



Improving Productivity & Market Success of Ethiopian Farmers

Report on PLS Selection and Program Development Meeting

July 30, 2004

ILRI, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

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Summary

Following the planning workshop and the pilot Learning Sites (PLS) selection visits made to the Regional States by members of the IPMS project team, a one day national meeting was held to finalize the selection of 10 PLSs.

There were 25 participants (Annex 1) including staff of the Federal MoARD and the IPMS project staff, representatives from the Regions, EARO, NGOs and CIDA. In addition representatives from the CGIAR and other international programs present in Ethiopia participated in the workshop. The program for the meeting is also annexed to this report (Annex 2).

Key points raised during the PLS selection and program development meeting

PLS methodology development session

The (national and international) research partners should be involved in rapid assessment and the participatory PLS planning workshop. Not all partners need to be included. It is up to the project to make the decision.

To enable us to invite the proper institutions, a synthesis of the potentials should be made after the data collection phase. We should also ensure that appropriate data are being collected for this purpose, since this will indicate who should be involved in diagnosis and design work.

We need to become clearer on the methodologies we are going to use for the diagnosis and design work.

We should also develop a clearer idea about the future scaling up (after the initial years) of our PLS activities. This applies specifically to the scaling out of the lessons learned to other districts with similar development potentials. The knowledge management system may be developed to accommodate this objective. For this scaling up, project staff need not be physically present in such “new” districts, but knowledge can be transferred through training sessions, exhibitions, web communication etc. We can start developing such a network by identifying recommendation domain areas with the help of GIS data that will be gathered during the development of this project. The knowledge management system may become operational after 2 to 3 years, once transferable knowledge starts to be generated in the selected PLS.

We need to incorporate monitoring and evaluation as an integral component of the development program. Baseline data collection should also be incorporated in the program activities.

PLS selection session

The process followed was one in which the Regional States were the first ones to decide on their priority sites based on their own market development potentials and the selection criteria proposed by the project. In cases where Regional State priorities overlap, such overlaps would be identified at the national level and be “ironed” out if possible.

In Tigray and SNNPRS, the potential overlaps at national level were already taken into consideration during the regional selection process and sites were dropped accordingly. The remaining 2 sites in both regions were therefore found to be priority sites for the region with no major competition at the national level.

Oromiya and Amhara had selected 4 sites each. Since only 3 sites were allowed, one site was to be reduced for each Region. De-selection was based on national criteria, i.e. overlap of sites with similar development potentials. Amhara eliminated Kalu District, since it has similarities with Alamata (one of the sites in Tigray). Oromiya was then faced with making a choice between Adaa Liben and Bekoji. The latter site was the preferred choice by the Region, especially since it has a national mandate for improving wheat varieties. However since wheat was already included in one of the Amhara PLS, it was decided to give preference to Adaa since it covers (besides wheat) another important cereal crop e.g. tef. It furthermore has market opportunities for many other commodities (pulses, horticulture, dairy, meat, apiculture) and can be used as a showcase for the project and the national and international centers since it is near Addis and major national, regional and international research stations/programs.

Several suggestions were made regarding the primary and secondary development potentials. These have been summarized in the revised attached summary table (Table 1). The table will be further developed during the PLS development phase.

Soil fertility management should be a technology which cuts across all sites. Other natural resource management technologies will be identified during the diagnostic and planning phase.

Most of the PLS selected were favored by good infrastructure (to ensure high probability of success) and hence scaling up to less favored areas would not be possible (comment raised by some participants). It was stressed that the project was not a general food security project but that it was a project which would be guided by a market development strategy to poverty reduction and food security. It is understood that not all woredas in Ethiopia will be ready for this strategy and the lessons learned may therefore not apply to those areas during the life of the project. Other programs with a non-market orientation may deal with such districts.

Project governing, advisory and implementing structure

To view the organ gram of the project implementation structure please refer to www.ipms-ethiopia.org

Committees

Development of clear TORs for different committees is necessary. Project will work on this during the planning phase based on the interactions with the potential partners during the PLS planning process. A clear distinction between the tasks of the advisory and learning committees and the implementation structure will be made. The need for an implementation committee at the regional level will be reviewed on the basis of the tasks to be conducted. Care will be taken not to overload the project with committees and to include staff which can make a real contribution to the proposed activities.

Project Steering Committee

This committee is not really steering and may be renamed to reflect the actual tasks.

National Advisory and Learning Committee

Involvement of research partners (EARO, international centers) in the National Advisory and Learning Committee (NALC) was recommended. Regional research partners are represented through the RALC representatives.

Participation of NGOs will be channeled through CDRA (NGO forum), who may nominate an NGO to represent it in the NALC. Other NGOs will be invited on a needs basis. Other parties may also be invited on a needs basis.

Regional Advisory and Learning Committee

Several suggestions were made for the composition of the RALC:

Involvement of TVETs at the regional level to take lessons home was recommended. The project recommends involving the regional TVET coordinators in the RALCs

Trade and Industry and Natural Resource Management can be considered in some of the RALCs depending on the focus of the activities.

Private sector may be invited on a needs basis.

Woreda Advisory and Learning Committee (WALC) and Woreda Project Implementation Team (WPIT).

Composition of these committees will be further discussed at District level during the project planning phase.

Research officer and research assistants

RO officers should have a research and development background and be called Research and development officers. The TOR should reflect this.

Recruitment of ROs from national institutions was discussed, especially to increase ownership of the project and continuity of activities. It was felt that the latter can be achieved by involving different institutions in project implementation. ILRI proposes to advertise the positions using its normal procedures (internal and then external). If officials from public institutions apply and are selected, permission will have to be obtained for their (temporary) release before actual employment can take effect.

Program implementation reach

An issue was raised with regard to the scope of the project activities and its effect on the district's extension, finance and marketing system. This issue will become clearer during the PLS planning phase when the actual activities are defined. In principle the project's PLS activities are experimental in nature and would leave part of the "normal" district operation intact until sufficient proof is gathered for the proper functioning of the experimental systems. At such a time sufficient district funds should be (re)allocated to the functioning of the system (the project itself has only limited development funds available).

Table 1. Summary of suggested Pilot Learning Sites (PLSs) and their attributes

Development Plan						
Region/PLS	Primary	Secondary	Potential for Institutional Innovations	Probability for Success	Major Technical Challenge	Remark
Amhara						
Fogera	Rice, dairy, fish, horticulture	Beef, sugarcane	Smallholder, cooperatives	Markets, research, access, TVET		Potential for irrigation
Metema	Live animals, meat, sesame	Cotton, soyabean	Smallholder, outgrowers, cooperatives	Markets, research, NGOs,	Moisture stress, livestock diseases	Large scale production connected to smallholders
Kalu	Small ruminants, dairy, apiculture,	Horticulture, sugarcane, cotton	Smallholder, cooperatives	Markets, research	Moisture stress	Potential for irrigation
Wonberma	Wheat Highland pulses	Soyabean, oil crops, pepper, apiculture	Smallholder, contract farming	Accessible, markets, TVET		Water logging?
SNNP						
Dale	Garden coffee	Dairy, fruits, vegetables, spices	Smallholder, cooperatives	Markets, accessible, Research, NGOs		
Alaba	Hot pepper	Pulses, spices, fruits, dairy	Smallholder, contract farming, cooperatives	Markets, accessible, TVET, ILRI		
Tigray						
Asbi Wonberta	Highland pulses, Apiculture	Dairy, horticulture	Smallholder, cooperatives	Accessible, markets, TVET, research	Moisture stress	
Alemata	Goats, sheep, apiculture	Lowland pulses, horticulture	Smallholder, cooperatives	Accessible, markets, research, NGO	Moisture stress	Potential for irrigation
Oromiya						
Miesso	Livestock, sorghum	Fruits, vegetables, oil crops, pulses, dairy	Pastoral system, cooperatives	Accessible, research, export	Moisture stress	Potential for irrigation
Gomma	Forest coffee	Spices, fruit, vegetables	Smallholder, cooperatives/unions	Accessible, research, markets		
Bekoji	Wheat	Pulses, dairy, oil crops, apiculture	Smallholder, cooperatives, contract farming	Accessible, research		
Ada'a-Liben	Teff, pulses	Wheat, horticulture, dairy, poultry	Smallholder, cooperatives, outgrowers, contract	Accessible, markets, research, University, ILRI, Abattoirs, showcase		Potential for irrigation (lakes, Awash)

Annex 1. List of PLS selection and program development meeting participants

Sr.No.	Name	Institution	E-mail
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Annex 2. Meeting program on PLS selection and program development meeting

Venue: Small auditorium, ILRI campus

Date: July 30, 2004

Program:

09.00 – 09.15	Welcome and introduction
09.15 – 10.00	Presentation of regionally selected PLS
10.00 – 10.20	Coffee/tea
10.20 – 11.20	Discussion/finalization of selection PLS
11.20 – 12.20	Presentation and discussion of project's PLS development program
12.20 – 13.20	Lunch (at ILRI cafeteria)
13.20 – 14.20	Presentation and discussion of project's governing and implementation structures.
14.20 -	Closing