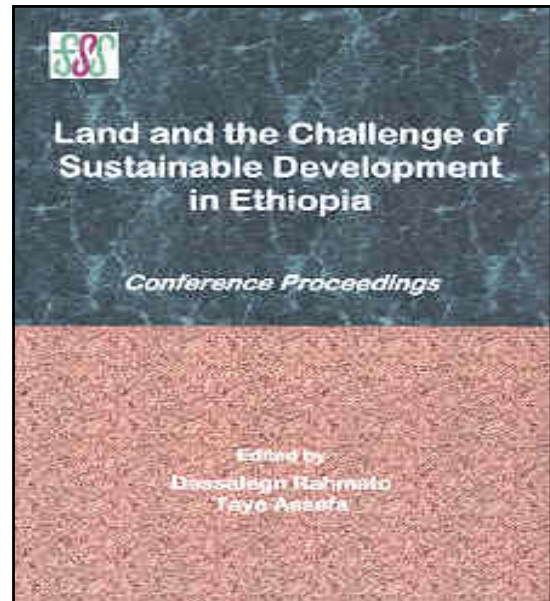
## FSS Update



A free medium for sharing information among CSOs on their initiatives, activities, challenges and achievements.

Send your contributions to:  
[fss@ethionet.et](mailto:fss@ethionet.et)

## New Publication (Oct. 2006)



## Publishing Opportunities Offered by FSS

Since its establishment in 1998, FSS has been producing a variety of good quality publications on different development issues. While a lot of these publications are products of its research and public debate programs, a number of them are also the outputs of independent research carried out by individuals outside FSS and selected for publication by FSS on the bases of the originality of their research and the social significance of their subject matter.

FSS would like to encourage authors of such good quality works to submit their manuscripts for publication in its book and monograph series.

FSS also invites authors to submit contributions for publication in the quarterly *FSS Bulletin*, which carries short articles on current development and policy issues, book reviews, communications and short notes on on-going research.

FSS provides a modest honorarium for approved manuscripts that can be published as books, monographs or Bulletin articles and book reviews.

#### For more details, contact:

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