

Report on trainings organized to smallholder farmers, researchers and extension staff in Ethiopia on implementation of community-based breeding programs and dissemination of improved genetics

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Background

Community-based sheep and goat breeding programs (CBBPs) are being implemented in Ethiopia since 2009. These pilot programs were found to be successful and below are the results from CBBPs in Ethiopia.

- Sheep/goat farming, once a side activity for these farmers, is now the main business and the linchpin of their livelihoods.
- High demand for breeding rams from neighboring communities, other government programs and NGOs in all sites, provides the foundation for specific business models around production of breeding sires and semen for artificial insemination.
- More than 5000 households in 40 villages derive direct benefits from the scheme and the emergence of a functional cooperative society in each village.
- Most of the participating households in Menz (a CBBP site) have graduated from the government-run safety net program that meets short-term food needs through emergency relief. They now use income from the sale of sheep to meet their subsistence needs.
- “Best of stock” growing breeding lambs/kids, that were previously sold and slaughtered (“negative selection”), are now retained as the breeding stock.
- Increased income from sheep production (an average increase of 20 percent since CBBP inception in 2009) and increased mutton consumption (now an average of 3 sheep slaughtered for home consumption per family per year compared to 1 sheep at the start of the project) directly linked to CBBP production in Bonga, Horro and Menz.
- Sheep/goats in CBBPs have shown improved performance, such as lamb growth rate, lambing interval, reduced mortality and attract higher market prices compared to sheep/goats from non-CBBP farmers.
- Most of the established cooperatives have managed to build capital (e.g. Boka-Shuta cooperative has about USD 96,000).

Consequently, CBBPs have been identified as a technology of choice for genetic improvement of small ruminants in Ethiopia. To impact at scale, the Ethiopian ministry of agriculture, through its livestock and fisheries sector development project, is investing in upscale of CBBPs. ICARDA was asked to technically assist the program. As part of this initiative, we have conducted several trainings to national partners and farmers. The following section highlights trainings conducted in different sites.

Sekota

Training titles	Participant	No. of participants	Time/season
Theoretical and onsite practical training on data recording, cooperative supports and overall monitoring of Cbbp villages	Enumerators	9	Feb, 2020
Cooperative establishment processes, certification and handling of the entire systems	Farmers	52	March, 2020
Demonstration of adapted forage varieties along irrigation entry points at the Cbbp villages	Farmers and DAs	18	Jan, 2020
Total		79	

Debre Berhan

- Team give training for zone, district and kebele level livestock experts in December 2020 about community-based breeding program scaling strategy for a total of 25 participants (Zone livestock agency experts=4; District level livestock experts= 6; and Kebele level livestock experts= 15)
- Awareness creations to Zone, district, kebel level livestock experts and Farmers about community-based breeding program and artificial insemination in sheep for Zone livestock agency experts (6), District level livestock experts (12) Kebele level livestock experts (8)
- 256 farmers from different kebeles were trained on CBBPs and importance of Artificial insemination.

Doyogena

Three sets of trainings were conducted:

1. Training to farmers
2. Training to district small ruminant production and health professionals
3. Researcher, enumerators, and health professionals

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• Sites	Topics	Male	Female	Total
Training of farmers	Management of ewes and rams, health management, feeding and importance of cooperatives	208	89	297
District small ruminant production and health professionals	Principles of CBBP, ram selection, ranking and certification	4	0	4
Research staff, enumerators and health professionals	Mass synchronization and artificial insemination	13	0	13
Total	•	225	89	314

Bonga

The following were trainings conducted:

- Importance of AI and ultrasonography to 5 enumerators and 60 farmers
- Breeding ewe management and top ram utilization and management to 42 farmers
- Optimization of CBBP (including model villages, selection intensity, importance of ram certification and market linkage options to 8 enumerators and 30 stakeholders
- In new intervention site, training on concepts of CBBP (animal identification, recording, selection and management)