

March 2010 E-Newsletter

IIRR Honored for Good Gender Practices in Ethiopia

(ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia) - On March 1, 2010, the Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA), an umbrella group for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Ethiopia, organized a national Good Practice Day where approximately thirty-nine international and national NGOs took part.

The objective of the Good Practice Day was, among others, to showcase NGO contributions to the development of Ethiopia, share innovative approaches to development, and clear up misconceptions about the role of NGOs.



Firew Kefyalew, IIRR Ethiopia Country Director (right), accepts an award on behalf of IIRR from His Excellency Girma W/Giorgis, President of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia (left).

IIRR was selected as one of sixteen honored NGOs in Ethiopia based on an impact story submitted to CCRDA for competition. The story, entitled “Even the usual age-old greetings have changed,” depicts how, with over a decade of continued technical and financial support of IIRR’s Gender and Leadership in Decision Making project, Alemaya Primary School’s entire environment changed in favor of female students. In fact, the school has become one of the very few schools where girls are encouraged to stand out in their studies, feel safe, and exude confidence as contributing members of society.

After receiving the story, CCRDA engaged film producers who went to the school and filmed some of its gender-related activities. His Excellency Girma W/Giorgis, President of Federal Republic of Ethiopia, awarded certificates to sixteen NGOs, including IIRR, for submitting good practice stories and sharing their valuable experiences to CCRDA members and other development partners. In their speeches on the occasion, the president as well as the Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Health appreciated the contribution of NGOs to the country’s development. In total, thirty-six NGOs, including IIRR, participated in an exhibition staged on the day.

IIRR Celebrates the 50th Anniversary of Its Establishment in the U.S. and the Beginning of Its Partnership with Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton, LLP



(NEW YORK, United States) - The unique partnership between IIRR and CGSH dates back to 1960, when a partner of the firm, James G. Johnson, worked with IIRR's founder, Y.C. James Yen, to establish the Institute in the United States. The firm's pro bono work for IIRR has grown steadily ever since. IIRR's Board of Trustees has always included at least one active or retired partner of the firm and currently has three. The firm and its individual partners have made generous contributions of unrestricted funds to IIRR and have actively supported the Institute's work for since 1960.

IIRR is grateful to CGSH for the longstanding and unique partnership of the two institutions and greatly appreciate the firm's willingness to co-host the 50th Anniversary Celebration in April where IIRR will honor [The Starr Foundation](#) and [Cleary Gottlieb](#) as 2010 Citizens of the World.

For more information on the 50th Anniversary Celebration on April 13, 2010 or to make a tax-deductible contribution to IIRR, please contact Scarlett Lopez Freeman at scarlett.freeman@iirr.org. [Online contributions may be made by visiting www.iirr.org](http://www.iirr.org).

Roundtable Discussion on Disaster Risk Reduction Held

(SILANG, Cavite, Philippines) - A roundtable discussion on Disaster Resistant Sustainable Livelihood Framework and Decentralized Disaster Risk Management by the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction and Practical Action-Sri Lanka was held February 23, 2010 at IIRR's Yen Center



Dr. Julian Gonsalves (far left), Senior Advisor to IIRR, addresses participants at the roundtable. He is joined in the discussion by Emilita Oro (center), Program Manager and Officer-in-Charge at the Regional Center for Asia, and Isaac Bekalo (far right), President of IIRR.

with about twenty-five participants from different non-government organizations, the academe and government agencies working on climate change and DRR. The discussion focused on the centrality of securing livelihoods in any disaster resistance work.

Dr. Isaac Bekalo, President of IIRR, presented an overview of the Institute's work on Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction, or CMDRR. Dr. Bekalo stressed that CMDRR places communities

or villages at the center of the process in building resilience to and responding to natural and man-made hazards.

Mr. Lauro Monzon, Head of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council of the Provincial Government of Cavite, also shared their program on disaster management and preparedness which includes setting up community-based early warning systems and building local capacity on disaster response.

One of the program highlights was a presentation by Ms. Madhavi Ariyabandu, Regional Program Officer of the United Nation International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, entitled “Integrating DRR at the Local Level.”

Ms. Ariyabandu stressed that local level governance institutions must actively take the lead on DRR wherein participation of communities, their institutions, the private sector and other stakeholders is crucial. She added that localizing DRR also means a bottom-up approach to planning in order to understand the hazards-vulnerability scenario.

[Read the full article here.](#)

IIRR to Sit in Technical Working Group on Climate Change Adaptation

(SILANG, Cavite, Philippines) - The International Institute of Rural Reconstruction was recently invited to join the Technical Working Group on climate change adaptation under the Civil Society Organization-Working Group (CSO-WG) on Climate Change and Development, a loose network of civil society organizations in the Philippines actively involved in national and international climate change negotiations.

IIRR signified its intention during the “Round Table Discussion on the Moving forward with the UNFCCC Multilateral Processes” held March 2, 2010 at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Social Hall in the National Office in Quezon City. The discussion was organized by the CSO-WG with assistance from the Climate Change Office of DENR.

The discussion aims to update the current status of the Philippines after the COP15 Climate Change negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009. It was also intended to solicit stakeholders coming from the CSO on how to move the negotiations after the COP15.

Segfredo Serrano, Under Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, provided an update on the current position of the Philippine government on climate change adaptation. This was followed by a presentation on mitigation by Ms. Joy Goco of DENR and a presentation entitled “Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation + the Conservation and Enhancement of Existing carbon stocks” by Lawrence Ang of the Philippine Climate Change Commission.

Neth Dano of the Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration (ETC) provided an input on technology and, finally, Dir. Leila Lora-Santos of the Department of Foreign Affairs provided updates on climate change financing.

An expert on Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction, IIRR will position itself on the adaptation side of the negotiations which currently necessitates more substantive mechanisms on moving forward in order to strengthen its position under the COP15 Accord.

Under Secretary Serrano, however, stressed that the position of the Philippines in relation to addressing loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in disaster-vulnerable developing countries includes supporting the adoption of a broader framework for disaster risk reduction, management and sharing that includes risk insurance, risk transfer mechanisms, rehabilitation and compensation for loss and damage.

With the participation of IIRR in the CSO-WG, it hopes to provide additional input on disaster risk reduction that the Philippines will push during pre-COP16 Cancun, Mexico climate change negotiations in December 2010.

[Read the full article here.](#)