

Bridging the Gap between Strategy and Delivery of Improved Sheep Fattening in Ethiopia



ICARDA and TAAT (Technologies for African Agriculture Transformation) project introduced entrepreneurial skills to sheep farmers in the Ethiopian Highlands in 2018. The approach of the targeted youth as disseminators of improved and market-oriented sheep fattening technologies and practices. In 2019, power of idea implementation and strategy execution was put in the hands of “Sheep Fattening Community of Practice” teams. A [training in Entrepreneurial Skills Development](#) and follow-up workshops for communication, interaction and cooperation between grassroots change and

development agents, researchers and government Ministry officers, were undertaken with the vision of starting to address the knowledge gap that would help to commercialize sheep fattening as a pathway to tackling youth unemployment in the Ethiopian Highlands. The workshops in part also sort to understand how local knowledge and systems might shape innovation in commercialization of sheep fattening.

The training held in Debre Birhan on 1-4 January 2019 (Fig.1) comprised 31 participants drawn from regional and local communities in Bonga, Horro, Menz and Doyogena across various disciplines (agriculture, youth and sports, gender, cooperative development and entrepreneurship office) as well as researchers from six different partner institutions (SARI, ARARI, OARI, Areka ARC, Bako ARC, Debre Birhan ARC).



Participants of the Workshop, Debre Birhan, Ethiopia, January 1-4, 2019
Image credit: ICARDA/Nahom Ephrem

The overall objective of the practical oriented training was to familiarize participants with fundamental entrepreneurial skills with an aim to support upcoming youth groups and farmer entrepreneurs in sheep fattening within their localities, to enhance creativity and innovation necessary to improve business performance and engagement in profitable ventures.



This entailed enabling participants understand, learn and practice business models of sheep fattening, participants understanding basic terms of business and business plan development and familiarizing themselves with entrepreneurial behavior necessary to start and run sound business ventures. Participants were actively engaged throughout the sessions, which included a mix of audio-visual

presentations, group exercises and plenary discussions. This capacity enhancement is expected to boost ICARDA's initiatives in sheep fattening commercialization in Ethiopian Highlands.

During the training, they formed regional-based teams dubbed "Community of Practice, (CoPs)" to garner support from regional and local Administration to support youth sheep fattening. Follow-up workshops were held by ICARDA in individual regions between August and December 2019.

The CoPs will also support the multi-stakeholder innovation platforms approach CRP Livestock Feeds & Forages Smart Project by coordinating activities of multiple partners in sheep farming, cooperative formation, entrepreneurial support and gender mainstreaming in the project sites.

ICARDA has been undertaking sheep fattening interventions in Ethiopian Highlands since 2014.

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