



Yeshareg Tesfa, 18 years old, a beneficiary of the Sheep Fattening program, Menz. Photo Nahom Ephrem/ICARDA

Context

- Traditional, subsistence sheep fattening systems in rural Ethiopian Highlands offer limited income potential for the farmers.
- Our interventions aim to improve sheep fattening practices to enhance productivity and market orientation to enhance incomes.
- We work in 29 villages in Menz, Bonga and Doyogena.

Our innovative approach

- Collective entrepreneurship via formation of sheep fattening youth groups and cooperatives.
- We incorporate entrepreneurial skills development training as well as sharing, co-generation and knowledge transfer of good practices.
- Public and private sector engagement co-opted through coordination committees (Community of Practice) to improve vertical and lateral engagements.



GENDER EQUALITY, YOUTH & SOCIAL INCLUSION

Sheep Fattening in Ethiopia opens up exciting economic opportunities for rural youth, including young women

- 612 young people in 44 groups participate in sheep fattening activities.
- 43% of participants are female; the rates are growing.
- Participants increase their incomes from sheep.



Shaya Women Sheep Fattening Group, Bonga
Photo Nahom Ephrem/ICARDA



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Jane Wamatu
j.Wamatu @cgiar.org

Outcomes

- 100% of original members of the 44 youth groups are still participating after 1.5 years; a 26% increase in new memberships.
- Fattening weights of rams have increased 44-67%, just with locally available feed resources.
- Increase in fattening rams per youth from 2 to an average of 6 within 1.5 years.
- Average youth incomes increased by ETB 15000 (\$500) in the first year.
- Three Government bureaus began to incorporate the sheep fattening program into their regional agendas.

Future steps

- Consolidation of youth groups into sustainable regional cooperatives.
- Strengthen the roles, coordination and collaboration of Community of Practice teams for enhanced engagement of policy and value chain actors.
- Develop digital tools for collaboration, sharing and dissemination of technical and market information.

Partners

- Amhara Agricultural Research Institute
- Southern Agricultural Research Institute



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