



RESEARCH
PROGRAM ON
Livestock



Science for resilient livelihoods in dry areas

Strengthening Sheep fattening Communities of Practice in Ethiopia: Laying down revised strategies



Assessment and Planning Workshop 2020

December 2020

Introduction

ICARDA launched CoPs in 2019 with the intention to engage diverse stakeholders in livestock activities to sustainability support scaling of improved market-oriented sheep fattening (SF) practices and technologies in the highlands of Ethiopia. The 2020 workshop was the second of a planned series of annual stakeholder consultations that brings together sheep fattening stakeholders from ICARDA's four SmART project sites. Their consultations will together feed into the broader efforts to raise visibility and momentum of efforts to repurpose public and policy support to market-oriented sheep fattening, particularly for the youth. CoP members met in a two-day workshop in Addis Ababa on 25-26th December 2020. Key on the agenda (Table 1) was how to structure and organize individual CoP platforms so that they remain active and to hold discussions on possible pathways ahead for this initiative to enable it to achieve desired outcomes. One of the major challenges so far has been the continuous shift of staff from Government departments represented in the CoPs as well as changing positions by members, thus requiring them to be replaced by new colleagues. Constant replacements have resulted in loss of platform/institutional memory, thus hindering several members as well as government offices from fulfilling their major purpose as members of the CoPs. Incoming new staff clearly do not have enough knowledge and information regarding the major aim of CoPs. It is, therefore, imperative, to redefine the CoPs. The workshop sought to better position the 'repurposing' agenda, as well as the centering of farmer and youth voices, as strategic foci for structural CoP changes and SF-related policy change discussions. To examine the current status of CoPs (what is working and what is not), participants identified major barriers/constraints and opportunities, and brought in ideas and strategies to develop a clear working program.

Structuring functional CoPs

This was an important session of the workshop. In breakout sessions, consisting of representatives from similar offices (e.g all cooperative or all gender), they discussed the structure of the existing CoPs and designed comprehensive working programs with supporting activities. They assessed the status of their offices in the current CoPs and identified challenges, opportunities, and new knowledge. In plenary, the groups agreed that restructuring should be

Review Workshop on Strengthening Sheep Fattening Communities of Practice in Ethiopia

December 25-26, 2020
Venue: Beshale Hotel Ertale Hall
Addis Ababa

Agenda: Table I

Day 1: Friday 25		
Time	Activity	Facilitator
8:30 am	Registration	Martha Sintayehu/Nahom Ephrem
9:00 am	Welcoming Remark	Ayele Abebe
	Participant Introductions	Ayele Abebe
9.30 am	Highlights from sheep fattening activities: Status, challenges and opportunities	NARS Researchers - Menz
		NARS Researchers - Bonga
		NARS Researchers - Doyogena
10.30	Plenary: Reflections on sheep fattening activities in 2019/2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none">What has been achievedWhat could not be achieved? Why?	Ayele/Muluken
11:00 am	Tea Break	
11:30 am	Group Photo Session	
11:45 am	Plenary: Reflections on the role of CoP in 2019/2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none">What has been achievedWhat could not be achieved? Why?	Esayas Mulatu & Nahom Ephrem
12.30	Plenary: What is the role of CoP in the sheep fattening program	
1:00 pm	Lunch	
2:15 pm	Why Cooperatives? Prospects and approaches	Dagnew Gessesse
3.15 pm	Plenary:	
4.00 pm	Tea Break	
4.30 pm	Functioning of CoPs: Structure and Organization	Esayas Mulatu
5.15 pm	Plenary: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Incorporating CoP members from different government levelsIncorporating members from the sheep value chainResponsibilities of individual CoP members/offices	Esayas Mulatu
6.00	Day Wrap up	Muluken Z./Nahom E
Day 2: Saturday 26		

Time	Activity	Facilitator
8:30 am	Registration	Nahom E.
9:00 am	Reviews from Day I	Tesfaye A. /Asfaw Bisrat
9:15 am	How to keep CoPs active <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teambuilding ▪ Communication ▪ Challenges, constraints, opportunities and how to communicate them 	Esayas+ Team
11:00 am	<i>Tea Break</i>	
11:15 am	Role of CoP in informing policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How to communicate and influence sheep fattening agenda to higher government levels ▪ Can sheep fattening be incorporated into workplans of government at regional/district/kebele level? How? 	Ayele A./Tesfaye A.
1:00 pm	<i>Lunch</i>	
2:00pm	Group Work: How CoPs plan to organize themselves (Action plans for each sector)	Ayele A./Muluken Z.
3:00pm	Presentation of Action Plans	
3:45pm	Feedback from Participants	
4:15pm	<i>Wrap up</i>	Nahom/Muluken

undertaken in phases while seeking to answer the following questions: Who are the existing members of our group? What is their primary purpose? Does the group have important stakeholders? What are the benefits to group members and stakeholders? What specific needs will the community be organized to meet? What resources are available to support and meet the purpose of CoPs? Discussions proceeded as follows:



Fig. 1: Breakout sessions during the CoP meeting. Members from Women, Children and Youth Affairs (left), Research Centers (right). Photo credit, Nahom Ephrem

What is the main purpose of the CoPs?

- To learn, adopt and disseminate technologies, knowledge, and information.
- Support the sustainability of improved sheep fattening technologies and practices, particularly the Youth Cooperative approach, by taking it into their working agenda.
- Assist in building linkages and relationships with stakeholders (Regional Bureaus & Federal Ministries, NGOs, and other relevant organizations).

Who are the CoP members?

It was observed that a substantial number of previous CoP members were not present because of a change in their working position or department. It became necessary to revise memberships and fill in the gaps. The newly reformed CoP members are presented in Table 2.

What are the available resources?

- Technical & knowledge resources: Available expertise i.e. researchers and technical experts.
- Political resource: Research Center Directors and heads of Government offices.



Fig. 2: Presentations by CoPs, Members from Trade & Industries Enterprise (left), Livestock office (right) Photo credit: Nahom Ephrem

- Time and energy: Members believed that time could not be a problem if programs are designed properly and if members remained motivated.
- Financial resources: They explained that governmental offices had limited finances to support CoP and recommended that ICARDA continues to support joint cross-regional meetings.
- Technological Resources: These are important resources that enable CoPs to share and exchange information and experience (Social & digital media; Tv, radio, email, social media groups). Media representatives are the latest entrants into the CoP in 2020.

What are the benefits for members?

Participation as a CoP member was believed to have certain advantages and benefits that include:

- Build relations with peoples or stakeholders that one may, otherwise, never encounter.
- Capture and analysis of new and existing knowledge and information.
- Able to create communication platforms and working programs.
- Stimulates learning by serving as a tool for experience sharing, communication, and knowledge and technology dissemination.
- Introduction of collaborative processes and encouragement of free flow of ideas and information.
- Help people organize around purposeful actions and generate new knowledge.



Fig. 3: Presentations by CoP Members from MFIs (left), NARCs (right). Photo credit: Nahom Ephrem

How can we design our CoPs?

It was very important to note that designing CoPs is a key step that it enables definition of activities, technologies, group processes and roles that will support the goals of sheep fattening program. Participants indicated that the design of the CoPs must level up with members working programs and environments thus it is imperative to:

- Identify tasks that the sheep fattening community are likely to and/or want to, carry out.
- Identify meeting opportunities for youth group members and other sheep fatteners to design communication platforms.
- Identify community facilitator(s) and determine roles.
- Establish working programs for CoPs and define how these will be integrated into the overall agenda.

Table 2: Representatives of CoP and their major role as members

Major Role in CoPs	Name of Organization	Represented By	Position	Site/District
Organizer	The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)	Jane Wamatu	Project coordinator	Addis Ababa
		Nahom Ephrem	Consultant	Addis Ababa
		Esayas Mulatu	Consultant	Addis Ababa
Facilitators	National Agricultural Research Centers (NARCs) - Debre-berhan ARC (representing ARARI) - Areka and Bonga ARC (representing SARI)	Ayele Abebe	National Sheep Research Coordinator	DB-ARC
		Asfaw Bisrat	Assistant Researcher	DB-ARC
		Leulseged Alemayehu*	Feeds and Forages Researcher	DB-ARC
		Tesfaye Abiso	Nutrition Researcher	Areka ARC
		Estifanos Endrias	Feeds and Forages Researcher	Areka ARC
		Tessema Erchafo	Socio-economics Researcher	Areka ARC
		Muluken Zeleke	Center Director & Nutrition Researcher	Bonga ARC
		Atinafu Asefa	Animal Breeding Researcher	Bonga ARC
		Taye Takele*	Zonal Livestock Office Head	Kaffa/Bonga
		Abera Abate	Small-ruminant expert	Kaffa/Bonga
		Tesfaye Hadaro*	Small-ruminant expert	Doyogena
Practitioners	Livestock Office	Temesgen Alemu	District Livestock Office Head	Doyogena
		Derash Delelegn*	District Livestock Office Representative	Menz Mama
		Getachere Chewaye*	Team leader	Menz Gera
		Fanaye Melese*	Zonal WCYAs office Vice-head	Kaffa/Bonga
		Mesele Markos	District WCYAs office Head	Doyogena
	Women, Children and Youth Affairs (WCYAs)	Solomon Hailu*	Expert	Menz Gera
		Marta Yirga	District WCYAs office Head	Menz Mama
		Seifu Gebre-medhin*	District Cooperative Process Coordinator	Adiyo/Bonga
	Cooperatives Development Office	Gizachew Mengesha*	Zonal Cooperative office Head	Kaffa/Bonga
		Degefe Darago*	Cooperatives Training Expert	Doyogena
		Markos Obola	Cooperatives office Team-leader	Doyogena
		Shewfera Gebre	Cooperatives office Head	Menz Mama
		Zinabu Altaw	Cooperatives office Head	Menz Gera
		Bizuayew Eshetu*	Zonal Job creation Expert	Kaffa/Bonga
		Habtamu wolde*	Zonal Enterprise and Industry Office Head	Kaffa/Bonga
	Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (Menz), Trade and Industries Enterprise (Bonga) and Job Creation Office (Doyogena) (N.B. some organizations might initiated internally by regional offices with different names)	Degefe Anebo*	Job creation office Team-leader	Doyogena
		Bekele Debay*	TVET office Team-Leader	Menz Mama
		Biru Yeshidenber	TVET office Head	Menz Gera
	Media and Communication (N.B. Members from Menz and Doyogena agreed to recruit new CoP members that could represent media and communication)	Bizuayehu chaka*	South Tv and Radio- Bonga Branch Reporter	Bonga
Remark	Representatives of the other CoP members like Youth leaders, Sub-Committees and Enumerators are not included due to the ongoing registration of youth groups that new changes will be made very soon and new members will be recruited.			

*newly recruited members



Figure 4 Presentations by CoP Members from Media and Communications (left) and Cooperatives development (right). Photo credit: Nahom Ephrem

Finally, participants identified their major roles in the program and set-out activities to be conducted. This section of discussion tried to answer the listed questions in Table 3.

- *What are the Key Roles of CoP members?*
- *What should be done to accomplish these roles?*
- *What outcomes should be delivered by CoPs?*


Lessons Learnt

After completing a successful CoP progress review and measurement workshop, the following key lessons were seized:

- Unequal ownership and unjustified roles for CoPs were shown in the original plan.
- Lack of comprehensive working plan and user-friendly communication platforms were found to be the most important barriers affecting the CoPs.
- CoPs need to be engaged in planning, review and implementation activities of the sheep fattening program for improved understanding of approached and to build trust, motivation, and self-belongingness.
- CoPs found to be crucial for creating linkage and relations with other stakeholders and buy-in their interest for future collaboration.

Table 3: Major roles identified, proposed actions and output indicators by CoPs

Roles Identified	Proposed Action	Output Indicators
Support adoption, dissemination and sustainability of technologies and approaches	Raise awareness to officers and co-workers and recruit a task-force	-Taking the program into working agenda -No. of youth groups registered and new potential areas identified -Working program designed
	Assess potential areas for scalability and assist in dissemination of technologies	
	Set-up and design a working program for continuous supervision and follow up of existing and new sites	
Inquire, learn and share new and existing knowledge, experience and information	Analyze existing knowledge and experience and identify core technical and skill gaps need to be improved	-No. of skill gap training/ workshops organized -No. of field of field days'/trade fair shares organized -No. of TV, radio or other media announcements
	Adopt and Implement knowledge management tools	
	Facilitate and/or participate in capacity building trainings and workshops	
	Set up and practice knowledge and experience sharing platforms (Farmer field days, community conversations, trade share fairs, TV or radio announcements...)	
Identify and build strategic linkages, relations, collaborations and networks with partners and other stakeholders	Identify key stakeholders and create new linkage networks to buy-in their interests (Regional and Federal level Directories and Ministries, MFIs, NGOs...)	-No. and type of relations and linkages created -No. of visits organized -Communication platforms set
	Liaise with stakeholders to mobilize resources and share new information, ideas, skill, knowledge and experience.	
	Set up user friendly communication platforms	
Assess, collect and document data and report results	Assess and measure outcomes, identify barriers and suggest solutions	Reports submitted (Quarterly & Yearly)
	Develop data recording and reporting templates	
	Record and document formal meetings and informal conversations, success stories and experiences, information	
	Timely reporting	
Monitoring and Evaluation	Participate in assessment and M&E framework development	-Assessment framework developed
	Conduct timely monitoring of progress of activities	
	Participate in evaluation and identification of project outcomes, barriers, existing opportunities and suggest ways for future improvement	-Short/Mid-term evaluation report



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