

Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Associations



Proceeding of Experience Sharing Workshop on Food Security Thematic Interventions in Amhara Region Held on September 29/2011

Northern Region Coordination Office
Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACSI	Amhara Credit and Saving Institute
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ARARI	Amhara Region Agricultural Research Institute
BoA	Bureau of Agriculture of Amhara region
CCRDA	Consortium for Christian Relief and Development Association
CFI-HHs	Chronically Food Insecure Households
CFI-HHHs	Chronically Food Insecure Household Heads
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DPFSPCO	Disaster Prevention and Food Security Program Coordination Office
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSP	Food Security Program
FTCs	Farmers' Training Centers
GO	Government Organization
HABP	Household Asset Building Program
HHs	Households
HHHs	Household Heads
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
IPMS	Improving Productivity and Market Success
Kg	Kilogram
KII	Key Informant Interview
Mr	Mister
MoARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MSE	Micro and Small Enterprises
NF IGAs	Non-farm Income Generating Activities
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
OoARD	Office of Agriculture and Rural Development
PLC	Private Limited Company
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Program

i. Welcome Speech



Mr Degu Addis, CCRDA NRCO Coordinator,
conducting the welcome speech

The welcome speech of the workshop was made by Mr Degu Addis, Northern Region Coordination officer of CCRDA. He welcomed the participants of the workshop on behalf of the organizers of the workshop. He remarked that the Food Security Steering Committee has been doing encouraging activities in the past and it is promising. The steering committee planned to work aggressively in a strengthened manner to fill the current gaps of the forum and make the Forum a well functioning one.

In the remaining months of 2011, the steering committee planned to conduct two workshops in the food security thematic areas and this workshop is the first one. The second workshop will be conducted in near future. The steering committee planned to:

- Conduct field visits on each partners' interventions and formulate best practices;
- Prepare standard plan and guideline of the Food Security Forum and act accordingly;
- Scale-up the best practices obtained from partners' interventions, and
- Conduct different studies, as much as our capacity allows.

The objective of this workshop is to share the experiences of four partner organizations namely Amhara Disaster Prevention and Food Security Program Coordination Office, Andassa Livestock Research Center, IPMS/Fogera Vegetable Value Chain Development Approach and SOS Sahel which are working in food security areas. From their experiences, we hope the participants will get valuable lessons of what they are doing and how the participant organizations of the workshop will take the lessons and adapt them in their areas of intervention. It is a platform of experience sharing. Finally, Mr Degu, invited the guest of honor Mr Sileshi Temesgen, head of Amhara Disaster Prevention Food Security Program Coordination Office to open the workshop officially.

ii. Opening Speech



Ato Sileshi, head of Amhara DPFSCO, opening the workshop

Respected workshop participants!

It is well-known that multidimensional efforts have been under implementation to ensure the food security of Amhara region people and to reduce the level of the vulnerability of the Region's people to hazards thereby to achieve sustainable and continuous development. This effort and responsibility cannot be left-out for some concerned body alone. Hence governmental, non-governmental and donor organizations are performing numerous activities in the Amhara region. The works they are performing are significant, exemplary and in line with their institutional objective.

Respected workshop participants!

As you know, the Forum was established six years ago by including the concerned bodies with the initiation of different NGOs. Since its establishment, the Forum has been doing some efforts. By strengthening and continuing the Forum, it will play a significant role in ensuring the food security of the people of the region by utilizing the food security resources (material, human and experience) properly thereby implementing the food security and related issues in a strengthened and integrated way.

Although the regional Food Security Forum has numerous long-term and short-term basic issues, the Forum has performed very limited activities so far. The reasons for the low performance of the Forum are related to that the attention status of leading coordination office; the steering committee; and members of the Forum at large. Strengthening the Forum's organization and management and make functional is a task to be implemented in the coming a few months time and it is the homework of all of the members. I assure you that the Office of Amhara Disaster Prevention and Food Security Program Coordination will give special focus for the Forum and decided to execute its responsibility properly and in a strengthened manner.

One of the Forum's tasks is preparing experience sharing occasion for its members. It is believed that with today's experience sharing workshop a lot of important experiences will be presented. Additional inputs and experiences for ongoing efforts and started movements are expected to be gained from the workshop. Believing the existence of vast experience, experience exchange will be carried out from each participating organization. The workshop was organized by the Forum Steering Committee, CCRDA, Actionaid Ethiopia and Disaster Prevention and Food Security Program Coordination Office.

I forward my heartfelt thanks for those who made proper support and effort to materialize this workshop and participants of the workshop for coming by respecting our call. Finally, I declare the workshop is opened and wish you a successful experience sharing workshop.

Thank you!

Next Mr. Degu invited the participants to introduce themselves. After the introduction of participants of the workshop, Mr. Degu Addis invited Mr. Amare Kinde to take the facilitation role for the morning session.

1. The first Paper presentation: An Assessment on IGAs of Chronically Food Insecure Households in Non-farm Sector in Food Security Program Intervention Districts of Amhara Region”

Four papers were presented in the workshop. The first paper presented by Mr Ayalew Abera was entitled “An Assessment on IGAs of Chronically Food Insecure Households in Non-farm Sector in Food Security Program Intervention Districts of Amhara Region”



Mr Ayalew Abera, DPFSCO,
presenting the paper

1.1. Introduction

The food security program has been implemented in the Amhara region since for the past many years. Currently, the food security program has four components namely Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), Household Asset Building Program HABP /on-farm & non-farm IGAs/, Complementary Community Investment and (CCI) and Voluntary Resettlement.

The significance of the non-farm sector is more pronounced in the agriculturally backward and low productivity areas. The government food security program of the region has been giving a due attention for households’ investments in the non-farm sector through providing loan and technical supports mainly starting from 1997 E.C.

From the beneficiaries of PSNP components, 185,477 household heads or 700,191 people graduated from 2000 E.C to 2003 E.C. In the year 2004, it is planned to graduate 181,931 household heads.

The non-farm income generating activities is one component of HABP. This assessment is made to assess the contribution of this component in ensuring the food security of chronically food insecure households.

The role of non-farm income generation activity is seen as increasingly important for the viability and development of rural areas. It is significantly important for rural households to diversify income sources and enhances livelihood opportunities. The rural non-farm IGAs can potentially help to build assets for food insecure households. In addition, it can absorb rural landless surplus labor, offer more remunerative activities to supplement or replace agricultural income, help farm-based households to reduce risks, provide a means for the rural poor to cope or survive when farming fails, exploit rural comparative advantages (resources, location, labor costs), foster rural growth, and improve the overall quality of life, goods and services in rural areas.

1.2. Scope and Methodology of the Study

The study is limited to assess the investment status of non-farm IGAs of CFI-HHs in generating income. The assessment is done in nine food insecure districts of the region. The sample size comprises 445 rural households. The study did not use any livelihood assessment models. It only uses the simplest methods such as questionnaires, key informant interview, FGD and document analysis. Moreover, the study did not evaluate the contribution of non-farm IGAs in CFI-HHs rather assessing the investments of chronically food insecure households in the non-farm sector only.

Data for the study were obtained from different sources using triangulated methodologies. Structured household questionnaire; participatory focused group discussion; conversational interviews were the primary sources of information for the study. The information obtained from the primary sources is supported by secondary sources. The study was conducted on 445 sampled HHHs residing in nine chronically food insecure districts of the region. Literatures related to non-farm IGAs were also reviewed to ease the understandings of the status and contribution of the non-farm sector intervention in other African countries and the world at large.

1.3. Objective of the Study

1.3.1. General objective

The general objective of the study is to assess the status of implementation of non-farm income generating activities by CFI-HHs under the support of FSP of the region

and see the extent of the investment opportunities of the non-farm sector for CFI-HHs in the region.

1.3.2. Specific objectives

- To assess the status of business plan preparation for CFI-HHs for their investments in non-farm IGAs;
- To see the status of loan provision for non-farm investments of CFI-HHs mainly from Federal government credit source;
- To assess the loan repayment status of CFI-HHs who are engaged both in on and non-farm IGAs;
- To see the participation of family labors in non-farm investments of CFI-HHs.
- To track the contribution of non-farm activities on the total annual income generation of CFI-HHs.
- To assess the contribution of some characteristics of CFI-HHs such as age, educational status and family size of HHHs, on their annual income generation from non-farm investments.
- To assess the contribution of business planning, skill training, provision of technical supports and loan on income generation of CFI-HHs for non-farm activities.
- To assess whether a non-farm IGAs can be alternative investment opportunities for CFI-HHs or not.
- To track the status of non-farm IGAs as a major livelihoods of CFI-HHs residing in CFI-districts of the region.
- To assess the benefits gained by the CFI-HHs from their investments in non-farm IGAs through the support of the region.
- Uncover the challenges and opportunities of non-farm IGA in the sample districts.

1.4. Summary of the Study Result

Demographic characteristics of the sample

The average family size of the total sampled HHHs is 4.76 which is less than the regional. The average family size of CFI-HHs headed by female is 3.93 and those CFI-HHs headed by male is 5.08.

Majority of the chronically food insecure population in the sampled HHs is under child age who are not expected to contribute for family labor. 2.7 percent of the population is old age and couldn't actively participate in the HHs IGAs. On average 54 percent labor dependency ratio has existed in the total sampled HHs residing in the study districts.

The educational status of the majority of sampled HHs (64.1%) is below primary education. The remaining 35.9% is in different levels of education starting from grade one up to twelve.

Livelihood of sample HHs

Agricultural activities are the major livelihood of the CFI-HHs. The result of the assessment study indicated that only 9.5 percent of the total 444 respondent CFI-HHs have engaged only in non-farm activities. The rest 90.5 percent have been engaged both in on and non-farm activities.

The types of non-farm activities on which CFI-HHs are engaged with under the support of the regional FSP are purely non-farm including mainly petty trading and handicrafts. Most of the CFI-HHs engaged in most of the handicrafts activities is traditional. The majority of CFI-HHs who are involved in non-farm investments are engaged in petty trading rather than other various types of handicrafts activities.

Of the total 441 respondent HHs, 51.1 percent of them have invested in petty trading while other 42.6 percent have invested in various handicrafts activities. Only 6.3 percent have invested in various types of non-farm activities that are different from petty trading and handicrafts.

The time of engagements of the sampled HHs in non-farm activities, of the total 432 respondent HHs, 45.8 percent of them have started to engage in non-farm activities before 1998 and the remaining have started investments in non-farm activities in the later years.

From the sampled CFI-HHs who have been engaged in non-farm IGAs, 59.1 percent of interrupted their non-farm investments below six months. Others interrupted their investments up to two years. However, they continued their investments. The major causes for interruptions of households' investments in non-farm income generating activities were lack of working capital, changing with other non-farm investments, lack of access to product markets and bankruptcy.

Supports given – training and follow-up

The major actors involved in providing the necessary supports for the non-farm investments of CFI-HHs in rural food insecure districts of the region are government agencies, mainly the offices of Agriculture and Micro and Small Enterprises development agencies. Some NGOs are also active in providing business development and technical training but their scope is very limited. Of these institutions, it is the MSE support centers located at the district and in some cases kebele levels that have

primary responsibility for non-farm enterprise development. In some districts, Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training centers and Farmers Training Centers also play a vital role in the non-farm skills development and creating opportunities for skilled labor to participate in rural non-farm sector.

Out of the 429 respondent HHs, only 19.8 percent of them have received skill training prior to their investments while the remaining 80.2 percent have not received any type of skill training in their non-farm investments showing that the majority of the CFI-HHs in the non-farm sector are simply through using their traditional skill. This might inhibit them to maximize their income generation from their business. Skill training was also provided for short period of time. Out of the total 86 respondent HHHs, 57.1percent of them have received skill trainings for short period of time ranging from 1-15 days.

Making a close follow up on and provision of technical supports to CFI-HHs who are engaged in the non-farm sector are most important in achieving their expected benefits. The result of the assessment indicated that efforts made so far in providing on job technical supports for CFI-HHs who have engaged in the non-farm sector are very minimal. Out of the 409 respondent CFI-HHHs (both sexes) who have invested in non-farm income generating activities, only 22 percent of them were receiving on job technical supports while implementing their business.

Access to Credit Service and Loan Repayment

Lack of access to efficient institutional credit provision is perhaps the most critical factors impeding both non-farm and on-farm developments. Providing support for agricultural development through financing inputs and marketing of non-farm produce is vital for improvement of household food security and sustained growth as a whole. The result of the assessment clearly shows that credit access of the sampled CFI-HHs mainly from credit institutions in starting investments in non-farm IGAs is very limited. Of the total 427 respondent CFI-HHHs, only 39.3 percent of them have started their investments in non-farm IGAs through receiving loan from credit institutions. 38.4 percent have started investments by their own sources of money. The remaining 22.3 percent have started their business through receiving a start up working capital from their relatives freely, with interest and without interest.

The provision of credit service for chronically food insecure households for their investments on and non-farm activities under FSP have been undertaken by farmers' multipurpose cooperatives. In this regard, the Federal credit line fund support was the major source of loan being provided for non-farm investments of CFI-HHs. In this regard, the study indicated that the trends of loan coverage and the average size of

loan provision for non-farm investments of chronically food insecure households has been increasing from year to year from 1998 E.C. up to 2001 E.C.

With regard to loan repayment, out of 299 respondent CFI-HHHs, 36.5 percent of them have not yet started repaying the loan they received so far from various sources for their investments in non-farm activities while other 39.1percent have partially repaid their loan. The remaining 24.4 percent of HHHs have already repaid their loan. The study indicated that female HHHs have better status of loan repayment than male HHHs. Besides, the trend of loan repayment of HHs has been also increasing from year to year from 1998 E.C. up to 2001 E.C.

Infrastructure

One of the major factors in creating a better access to products market is rural feeder road. The reason is rural road access is an indispensable infrastructure for rural population to transport and market their produce and buy essential consumption goods and agricultural and non-agricultural inputs. Inline to this, the study indicated that the main places of markets for CFI-HHs to sale their products of non-farm investments are kebele, subdistrict, district and zone level markets. From 405 respondent CFI-HHHs (both sexes) majority (54.1 percent) sale their products of non-farm investments in their respective district town markets. Other 29.9 percent sale their products in their nearby day markets at kebele level. The remaining 13.6 and 2.5 percents sale their product at sub district and zone market places respectively. District town markets are the main market places for chronically food insecure households to sale their non-farm products.

Unlike male HHHs, the market place of the majority of female HHHs is day markets at their nearby kebeles which implies that they might not receive a good price for their products. Regarding the distance of markets, the sampled HHHs (both sexes) require on average 3.37 hours for a round trip to reach their nearby markets to sale their non-farm products. The main market place for female HHHs is day markets at kebele level, the average time required by them for a round trip is 2.27 hours.

The study indicated that transport and market problems are the two major problems facing them for marketing their non-farm products. However, transport is relatively a more serious problem for male HHHs than market and the reverse is true for female HHHs.

Income source

The study showed that the on-farm sector is the major investment area and source of annual income for majority of the sampled CFI-HHs under food security program support of the government. In this regard, the major annual income of 90.5 percent of

the total sampled HHs is generated from their investments in on-farm IGAs. Non-farm IGAs are also considered as an additional investment opportunity for most CFI households and a major source of income for small number of households (9.5 percent) of the total sampled HHs. The trend of non-farm investment as a source of income has been increasing from year to year since 1998 E.C. with a slight decrease in 2001 E.C.

The sampled households generated an average annual income amounting to ETB 3,159 from their investments both in on and non-farm IGAs from 1998 E.C – 2001 E.C. The trends of annual income generation of CFI-HHs from their investments both on and non-farm activities were increasing from year to year. This increasing trend of average annual income of HHHs for the past four consecutive years was also true for both sexes. Taking the non-farm investment alone, an average annual income amounting to ETB 1,364 was generated by those sampled households who have invested in the non-farm sector during the past four consecutive years and its trend of average amount of annual income generation of HHs from non-farm activities was increasing from year to year.

Male HHHs with an average number of 5.08 family members have generated an average annual income amounting to ETB 3,448 from their investments both on and non-farm activities from 1998 E.C up to 2001 E.C. The amount of average per capita income of sampled male headed HHs was ETB 678. Female HHHs with an average number of 3.93 family members have generated an average annual income amounting to ETB 2,416 from their investments both on and non-farm activities, their per capita income amounts to ETB 614.

Alternative Investment Opportunities

The result of the assessment revealed that the average amount of income generation of HHs from the non-farm sector for the past four consecutive years was 43.2 percent contribution to the total average annual income generation of CFI-HHs (both sexes) from their investments both in on and non-farm sectors. The average annual income generation from the non-farm sector has 40.6 percent contribution to the total average annual income generation of male HHHs. whereas the contribution of non-farm investment to the total average annual income generation was 52.3 percent for female HHHs. The trend of contribution of non-farm income generation to the total annual income of female HHHs is increasing and greater than male HHHs. This shows the non-farm sector was indeed a better alternative investment opportunity for female than male headed HHs.

Saving

Saving by households has an indispensable contribution in improving the HHs income in particular and the national economy in general. Of the total 437 respondent

households, 46 percent of them had been saving from their annual income generation while the remaining 54 percent hadn't been saving.

The majority of the sampled CFI-HHHs were saving their money through traditional means of saving. Of the total 198 respondent CFI-HHHs, 54 percent of them were saving their money at their home while the remaining 17.7 percent, 16.7 percent, and 11.6 percent were saving using 'Ekub', ACSI and saving associations respectively. Therefore, further efforts should be exerted to aware CFI-HHHs on the benefits of saving money in micro finance and other saving institutions. Each of the 197 respondents CFI-HHHs of both sexes have saved a total average amount of money ETB 1,188 from their investments both on and non-farm activities during the past four consecutive years.

Benefit Obtained from Non-Farm Investment

Out of the 438 respondent CFI-HHHs, 95.2 percent of them have assured that they were benefiting while the remaining 4.8 percent were not benefiting from their investments in the non-farm sector. Some of the benefits achieved by CFI-HHs who have been engaged in the non-farm sector investment under the support of FSP of the region are improving access to food, improving clothing of children, joining children to school, improving status of housing, covering medication expenses, saving money using various means, taking the truck of increasing both household productive and non productive assets, achieving motivation to further improve their investments in non-farm IGAs.

Future Intention for non-farm IGAs

With regard to the future intention of households who have been investing in non-farm activities for the past four consecutive years, the majority of them (84.2 percent) assured that they have a plan to improve their interventions in the future. 8.5 percent and 4.6 percent of households have a future plan of changing by other non-farm activities and continue the current investment without improvement respectively. The remaining 2.7 percent responded that they will interrupt their investments on non-farm activities for various reasons such as health problems, lack of access to market, lack of transport and other related problems.

Proximity to the market, availability of customers, having a working place for non-farm IGAs, having access to transport, and others were identified by the majority of the sampled households as available opportunities in their surrounding areas to improve their investments in the non-farm sector.

Type of Support Required by the Government

The HHs forwarded their opinion on the types of supports they require from government in order to improve their future investments in the non-farm sector. Accordingly, of the 406 respondent households, 46.8 percent of them require provision of credit, 17.5 percent require appropriate and timely expertise supports related to the types of non-farm activities on which they will invest, 4.2 percent need working places to improve their non-farm investments and 31.3 percent require various types of supports from government.

1.6. Major Challenges Facing CFI-HHs in Their Non-Farm Investments

- Lack of access to market to sale their product;
- Problems of credit distribution and repayment facilitation;
- Lack of training (both entrepreneur and skill);
- Lack of working place (both to produce and sale)
- Lack of input for production;
- Problems of transport;
- Lack of expertise advise and close supervisions;
- Low purchasing power of people for non-farm products due to the overall poverty situation;
- Cultural bias against crafts;
- Lack of careful selection of beneficiaries who are eligible for non-farm investments;
- Absence of saving component for the credit being provided from federal food security budget;
- Lack of experience sharing system on non-farm investments of some model performers;
- Lack of appropriate coordination and/or integration among all implementing sectors of non-farm IGAs;
- Budget constraint for provision of skill training for beneficiaries of non-farm investments;
- Lack of operational guidelines for credit disbursement and collection;
- Fierce competition between the non-farm products and other factory products
- Greater interest of households to invest in on-farm than non-farm activities for their various reasons;

1.7. Recommendation

The recommendations given for the successful implementation of non-farm IGAs are:

- Encourage them to engage in the non-farm sector and diversify their sources of income,

- SME should further strength its structure at kebele level or design other means;
- The traditional system of households investments in non-farm IGAs should be substituted by a better one;
- Their investments should be based on business planning;
- Adequate start up working capital should be provided;
- The required skill trainings need to be provided properly for beneficiaries of non-farm IGAs prior to their investments;
- CFI-HHs who have productive family labor need to be advised to utilize their available family labor more efficiently in their non-farm investments;
- A special support should be delivered for female HHs in addressing their critical problem in access to market and encourage them in their investment;
- All concerned implementing agents at district level mainly SME, BoA, ACSI & others should be well coordinated at various stages of the implementation process of the non-farm IGAs in identification of beneficiaries, business planning, provision of skill training, provision of loan, close supervision and technical support provision to maximize the non-farm IGAs.

1.8. Discussion

The questions and comments provided by the participants and the answers given are presented as follows.

Question 1: The study showed that the loan repayment status of women is lower than that of men. Different experiences show that the loan repayment of women is greater than men. How this happen?

Question 2: Absence of the saving component on credit provision for NF IGAs is stated as a challenge by the study. But the saving component is left out deliberately by DPFSPCO to reduce burden on beneficiaries. Is it a new idea or another idea?

Question 3: Does the study considered the seasonality factor as the rural people have more idle time?

Question 4: The provision of credit up to 2000 E.C is increasing while in 2001 E.C credit provision decreased. What is the reason for decrement?

Question 5: The study revealed the existence of many challenges on NF IGAs. Having many challenges, how income will increase when many conditions are unfulfilled?

Question 6: The study indicated that income obtained from NF-IGAs increased. Is the increased income real or due to inflation?

Comment 1: The non-farm component of HABP has big role to ensure food security. It is the better one from the other components. The NF component lacks institutional

support and provision of training. Proper targeting and preparation of business plan must be done. In the past, loan provision was small and the higher portion of the loan did not disperse to districts. In the past three years, the loan provision increased and the higher proportion of the loan provision goes to districts. For example, in the last two years only, 650 million ETB was dispersed to districts for this component.

Comment 2: The problems encountered were low loan repayment and lack of market for the products. The study indicated the increment of annual income and women's participation in NF activities is better (52%). The identified limitation was targeting and training. If we strengthened the NF IGA component, it will play a significant role in ensuring food security. The forum provides input for the study.

The study presented in a good way. To enrich the study further, the study results should be compared with the set targets (on average what we planned and what we achieved). On NF IGA, the community should have the right attitude towards the people who participate in NF IGA. There is a negative attitude towards participating in NF IGA and adequate work should be done to change this attitude.

There is also a limitation on input provision although it is increasing in the previous years. There is a difference in the loan provision of ACSI and cooperatives. The study shall assess these issues further.

Comment 3: NF IGAs are very important. Empowerment and getting benefit from the NF IGAs for the people engaging in NF IGAs are the two necessary things for sustainability of NF IGAs.

Comment 4: BoA and ACSI should coordinate and act properly. The utilization of the fund is low. The reasons given for low utilization of the assigned fund are unsatisfactory. It is vital to coordinate systematically in a better way. The problems are many. We have huge amount of money. However, there is a problem of coordination and effective utilization of the money. A mechanism must be devised to make the system compulsory in order to solve this problem and better utilize the available fund.

Comment 5: Since the study is comprehensive, it is a good input for BoA. In the rural areas, the main sources of income are land and labor. The study showed households with less family size have more income. The reason given was reduction of consumption. There seems the existence of contradiction and better to reconsider it.

Comment 6: The study shall assess the sustainability of NF IGAs. The system need to be checked. The status of previous beneficiaries (graduates) of NF IGA should be evaluated.

Comment 7: Sometimes we duplicate development activities. When we discuss like this workshop, we avoid duplication of efforts (reinventions). The study conducted by us (locally) and it is encouraging. It was better if the study involved other relevant organizations like universities and research centers so as to easily and quickly scale-up and influence policy makers in a positive way. It will also help to check the sustainability of NF IGAs.

Proper care should be taken when presenting the study results. For example, when family size increases, income increases. Such results should be checked with theories and statistically tested for their significance.

Comment 8: The study is being taken as a source at federal level. Other regions took the study and used it. It must be clear for the participants that the study is an assessment and used simple descriptive statistics. So, it is good to take the study as baseline and should not consider it as completed and comprehensive study.

From NF IGA as the study indicated, the majority is petty trade. However, petty trade consists of a wide range of IGAs. The study should clearly identify which IGAs are practiced.

The study indicated that the income of those who participated in NF IGAs increased. It should be checked whether the increment is a real one or due to inflation.

Comment 9: The first recommendation is too general almost not a recommendation. It should be detailed and show what to do, who is responsible and when to do. The recommendation should also include NF IGAs for the rural household identified for men and women separately. This will assist to implement properly.

Comment 10: If we intend to implement NF IGAs in a district, first we need to conduct the district contextual analysis in detail. That is targeting, type of training (conventional or informal), marketing and infrastructure are key problems and identify who will solve these problems, how to solve the problems and when they will be solved. After this, we proceed to scale up.

Answers given for the raised questions:

Most of the comments and questions will be taken as input to enrich the study further. Answers given for some selected questions are presented as follows.

The comments given by participants on the presented paper and related issues are:

- The main reason for low loan repayment status of women as compared to men is that most of the women are included in the scheme in less than three years which is premature loan period.

- Income increases as family size increases. This happened because in the study, only productive age members were considered. That is to say more labor more income.
- The increased income is the gross income. We did not use the real value of money in income calculation.
- The study did not consider the timing of labor utilization. Only whole time NF IGAs practitioners were considered in the study.
- The decrement of credit provision in 2001 E.C occurred due to the limitation of cooperatives to disperse loans.
- Regarding sustainability of NF IGAs beneficiaries, there is no reentry to the program up to now.
- We got adequate input for the study from the workshop. In the future, it will be done again with the participation other organizations.

2. The second presentation “Sheep Production and Productivity Improvement for Poverty Alleviation in the Highlands of South Gondar of Amhara region”

The second presentation paper entitled as “Sheep Production and Productivity Improvement for Poverty Alleviation in the Highlands of South Gondar of Amhara region” presented by Mr. Shigedif Mekuria, From Andassa Livestock Research Center.



Mr. Shigedif Mekuria, ARARI, presenting his paper

2.1. Introduction

The Washera sheep breed is recognized as one of the promising indigenous sheep breed for crossing with other local sheep breeds in the region to improve the

productivity of local sheep. The Washera sheep breed has an important genetic potential for growth and adaptation to a wide range of agro-climatic conditions. Generally, high growth rate and twinning rates are among the desirable traits identified for this breed. Due to this, many Washera rams have been distributed to smallholder farmers throughout the Amhara Region. Still the demand for Washera rams have increased persistently without objective data confirming expected outcomes from the previous endeavor.

The Regional Government Office requested the Regional Agricultural Research Institute to study the performance of this breed in a pilot area both under on-station and on-farm management system. Andassa Livestock Research Center took the responsibility for this work and designed a research project to introduce the Washera sheep breed in to the habitat of Farta sheep. Supported by the regional Disaster Prevention and Food Security Program Coordination Office, two food insecure districts (Farta and Lay Gayint) were selected for Washera sheep distribution as a pilot area since sheep production is the main stay of the people in the two districts.

The sheep breed reared in Lay Gaint and Farta districts is Farta sheep. Farta sheep is said to be small size and slow growing. Improving the productivity by improving the production environment and the genetic makeup of these breed of sheep benefits the farmers keeping the breed. Adapting and making use of this breed of sheep in Lay Gaint district can contribute much for the effort in reducing poverty by increasing the income of small holder farmers in the area.

The project was development-community-research oriented consisting of simple research and development activities emphasizing on introduction/adoption of technologies. It was community-based with full participation of the beneficiaries that would result in a model village for development/research. Integrated approach comprising the different livestock development disciplines with activities ranging from production to product marketing focusing in small ruminant production specially sheep was used.

2.2. Objectives of the Project

- Introducing the better productive Washera sheep in to the traditional management systems of Lay Gaint and Farta districts to evaluate its adaptability and productivity,
- Improve sheep production thereby increase the income of the poor farm household in the area and
- Establishment of elite nucleus at Adet Washera sheep breeds improvement as a ram source for distribution.

2.3. Methodology

Sites for the project were selected in consultation with district and kebele expertise based on the potential of the areas for sheep production and representativeness of the kebeles and accessibility for monitoring and evaluation were also taken into account. The selection of peasant associations and districts were based on sheep population, attention for sheep production, road accessibility and presence of grazing land and water accessibility. Due to this Ata and Awuzet from Farta district and Titira and Hagere Genet rural kebele administrations from Lay Gayint district were selected.

The criteria for farmer selection were their active participation; owning land for forage development; access to water; able to build flock house; access to road and having interest in sheep production. Based on the above criteria, 118 farmers were selected and participated during data collection. More than 1,000 Washera sheep were distributed to the farmers on loan base. Based on the agreement, two groups from the participant farmers were formed in which one group (100 farmers) has taken both pure Washera ram and ewe (1:10 ratio) while the other group (18 farmers) was given only Washera ram.

Data were collected through enumerators and livestock researchers group. In addition, qualitative data were collected through FGD. FGD was carried out at both sites with 23 farmers in Farta and 13 farmers in Lay Gayint composed village leaders, religious leaders, elders, women and youths who have experience of keeping Washera, Farta and their crossbred sheep. Key informants on study sites such as village extension officers and enumerators were also participated in the discussion. A multidisciplinary team was formed for the application of the PRA methodology which was composed from researchers in different livestock fields of the Andassa Livestock Research Center. Additionally, 16 non-participant beneficiaries' farmers (out of the project) also involved in this study.

2.4. Major results of the assessment

Though proper impact of the project has not been conducted, reports from field assessments and discussions with households indicated that most beneficiary households were able to raise their income and build asset thereby improving their food security situation. Data analyzed indicated that Washera sheep is performing well in the area.

The households in the project area perceived to prefer the Washera sheep and their crosses to the local breeds in terms of fast growth; prolificacy; better demand at the local market because of its big fat tail; attractive coat color; larger body size; and conformation. Farmers also witnessed that lambs of Washera sheep have good growth rate, are very attractive in their conformation as well as appearance and the dams are

good in producing enough milk for their young/good mothering ability. Along with this Washera sheep had also better in prolificacy and annual reproductive rate than Farta sheep. Similarly, the biological evaluation also revealed that Washera sheep was better in growth and high reproductive performance. This indicates that Washera sheep breed could be used in these areas.

Most farmers also appreciated the fast growth and fattening potential of crossbred's sheep as compared to Farta sheep. Besides, crossbreed sheep have no any drawback mentioned by the farmers since they are benefitted genetically from Farta sheep to tolerate those problems in the area and from Washera sheep for fast growth and fattening potential. That is why most of the farmers have a great interest in crossbred sheep. Due to this reason the demand for Washera sheep ram in the study areas is very high.

Considering the study area's fragility and seriousness of feed deficit, it is recommend that Washera sheep ram should be used for crossing with Farta sheep to improve its growth performance, reproductive performance, fattening potential, big fat tail, large body size and attractive coat colour.

During Washera sheep breed distribution improved management packages (improved feeding, animal health, appropriated housing and designed appropriate crossbreeding scheme) should be considered. Based on the need assessment (when discussing with farmers), because they are benefiting from this sheep, it is important to scale up to other food insecure areas by organizing different stakeholders who could involve (credit organizations, BoA, cooperatives, etc.)

2.5. Challenges

1. The presence of major constraints to sheep production in the study areas are feed shortage, animal health problems, labour shortage and occurrence of drought.
2. Due to lack of institutional and market linkage, the people in the study area could not easily access it. There is very high Washera ram demand in the study area
3. Some of farmers hope that they can be free of the loan, they reported and complained so many deaths stressing as if this breed of sheep is not adapting and not relevant for the area.
4. Farmers in the area do not maintain replacement ewe and/or ram lambs of the pure Washera and the crosses in that they sell pure washera and/or crossbred ewe and/or ram lambs at early age without leaving replacement stock.
5. Shortage of forage seeds (Oat and Vetch) since the farmers know well and adapted these forage crops

2.6. Opportunities

- In the study areas farmers are aware of the current high market values and demand for sheep and the establishment of Ashraf Industrial PLC at Bahir that slaughter 3,000 shoat per day.
- The high acceptance and demand of Washera and crossbred sheep at the local market and farmers practice using Washera and crossbred ram to improve the Farta sheep breed.
- The willingness and adaptation of farmers in development and feeding of improved forage species for their animals
- Farmers were organized in Farmer Research Extension Group for easily adoption of the technologies

2.7. Discussion

Comment 1: Washera sheep breed was introduced to Tehuledere district by Agri-Service Ethiopia. It contributed greatly for ensuring food security. Focusing on indigenous breed is the preferred one. The Washera breed is identified for highland and midland areas. They feed much and do not want to go far.

The issue of animal feed is becoming a critical issue and needs serious consideration. If participants have good experience on this issue, share us. We want to take the experience.

Comment 2: In order to scale out the system (disseminating Washera sheep breed), the experiences of those who perform informally should be assessed and included in the study. It is also important to establish farmer-research-extension-group (FREG) forum.

Comment 3: Animal feed at farmer level has two basic problems namely management system and follow up. The study should recommend on how farmers will be organized and the system should be sustainable. The central management should go to farmer level management. The animal feed system should have its bylaw.

There are many types of animal feed. A lot has been done in the past. However, no significant benefit is obtained so far. When the number of animals increases, animal feed reduces and becomes a problem. What is the cause of the problem? Is it from the agricultural system? Or is it from farmers? Or is it from the research? Or is it lack of coordination? If the Washera breed do not go far and needs more feed, the study should indicate how to supply enough feed for them. The study should assess this issue and include in the study.

Comment 4: The objective of food security program is to ensure food security using the local resource. Therefore, it is important to include the study of other animals so as to ensure food security.

The other issue raised is to promote the diversified use of animal products. For example, in Wagemira zone the people use milk, meat, butter, skin and hides of sheep whereas in the western Amhara, sheep is used only for meat and skin/hide. This experience should be scale-out in the western Amhara. The study should also assess the impact of the cut of the tail of female Washera sheep as it reduces the price.

Comment 5: The current global challenge is climate change. Different papers indicate that there is potential hazard of genetic makeup extinction. When we transfer the Washera sheep breed to Farta district, we should assess the impact of climate change on the genetic makeup of the sheep and include recommendation on the adaptation strategy. When we conduct a study it should not be one-sided. For example, this study focuses on profitability side. It should also assess side-by-side the health, forage problem (forage extension), and other related issues for ensuring sustainability of the Washera sheep in Farta district. In the future, it would be better if sustainability from the impact of climate change should be developed as a package.

Answer:

We take most of the questions and comments to enrich the study further. One point should be explained here. The farmers are doing very good research. At the start of the project we gave 20 female Washera sheep and one male. Then they said we cannot manage it 10 female and 1 male is enough. Through the course of time they are still reducing the number of sheep that they effectively manage and utilize. This is the big lesson we got in this project.

3. The Third presentation: High Value Irrigable Vegetable Crop Development Impact on Food Security and Livelihood Improvement: The Case of IPMS, Fogera Value Chain Development Approach



Mr Tilahun Gebey, IPMS/ILRI presenting the paper

3.1 Introduction

Improving Productivity and Market Success of Ethiopian Farmers (IPMS) is a project of MoARD funded by CIDA and implemented by ILRI. It is implemented in 10 pilot learning districts of four regional states of which three are in Amhara region. The districts are Fogera, Metema and Burea.

The four pillars of the project are knowledge management, capacity building, participatory marketable commodity development and innovative research. It also addressed gender and HIV/AIDS mainstreaming, environmental protection, impact assessment and monitoring cross-cutting issues.

3.2 Methods and Approaches

The methods and approaches implemented by the project are participatory market oriented value chain planning approach aimed at identifying main farming systems, potential marketable crop and livestock commodities, constraints, potentials and interventions and value chain stakeholder assessment with roles and their linkages.

To quantify the results from individual and/or combination of interventions, the project established a baseline and measured changes. Several data sources were used to establish the baseline and to document changes and results. Data sources are baseline information established from formal baseline study and special diagnostic

studies. In addition, documenting change processes and results obtained from six-monthly progress reports, annual monitoring and evaluation reports, Master of Science thesis research, records kept by the OoARD, personal observations and diaries. Formal household survey conducted in 2009.

To start the development of a commodity, IPMS used a district level participatory market oriented value chain planning approach, aimed at identifying (i) main farming systems, (ii) potential marketable crop and livestock commodities at farming system level, (iii) constraints, potentials and interventions for each value chain component and (iv) value chain stakeholder assessment with potential (new) roles and linkages. Different value chain stakeholders were involved and consulted in this planning exercise. Secondary biophysical and socio economic data were collected, followed by open ended interviews with focus groups and key stakeholders. The results were presented in a stakeholder workshop in which priority marketable commodities were decided upon together with key intervention areas and partners.

This initial rapid assessment was followed by some more detailed studies on selected commodities. Such studies were conducted by partner institutions and/or students and/or IPMS staff using formal surveys, interviews, and observations.

To implement the program at the district, peasant association and community levels, the project facilitated different knowledge management and capacity development approaches and methods to stimulate the introduction of the value chain interventions by the actors concerned. The various value chain interventions are documented by the project staff in the six-monthly progress reports and the annual monitoring and evaluation reports.

3.3. Summary of Experiences of the Project

Onion and tomato are among the largest production and highly commercialized vegetable crops in the region. In Fogera district, regardless of the existence of year round rivers and high ground water availability to supplement irrigation, favorable climate and soil type, the productivity and gross production of vegetables is low. This low production is attributed to shortage of input supply, lack of skills, and price collapse during peak harvest periods. With the aim of enhancing vegetable production through improving linkages among multi-stakeholders and developing market linkages to improve livelihood of vegetable producers, the district stakeholders/IPMS introduced new high yielding varieties, onion seed production system and staggered planting production techniques.

These stakeholders also created onion seed producers' platform, worked on onion market linkages, introduced better management skills and also strengthened linkages among actors along the value chain. The combined effects of all these interventions resulted in a tripling of the irrigated vegetable area from 2005 to 2008, and an onion seed production system by entrepreneurial farmers which not only services Fogera itself but also sells seeds to other districts.

The introduction of staggered production in tomato prevented market price deterioration and improved volume of production whereas market network for onion bulb created high volume of absorption outside the district. Onion seed certification improves confidence and traceability and creates marketing outside the district and the region. Ensuring seed producers' certification was a complex process which required the involvement and commitment of many stakeholders, including intensive technical support and follow up from input to post harvest handling and marketing. Despite all these hurdles, onion seed production proved to be a lucrative business. While significant progress has been made by using the value chain development approach, challenges/opportunities remain and/or are emerging which requires continuous responses from the actors involved. In particular, more attention needs to be paid to improvement of agronomic and irrigation practices, since yields observed for the major vegetable crops are well below their potential. Also more attention/knowledge is required on appropriate storage technologies as well as a nationwide market intelligence system

Some exciting results of IPMS Fogera project are:

- The average yield/hectare from two demonstration sites of the new hybrid tomato (Shanty) is 500 quintal/hectare.
- Net return to the family obtained from onion produced from 1.788 timad was 1,959 ETB whereas the net return obtained from tomato produced from 1.094 timad was 5,341 ETB.
- In 2010, a total seed value of 3.4 million ETB was obtained for 91 farmers (adopters)
- Profit per timad from onion bulb production was 9,953.55 ETB and profit per timad from onion seed production was 20,908.93 ETB.

3.4. Lessons and Challenges in the Intervention Process/Approach

Value chain approach is very important for all types of agricultural commodities. High production by itself does not guarantee the profitability of the producers unless it is linked to market. For successful commodity development, availability of various inputs like seed, fertilizer and other agrochemicals should be well considered ahead of time. Identification of relevant stakeholders and their level of involvements are important for the overall achievement of its objectives. Establishing platform and

commodity stakeholders are the key approaches along the value chain development. The following points were concluded as a recommendation.

- Establishing an efficient smallholder farmer seed system relieved the OoARD to do other activities.
- Row planting decreases the amount of onion bulb used for planting by 3 - 4 quintals/ha which could reduce onion seed production cost by about 1,200 - 1,600 ETB
- Improvement in onion seed supply lead to speed up the expansion of onion bulb production and increased the producers' household income.
- Seed production is a lucrative business and certification is essential to sell products outside the district.
- Distribution of motorized water pump and other irrigation technologies should be based on the availability (potential) of water in the district.
- Stager production, especially on tomato was a successful intervention.
- For efficient utilization of water for irrigation, the extension should support on creation of full awareness on water requirement for different plant, frequency of irrigation.

3.5. Upland Rice or NERICA Experience in Fogera District

A short orientation on upland rice or NERICA experience in Fogera district was given. NERICA is a **New Rice for Africa** ("NERICA") is an inter-specific cultivar of rice developed by the Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice) to improve the yield of African rice varieties. NERICA project is funded by the African Development Bank, the Japanese government and the United Nations Development Programme. This rice variety is suited to dry lands.

The expansion of rice in Fogera district started from 2003 with total volume of production 13,930 quintal. Its production increases from year to year and reached 87,240 quintal in 2010. The interest of farmers in producing rice is increasing from time to time. The productivity of NERICA-4 is better in the district. Seed production is underway in collaboration with farmers. The rice has high demand in the market and market linkage is created to get better price for the rice.

3.6. Discussion

Question 1: During tomato production period, the price of tomato falls. During winter, the price of tomato rises. Does the project induce a mechanism to preserve tomato for some time and sell it when it prices is appropriate? Is there market access mechanism?

Question 2: Green-house is not only flower development. It can also be used for vegetable development. Is there any effort in this regard?

Question 3: Value chain approach is a new development concept. It is the vertical integration of the ends (chains) of independent actors through values such as input supply, farmers, brokers, wholesalers, retailers, industry and supermarket. It is pointed out that in 2008 there was a market failure. If value chain planning performed, how the failure occurred? Did the mapping done together with value chain upgrading and development? Do all the actors of the value chain have the knowledge of the mapping?

Question 4: We were using the seed of tomato and onion by bringing from other areas. Now we produce ourselves. Farmers' tomato was collected lately. Now it should be collected earlier. The majority of the farmers produce industry tomato. It gives production in short time. Did the project introduced tomato types which can flower repeatedly and give production?

Question 5: On onion seed production, only 3 women out of 91 participants participated. Why the participation of women so small?

Question 6: How much are we sure of the seed quality? Can we label the seed quality?

Comment 1: What could the persons from DPFSPCO learn from this result? There is lack of market linkage. We say there is production but lack of market. One project cannot do everything. There is a need to link the actors of value chain and bring them to one direction. When DPFSPCO works on creating the linkages among the actors of value chain, value chain helps to get out from poverty.

Comment 2: The special problem related to agricultural products is instability of price. It could not be one organization's task. Bringing commercial volume of agricultural products is difficult. If there is an experience of farmers using small technology to preserve their products, share us.

Comment 3: The concerned bodies should closely and properly examine what is lacking? How shall we go? What shall we do? and establish integration to perform better. For preservation, different technologies must be used. For example, Israel uses different technologies for preservation to open international market.

The IPMS project does not involve in construction and free provision as they have the principle of avoiding dependency. They preferred to work with the farmers. There should be integration between the extension system and IPMS and proper assessment to make the integration fruitful.

The participation of women is small. For example, in this workshop there is no any woman. When we empower women? When we plan, we must think how our plan should benefit women. We should develop gender responsive plan. Mr Tilahun told us the project addresses gender and HIV/AIDS cross-cutting issues. But we could not see the direct women beneficiaries of the project as the project did not use gender responsive planning.

Answers given on the questions and comments

1. For the question raised on the preparation of the mapping work while preparing value chain, we did comprehensive baseline survey and it is assessed in this survey. The study identified seed shortage as the main problem and the project worked on seed and this problem occurred. The problem is caused by lack of promotion of market.
2. With regard to staggered production, we did a better work. Since the production is seasonal, it makes difficult to create linkage. Now we have tried to lengthen by producing on some other places.
3. On preservation, we conducted experience sharing. However, we could not build the preservations we saw at the experience sharing due to different reasons. There is no tomato at Fogera from June to September. So, preservation technology is important to introduce.
4. Regarding the participation of women, since women have many other problems, they do not participate themselves directly. The benefit from the project through share cropping mechanism. We checked this through monitoring and evaluation.
5. We have tried to introduce zero tillage sowing technology using chemicals. We got good results especially for rice. However, since Fogera is adjacent to Lake Tana, we advised to stop as it may pollute the lake and we stopped the intervention.
6. Seed quality - we brought the onion bulb from Ziway and Afar. We bring the bulb after it is tested by laboratory and confirmed it is ok. There is a high demand for seed. When seed goes out of Fogera, it should get seed certification.

4. Improving the Livelihood of Smallholder Farmers and Marginalized Segments of the Community through Value Chain Development Experiences from SOS-Sahel Ethiopia (the Fourth Presentation)



Mr Molla Jember, SOS Sahel, presenting the paper

4.1. Summary of the Experience of SOS Sahel Ethiopia/IDE ETHIOPIA

The title of the project is Ensuring Small Producers in Ethiopia Achieve Sustainable and Fair Access to Pepper and Bee products. The duration of the project is a three years (March 2008–January 2011). The project is implemented by SOS Sahel Ethiopia/IDE ETHIOPIA in Dangila, Jabihtenan, Dembia and Lay Armachiho districts of Amhara region. The beneficiaries of the project are 1,200 smallholder beekeepers and 1,600 pepper grower in total 2,800 household heads.

The purpose of the project is to create strong value chain and work to avoid complaints of various level market actors. Producers complain on market problem for their products because farmers have low volumes, poor quality (they don't add value to their produce) whereas packers/traders complain on no marketable volume and lower quality.

The goal of the project was lifting smallholder producers out of income poverty through effective participation in local, national and global agricultural markets. More specifically, the project aims to support smallholder producers to overcome constraints to achieving sustainable and fair access to honey and pepper markets both within Ethiopia and beyond.

The project has economic, social and environmental expected outcomes. The economic outcomes are boost production and supply at local level, post-harvest processing and product development and market development. The environmental output is to encourage producers to be environmentally friendly while producing their products. The social outcomes are access to affordable credit and dependable financial services, human capital creation and attitudinal change and mainstreaming of women and marginalized people. Similarly, the expected project outputs are productivity of small-scale producers improved, increased income return of the producers, sustainable linkages established/strengthened with local, national and international market and action research, documentation and policy engagement and key lessons.

4.2. Accomplishment Status of the Project

The project accomplished its planned activities. In honey production, three collection and processing centres constructed and equipped with honey processing equipments, food graded honey container and necessary packaging materials, three beekeeping cooperatives were established in the three districts whose members reached to 1,504 (women 7% or 106). If we include the previous cooperative of Dangila whose total members is 753 (of which 340 or 45% women) make up total beekeeping cooperative members to 2,257.

For pepper, two pepper grower multipurpose cooperatives were supplied with pepper grinding mill; 146 pepper grower farmers were provided with improved pepper seed and technical support and harvested good yield; two multipurpose cooperatives (Mankussa in Jabitehnan and Chuahit in Dembia) were selected for the project's pepper intervention. The total member of these cooperatives is 4,064 (of which 415 female).

Environmental related activities performed by the project are 35 private nursery site established and supplied with various bee-forage source of seeds and seedlings to use to their own and supply to the community; 3 community nursery sites were supported with different forage seeds and 37 private nursery sites were established by the project.

In developing micro-irrigation, manual well drilling technology was introduced and nine water delivery technology (only suction treadle pump) were supplied and installed in a borehole to 9 model farmers (4 Jabitehnan, 3 Dembia, 1 Dangila and 1 Armachiho).

Socially, eighty-one marginalized sections of the community, women and HIV/AIDS affected individuals received training on beekeeping management and got framed beehives and bee colony to become self supported. Some destitute women start earning income from the skill they gained in honey processing techniques.

The project made efforts to create market linkages. Producers linked to local and national markets. Cooperatives' products were promoted using different promotional strategies. Pepper powder recipe developed, value added and packed pepper powder supplied to market by cooperatives.

4.3. Achievements and Impacts of the Project

The project achieved direct, indirect and multiplier effects. The project brought about economic, skills, technology and social benefits to beekeepers and pepper grower farmers and to the community at large and achieved economic, environmental and social benefits.

The economic benefits of the project are income gain from price improvement (from ETB 12 to ETB 35 per kg); dividend share from 2.99 to 444 ETB; product diversification (honey, beeswax and honey-wine); improve their food security status through better beekeeping and pepper management; micro-irrigation (only treadle pump) technology users have earned an income ranging from 3,500 to 7,200 ETB by growing and selling of different fruits and vegetables. Among pepper grower farmers who had used better Mareko-Fana seed and received technical assistance in the agronomy practice earned income more than 150,000 ETB from the sale of pepper production. Destitute women, HIV/AIDS affected people and marginalized segment of the community started practicing beekeeping as their livelihood and improve their food security status. The irrigation technology has made smallholder farmers to think that their agriculture practice could not be any more rain dependent.

The project enabled to sensitize and train communities in environmental conservation methods through distrusting bee forage seedlings and seeds.

Social benefits of the project are ccreation of human capital through extension and training services; positive change in attitude and psychology towards adopting new agricultural practice (off-season small scale irrigation) introduced by other farmers in the project areas has been encouraging and creation of viable and self-governing farmers' organizations. The establishment of women income generating groups has encouraged the disadvantaged social groups 'women' to further strengthen their participation in economic activities and in terms of health at the family level. Incomes from the sales of honey and pepper have improved the household food security significantly.

In ensuring sustainability as this is a commercially oriented project, it is designed to transform subsistence farmers to entrepreneurs. Therefore, the project was fully aware that the business aspects should not be highly subsidized in order that these enterprises become independently viable in the long term after the end of the project assistance.

For technological and technical sustainability, the implementation approach was participatory. For the sustainability of micro irrigation technology: selected local people and government experts were receiving intensive training in the drilling techniques and installation skills. Those who received the training established private drilling team enterprises in the intervention districts. They have been linked to input (technology) suppliers. Pepper grower farmers now able to produce Marko-Fana better pepper seed and supply to the other pepper growing farmers.

With respect to financial sustainability, the cooperatives were linked to micro-credit and saving institutions. Some cooperatives improve their capital through purchasing additional share. Institutional sustainability is ensured through capacity building in the area of institutional leadership and business management, cooperatives' leaders able to lead their institution. The commitment of on-going government assistance and support to their civil institutions will continue into the future. Environmentally, private nurseries were established to distribute bee forage and other local trees to conserve the environment.

4.4. Challenges

The main challenges of the project are supply side, demand side and technical. The supply side problems are poor production systems, low output volume and poor economies of scale; supply shortage and higher price of packaging material; low level of trade finance and micro-finance available limits purchase capacity of rural businesses and co-operatives; poor marketing skills of the suppliers and the co-operatives; lack of organization and management of the producer groups and co-operatives cause overhead costs are high and limit the opportunity for supply to reach national markets; due to poor product quality and in-consistent volume supply entry to export markets is a significant challenge and poor shelf life.

The demand side problems are lower paying capacity of consumers to purchase high quality honey and pepper and stringent controlling parameter to enter to EU market.

Technical problems are inflation and budget shortfall; the involvement of stakeholders in the marketing component of the project has fallen short of the skill standards and level of market awareness required; low entrepreneurial and leadership skills of the co-operatives; time costs associated with group decision making; limited budget to go through the necessary steps of pepper value addition and create link to end markets. Supply chain for the irrigation technology was not sufficiently strengthened during the relatively short project term. Budget constraint limited the project to address a larger number of marginalized women and HIV/AIDS affected sections of the community, and to ensure that sustainable life changes had been achieved by the end of the project term.

4.5. Lessons Learnt

Lessons obtained from the project are:

- Chronic poverty disables the potential for rural producers to engage with basic technology advancements, value addition and more rewarding markets.
- The opportunity cost of developing business in rural poor areas is high and uncommercially viable for the private sector alone to address.
- The essential need for external support to producer driven enterprise in the rural poor environment is very apparent. However, the challenge remains as to how to balance this need against the equally important need to stimulate and mobilize the producers own responsibility and resources to bring about sustainable, self-reliant development
- Stimulating the private sector involvement in providing good quality input supplies to small holders in rural area need longer term encouragement to gain their commitment.
- Smallholder farmers become risk averse only if they are not well introduced to new technologies.
- Value chain approach becomes effective upon establishing a good trust among different actors and when there is ethical trading system
- For the producer to maintain a good market position, especially if the intention is to reach the position of export, consistent quality and consistent quantity are the two necessary factors.
- For entry into a market, producers need to first identify the minimum supply levels, then to achieve the economies of scale that maintain the market position.
- Engaging the private sector and the government in building on these efforts and sustaining the interventions in a commercial market lead manner is the long term challenge.

4.6. Discussion

The questions and comments that were forwarded by the participants and the responses given by the presenter are depicted as follows.

Question 1: Under the existing condition of subsistence farming and fragmented land, how can we create market volume? Without adequate market volume, it could not be value chain rather it becomes supply chain. Did you address the critical factors of value chain (quantity, quality, time,) properly?

Question 2: When we bring and produce pepper from one agro-ecology to another agro-ecology, did the genetic make not change?

Question 3: In order to ensure sustainability, how did you institutionalize (created institutional capacity)?

Question 4: How did you solve the market problem? Do cooperatives (2 or 3) solve the market problem?

Question 5: The main problem on paper is disease. Share us how you solved this problem if there is any.

Question 6: What concrete result did you bring at Jabitehnan district?

Question 7: At Dangila District, there was a problem of beeswax. How did you solve the problem of beeswax?

Question 8: At Dangila District, there is no market problem. The problem is quality of honey as they use smoke. How did you solve this problem?

Question 9: There is a problem on networking. Experience sharing is very important. It reduces duplication of work. Even two NGOs working in a district do not know each other. How can we create networking and linkages at grassroot level?

Question 10: What is the reason that Amar is declining from time to time on market?

Question 11: We saw that 45 women are members of the cooperatives. How they benefited (outcome)?

Question 12: How women and youth benefited from the project?

Answers given for the raised questions are:

1. It is known that it is difficult to create market volume under subsistence farming system. It is also challenging to create market linkages. I believe that the agricultural system will solve this problem. By organizing farmers and collecting products from individual farmers through their cooperatives and supply to the market.
2. Regarding the change of the genetic makeup of the pepper brought from other ecological zones, from 1-3 rounds it worked adequately for us. There may be a change in next rounds.
3. Sustainability issue is a big issue. We have phase-out strategy before entry. We trained former to takeover when the project phase-out. For example for micro irrigation project, farmers are organized and created drilling enterprises in Jabitehnan district and they are working. We organized in Dembiya district but I do not know their current status.
4. For integration, we lack. We do not know each other. Sometimes even we do not listen to each other.
5. For the problem related to honey, we did big promotion work to improve the quality of honey. We got better results.

6. Pepper: there is a big quality problem in Jabitehnan district. We trained them to add value such as packing and sell to get better results. They have developed their own pepper preparation recipe. We also tried to create market linkage. This problem calls for the coordinated effort of all concerned bodies.
7. Beeswax problem is solved by producing beeswax by the farmers themselves. They also get benefit by selling to others.
8. Amar is on the status of disappearing from the market. When the project phase out, passiveness created among the farmers. The supply of honey is also declining. Chemical spray is becoming a big problem for honey production. It is becoming big challenge. There is a potential chance of losing our bee resource. The cooperative did not work hard.
9. With regard to benefiting women, they benefitted from the project through their cooperatives fro honey. In addition we benefitted marginalized women in pepper and micro irrigation components.

5. General Discussion and the Way Forward

The facilitator of the afternoon session, Mr Getachew Ali invited Mr Sileshi Temesgen to lead the general discussion. Mr Sileshi opened the floor for general discussion by thanking the organizers and informing the participants that they can raise questions and provides comments on the four papers presented as well as share their experiences so that others can learn and use them.

5.1. General Discussion



Mr Sileshi Temesgen and Mr Getachew Ali leading the general discussion of the workshop

As all of the questions entertained fully at the sessions of the papers' presentations, all participants gave comments which are important for the forum's future actions. The comments given by participants are summarized and presented below.

Comment 1 (GIZ):

- Everybody is busy with its day-to-day duties and it is not common to sit together to discuss and learn from each other. But discussions and experience sharing like this one will contribute much for our work and we should consider it as important and strengthens our achievement. If we were invited, we had good experience to share for the participants. In the future, we hope we will be invited to share our experiences.
- The audience of the workshop is small. It should be more (at least two or three fold). Because the presented papers are very important and help many organizations as inputs in their development intervention. If the forum has no resource, we can cover our expenses to increase the participants.

- There should be someone from the concerned government bodies to highlight some important issues such as land administration issues. It is good to include in the future meetings. Our organization works on land related issues and there is much complaining made by the community. We want to hear on such and other similar issues what is going on and the directions of the regional government.
- The time of the workshop is short. It is better to give optimal time in the future to pass the messages of the workshop properly.

Comment 2: (Agri-service Ethiopia)

- This forum shall have operational manual to support its implementation. The South Wollo GO-NGO forum is preparing a good operational manual and the forum can use it as input.
- We observed that there is lack of partnership among NGOs in their operation areas. So, it is important to establish NGO to NGO network to avoid this gap.
- When we study about the chronic food insecurity, it is better to start from the root causes not from its symptoms. Starting our solution for chronic food security from the root causes enables us to sustainably solve the problem. The presented papers are best and we need to convert them to action /implementation/.
- We talked about value chain repeatedly. Still we lack integration among the major actors of value chain. For example, it is forbidden by law to sell haricot bean whereas the farmers do not know this law. On the other hand, bureau of Agriculture do not know how much haricot bean produced. When we try to use the concept of value chain, we shall not conceive it narrowly. We have to assess and address all components of value chain. The forum shall consider developing the means on how to implement value chain approach at grassroots level properly. Mostly we have the terminology; however, the real implementation lacks much.
- When we exercise to develop alternative IGAs, there is a problem of targeting. The issues of targeting need to be properly addressed.
- The problem of dependency syndrome is not explained by any of the papers. However, there is a real challenge of dependency syndrome. We shall put a direction on how to cope up and solve it.

Comment 3: (DPFPCO)

- It can be concluded that the workshop has met its objective. Almost all the expected participants have come. The forum made many efforts so far. The remaining is to convert our promise to action.
- In the previous workshop of the forum, we have agreed to assign focal persons immediately. But only three organizations (BoFED, ORDA and SOS Sahel) assigned focal persons. Every member of the forum should assign focal persons as soon as possible.
- Amhara Disaster Prevention and Food Security Office will take the forum as its regular duty.
- The guideline of the forum prepared and we need to meet in a short time and approve it.

Comment 4: (Mr Fentahun Wakie, SNV)

The nature of networking demands high effort and working much, but it is not fruitful as intended. A network will be effective when it has incentives. The incentive is the value added to our performance. We perform much in small areas through high investment. But it couldn't be scaled-up because the government cannot invest that much for small areas. BoFED, BoA and DPFSCO together should develop a system to collect, process, and disseminate the best practices of NGOs by developing simple formats. Then make the NGOs to submit their best experiences from their selected major activities. In this way, best practices can be easily scaled-up and we can get numerous lessons. I can contribute to develop this system voluntarily.

5.2. The Way Forward

The action points suggested and unanimously agreed by all workshop participants to be carried out are:

1. The Amhara Disaster Prevention and Food Security Program Coordination Office must take the Forum as one of its duties and act accordingly.
2. All the members of the Food Security Forum must assign focal persons in a very short period of time.
3. The Forum's steering committee meetings must be conducted by their schedule (every three months).
4. The Forum should have its own annual plan and consolidated operational guideline
5. Formulating and sharing best practices obtained from NGOs should be done and integrate them with the forum's plan for implementation.
6. Knowledge sharing and capacity building system should be established by BoA. When a project phases out, the project implementer should formulate the best practices obtained from the project. These best practices should be collected, documented properly and disseminated to the user on time to be used. BoA should take this responsibility. Otherwise, scaling out best practices won't go beyond talk. It is expected BoA will present a report on best practices collected from NGOs in the next meeting. In this way we can benefit and positively influence the government on policy issues.
7. The Disaster Preparedness and Food Security Coordination Office should breakdown the recommendations of the study on non-farm activities by differentiating with each actor what to do, when to do and how to do in order to scale up best practices on non-farm IGAs. Each actor should take its share and implement.
8. BoFED need to take the responsibility to establish the Food Security Forum at district level to avoid the current gap of integration and lack of knowledge and experience sharing among NGOs working in a district. The Forum shall be established with the involvement of both the government, the community and NGOs to make the Forum functional and achieve its set objectives.
9. Increase participants to the Forum meetings by inviting organizations working on food security related areas.
10. By next month, there will be the Forum's meeting at Dessie town. The annual plan of the Forum and the bylaw of the forum will be endorsed at the meeting. Experience sharing through field visits is part of the event. The expense of each participant of the workshop will be covered by the participant itself, if the forum will not have access for the planned program.

11. Amhara Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, Bureau of Agriculture and Disaster Prevention and Food Security Program Office together should work a plan to make the Forum functional and exploit its benefits.

Closing Remark



Mr Sileshi Temesgent, giving concluding remark

The closing remark was made by Mr Sileshi Temesgen. He started his closing remark by forwarding his thanks on behalf of himself and his organization to the organizers, resource persons and the participants of the workshop. He thanked the participants not only for their warm participation in the discussion on the issues raised as well as sharing their experiences but also for their strong interest and commitment to the forum. This was manifested through their presence even though the call to participants was very short time and almost all of the participants have attended the workshop. He also thanked the resource persons as the presented papers were so informative and educative.

On his remark, he underlined the need to strengthen and continue the forum because the Forum can play a vital role by exchanging experiences among different GOs and NGOs and bringing together the government and NGOs for effective and efficient development intervention. Scaling up best practices of NGOs to other government and NGO organizations go in line with the government policy. Therefore, the Forum will help to discuss closely on how to draw best practices of the NGOs and scale up to others.

The other point he underlined is when members of the Forum make close relationships, discussions and exchange ideas, we can effectively solve the challenges of the NGOs step by step. That is the sole reason for strengthening and making the Forum sustainable.

Finally, he concluded the workshop by promising on behalf of his to strengthen more, to lead and support more the Forum and declared the workshop is officially ended.

Annex

Annex 1: List of Participants of the Panel Discussion

S/N	Name	Organization	Position	Telephone		Email
				Landline	Mobile	
1	Ayalew Abera (M)	DPFSPCO	Expert		0918 025465	aabera2010@yahoo.com
2	Getachew Ali	AAE NRO	Reg. coordinator	0582 208756	0918 719768	
3	Lakew H/Mariyam	BoFED	Expert		0918 780463	
4	Anteneh Gelaye	CARE Ethiopia	Project Manager	0582 201628	0918 764191	antenehg@care.org.et
5	Tshehay Asmare	ORDA	Manager		0918 701191	tshehayasmare@gmail.com
6	Endris Feyessa	CONCERN	Manager		0920 482658	endrisfeyesa@yahoo.com
7	Worku Kebede	DPFSPCO	Expert		0918 141557	hatworku@gmail.com
8	Tilahun Abera	FC	Coordinator		0911 824136	bbffcp@ethionet.et
9	Tesfaye Mekonnen	WFP	FM		0914 711344	Tesfaye.Mekonen@wfp.org
10	Tilahun Gebey	ILRI/IPMS	RDO		0918 761182	
11	Aynalem Gezahegn (A)	BoA/IPMS	RALC-chair		0918 768386	
12	Shigedif Mekuria	Andassa LRC	Researcher		0918 709628	Shigdaf@yahoo.com
13	Kerealem Ejigu	Andassa LRC	Director		0918 340110	e_kerealem@yahoo.com
14	Molla Jember	SOS Sahle	Proj.coor		0918 778222	mollajember@yahoo.com
15	Amahre Kindie	DPFSPCO	Deputy Head		0918 340128	Amare20002@yahoo.com
16	Sileshi Temesgen	DPFSPCO	Head		0918 341260	silesheplaua@hotmail.com
17	Degu Addis	CCRDA NRC	Coordination		0918 769048	adegu@yahoo.com

S/N	Name	Organization	Position	Telephone		Email
				Landline	Mobile	
			officer			
18	Tenaw Mekonnen	BoA	Process Owner		0918 768898	tenawm@yahoo.com
19	Asamere Wolde	World Vision	HEA Officer		0911 968284	asamerewol@yahoo.com
20	Leake G/Libanos	GIZ/SLM	Senior Advisor		0918 761866	leakejlibanos@giz.de
21	Fentahun Wakie	SNV	Coordinator	0582 264536		fwakie@SNVworld.org
22	Mesfin Tafera	Agri-Service	RPD		0911 674651	mtefera@gmail.com
23	Tadele Assefa	WCY	Expert		0918 760880	tadeleru@yahoo.com
24	Muhammed Abdie	ARARI	ICT expert		0918 716110	muhaarari@gmail.com
25	Ayana Dinberu	ARARI	PR Officer		0918 780651	ayanageremew@yahoo.com
26	T/Haimanot Medhin	EECMY/DASSC	Manager		0918 770977	tecmedhin@yahoo.com
27	Yalew Tizazu	Plan Int-Ethiopia	Program Officer		0911 056774	Yalew.Tizazu@plan_international.org
28	Minda Ayele	Plan Int-Ethiopia	Food Security		0921 524358	