



Scaling Sheep Fattening in the Ethiopian Highlands A Stakeholder Review Workshop

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
August 23, 2019



Workshop Report

During August 2018 to January 2019, ICARDA in collaboration with the TAAT (Technologies for African Agriculture Transformation) project embarked on a new approach in the scaling of improved sheep fattening technologies and practices in the Ethiopian Highlands. The new approach entailed facilitating rural youth, predominantly unemployed, into formation of youth groups to undertake market-oriented sheep fattening. Members of the groups were empowered with a start-up package, trained in entrepreneurial skills development (ESD) and technical skills in feeds, feeding and husbandry of sheep fattening. The youth groups were intended to act as role models and promoters of improved market-oriented sheep fattening in their respective communities.

The workshop was held to review the progress of the sheep fattening project, outline the major successes, challenges and opportunities going forward. Key implementation partners and representatives of the beneficiaries were in attendance (Annex2). The continuation of the project is undertaken by ICARDA under funding from CRP Agri-Food Systems, Feed & Forages flagship.

The workshop began with highlights on sheep fattening performance from the project sites and proceeded with topics on collective action, market orientation and gender inclusion.

Experiences from the Project sites (Bonga, Doyogena, Menz)



Bonga site highlighted that the project achieved tangible outputs in terms of income generation and women's participation.

The youth groups in Modio *kebele* sold fattened rams during the Easter market for over 4400 ETB/ram compared to the regular 2500 ETB, earning profits of over 3300/ram. This has stirred fervor among other youth groups in Bonga as well as other sheep farmers in the communities.

The women-only youth group in Shaya *kebele* out-performed other groups in their husbandry achieving average daily gains of 130.7g up from an average of 70-80g. This exemplary performance was largely attributed to trainings in ESD that contributed towards positive attitudes in market orientation, that further stirred uptake of improve feeding and husbandry methods. Youth groups with a total of 175 members were aiming at selling 589 fattened rams during the Ethiopian New Year in September.

Menz site is experiencing a flurry of requests from unemployed youth in the site and environs who are very eager to join the youth groups. Positive competition is being experienced between youth groups and between members within groups to increase the number of rams per cycle. This is as a result of good support from champion farmers and the CBBP committees who were very active in mentoring the youth groups in best-practices in market-oriented sheep fattening.

One of the youth groups in Mollale, the *Millenium sheep fattening and marketing cooperative*, was already existing and registered with a membership of 98 youth, however, it had largely abandoned sheep fattening. The project revived its fattening activities, thus making visible the benefits of collective action, from which other groups in Menz would borrow lessons. The group sold 36 fattened rams for a total price of 103,000 ETB, an average of 2860 per ram, up from 1500-1800 ETB per ram.



With a high population and small land holding, sheep fattening is lucrative in **Doyogena**. To be competitive, youth group members replaced concentrates with rations consisting locally available *enset* mixed with wheat bran, thus reducing costs of fattening.

Youth groups sold single rams at the local market for as high as **6700 ETB** (up from an average of 3500-5000 ETB) during the Easter market, emphasizing how their negotiating power for good prices had increased after the ESD training. The Doyogena team reiterated that the rapidly increasing numbers of educated youth should be targeted by the project as it would have a big role in job creation and minimize migration of youth from the area.

Marketing Orientation

Esayas Morka moderated the session on entrepreneurship. Youth representatives and champion farmers reiterated that ESD training had equipped them with basic concepts of entrepreneurship and knowledge of business planning essential to the success of the sheep fattening business. Specifically, they learnt how

to explore linkages between an entrepreneur and all resources and services needed to successfully launch and sustain the business. In addition, they appreciated the training on financial recording. However, they are still wary of lending by micro-finance institutions and remain averse to loans. In Bonga, predatory lenders are the most accessible although they insist on sharing profits from sheep fattening in addition to repayment of the loan. Youth groups were urged to develop business plans as this is a prerequisite to getting loans from MFIs. The money we get as a loan is from individual lenders.

Action points

Esayas Morka to introduce lessons on business plan development during future ESD trainings.



Collective action and Collective marketing



Woinshet Asnake gave a presentation of collection action and marketing. The concept of being in a group, collective marketing and its advantages for youth groups/farmers, formation and leadership of a marketing groups were presented. Youth representatives from Bonga and Doyogena site were in agreement that marketing committees, formed by NARS, CBBP Sub-committee and members of the youth groups, undertook market studies, identified target locations and negotiated for higher prices,

largely contributed to improving their bargaining power. However, in Menz, a lot of effort is still required to encourage youth groups to practice collective marketing. Lack of permits to sell in other local markets necessitates them to pay tax in those locations, thus, their profits are eaten into. Negative perceptions as a result of too many brokers in the market, theft of rams and insecurity at larger markets around Debre Berhan and Addis Ababa, has forced most group members to target local village markets and act independently as opposed to selling rams collectively.

Action points

- Youth group leaders to initiate market committees (where they have not been formed yet, comprising CBBP, development agents, NARS researchers, youth leaders) to gather up to date market information and share it with group members.
- NARS and development agents to facilitate follow up to relevant government offices to facilitate legal registration of youth groups is a key step in order to get a permit to collect fattened rams together and sell them in different locations.

Gender inclusion

Lemlem Abebe, led the discussion on female participation in sheep fattening. Participants highlighted that more focus should be given to encouraging young women to join the groups. Generally, membership is not denied to women. Fattening in groups has been particularly advantageous to female members because division of labor in collective fattening has helped them have more time to attend to other domestic issues. In Bonga and Menz, women are out-performing men in fattening performance of rams. However, in Menz, the membership of males increased in second phase while numbers of female reduced. One of the reasons was that females sold their rams but did not reinvest in new rams, thus they had no rams to fatten in the second round.

Action points

- ICARDA and the NARS to follow up with the Gender offices representatives in the Communities of Practice (CoP) to garner their support in creating awareness and popularizing market-oriented sheep farming among women.
- All mixed-gender youth groups should seek to increase female membership to at least 30%.

Sheep Performance

Moderated by NARS researchers, emphasis was on year-round feed availability as a major constraint. However, locally available feed resources can largely fill the existing gaps. The champion farmer, Solomon Geberemariam, from Bonga has grown *desho* grass but says, it is not adequate as a protein source, thus he now intends to grow legumes with the help of research centers.

Youth members in Menz complained that they did not get follow up from the research centers and enumerators regularly. They largely experienced problems getting veterinary services for sick rams. Importance of field days as there is a lot of learning and experience sharing.

Action points

- The NARS researchers need to closely supervise the enumerators to ensure they are making follow ups to youth group members.
- Youth group members should contact the NARS if they do not receive any visit from an enumerator within one month.
- More emphasis to be given on training of feeds, feed resources and their nutritive value.

Way Forward

Youth group representatives and champion farmers were urged to encourage their colleagues in sheep fattening to take advantage of expertise available that being facilitated by ICARDA and the NARS centers to advance their skills in sheep fattening because the project is time bound. They were also encouraged to reach out to members of the Communities of Practice who represent different Government offices for further support and assistance. The CoPs in their regions would be introduced to the youth group members and champions so that they hold further discussions.

Review Meeting on Scaling up Improved Sheep Fattening Practices and Technologies in Ethiopia

Workshop Agenda

August 23, 2019

Venue: Hiruy Hall, Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research

Addis Ababa

Day 1		
Time	Activity	Facilitator
8:30 am	Registration	Martha Sintayehu
9:00 am	Welcoming Remark	Barbara Rischkowsky
9:10 am	Project Review – Highlights from TAAT	Jane Wamatu/Nahom Ephrem
9.30 am	Highlights from the Sites; Presentations from Bonga, Menz, Doyogena	NARS Researchers
10.30am	Collective Action	Woinishet Asnake
11:15 am	Tea Break	
11:35 am	Group Photo Session	
11:45 am	1. Overview of Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs) in Ethiopia 2. Business Cases for Sheep fattening in Youth Groups	Esayas Mulatu
1:00 pm	Lunch	
2:00 pm	Experience Sharing from Youth Groups	Youth Group Representatives
3.00 pm	Gender Inclusion in Youth Groups	Wole Kinati/Lemlem Abebe (EIAR)
3:30 pm	Planning Next Steps (in Groups)	Jane W./Nahom E.
4.00 pm	Tea Break	
4:15 pm	Presentations from Group Discussions	Individual Groups
5:15 pm	Wrap up	Jane W./Tesfaye G.
5.30 pm	Closing Remarks	Jane W./Tesfaye G.

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Participants List				
#	Name	S		Site
1	Muluken Zeleke	M	Researcher, Livestock Nutrition	Bonga
2	Zelalem Abate	M	Researcher, Livestock Breeder	Bonga
3	Amsalech H/Mariam	F	Champion Farmer	Bonga
4	Selemon G/Mariam	M	Youth Member (Model)	Bonga
5	Shicho Shewano	M	Youth Leader	Bonga
6	Ayele Abebe	M	Researcher, National Sheep Research Coordinator	Menz
7	Asfaw Bisrat	M	Researcher	Menz
8	Tesfa Getachew	M	Researcher	Menz
9	Beletew Dinku	M	Champion Farmer	Menz
10	Yeshareg Tesfa	F	Youth Leader	Menz
11	Belege Yitna	M	Youth Leader	Menz
12	Deribe Gemiye (Dr.)	M	Researcher, Center Director	Doyogena
13	Tesfaye Abiso	M	Researcher	Doyogena
14	Mitiku Abute	M	Youth Group member (Model)	Doyogena
15	Tesfanesh Demise	F	Youth Member (Model)	Doyogena
16	Dawit Shamalo	M	Champion Farmer	Doyogena
17	Getachew Legesse	M	TAAT - National Technology Transfer Officer	ILRI-TAAT
18	Tesfaye Getachew	M	Small Ruminant Research Management Coordinator	ICARDA
19	Woinishet Asnake	F	Resource Person – Collective Action	ICARDA
22	Lemlem Abebe	F	Resource Person – Gender	EIAR
23	Esayus Mulatu	M	Resource Person – Business Development Advisor	Consultant
24	Nahom Ephrem	M	Resource Person -	Consultant
25	Jane Wamatu (Dr.)	F	Resource Person	ICARDA

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