

# **The Launch of the Community of Practice Platform for Sheep Fattening in Basona Worena, Ethiopia**

## **Workshop Report**

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ICARDA

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Community of Practice members at the launch of the CoP Platform for Basona Worena. *Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.*

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## **Executive Summary**

The CGIAR Initiative for Sustainable Intensification of the Mixed Farming System, involving the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dryland Areas (ICARDA), launched social entrepreneurship for youth and women's group sheep farming activities by launching the community of practice (CoP) platform in Basona Worena, North Shewa.

The main stakeholders for improved implementation of sheep farming activities in Basona Worena are District Administration, Cooperative Office, Livestock Office, Office of Gender Issues, Technical and Vocational Training Center, Government Communications, Amhara Credit and Savings Institution (ACSI) and Debre Berhan Agricultural Research Center, Fana Radio Broadcast and AbrisMind .

To support youth and women groups in sheep fattening, key stakeholders in the CoP explained how they have supported trends of improved sheep fattening implemented in Ethiopia by ICARDA. Accordingly, the participatory planning was carried out based on the role and responsibilities of offices.

The target audience of the workshop were district higher officials and experts from different disciplines who were aware of the importance of sustainable intensification for mixed farming systems and the support to be given by the CoP to improved sheep fattening activities.

## General Overview

Sheep fattening is one of the main sources of livelihood in the Ethiopian Highlands is a long-standing practice targeting festive seasons. (Animut and Wamatu, 2014). However, the sheep fattening system is traditional, which reduces the productivity and profitability of the sector.

The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) launched an improved approach to sheep fattening by youth and women's groups at various locations in Ethiopia. As part of a CGIAR initiative to sustainably intensify the mixed farming system, the International Center for Dryland Agricultural Research (ICARDA) plans to scale up the adoption of improved sheep fattening technologies and practices with a business-driven approach. To make this happen, ICARDA established a community of practice platform with key stakeholders from local organizations tasked with developing and strengthening business and institutional models.

At the kick-off workshop in October 2022, Dr. Jane Wamatu expounded on the community of practice as a system charged with institutional innovation in which multi-stakeholders share common concerns and achieve common goals of technological adaptation and innovation in social entrepreneurship. Dr. Jane emphasized the need for the CoP to share best experiences from different locations and create knowledge to advance sustainable business-oriented sheep fattening practices and technologies in Basona Worena. To improve the enabling environment, participants from different offices were co-opted through the integrative approach to develop a participatory action plan. Dr. Jane highlighted that the purpose of the platform is to facilitate youth group formation and awareness raising, group registration and the development of market linkages.



Introductory speech by J. Wamatu. *Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.*

The representative from SI-MFS initiative, Dr Million Gebreyes briefed on the role of (the SI-MFS) Initiative in creating a multi-disciplinary working environment for several partners to work together towards sustainable intensified smallholder farms in Ethiopia. Sustainable intensification according to Dr. Million was intended to produce more food from the same piece of land, and enhancing livelihoods, environmental health, and biodiversity by using resource-efficient and climate-smart technologies. The sustainable intensification of the mixed farming system can be achieved by efficient coordination, integration.



Overview of the SI-MFS Initiative by Million Gebreyes. *Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.*

An introductory presentation by Muluken Zeleke and Luilseged Alemayehu focussed on improved sheep fattening technologies and practices in Ethiopia by youth and women groups in the Menz area of the Amhara region. The content of the presentation included the following:

- Scaling goals and approaches.
- Status of youth and women's groups in sheep fattening.
- Trends of number of youths, sheep, cooperatives, capital.
- The success stories and short-term stories.
- The procedure of establishing a community of practice and, youth group formation.
- The training packages (technical, business, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy).
- The registration process of the cooperative office.
- The constraints and entrepreneurship opportunities.
- The meaning of group sheep fattening entrepreneurship for youths in Basona Worena.
- The constraints faced during the implementation.
- The plan in Basona Worena and the way forward.

Expectation of participants from the workshop were as follows:

- To interact with the youth group engaged in sheep fattening activities.
- To get insight into the multistakeholder.
- How to deliver result-oriented services.
- To change the attitude of communities through individuals.
- How to plan and execute in a team.
- The significance of entrepreneurship in youth and women's empowerment.
- The working principle and guidelines of a community of practice.



Getnet Tegafaw, District TVET Office. *Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.*

### **AbrisMind**

A national certified trainer from AbrisMind training and Consultancy made a presentation and covered the following topics:

- Getting clear insight into teamwork.
- Clear understanding of change and attitude.
- How to gain power and influence.
- Creating a service mindset.

The keynotes from the presentation given by Ms. Hanna Hailu were:

- Importance of creating change internally, being changed and changing the community. Personal, community life does not get better by chance, but only through inner change. Stepping out of the comfort zone may not be easy at first, but it has potential repercussions in the end. Members of the CoP need to be the change you want to see in the community.
- The power of vision and burning desire.

- Attitude: the way we look at our jobs, sheep fattening, youths, and women
- Service mindset: - the satisfaction of being of use to others.
- The power of seed: - the good seed we sow today will be harvested tomorrow in our communities.
- Team working-synergies. The more powerful your purpose, the more you will find clarity about which people to bring on board the organization. There must always be reviewing of talent not only in terms of skill and experience, but also in motivation and commitment to the purpose.



Hannah Haile of AbrisMind training and Consultancy on Teamwork & synergies.  
*Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.*

## Participatory planning

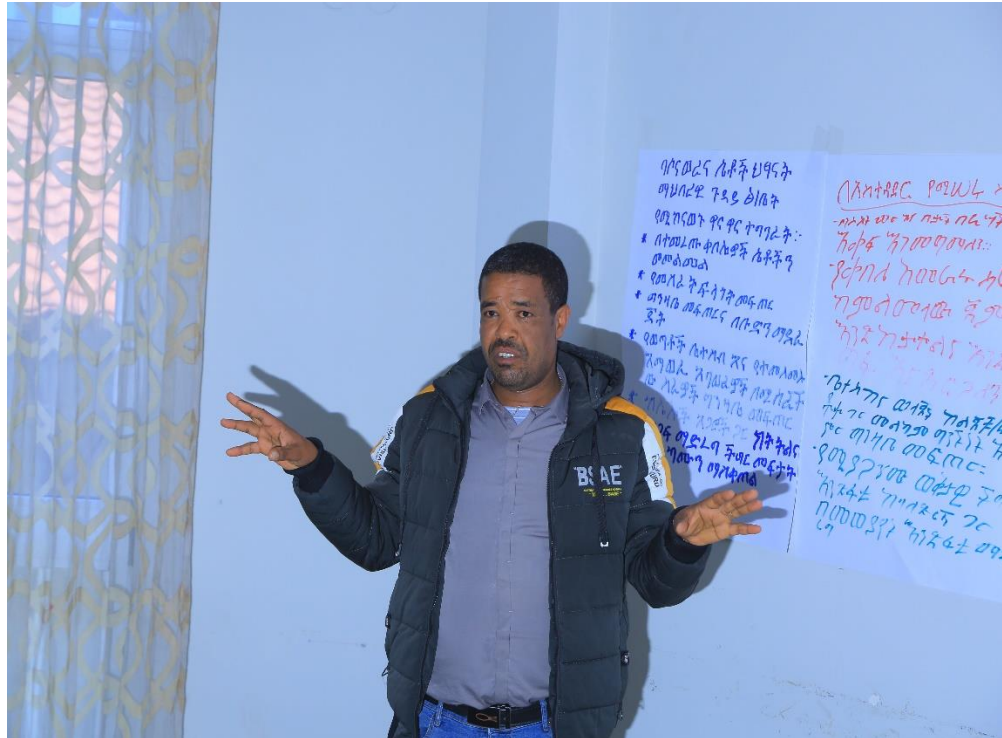
In line with the aim of the meeting, the multi-stakeholders plan together the activities they can contribute to scale up the practice of sheep fattening by youth groups. They prioritized the activities and mapped out the procedures for each participating office.

Planned courses of action were as follows:

### **i. District administration office, presented by head of administration Office:**

- Mobilizing the community, youth and women to be engaged in business-oriented sheep fattening innovation.
- Politically leading and monitoring the youth and women groups sheep fattening activities.
- Give direction for the kebele administrative to facilitate the enabling environment during the implementation.
- Evaluating and monitoring the implementation status community of practice.

- Facilitate an enabling environment to the CoP.



Mr. Girum Wondimeneh, Basona Worena, Head of the district office. *Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.*

## ii. Livestock Resource Development Office

- Identification of the potential for each kebele.
- Identifying youths and women who have potential and interest.
- Creating awareness on improved sheep fattening techniques.
- Planting feed source forages in farmer training center.
- Mobilizing farmers to construct standard barn from locally available materials.
- Facilitation during sheep selection, purchasing and distribution.
- Leading deworming, vaccination and castration.



Mr. Afework Abera, head of livestock development office. *Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.*

### iii. Cooperative Office

- Creating awareness on the importance of working in team.
- Facilitate enabling environment of legal entity registration.
- Conducting the feasibility study and making business plan.
- Preparing internal by-laws.
- Organizing capital mobilization event.
- Providing legal certificate.
- Providing training on financial literacy.
- Enhancing internal monitoring capabilities.



Mr. Getaw Asefa, Head of Basona Worena District Cooperative Office.  
 Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.

**iv. Women and Social Affairs Office**

- Mobilizing women to be engaged in improved sheep fattening.
- Create awareness for families to help the women.
- Organizing women in a group.
- Providing a training on women empowerment.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation with stakeholders.



Ms. Etabezahu Tessema, head of women and social affairs office, Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.

**v. Amhara Credit and Saving Institution (ACSI)**

- Improving the saving culture of youths and women.
- Providing credit to expand the sheep fattening business.
- Providing business and finance monitorship.



Mr. Haileyesus Woldecherkos, General Manager of ACSI. *Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.*

**vi. Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT)**

- Facilitating and providing training to youth and women.
- Creating awareness to families of youth and women.

**vii. Government Communication Office**

- Preparing audio and print products to create awareness.
- Documenting, posting and broadcasting the improved sheep fattening practices to reach more youth and women.



Tsehay Abera, Media and Communication expert. Photo credit: Girma Tesfaye.

### viii. Debre Berhan Agricultural Research Center (DARC)

The researcher from DARC planned to coordinate and organize the community of practice platform and trainings respectively. The demonstration of improved fattening practices and technologies in youths and women. The collection of data, reporting to ICARDA, monitoring and evaluation with the multiple stakeholders.

### Conclusion

The formation of a multi-stakeholder community of practice platform to facilitate the social entrepreneurship environment of youth and women groups engaged in sheep farming in Basana Worena district formed eight different technical committees to collectively improve the productivity of smallholders in mixed farming systems.

The soft skills as a pillar for the success of the joint action increased the motivation and changed the attitude towards the way of looking at sheep farming in the group and the possible effects of the implementation of the project with a participatory approach.

Planning with diverse organizations towards a common goal is critical to the efficient and effective implementation of the Sustainable Intensification Mixed Farming System initiative.

## Appendix I: Program Agenda

### Agenda

18 August 2022

Getva Hotel, Debre Berhan

Local Time	What	How	Who
<b>August 18</b>			
3:00	Registration /Introductions		Muluken Zeleke
3:30	Welcome and brief on the objectives of the meeting	Speech	Dr. Jane Wamatu
3:40 - 4:00	Introduction to the Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems (SI-MFS) initiative	Speech	Dr. Million Gebreyes
4:00 - 5.00	Background of Sheep Fattening activities in Ethiopia	Presentation	Muluken Zeleke Asfaw Bisrat Liulseged Alemayehu
	Sheep fattening is creating entrepreneurship opportunities for youth and women.	Presentation	Muluken Zeleke
<b>5:00 - 5:20</b>	<b>BREAK</b>		
5:30 - 6:30	Keynote on Community of Practice	Presentation	Hanna Hailu
6:30 - 7:30	<b>LUNCH</b>	Hotel	ICARDA
8:00 - 8:30	Reflections on Community of Practice	Plenary	Hannah Hailu
8:30 - 9:00	Planning Stakeholder engagement activities	Group exercise	All
<b>9:00 - 9:20</b>	<b>BREAK</b>		
9:30 - 10:30	Reporting back the plan	Presentation	Group chairman
10.30 - 10.45	Closing Remarks	Speech	Head of District
<b>10:45</b>	<b>Closing speech</b>	Speech	Jane/Muluken

## Appendix II: Trainees List of Contacts

#	Name of nominee	Gender	Country	Position/Specialization
1	Abreham Mengesha	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Basona Worena administrator
2	Girum Wondimneh	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	District office, head
3	Getaw Assefa	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Cooperative office head
4	Wubalesh Bekele	F	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Cooperative expert
6	Afwork Abera	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Livestock office head
7	Meseret Girma	F	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Small ruminant expert
8	Etabezahu Tessema	F	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Womens Affair office head
9	Tinibit G/silase	F	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Women capacity-building expert
10	Fikire Cherkos	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	TVET head
11	Getnet Tegafaw	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	TVET expert
12	Tsehay Abera	F	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Communication office, media expert
13	Haileyesus W/kirstos	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	ACSI
14	Temesgen Alena	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	ILRI/Africa rising coordinator
15	Asfaw Bisrat	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Researcher, DARC
16	Liulseged Alemayehu	M	Ethiopia, Debre berhan	Researcher, DARC
17	Hanna Hailu	F	AbrisMind consult	Trainer
18	Million Gebreyes	M	ILRI	Trainer

**Consent Statement:** *“Personal information including Name, Business Title, Email, Phones, Images and GPS points included in this report have been authorized in writing or verbally by the data subject”* J. Wamatu