

ECO-REGION

Newsletter No 2, 2017



In this Issue

- 🕒 **SHARE BER Project Approach and Successes**
- 🕒 **Capacity Building Support for Sustainable NRM and Livelihood Improvement**
- 🕒 **Women Specific Business Groups**

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to introduce the second annual Eco-region newsletter (From February 2016 to February 2017) for SHARE Bale Eco-region project on behalf of implementing consortium members, Farm Africa (lead), SOS Sahel Ethiopia, IWMI, FZS and PHE EC. The SHARE Bale Eco-region project is a multi-sectoral and integrated designed in a way to address the multifaceted challenges of the Bale Eco-region. With consideration of the three pillars for sustainable development (economic, environmental and social) and integrated approach, the project multi-sectoral innovative interventions have brought a remarkable results in the areas of natural resources conservation and livelihood improvement which will have a potential contribution to the SDG, GTP II, CRGE of the country and regional strategies.

The 1st annual Eco-region Newsletter briefly introduced our readers about the project overview, approaches, overview of processes followed and multi-sectoral activity progresses (www.phe-ethiopia.org/pdf-ecoregion_newsletter_vol_1.pdf). This 2nd Eco-region annual newsletter presents you about practical experiences of effective consortium coordination, integration between sectors and development actors. It also details some tangible project results from multi-sectoral and integrated interventions including shared management practices at Bale Mountains National park, research findings and recommendations as well as how conservation objectives are linked with generation of

economic benefits for the local community through introduction of formal benefit sharing mechanisms. It also portrays you how the different development interventions are compatible to environmental benefits and how population and health as well as gender is mainstreamed across interventions. In addition, the newsletter shares activities and actions related to higher level partners forum events, multi-sectoral taskforce meetings and field visits conducted to Bale Eco-region by federal and regional government bodies, EU delegation, Norwegian Embassy, SIDA and the community. Interview of the Higher Level Partners' Forum (HLPF) chairperson and message from the consortium lead organization is also incorporated into the newsletter.

In general we strongly believe this newsletter will be informative and have an immense value for development actors, policy makers, researchers and wider stakeholders to inform practical and evidence based results and lessons gained from integrated and multi-sectoral interventions of SHARE Bale Eco-region project.

Finally we wish readers to have productive and enjoyable reading. Your feedbacks and comments are much appreciated and will make a substantial contribution for strengthening interactive learning process and partnership. ■

Negash Teklu
Editor-in-Chief and
PHE Ethiopia Consortium,
Executive Director

Editors and Contributors

Negash Teklu,
Executive Director, PHE-EC

Endashaw Mogessie,
Monitoring, Evaluation and Communication
Coordinator, PHE-EC

Tadelle Gashu,
Monitoring, Evaluation & Knowledge
Management Specialist, SHARE BER Project

Asaye Asnake,
Project Coordinator, SHARE BER Project

Biruktayet Assefa (PhD),
Project Technical Advisor, SHARE BER Project

Mulugeta Lemenih (PhD)
Head of Forestry and Natural Resource
Management, Farm Africa

© SHARE BER Project Consortium

Address:

Farm Africa
PO Box: 5746, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: +251 11 467 4129
+251 11 465 5156/11 4663172

E-mail: ethinfo@farmafrica.org
Web site: www.farmafrica.org

PHE EC
P.O.Box: 4408, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia
Tel.: +251 116 634121
E-mail: info@phe-ethiopia.org
Web site: www.phe-ethiopia.org

Message from the SHARE BER Project Consortium Lead

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that I convey this message in this second annual Eco-region Newsletter. When SHARE BER project was initiated it was with the intention to wholeheartedly address critical challenges linked to sustainable conservation of biodiversity, ecosystem management and resilience building which have plagued the eco-region for many years. The project set to test and verify eco-regional multi-sectoral development approach that has packages appropriate for the different agro-ecological, socio-economic and cultural set ups within the Bale eco-region. In this regard, five consortium partner NGOs came together with their own specializations and many years of expertise to work together with communities to address their challenges by ensuring resources are utilized to manage, complement and work cooperatively to achieve the ambitious objectives set out. In doing so, promising results have been achieved from the pilot areas in the past two years. The results obtained however need to be further strengthened and continuous support is needed from all stakeholders involved to fully sustain and achieve the intended objectives. Currently, we have garnered evidence and learnings that can further help us consolidate the results obtained and plan towards scaling up within the region and provide valuable lessons for cross learning.

The work does not stop here. In order to address the challenge of biodiversity and ecosystem management, the sustainable use and management of natural resources beyond the eco-region needs to be addressed further to the downstream areas. There is a real opportunity in maintaining this momentum and working together with other development partners and the Government of Ethiopia. In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity and thank the high level government partners' forum for their leadership and strategic direction, and local government offices including taskforce members, communities and other partners



who have played key role in supporting the smooth implementation of this project. I would also like to thank the European Union who have provided the financial support, cooperation, flexibility, and encouragement in executing a multi-sectoral eco-regional project. Lastly, a huge thanks to the consortium member organizations and the SHARE-BER team staff for their tireless and relentless effort by working alongside the community in delivering results.

On behalf of our partners, I am excited in sharing this newsletter that aims to provide insight on several studies that have been conducted, lessons on integrated watershed management, various tools developed for monitoring, the latest developments on controlled hunting and stories from field.

Happy reading! ■

Yasmin Abdulwassie
Country Director, Farm Africa

SHARE BALE ECO-REGION (BER)

PROJECT APPROACH

The Bale Eco-region (BER) is one of the global biodiversity rich areas. The eco-region comprises diverse ecosystems that are inter-dependent and function with immense complexity such that its management demands collaboration and partnership of actors of various sectors and development actors to better achieve sustainable biodiversity conservation and maintaining eco-system functions. The multi-sector partnership and collaboration will be an important instrument to have an optimum contribution for SDG, GTP II, CRGE and regional strategies. The SHARE BER project was thus initiated so as to implement multi-sector, integrated and landscape developmental approach that brought together different stakeholders including government and communities to exert coordinated efforts with the spirit of constructive engagement and strong partnership at all levels.

The project is implemented by a consortium of five NGOs each of which has its own excellence and expertise in different disciplines and long years of experience in the fields of rural development with practical existence in the area. The organizations have joined hand in hand and developed a shared vision and common goal of implementing an integrated multi-disciplinary development project taking the Eco-region approach in the area. This has thoroughly planned at the outset with formal MoU signed among the consortium members so as to build common value and ownership. In line with this, consortium member organizations and partners have

developed the project plan by incorporating appropriate tools and methodologies for implementing impact oriented activities that can address the critical challenges of the Eco-region. Similarly, activities like common field level office, joint data collection, monitoring, communication and knowledge sharing strategy (e.g. Eco-region Newsletter) have been developed and applied.

The underlining objective of the multi-sectoral mechanism that is established among the consortium members and with other partner organizations is centered on how the members can put in place appropriate exit strategy on the one hand and contribute for the success of the inclusive eco-regional approach at household and watershed level on the other hand. In this regard, the major multi-interventions followed by the project are: Integrated Watershed Management (IWSM), Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP), Participatory Forest Management/Participatory Rangeland Management (PFM/PRM), livelihood activities (e.g. Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA), livestock production, beekeeping), family planning, capacity building, and gender mainstreaming. These interventions are implemented in an integrated manner at household and watershed level.

Corresponding to this, the project applied the following consortium management arrangements: Strategic Management Committee, Joint Technical and Financial Team, common Project Coordinator

and MEL Specialist. At field level, the consortium member organizations pulled resources and established common working office and logistics, and joint monitoring system.

The project has also applied a multi-sectoral integrated approach across the Bale eco-region by establishing functional twelve kebele, seven woreda and one inter-zone (Bale and Arsi zones) level taskforces and one pastoralist forum as showcase. Although the need of establishing taskforces from kebele to national level is very crucial, the project has established only from kebele to zonal level and has set plan to establish regional and national level in the coming year. This approach has helped to bring the different sectors and actors with different discipline to be coordinated in solving broad range of problems which cannot be solved by one sector alone.

It has been demonstrated that taskforces bring tangible differences, results and strong evidences through: (a) information sharing and knowledge management; (b) multi-sectoral partnership; (c) integration and collaboration of implementing partners and other relevant stakeholders; (d) ensuring real community engagement and joint problem solving; and (f) creating best networking among stakeholders through common understanding and shared vision at all level with clear exit strategy.

Furthermore, High Level Partners' Forum (represented by State Ministers, Authority and Bureau

Heads, and consortium member Directors) was established and became functional to give government ownership and leadership.

In the last two years, the multi-sectoral approaches and coordination mechanisms that the project followed has brought tangible results. To mention few:

✔ It has created good space for participation and trust among

consortium members and between government and the consortium

✔ It was helpful for learning and promoting of best practices and experiences

✔ It was a leverage for efficient and effective implementation of the project

✔ It has created opportunity for cross-learning among the consortium members and different

partners

The achievements listed above were also proved and justified with regular joint M&E and the European Union Delegation Mission (EU) and Higher Level Partners' Forum (HLPF) visit. The achievements of the project have attracted attention of stakeholders such as SIDA, Norwegian Embassy to come down to the area and got lessons. ■

Practical Case of the Process:

Bale-Arsi Inter Zonal Multi-Sectoral Task force (MSTF) First Meeting

SHARE BER Inter Zonal level MSTF held its establishment meeting in 31st May 2016 with the presence of zonal and woreda office heads, community representatives, NGOs working in the Bale Arsi zones, private sectors, and SHARE BER project staff. Its first MSTF inter zonal meeting was conducted on 03 March 2017 in the zonal capital of Bale Zone. Vice Zonal Administrators of Bale and West Arsi Zones, representatives of various sector offices of the two zones, Woreda Administrators of the seven SHARE BER pilot woredas, SHARE BER staff, Mada Walabu University representatives and NGOs working in the area, totaling 48 participants had taken part in this meeting. The agendas were review of the SHARE BER progress to date and next six months activity plan. Accordingly, PHE EC Executive director and SHARE BER Project coordinator has made presentation on the overall role of MSTF approach in attaining the global, national and regional development targets and progresses of the project and next six month plan respectively. Subsequently, each pilot woreda has presented the progress report of SHARE BER project according to its woreda context, which was considered as one step ahead in developing the ownership and scale up sense of SHARE BER's piloted interventions. Details of each of the agendas are narrated in the meeting minutes recorded by the minute-taker, and signed by meeting participants in the minutes.

Eventually, the meeting was concluded by passing the following action points:

1. Administrative offices of both zones (Bale and

West Arsi) have to conduct a technical meeting with technical teams of pertinent sector offices and SHARE BER project at least every two months.

2. The issue of illegal settlement inside forestlands of the Bale Eco-Region must be the most burning and first-priority agenda for the two zones

3. The problem of boundary conflict between Adaba and Harena Bulluk Districts should be solved through participation of concerned stakeholders from the two zones, woredas and respective kebeles

4. Enhancing real coordination and integration of all concerned stakeholders through MSTFs at all levels (kebele, woreda, inter zonal and above) should be taken as a remedy for mitigating recurrent and prevailing natural disasters

5. The Bale Technical Coordination Team (BTCT) has to take part in the MSTF meetings of woreda and kebele levels in order to ensure sense of ownership and enforcement of the actions

6. Scale up of the best practices and lessons of SHARE BER should be given considerable attention as exercise of a clear exit strategy by respective stakeholders.

7. The next six months SHARE BER Zonal MSTF meeting should be held in the capital of West Arsi Zonal Administration. ■

2.1. Joint Monitoring Visit (JMV)

JMV is a regular activity of the project co-exercised by representatives of project implementing NGOs and representatives of government partners at the zones and woredas of the eco-region. It is an established mechanism of SHARE-BER project used to assess progresses, identify strengths and limitations, generate lessons helpful to fine tune its approaches and implementation for maximum impact. It is also a mechanism to receive feedback from local communities and government partners about the project to ensure proactive responsiveness is given to local priorities and needs. In the year 2016, SHARE BER project organized a number of joint monitoring field visits, several of them by the technical field staff and one higher level by senior staff. The process engages government partners from woreda, zone, region and federal government offices, and staff member of implementing consortium organizations and community representatives.



Joint M&E team on discussion with communities at Hawo Kebele, Harena Bulk woreda

Key recommendations and findings from these visits were documented, used in subsequent project activity planning and contributed to the improvement of project delivery. Some of the recommendations received from the joint monitoring visits include, among others, importance of working towards clear exit strategy, strengthening integration of interventions at household level, mainstream gender across the different project interventions, including small-scale irrigation activities, strengthening and boosting the role of multi-sectoral taskforces, consolidating the integrated watershed management activities including data on weather and

hydro sedimentology stations, and ensuring shared management within the park.

Based on these recommendations and to respond to the demands identified by the joint monitoring team, a consultative workshop was held in March 2016 at Adama. In this workshop, the project plan was enriched by incorporating the recommendations obtained from the joint monitoring visit. As a result, the following actions were taken. **(a)** tailored-made gender mainstreaming manual is developed to serve as guidance for practitioners to facilitate gender mainstreaming in the project thematic interventions. Besides, training was provided

for implementing partners and experts from government offices; **(b)** task forces are provided with continuous support to play active role in implementation of the project and enforcement of joint decisions; **(c)** multiple interventions are integrated and applied at household and watershed levels; **(d)** micro-watershed level participatory integrated watershed plan has been developed by the community. These actions enhanced institutional integration in line with the project's exit strategy. ■

2.2. The European Delegation Visit to the Bale Eco Region



EU delegation visiting the BER

The EU delegation mission visit, which was held in June 2016, was conducted with the purpose of assessing the project progress on the ground, understand how the local participation and local ownership is, evaluate the intra and inter-coordination mechanisms of the project, and recommend improvement areas of the project. Participants from the EU Mission Delegation office recognized the overall positive progress of the project, its inclusiveness, the approach and intensive involvement of communities and government

sector at different levels. Particularly, the strategies employed in promoting family planning and achievements recorded integrating it with natural resources management activities, where it was considered as taboo in that particular community, was highly appreciated.

The EU delegation team, in its field mission report, has indicated about the project strength, areas of improvement and recommendations. The major recommendation provided

were the need of catching up with the delayed activities and strengthening multi-sectoral taskforces, consolidating the pilot initiatives, and addressing issues of sustainability and scaling up.

Similarly, in March 2016 Ambassador of the Royal Norwegian Embassy and his staff visited the REDD+ project areas in the BER. The feedback following the visit was very constructive and positive which in fact contributed a lot for the process of extending the 2nd phase of REDD+ project. ■

2.3. High level Partners' Forum



Participants attending the High Level Partners Forum (HLPF) Meeting and Participants group photo left to right respectively

The high level partners' meeting and field visit was conducted from 1–5 Jan 2017 with the purpose of providing leadership and directions, reviewing progresses and recommendations on the future prospects of up scaling the eco-reign approach. During the field visit, an estimated large

number of beneficiaries from the community have been involved in the discussion and witnessed on achievements, issues and challenges. Besides, pilot research demonstrative sights were visited, such as: hydro-sedimentology stations, eco-tourism facilities that include outposts and park sites,

livestock market center, water ponds and their management system, Climate Smart Agricultural activities like beekeeping, coffee producers of PFM cooperatives, women focused enterprises, family planning interventions including VHC members, and taskforce groups.

In the event, participants including State Ministers, Federal and Regional Authority Heads and Directors, Zonal Administrators and consortium members were part of the event. Moreover, media coverage was given by Ethiopian News Agency, Oromia TV and Radio, and Bale zone communication Office.

The 1st day of the government visit was allotted for the forum meeting, which usually takes place every six months, discussed on the project overall performance and the next six months plan. In addition, the importance of increasing members of HLPF was also discussed and agreement reached. The new members agreed to be included

in HLPF were Ministry of Health, Ministry of Federal Affairs, Oromia Pastoralist Area Development Commission and Bale and Arsi Zones Administration. The Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute was also previously suggested.

The meeting was accompanied by a three-day intensive field visit whereby implemented project activities were witnessed on the ground. Finally, HLPF visit participants reflected their appreciation to SHARE-BER project and reinstated their commitment to support the project. Some of the comments given were:

✔The approach is remarkable (i.e. integrated and multi-

sectoral follows Eco-regional approach; participatory; combines conservation with livelihood and family planning activities; links research with development issues)

✔Working as consortium (5 organizations but working as one in harmony is a very good example; it is advisable that this lesson shall be adopted by other NGOs working in similar areas)

✔The project is on the right track; however it seems the project needs more time to see the results as planned

✔Try to scale it up as possible using the success showcase that the project has ■



Participants in the HLPF visit discussing with the community



2.4. SHARE BER Project Research Workshop

Capacity building is one of the major result areas of SHARE BER project. The project sponsored research grants to students in different universities. A workshop has conducted at Hawassa in April 2016 for the purpose of evaluating progress of thesis conducted by MSc students and project holders. For the purpose, feedback was provided for all studies presented critically indicating improvement areas. Presenters (MSc students) were from Addis Ababa, Hawassa and Medawelabu universities who are sponsored by SHARE BER project and undergoing their paper work on different topics.

at ILRI, Ethiopia. The objective of the workshop was to showcase achievements and findings from the SHARE research contributing to development interventions for livelihood improvement and

resilience building. The workshop also served to continue to have a common understanding and team spirit among the research teams for proper implementation of the project. ■



Group photo of the workshop participants

As a follow up workshop, SHARE BER project research and dissemination workshop was held from 9th – 10th Feb 2017

3

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

3.1. Capacity Building Support for Sustainable NRM and Livelihood Improvement

Human and institutional capacity building of key government sectors and community based institutions is one of the result areas of SHARE BER project. The objective of incorporating this into the project is to ensure sustainability of project initiatives beyond the project life time, hence ensure long term and sustainable natural resource management and livelihood improvement in BER. This also provides excellent

exit strategy for the project. To this effect, the project has undertaken gap assessment, identified areas that need project support, deliver capacity building activities through such actions like training, experience sharing visits, system/tools development, material support, establishment of different platforms (multi-sectoral task force from kebele to zonal level, High level partners Forum involving regional and

federal government institutions), production of IEC/BCC materials, intra-learning system among consortium members, material support to NRM CBOs and beneficiaries, infrastructure development (construction of ponds, outposts, campsites, road maintenance, etc), and provision of agricultural inputs and tools. Major capacity building efforts are summarized in the following table.

Table 1: Capacity building activities accomplished by the project

S.N	Type of capacity building	Target beneficiaries	Quantity	Description of contribution
1	Trainings (short & long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBOs executives (PRM, IGA cooperatives, PFM, multi-purpose cooperatives) Community elders and religious leaders kebele leaders, development agents and health extension workers Government SHARE BER Project technical staff VHC members (DAs, HEWS, school teachers, Kebele administrators) Scouts 	41,986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen management and leadership capacity of CBOs Improve business and financial management skill of cooperatives Awareness creation on income generation schemes Awareness creation on family
2	Experience sharing (in and out of the country)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBOs (PRM, PFM, cooperatives) Government higher officials and technical staff 	CBOs (PRM, PFM, cooperatives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for peer to peer exchange and experience sharing Improves joint management and ownership
3	Material support to 12 school clubs, 12 health post/ health centres,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBOs (PFM AND PRM) Milk processing cooperatives and Goat husbandry groups Park office and staff Agricultural tools Family planning accessories 	121 different groups supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen CBOs through constructing offices, Provision of furniture, equipment and processing centres Support delivery and FP services

4	Technology transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beekeeping farmers • Development agents and woreda experts • CAHWs • CSA adopters 	136 57 25 351	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government staff experts and communities enhanced practical skills working with the project
5	Education scholarship	Government and project staff	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and project staff supported to upgrade their education qualification (Diploma to degree and degree to Masters)
6	Established different types of platforms (pastoralist forum, taskforce, higher level partners forum)	CBOs and government offices	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HLPF, taskforces (kebel to zonal level), Pastoralist forum, SMC, TCT, BCTC, finance team • These platforms have served as joint learning, coordination and knowledge sharing mechanisms
7	Infrastructure development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities, Tourists, park office, 	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park camp site, Tourist hut, Staff accommodation, Out posts (4) • Water ponds (4) • Secondary Livestock market centre (1)
8	Production of IEC/BCC materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities and government staff 	4500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip books and postures which are used for awareness education on family planning
9	System/tools and guidelines development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities and government offices 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water management system, Community based monitoring tool, Control hunting and benefit sharing guidelines (3) and conservation covenant templates
10	Financial support as seed money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRM CBOs 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support cattle trading in the pastoralist areas

3.1.1. Short and long term training/experience sharing

Technical gaps identified during the gap assessment have been addressed through conducting training, experience sharing visits and long term educational sponsorship for government staff. In this regard, training has been given to 182 government staff members in the areas of integrated watershed management, participatory land use planning, PFM, PRM, community based monitoring, spatial monitoring and reporting tools (SMART),



Delegation team on training in Kenya

GIS/GPS application, gender mainstreaming and family planning. In addition, experience sharing visit was conducted to Kenya for 15 staff members of OFWE, EWCA, Prime Minister Office, Bale zone administration, BMNP, staff and journalists to get lesson on the areas of controlled hunting and benefit sharing. In addition, necessary Artificial Insemination (AI) materials, equipments and tools were

purchased and distributed to the two Pastoralist offices and trained staff has begun giving AI service in the project woredas for the improvement of cattle breeds.

On the other hand, in order to enhance capacity of key government partners from long term perspective, additional six staff members have been sponsored for degree summer

school and MSc programs. Out of six staff members' one student sponsored for summer degree program at Wondo Genet college of Natural Resources and the other five students sponsored for MSc studies at Wondo Genet College of natural science and Madda Walabu University in the areas of reproductive health and natural resources management and climate change. ■

3.1.2. System and tools development for NRM and benefit sharing

SHARE BER Project, as part of capacity building activities, has developed tools and systems that assist effective and efficient NRM in the eco-region. The tools and systems developed are the following.

3.1.2.1. Community Based Monitoring (CBM) tool

The CBM tool is designed to enhance communities' participation in resource management, benefit sharing and decision making processes. It has been used for monitoring and reporting on the resource management practices by 31 PFM CBOs. Participatory evaluation of the CBM tool revealed as the tool is becoming an added value for PFM in giving the following benefits:

- ✔ Improved CBO-OFWE partnership in joint management of forest resources as OFWE has

been receiving reports on a regular basis (every three months)

- ✔ Helped reduce fire incidences and other illegal practices (illegal settlers and forest use)

- ✔ Helped in organizing credible evidence against wrong doers in court hearings, which had been previously challenging.

- ✔ Helped in understanding major challenges facing CBOs and these issues were tabled for woreda task force meeting discussions.

3.1.2.2. Controlled Hunting Area (CHA)

In connection with piloting Controlled Hunting Area (CHA), shared management of protected areas and benefit sharing mechanism, three guidelines were developed together with

stakeholders. The guidelines prepared and under use are MoU for joint management of multiple PFM sites as one unit, PFM internal bylaws that includes wildlife component and joint management agreement document to be signed between each PFM cooperative and OFWE.

3.1.2.3. Investment Decision Making Support Tool

SHARE BER project in collaboration with key regional and federal government offices have started developing an investment decision making support tool that can help decision makers to make informed decision in relation to investment and land use planning. The tool will be a kind of software that gives clear data of a particular land located in the eco-region which supports the investment decision making bodies on feasibility of proposed investments. ■

3.1.3. Material support for community institutions

Industrial material support for office constructions, office furnitures and provision of tools are part of the material support given to seven PRM and 95 PFM CBOs so as to strengthen the capacity of CBOs to effectively manage natural resources. In addition material support in relation to promoting Family Planning has been given to 12 health facilities to fill the gap in the areas.

Thus government staff and CBOs have been capacitated in the implementation of eco-regional, multi-sectoral and integrated interventions to sustainable management of BER. Capacity building efforts of the project provided to key government sectors and CBOs have been changed into practices and the following intermediate results have been achieved.

- ✔ Seven model PIWM plan developed and implementation undergoing

- ✔ PRM scaled up in 10 kebeles and 10 PRM CBOs established and more than 350,000 hectares of range land resources has become under improved management

- ✔ PFM CBOs across BER strengthened and capacity to implement the forest management plan increased.

✔Community based monitoring (CBM) team in 38 PFM sites were established and monitoring and data collection started.

✔Piloting PLUP has been started in two kebeles.

✔Provision of AI services in pastoral areas started for the 1st time in the pastoralist communities.

✔Law enforcement enhanced in BMNP through systematic monitoring system.

✔Community hunting and benefit sharing initiatives piloted in two sites.

These all contributed towards sustainable NRM, livelihoods improvement, food security and enhancing resilience. ■

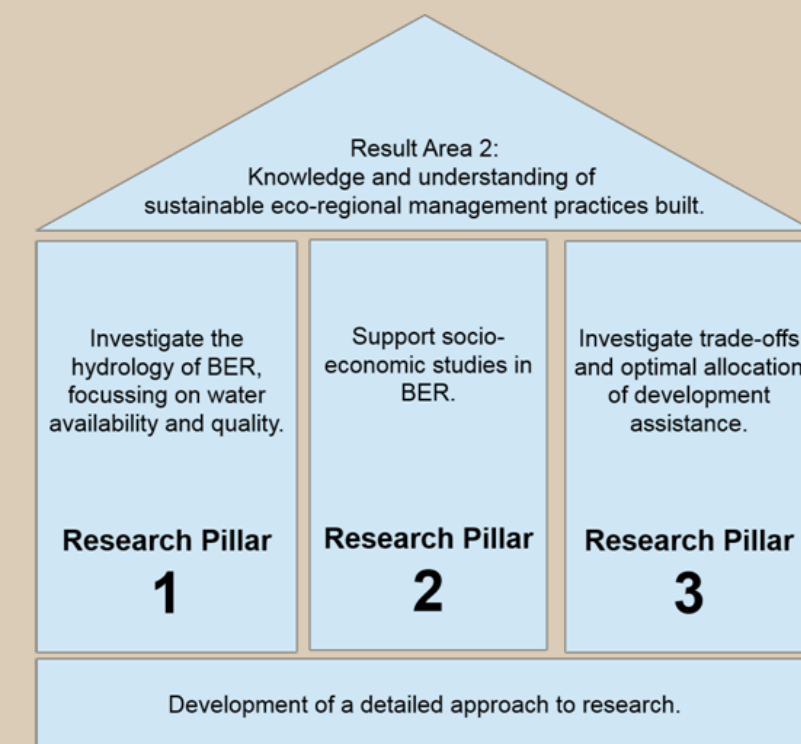


One of the constructed CBO offices

3.2. RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

One of the values of SHARE-BER project is the integration of research into development activities. The Project developed a guiding document which refers to research methodologies, approaches, expected outputs and outcomes, research stakeholders and detail planning. Based on this, 14 studies have been conducted to build knowledge and understand the eco-regional management practices and socio-economic situations, challenges and solutions. Researchers from different universities (Addis Ababa, Hawassa and Madda Walabu) and research institutes (International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and Water and Land Resource Center (WLRC) are primarily involved in conducting research studies which has a direct contribution in building the capacity of local researchers. International Water Management Institute (IWMI) has been leading the coordination of the research activities. The studies are categorized as:

(a) Hydrology and hydro-meteorological monitoring;
 (b) Socio-economic aspects of BER;



Structure of the research and the 3 research pillars

(c) Investigating the trade-off relationships and optimal allocation of development assistance;
 (d) Payment for Ecosystem Services and;
 (e) Access and Demand for Family Planning versus Natural Resource Management and Livelihood Intervention (see table below).

From those completed studies key lessons and recommendations are extracted to produce technical/policy briefs. Moreover, a research review and dissemination workshop was organized on 9-10 February 2017 with the objective of collecting inputs for further

refinement. On top of this, the workshop has been aimed to feed into policies and strategies of the country. Furthermore, synthesis

of lessons learnt from piloting the REDD+ project in the BER was discussed. Researchers whom have conducted the study presented

their findings. Participants invited from the relevant government, NGOs, and partner organizations attended the validation workshop.

Table 2: Studies conducted in the BER

S.N	Title	Responsible	Key findings
1	Status of Woody Species in the BER	Madda Walabu University	Diversity, richness and density of woody species in BER is different within the forest; Slashing of smaller shrubs and seedlings for coffee production affects the diversity and abundance; Hence awareness creation is needed to maintain productivity and genetic diversity
2	Valuing Alternative Resource Management Practices to Improve Ecosystem Services in the Upstream and Downstream Communities of the BER	Addis Ababa University	Both Midland and lowland respondents considered all attributes in valuing reforestation interventions except biodiversity. Lowland place highest value on livestock feed availability and expect that improvement on both attributes will improve the productivity of their livestock. Generally the results indicate a significant potential to improve management of the eco-region to sustain and enhance conservation and the livelihoods of the local community and beyond.
3	Economic Activities of Communities and their Dependence on Natural Resources in the BER	Madda Walabu University	People in the BER mainly use crop-production and livestock keeping as their main sources of income. These livelihood strategies are strongly dependent on natural resources which has strong implication on the decreasing trend of forest coverage
4	Youth Livelihood Strategies in the BER; Land Use Changes, Optimization Strategies and the Role of Institutions for Sustainable Natural Resources Management in the BER	Addis Ababa	The youth rely on or look for economic opportunities mostly in agriculture. Roughly a quarter of the youth is either seasonal or permanent migrant. Some local initiatives exist to positively engage the youth in soil conservation, PFM, and micro and small enterprises.
5	Land use changes, Optimization Strategies and the Role of Institutions for Sustainable Natural Resources Management in the BER	Hawassa University	Forest and woodland cover of the BER has substantially declined over the last three decades (1986-2016) while agricultural expansion and settlement have sharply increased. The area of forest and woodland have declined with an estimated 2,879 and 10,000 ha/year which is 0.6% and 2% of its area in 1986 respectively. Nevertheless, the rate of deforestation and land-use conversion in areas under Participatory Forest Management (PFM) and Participatory Rangeland Management (PRM) arrangements significantly declined

6	Livestock-related natural resource usage and highland-lowland interdependences	International Livestock Research Institute	Livestock is still the mainstay of the economy. Livestock movements are becoming more opportunistic in some areas due to mobility challenges, but Godantu movements is still practiced. Trends seen 10 years ago have continued including loss of grazing lands to agriculture including commercial. Wealth ranking suggests that wealth has in most places increased (though by little). In most places livestock numbers had not decreased per household in spite of land/grazing access challenges and crop farming. Less use of mineral springs in some areas – replaced with salt from RV. Intensification increased in Nensebo – both land and production wise (Solana mobility stopped over last ten years).
7	Study of Humanitarian Aid versus Investing in Ecosystem Rehabilitation	Aseffa et al	SWAT modelling done with Delineating the watersheds into 105 hydrologically connected sub-watersheds. Likewise, HRUs -Land use, soil, and slope characterization was done for the sub basin/ watershed. This enables to reflect differences in evapotranspiration and other hydrologic conditions for different land covers/crops and soils & slope.
8	Analysis of the Long term Cost-effectiveness of Improving Access and Demand for Family Planning versus Natural Resource Management and Livelihood Intervention	Madda Walabu University	<p>Preliminary findings:</p> <p>Increasing human population aggravates encroachment of pastoralists in to forest coffee and forestland for settlement and wood and NTFPs exploitation</p> <p>Increasing cultivated land was the main coping mechanism of Pop growth impact on livelihood in BER</p> <p>Water Availability has decreased during dry seasons because of drying of rivers and streams</p> <p>Long distance 30min - 4hours travel to fetch water for HH consumption and animals during wet and dry seasons respectively</p> <p>It is identified that the Savanna grass land was destroyed by agricultural expansion and invasive species</p> <p>Family planning and decrease in number of wife per man is proposed as solution to decrease the size of population</p>

9	Investigation of Modalities for Innovative Sustainable Financing Mechanism for PNRM: case of Bale eco-region Ethiopia	International Water Management Institute	Market incentive mechanism is suggested instead of command control. Financial mechanisms for sustainable watershed requires looking beyond agricultures (e.g. hydropower, Urban Water supply, etc). Identification of sediment sources are important for identification of interventions. Monitoring of evidence on changes due to the interventions (conditionality) is important, as well as institutional reforms.
10	Water-Based Ecosystem Payment Feasibility Study	International Water Management Institute	Preliminary findings: it is reported that (Awulachew et al., (2008) about 66% of soil being eroded is from non-cultivated land; Evidence is emerging incentives for conservation of individual holdings but incentives are lacking for collective land; There is a focus on offsite effects - sedimentation of water ways and reservoirs, and deterioration of water quality and increasing the risk of flooding. Initial discussions were held with MoWIE and EEPSCO to discuss their interest and opinion about PES schemes. The feasibility of PES for the Malka Wakena Watershed is being investigated through analysis of flow and sediment data.
11	Factors Affecting Women's Participation in the Management of Forest Resources	REDD+	Women play a pivotal role in participatory management of forest resources (PFM) but still lack sufficient visibility, voice and leadership; Their participation is limited by cultural and religious practices, including polygamy and gender stereotypes.
12	Environmental Impact of Household Fuelwood Consumption in the BER	REDD+	Use of improved cook stoves saves almost 28.6% of fuel compared to traditional stoves, leading to an average annual fuel saving of 875 kg firewood; These savings translate to an annual 257 kg of carbon saved annually per stove.
13	Assessing Policy Gaps Towards Implementing Participatory Forest Management	REDD+	There is a mixed level of satisfaction towards participatory forest management among respondents. Poor law enforcement is mentioned as key bottleneck
14	Lessons Learnt from Piloting the REDD+Project in the BER	REDD+	There was strong involvement of all relevant stakeholders (i.e. from local community to policy makers) during PFM initiation and implementation; PFM scheme created equal opportunity for both men and women to be a member of CBOs and other activities.

Links to a number of blog posts written on SHARE research:

www.iwmi.cgiar.org/2016/04/ethiopias-mountain-communities-face-up-to-the-future/

www.mri.scnatweb.ch/en/blog/entry/bale-eco-region-ethiopia-share-project-on-conservation-of-ww.blogs-mri.org/?p=835

www.wle.cgiar.org/protecting-soils-ethiopia-share-project

3.3. Integrated Natural Resources Management (INRM)

SHARE BER Project has embarked on a number of interventions to address the issues of natural resources and ensure sustainable management. Integrated natural resources management was initiated to sustain the major natural resources which are critical to livelihoods of the local communities in the area in particular and the national and regional level in general. The integrated natural resources management interventions of SHARE BER Project were focused mainly on forest management, rangelands management, Bale Mountains National Park (BMNP), watershed management and participatory land use planning

(PLUP).

In this regard the project has used multipronged approaches in line to the contexts fitting to range land, forest, protected areas and other land management. Participation and involvement of the local communities was the pillar of all the actions. The implementation of the integrated natural resources management was done building on the existing local practices and indigenous knowledge available in this area. In all cases, forest, rangelands, Park and land management, local communities were engaged and are shouldering shared management responsibilities

of the resources. Moreover, community based organizations including cooperatives were organized in the form of PFM and PRM cooperatives, water platforms, watershed committee and PLUP groups. The protected area management intervention focused on supporting BMNP to ensure shared management and resource protection with the involvement of communities and other key actors. The NRM initiatives were implemented to create the opportunities for getting benefits from REDD+ scheme and from other Payment for Ecosystem Service schemes. ■

3.3.1. Participatory forest management (PFM)

The situation analysis of the project at its inception phase has identified that, the natural resources in the Eco-region, unlike their local, national and global importance, are threatened with unsustainable use and overexploitation. Baseline was established for PFM CBOs based on Governance Management Effective Tracking Tool (GMETT) assessment. The support to PFM CBOs' was given based on the gaps identified by GMETT assessment at the onset of the project. With this regard intensive supports in the form of training, experience sharing visits, material and tools have been provided to 95 PFM CBOs with 5358 members which are engaged in the management of more than 278,000 hectares of forest land. In addition, as part of strengthening the monitoring and reporting capacity of PFM CBOs, piloting Community Based Monitoring (CBM) has been expanded from 31 to 60 PFM kebeles. The CBM is a monitoring system which involves the community in regular monitoring of forest resources. The PFM CBOs have established monitoring system by assigning responsible monitoring team that has three members. The teams were mainly engaged in a regular monitoring of forest utilization, forest protection, wildlife poaching, and CBOs financial and membership status. They also have a regular reporting channel on

the forest management through the established line of monitoring team, the forest block committees, the CBOs, and Forest and Wildlife Branch Offices. Moreover, PFM CBOs were also supported to enhance the participation of women in the forest management practices. Involvement of at least two women out of seven leaders was set as criteria in the establishing PFM CBOs.

Accordingly, the assessment on GMETT score of PFM CBOs increased from 49% to 75%. The result clearly indicated that CBOs have registered significant improvement in all aspects of governance and in the area of effective management. This will contribute towards effective protection and management of the natural forest which will contribute to reducing deforestation in BER.

Major achievements of the project are:

- ✔ The PFM CBOs have implemented improved governance and forest management practices;
- ✔ The time series data analysis on the bases of satellite image for the years 2014 and 2015 has depicted that there is 64% and 77% decrease in rate of deforestation and conversion of grass land to agriculture land respectively. This reduction in deforestation rate is also attributed to the cumulative result

of the REDD+ engagement before SHARE BER project.

- ✔ Women participation has improved, and bylaws that enhance women participation in administration of CBOs approved. In this regard agreement was reached by PFM CBOs to assign two women among the seven executive leaders;
 - ✔ Efforts made to benefit PFM members through ecotourism, honey and coffee marketing and community based controlled hunting;
 - ✔ Community based monitoring (CBM) piloted and strengthened relationship between CBOs and OFWE which in turn plays a significant role in taking informed and timely actions.
- There are still other issues in this regard that need further action so as to have more efficient and sustainable PFM forest management practices.
- ✔ The high level community expectations to benefit from REDD+;
 - ✔ The market link for the forest products like coffee and honey
 - ✔ The need to balance benefits of PFM CBOs through exploring the potentials of forest products ■

3.3.2. Participatory Range Land Management (PRM)

As part of integrated natural resources management, the project has established and strengthened PRM CBOs. SHARE BER Project has supported the establishment and legalization of 10 new PRM cooperatives in 10 kebeles and strengthened four previously established CBOs of three pilot woredas. The PRM cooperatives have 3060 members (2176 male and 884 female) and are managing 344,712 hectares of rangelands. Apart from legalization, series of supports were provided through peer to peer exchange visits, skill trainings, industrial material support for office construction series of follow up and technical supports.

As part of creating a platform for the pastoralist community to exchange information and resolve conflicts, a zonal pastoralist forum called 'Gumi Tedecha Horsise Bultoota' meeting has been conducted for two times. Representatives from 40 pastoralist kebeles, woreda and zonal government offices have participated in the meeting. In the last one year, some of

the major issues discussed and achievements attained through the Pastoralist Forum include: drought and its challenges that pastoralist communities face due to shortage of pasture for livestock, loss of crop yield, livestock disease outbreaks and falling of cattle selling prices. In addition, boundary conflict, importance of participatory rangeland management, water management platform, climate smart agriculture, and population issue focusing on family planning were also discussed.

As a result, conflict over resources use were resolved, communities in non-PRM kebeles were made to share experiences from PRM kebeles. Besides, the adjacent non-PRM kebeles accepted the rules set by the PRM kebeles including ensuring payment for grazing.

In summary the following major improvements were observed.

✔The satellite image analysis has showed 77% decrease in rate of conversion of grass land into farm land

✔Reduced movement of cattle from low land to highland areas

✔Separate cattle trough was established

✔The PRM cooperatives have better addressed conflicts on resources through using the pastoralist forum

✔Sand water filter system is in place and enabled communities to get relatively better quality for domestic use

Despite the achievements recorded, there are still issues that need further attention and action.

✔Sustainable fodder and water supply to wider communities in the pastoralist areas still needs more effort

✔Issues on movement of livestock from lowland to the high forest

✔The linkage between the pastoralist communities and Bale Mountain National Park has to be well assessed and appropriate actions set ■



Sample agreement document of PRM cooperatives

3.3.3. Efforts in establishing shared management in BMNP

The project has also developed interventions in the Bale Mountains National Park (BMNP). The interventions were sought to introduce a shared and integrated management practices into the protected areas. These were envisioned

to address the longstanding and pervasive problems of the park like encroachment, free grazing, settlement, timber and log extraction, and coffee land expansion. So as to address the problems in the management of the park, the project has

worked on establishing shared management system with involvement of multiple stakeholders including the community. In order to create and enhance shared management practice of the park, task forces were established with members

drawn from all stakeholders including communities. The taskforces were found to be supportive in introducing shared management practice at the parks and complements the efforts made to protect the park through using the scouts.

In addition, technical and financial support was provided to the park management with focus on enhancing the capacity of local communities and the responsible government body in the aspects of regular patrolling and legal enforcement.

The supports provided by the project to the Bale Mountains National Park are the following.

- ✔ Support to in creating alternative livelihoods of the communities in park buffer zone areas which used as a mechanism to reduce pressure on the BMNP
- ✔ Support to resource protection
- ✔ Infrastructure development like construction of outposts, campsites, hut and accommodation
- ✔ Maintenance of existing infrastructure (road, residences, outposts, horse shelters etc)
- ✔ Capacity development of park staff (equipment and tools provision, in country and abroad experience visit and trainings)
- ✔ Ecological treatment monitoring support (undertaking census on wild life, forest resource and livestock). This was found to be helpful for informed decision making
- ✔ Logistics and financial support to enhance patrolling and law enforcement
- ✔ Series of workshops for revision of General Management Plan of the park

To strengthen the shared management of the park and to put in place the benefit sharing mechanisms, the project has also supported the legalization of

controlled hunting and benefit sharing. The "Hanto" controlled hunting joint management area (CHA) was signed on December 14, 2016 envisioning to apply benefit sharing mechanism. The agreement was signed between Bale and Arsi forest and wildlife enterprise and the five natural resource management cooperative of Adaba, Dinsho, and Agarfa woredas. Moreover, all the involved cooperatives also signed a memorandum of understanding among themselves which would facilitate the collaboration among themselves in the management of the controlled hunting area as one management unit. The government has also agreed to share 30% of revenue generated from hunting at Hanto controlled hunting area with the CBOs and internally, the CBOs reached an agreement to share the received amount based on area coverage and performance. The agreement was done so as to benefit organizations that are involved in the management of the resources. This will be important to create ownership of the communities and reducing threats of agricultural expansion, illegal grazing, settlement expansion and poaching.

Improvements after the action:

- ✔ Shared management practice and benefit sharing mechanism initiated
- ✔ GMP of BMNP revised and endorsed
- ✔ Increasing patrolling intensity and coverage from 10% to 50%
- ✔ Law enforcement enhanced:
 - Illegal settlements (74 houses), coffee and garden crops (36 Hectares) demolished from the park area with the consent of the local community
 - Evidence based court hearing initiated

The major issues that needs further attention and action:

- ✔ Not fully engaging the taskforces

to support the BMNP low level of understanding and attention for shared management and law enforcement

- ✔ Intensified grazing, illegal settlement (permanent and seasonal) within park
- ✔ Disease for the wild life/rabbis specially on Ethiopian wolf

Unless appropriate and timely measures are taken on the issues listed above, the efforts made to register BMNP by UNESCO would be threatened.

Signing Conservation Covenant for Sustainable Natural Resource Management

Sustainable management of natural resources can be ensured through enhancing attitude of the community to work friendly with the environment and enable them contribute positively to the conservation efforts. As part of this activity, the project has facilitated signing of conservation covenant with individuals who are members of community based organizations' and other beneficiaries to contribute to conservation of the natural resources by creating ownership on the resources. Specifically, this agreement was signed with honey producers, community animal health workers, beneficiaries of climate smart agriculture, women enterprise groups, PFM cooperatives, multi-purpose and range land management cooperatives and significant number of beneficiaries in artificial insemination, and forage producing group. ■

3.3.4. Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP)

Implementing Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP) is a new approach which has been introduced in the Bale eco-region. After a continuous discussion at zone and woreda level on the approach and procedure, consensus was reached to pilot PLUP in two kebeles, Horasoba kebele from Dinsho woreda and

Hawo kebele from Harena Buluk woreda. Accordingly, kebele and woreda level and use planning team was established and provided training for effective implementation of the land use plan activities. Actual data collection has been underway and the progress of the land use planning work reached

70%. It is anticipated that the study will contribute towards the reduction of unnecessary expansion of farmland, propose best farming and conservation practices in each land use type as well as help to inform land use changes when necessary. ■

3.3.5. Integrated watershed management (IWSM)

Implementation of integrated watershed management is the key agenda of government which is widely practiced with focus on the application of biological and physical methods and through the mobilization of communities. The government integrated watershed management interventions have been implemented through community mobilization and campaign. This project has strived to support the government initiatives in this regard by giving focus on use of rigorous

participatory process that fits with the context and creates better ownership of the actions. It has also applied the IWSM linking with researches so as to make it more scientific and evidence based. Seven pilot watersheds from the representative seven intervention woredas of the Eco-region were selected for this intervention.

The IWSM interventions has introduced some innovations in that it has established hydro-sedimentology and weather

stations to have scientific measurement of the impact of the interventions and to get evidence on water discharge, sediment load and weather data for further planning and up scaling. Moreover, there have been nursery sites established at the selected watersheds so as to support the biological soil and water conservation and rehabilitation practices. ■

3.4. LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Livelihood improvement is one of the result areas of SHARE BER project with the purpose of increasing income at

household level. Climate smart agriculture, livestock productivity improvement, women focused small business support and access

to market and linkage are the major interventions done as part of livelihood improvement. ■

3.4.1. Livestock Productivity Improvement

Livestock is an important sub-sector within Ethiopia's agricultural economy. For pastoral community in particular, it is the principal source of livelihoods and plays a critical economic and social role. In the case of small holder mixed farming systems, livestock provides nutritious food, additional emergency and cash income, transportation, farm outputs and inputs, and fuels for cooking food. In the case of pastoralists, livestock represents a sole means to support and sustain their livelihoods. Yet,

livestock sub-sector encounters a number of challenges including impact from climate change. The sector has not been supported with modern services and production technology, and remains largely managed traditionally with respect to feeding, breeding, health care, water access and marketing. Consequently, production and productivity remain low, and the potential of the sector in terms of contribution to household and national economy untapped. Another problem in the sector

is the culture that focuses on number (quantity) rather than productivity or quality of the animals. Having large herds owes people a prestige by the community encouraging people to focus on number rather than quality.

Livestock is a principal component of SHARE BER project intervention. Supply of animal feed, animal health services, and improvement of breeds, access to market and improved marketing system and

water supply were identified as key components of the project to enhance the economic role of livestock production, while reducing its ecological impacts.

SHARE BER has therefore intervened to work in those identified areas in an integrated manner, which serves as a showcase for a good example of improved livestock production. The project made contribution in improving the situation of livestock production in the area, which is inline with the national Ethiopia livestock master plan of 2015-2020.

The project interventions are described below:

3.4.1.1. Forage improvement

Introduction of improved varieties of forage seeds, grass species and fodder trees has been undertaken across the project intervention areas. With this regard, selected beneficiaries were provided with different varieties of forage seeds and each beneficiary has grown improved forage on average land size of 0.02 hectares. All the households who undertook the forage development activities were also engaged with the artificial insemination program. Some of the improved forage varieties introduced to the area were; oat, legumes (Gabisa and Lalisa variety), cow pea, tree lucerne, pigeon pea, lablab, rodes grass, luceania and

susbania. On top of farmers' plot development, improved forage has also been done in communal lands. The project has managed to develop a total of 27 hectares with improved livestock fodder production across the different sites.

3.4.1.2. Breed improvement

Livestock holdings of the community in Bale eco-region are mainly local breeds that are low productive. Therefore, enhancing livestock productivity through breed improvement was one of the interventions planned by SHARE BER project. In this regard two strategies were applied: first was through Artificial Insemination (AI) and the second was through introduction of bulls of known and better local breed (Borena bulls). While AI service was provided across the eco-region (highland and lowland) use of bull was made in the pastoral areas only. The project conducted AI on a total 1520 cows of 1171 households. Particularly, the AI service is the first of its kind in pastoral communities of Bale zone. AI service

provided by SHARE BER project has showed success. The pregnancy detection rate stands at 45.8%PD+ in the highland. The semen used for breed improvement were Borena and Jersey as these breeds were suitable for the lowland areas and comparatively gives better milk and meat production than the local breeds. The pregnancy detection rate result ranges from 35% to 80% in the lowland areas.

The approaches the project followed in AI were the following:

1. Series of awareness to community on how to manage their cows before and after AI at kebele and sub kebele levels;
2. Hormone synchronization to enhance heat period;
3. Monitoring and continuous



Photos on AI service



Introduction of improved forage in farmers' field in the highland (right) and lowland (left) intervention areas

follow up on the site by AI technician;

4. Careful cow performance selection time for breeding.

3.4.1.3. Animal health services

Access to improved animal health service was one of the key challenges to livestock productivity, particularly in the pastoral districts of BER. SHARE BER project has worked to improve animal health service provision in pastoral areas integrated with several other interventions that enhance animal production and their economic contribution to households. The project in collaboration with zone and woreda Pastoralist development offices, selected individuals with better educational background among the community and trained them to become Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs). Selection of the individuals was conducted by kebele level taskforce together with district level government staff. Accordingly, 25 individuals from 10 pastoralist kebeles of Dellomena, Meddawolabu and Harana Buluk districts were selected, trained and certified as CAHWs, which are currently offering animal health services in their respective areas. The CAHWs were received intensive training for two rounds (each round for 15 days) by certified CAHWs' trainers and awarded qualification certificate by Bale Zone pastoralist development office. Following completion of the training, tool kit, veterinary equipments and medicines were provided for the CAHWs. To ensure sustainability of the service provision, it was agreed the community to pay a modest fee as a service charge to CAHWs. The price for the service is set by the woreda animal health department in consultation with the service users. This payment for CAHWs will have two benefits; one it creates employment opportunity and sustains the services, and secondly it avoids communities' dependence syndrome.



CAHWs providing animal health service

In the past one year, the CAHWs have treated/vaccinated about 118,831 livestock (cattle, Camel, Donkey & shoats heads) in 10 kebeles. The system has been strongly supported by the government in terms of access to medicines and others support, and have high potential to be sustainable. The advantage of the CAHWs is that they are part of the community and are mobile service providers moving together with the pastoral households. They also provide home to home services upon request by households.

3.4.1.4. Access to water

Access to water for livestock and human use is a major challenge in BER. The challenge is even more severe in the semi-arid areas occupied by pastoral and agro-pastoral households. In some areas of the pastoral kebeles, people are forced to travel six hours on average to get water. The household labor and time were spent on water fetching which has negative effect on the household economy. School Age Children are made to drop their school as they are engaged on water fetching and taking cattle into far places for watering. Moreover, the productivity of cattle is very less since they use more calories by walking long distance to get water.

One of the strategic interventions of SHARE BER project to improve livestock production was to improve a water supply system where SHARE BER has achieved great success in this regard. In collaboration with Bale zone water, mineral and energy office and the respective woreda water offices, the project has constructed four community ponds in four kebeles. The four ponds constructed by the project and one previously constructed pond by the government in three pastoral woredas (Table 1), are serving 1,387 households or 8,322 people and more than 31,430 livestock population. The previous experience revealed that, most of the water development initiatives remain with primary focus on the construction of the structure by ignoring the management system. Hence, most of the water structures couldn't able to give the intended service for long time.

Learning from this experience, SHARE BER project introduced water management system that supports sustainability of the water use. Water users developed their own bylaw together with woreda water, mineral and energy office and rangeland management cooperatives for the management of five community ponds in five

kebeles. The upper catchment and the whole area of the ponds are enclosed and protected from human and livestock interference to keep the sanitation of the ponds. The water platform bylaws have set sanctions on those who violate the water use rules.

The water supply system brought the following benefits to the pastoral community.

✔ Pastoralists and Agro-pastoralists

are accessing water near their home which results in improving livestock productivity, while reducing environmental degradation

✔ Women are getting enough time to prepare food for their children

✔ Children are attending their school. As evidenced from reports, student drop out highly reduced at Berak kebele, sedeta village due to the presence of Sedeta pond

✔ Upper catchment of the ponds

is protected from human and livestock contamination

✔ Livestock and humans are using water separately whereby the water for human use are filtered through sand box

✔ Water users are paying service fee for the water they are using, which is important for sustainability

Table 3 : Watering Ponds constructed by the Project and human livestock beneficiaries

SN	Kebele	Woreda	Household			Livestock				Total
			Male	Female	Total	Cattle	Goat	camel	Donkey	
1	Sirima Homote	Berberere	190	6	196	1641	2273	1131	290	5335
2	Berak Sedeta pond	Dello Mena	325	16	341	485	1705	250	193	2633
3	Naniga Dera, Keba Chama pond	Dello Mena	240	10	250	3250	1,932	1,000	134	6316
4	Horakore, Haro gurratti pond	Medda Wolab	225	35	260	2756	3380	175	105	6416
5	Medda, Sara pond	Medda Wolab	315	25	340	4250	5440	850	190	10730
	Sum		1,295	92	1,387	12,382	14,730	3,406	912	31,430



Constructed ponds (water usage before and after)

3.4.1.5 Access to Market

The rangeland management cooperatives are engaged in livestock trading to create good market access for their members and to generate income for the cooperatives. The cooperatives have got training on business

development and were supported with seed money as an initial capital for cattle trading. Linking the cooperatives with private sectors particularly with abattoirs has already started. As an integral part of market promotion strategies,

one standardized livestock market center (10,000 m²) is constructed in Dellomena town by SHARE BER project and made ready for use. ■



Partial view of the second livestock market center in Dellomena town

3.4.2. Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Initiatives

Introduction and promotion of CSA has been continued in the three focal intervention areas of the eco-region for the second season. Beneficiaries of climate-smart agriculture intervention have been selected in a participatory way by involving all kebele residents, and kebele and woreda government sectors. With this regard different type of improved crop varieties were introduced and tested in 173 farmers' field. In the lowland cluster crop varieties such as maize (Melkasa 2, Melkasa 4 and MH-Q 130), teff (CR-37 Boset and Kuncho) and haricot bean were introduced and tested. Similarly, crop varieties such as barley, bean, wheat, potato and onion (red bombe) have been introduced in the highland intervention kebeles. In addition in the mid altitude cluster crop varieties of maize, mung bean, wheat, and haricot bean were introduced. Improved agricultural practices such as row planting and inter cropping have been also applied in crop farm trials.

In order to evaluate and share good practices in the area of introduced crop varieties a joint field visit and evaluation was conducted in the highland, mid altitude and lowland clusters. A total of 807 (115F) participants from different kebeles, government offices and research centers have taken part in the field visit and joint evaluation in different field days. Finally yield data has also been collected from the improved crop varieties and significant yield increment has been observed as compared to the local varieties. As per the analysis made on yield data of introduced crops, it was found that the new varieties has three fold yield increment in teff



Improved crop variety of teff, potato and maize (from top to bottom)

(lowland cluster), 2.3 times more in potato, 2.5 times more in garlic (high altitude), two times in wheat and 1.5 times more in maize crops as compared to local varieties. Accordingly, farmer to farmer extension has been promoted and scaling up started (209 farmers in one season) and high demand for improved seeds observed from the community.



Harvested amount of potato under Farmers field day one tuber (Belete left, Gudane right, and Durame top)

3.4.2.1. Vegetable and fruit production support

Introduction of vegetable and fruit in the focal intervention areas of BER is one of the focus areas of SHARE BER project. Accordingly trainings and input support have been provided to beneficiaries and supported to engage in vegetable production.



Beneficiaries have benefited from selling the vegetable products where vegetable production becomes one of the quickest income sources. For instance beneficiaries from Madda kebele earned up to 11,000.00 ETB per household in one production cycle from a plot of land area 0.1 hectare.



As a result of increasing demand of the community for fruit tree development different varieties of fruit tree seedlings have been distributed to 110 beneficiaries in both highland, mid altitude and lowland woredas. The fruit tree seedlings introduced were, improved varieties of grafted Avocado, Mango and Apple tree. Suitable fruit tree types have been identified in participatory way by involving the community and research centers. The main purpose of introducing such economically valuable fruit tree seedlings has been just to contribute to the livelihood improvement of the target communities thereby minimizing the pressure on the forest resource.



Vegetable production at Medda Kebele, Medda Wolabu Woreda



Grafted mango and avocado fruit tree seedlings

3.4.3. Women Specific Business Groups



Women group producing milk products and provide to the local market

SHAER BER Project is helping women by organizing them as a group and creates small businesses that can make strong contribution to the economic well-being of the family as well as the community. Besides, improving their access to financial services, the involvement of women in business increases their decision making power. In this regard, the project supported milk processing women group which is composed of 50 members. The beneficiaries received support in terms of training, marketing, organizational management, milk inspection techniques, data recording and financial management mechanisms. On top of this, material support including milk processing materials like churner, cream separator machine, milk and water jars, and other accessories were provided. In order to link the group with the existing market, two milk processing centers have been constructed and made functional. Accordingly, the

group is able to produce milk and milk products such as butter and provide to the local market.

Correspondingly, another women groups working on goat husbandry received a financial support from the project. The groups, with a total of 84 members, were established and each woman of the group member was provided a loan amounting 2500.00 (two thousand five hundred) birr through PRM livelihood improvement committees to purchase three female goats per head. The loan has been arranged in the form of revolving fund so as to reach more beneficiaries through the PRM CBOs in the long-term. Additionally, in order to boost up the small businesses through increasing income generation activities the project supplemented the group with improved chicken production. Hence, up to seven chickens and construction and feeding materials were provided to each member. Furthermore, to

build up the saving culture of the groups and to ensure the intended economic wellbeing, three VSLAs were established. The group agreed on the amount of money to be saved, the time span for saving the amount of money that will be saved for social funds. ■



Goat husbandry beneficiary at Dello Mena

3.4.4. Integration of family planning into NRM

In the BER the challenge of high population dynamics is still prevailing despite actions to enhance peoples' realization towards the impact of high population growth on the wellbeing and resilience of the family and community. At the commencement of SHARE BER project, situational analysis was conducted engaging Zonal and Woreda health offices and

influential community members and identified that socio-cultural and religious factors are main barriers against family planning (FP) service utilization. With this respect, the project facilitated designing appropriate strategies, and activities to tackle the challenges working together jointly with experts in the woreda health offices and primary health care units. SHARE BER project

implementing partners who have been working as a consortium have addressed FP issues integrating into beneficiaries of health and non-health activities.

The project, in the last one year, has strengthened already existing village health committees (VHCs) and established new VHCs in some intervention kebeles. It has used the VHCs as a tool for facilitating

the FP behavioral change communication complementing the already existed established health extension system. VHC is a diversified group in which its members are represented from Kebele administration, Religious leaders, and Model women for the health extension package, Women affairs representative, Agricultural Development Agents, School Directors, Health Extension Workers (HEWs) and Primary Health Care Units (PHCU) Directors. With this respect, VHCs are capacitated through training, and mentoring in collaboration with the local government health offices. The VHCs are responsible for coordinating, organizing, monitoring and reporting on awareness creation events in FP and its linkage with other activities in the kebele.

A total of 12 VHCs, one in a kebele are organized, capacitated and functionalized in a way to address integration of FP issues in the SHARE BER project different thematic interventions. The VHCs are implementing community mobilization interventions through small group discussions and FP conferences among communities that include married women, men, youth groups, PFMs, PRMs, CSA beneficiaries and the project beneficiaries as a whole. In addition to FP, the VHCs have also done awareness creation on Population, Health Environment (PHE) integration and gender based violence including female genital mutilation (FGM) and early marriage.

During the group discussions, they used IEC/BCC materials such as, PHE/FP discussion flipbook and posters to illustrate the impact of uncontrolled fertility vs. using family planning services. On the other hand, the multi-sectoral taskforces established in the kebele are supporting the awareness creation campaign in mobilizing community and also asserts positive performance of VHCs and provides constructive feedback.

These all endeavors, directly



W/ro Abebech Jotte (Above) W/ro Abebech's husband with their daughter (bottom)

contributed to increase contraceptive utilization rates from 24% in 2014 to 36% in 2016 in the pilot intervention kebeles. This change is attributable to the attitudinal changes created through intensive awareness education delivered by VHC, Youth Peer Educators (YPE) and school clubs on reproductive health and family planning services. This was reflected during the donor (EU) delegation mission field visit, and cited in the report as: ***“The family planning intervention being made through a coordinated effort of Project staff, woreda health offices and village health committee has played significant role in reverting the deep-rooted negative attitude of the community towards family planning. If family planning intervention is strengthened, it will have a considerable positive impact in terms of natural resources use”.*** (EU delegation field visit report).

The SHARE BER project has been

using local people, who are living happy, healthy and economically well because of having balanced family size, as a role model to educate others. Among others W/ro Abebech Jotte is one who can be taken as example from well living family in the locality. She is living with her husband in Bekaye kebele, Harena Buluk woreda and married before eight years, and got one daughter and has used long term contraceptive service to balance her family. When the SHARE BER project intervened into the Bale eco region and work with VHCs, W/ro Abebech has joined the VHC group in the kebele and played her active role in educating family planning services for women living in her kebele as she is a good example for the local community. The influence that W/ro Abebech created to the local community is leveraged for changing their perception on this regard and the project used such approach to bring rapid change. ■

4

Dissemination of Results, Communication and Visibility

As part of disseminating results, the project has used different platforms and shared its approaches, experiences and practices to the donor, partners, stakeholders and community beneficiaries. With this respect, Power point presentations were provided on core result areas that the project addressed for more than two years of its implementation for partners, government administration officials at different levels, stakeholders and the local community beneficiaries and shared its experiences including the approach using experience sharing workshops. Field visit events to the project site (Bale eco region) were organized by the project for the donor, high level partners' forum (HLPF), zone, woreda and kebele level administration and local communities and demonstrated development works implemented in the Bale eco region. Besides, brochures and banners supported by photos were also published and distributed.

The project has also used mass medias i.e., TV documentary, radio and printing presses for dissemination of project innovations and good practices. Production of documentary film has been broadcasted through Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) that covers 22 programs and disseminated in Amharic, Oromiffa and English TV and radio outlets. Moreover, the project's experiences and lessons were shared through print Medias of Ethiopian Press agency issued on Ethiopian Herald and Beressa in twelve articles in each language. The project has also published blogs on events, annual newsletters, and TV and radio programs and print media publication on to the websites of all consortium member organizations.

As part of dissemination of research component of SHARE BER project, research briefs which include study findings and recommendations have been drafted and ready for printing and circulations.

The SHARE BER project communication strategy has been developed and agreed at the project commencement and implementations

went through as per the plan.

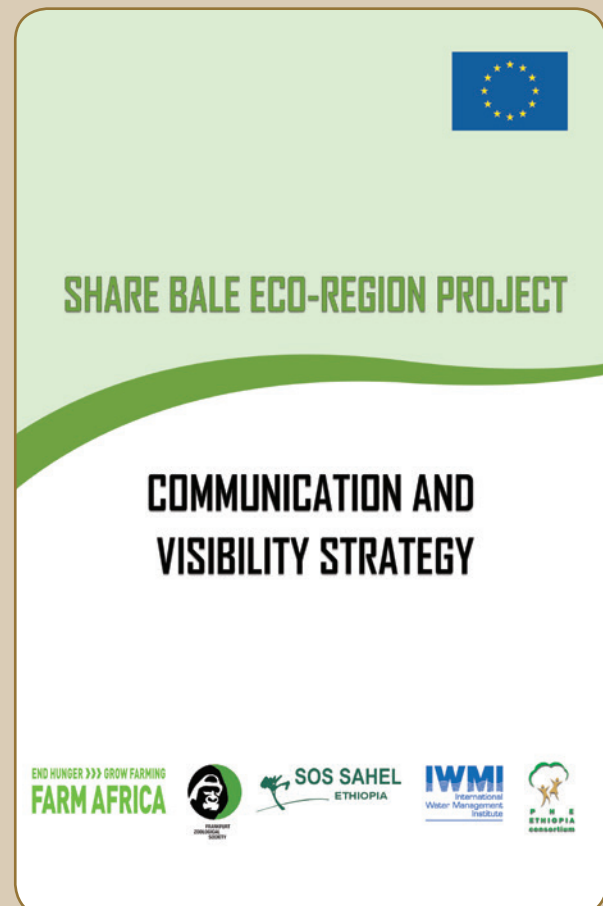
Visibility

Visibility of the donor (EU) has been acknowledged in every meetings, workshops, trainings and events. In addition, sign boards, reports and other presentations were prepared carrying the logos EU and implementing partners. The logos of EU and implementing partners were also posted on project motor bicycles, vehicles and laptops.

An instance of this is indicated in this blog post:

<http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/regions/africa/east-africa/ethiopia/news/>

<http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/2016/04/ethiopias-mountain-communities-face-up-to-the-future/>. ■



Interview

with **Kebede Yimam,**
State Minister,

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change



Eco-region: Would you please introduce yourself to our readers?

Kebede Yimam: I am Kebede Yimam, state Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. I am married and a father of four children (two daughters and two sons).

Eco-region: How was your engagement in SHAREBER BER Project?

Kebede Yimam: I was engaged in the project since its launching. I came to be engaged in the project based on design that gives provision for direct leadership role of Higher Level Partners' Forum (HLPF). This forum established constituting representatives from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MEFCC), Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MoANRs), Ministry of Livestock and Fishery (MoLF), Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity (MoWIE), Ethiopian Biodiversity

Institute (EBI), Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), Oromia Environment, Forest and Climate Change Authority, Oromia Pastoralist Area Development Commission, Oromia Forest and Wildlife Enterprise and Bale and Arsi Zone Administration. Moreover, the forum has also constituted the Executive Directors/Country Directors of the consortium member organizations of the SHARE BER Project. Through the continuous engagement in the HLPF discussion and learning on the need to have leadership that gives direction on inclusive and holistic manner, we have agreed to incorporate Ministry of Health and Ministry of Federal Affairs and Pastoralist. In this forum, our ministry (MEFCC) was given the chairing position and OFWE vice chair. The forum is represented by the state ministers of the respective ministry and authority and bureau heads. Therefore, as state minister to MEFCC, I have served as chairman of the HLPF.

Eco-region: Please tell us about the SHARE BER Project?

Kebede Yimam: SHARE BER project is aimed at both for conserving biodiversity within the eco-region and increasing resilience and well-being of highland and lowland communities in a comprehensive manner. The project is implemented at eco-region level through designing appropriate interventions that matches to the different agro-ecologies (highland, midland and lowland). The project has broader result areas intended to be delivered thereby helping to achieve the objectives. The results to be delivered by the project intervention are enhancing institutional capacity, building knowledge on sustainable eco-regional management, incorporate the practices in protected areas, watershed and natural resource management into land use planning, enhance livelihoods of local communities and enhance

government partnership to Bale eco-region management.

Eco-region: Based on your engagement in the project, please tell us about your impression and lessons on the Eco-region level interventions of the project?

Kebede Yimam: The major lessons from my engagement in the project are ;

1) the mechanisms created for the implementation: it is implemented by consortium of five member organizations which have different experience and excellence but acting as one organization-this is the best experience and coordination culture that I saw and need to be replicated by others too,

2) It has created mechanisms of involving all stakeholders at all levels- this will be instrumental for supporting the development efforts of the country

3) It has linked research with development interventions through conducting different action researches

4) It has engaged government officials from kebele to federal levels together with other stakeholders.

Eco-region: What do you think should be done by the different development actors and government organizations so as to widely scaling up and maximize the benefits of the beneficiaries from such development interventions?

Kebede Yimam: The major role has to be:

1)transparent and genuine

partnership among the non-state actors, and between government and non-state actors towards a common agenda

2)create joint coordination mechanism that supports efficient and effective implementation through avoiding duplication of efforts

3)develop culture of consolidating and promoting experiences and best practices

Eco-region: What challenges and threats do you anticipate in the eco-region approaches which have been piloted by the SHARE BER Project?

Kebede Yimam: From involvement in the project through the HLPF and field visits, I learnt that the shorter time period of the project and the limitation of fund would be the challenge to upscale the project results and best practices into other areas. The area is wide with different agro-ecology, diversity and complex setup with number of challenge like illegal settlement and illegal tree cutting which makes long term intervention and resource. In this regard the use of new approach for the project implementation which is under testing, the effects of climate and drought can be mentioned as the major threats to sustainability of benefits from the project results. In any case, there is a need to have strong documentation of the process and results in the way to help replicate the achievements.

Eco-region: What is your reflection on the role of charities and societies in development interventions of the country from your learning in this project?

Kebede Yimam: The practical

engagement of the Charities and societies which are implementing this project have shown me a real alignment and support to conserving the areas and improving wellbeing of the community thereby contributing to the CRGE and GTP II targets. The role of charities and societies in general has to be guided in the manner that complements the development of the country, not duplicating efforts.

Eco-region: Where do you suggest similar eco-region approaches to be applied?

Kebede Yimam: First of all, the BER initiatives needs to be further strengthened in a way that gives full coverage of the eco-region incorporating Ethiopian Somlia- as its current interventions are focused on limited pilot areas of the Bale and West Arsi zones. In addition, the results of this action have to be consolidated so as to be up scaled in other areas, this may off course needs time and finance. Once this has been done, it can be applied at large scale at country wide with priority focus to hotspot areas. In this regard, our joint partnership and collaboration needs to be more strengthened.

Eco-region: Do you have any additional message that you would like to share with the readers?

Kebede Yimam: I advise other NGOs which are engaged in similar activities to learn and adopt this consortium's coordination and working modalities. ■

Implementers Brief Profile

Farm Africa

Farm Africa is a nonprofit making charity organization working to end hunger and bring prosperity to rural Africa. Farm Africa has been working in eastern Africa and now has programs in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. It works at the intersection of building incomes and managing agricultural natural resources. Farm Africa's interventions focuses on crops, livestock and forestry Farm Africa has worked in Ethiopia since 1988.

Vision: A prosperous rural Africa.

Mission: Reduce poverty permanently by unleashing African farmers' abilities to grow their incomes and manage their natural resources sustainably.

Web site: www.farmafrica.org

International Water Management Institute

The International Water Management Institute (IWMI) is a non-profit, scientific research organization focusing on the sustainable use of water and land resources in developing countries. It is headquartered in Colombo, Sri Lanka, with regional offices across Asia and Africa. IWMI works in partnership with governments, civil society and the private sector to develop scalable agricultural water management solutions that have a real impact on poverty reduction, food security and ecosystem health. IWMI is a member of CGIAR, a global research partnership for a food secure future.

Vision, as reflected in the Strategy 2014- 2018, is 'a water-secure world'

Mission is to provide evidence-based solutions to sustainably manage water and land resources for food security, people's livelihoods and the environment.

The IWMI East Africa office is hosted by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) Addis Campus, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Web site: www.iwmi.org

SOS

SOS Sahel initially established as an international non-governmental charity organization, (SOS Sahel International UK) in 1984 and worked to support herders and farmers in the Sahel Africa's dry lands including Sudan, Niger, Mali, Chad, etc. In Ethiopia, it began rural development projects focusing on food security and participatory resource management in 1989. In 2005, SOS Sahel Ethiopia was registered as an independent national NGO by Ministry of Justice and also recently renewed its license by Charities and Societies Agency as an Ethiopian Resident Charity.

SOS Sahel Ethiopia is dedicated to improve the living standards of small holder farmers and marginalized pastoralists through better management of their environment and improved access to fair and sustainable agricultural markets.

Web site: www.sossahel.org.et

Frankfurt Zoological Society Ethiopia

The Frankfurt Zoological Society (Zoologische Gesellschaft Frankfurt) was founded in 1858 Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) is an international conservation organization (NGO) based in Frankfurt in Germany. It is committed to preserving wild lands and biological diversity in the last remaining wilderness areas on the planet. Therefore the conservation focus of all FZS projects is on protecting wilderness areas and preserving biodiversity.

Currently FZS is implementing project in Guassa Community Conservation Area aiming at improving Community and Ecological resilience. In Bale Mountains it is investing financial and technical expertise to reverse the decline of outstanding biodiversity and natural resource of the Bale Mountains and ultimately safeguarding the eco-system services for residence.

Web site: www.fzs.org

PHE Ethiopia Consortium

Population Health and Environment Ethiopia Consortium (PHE EC) is a non-governmental non-for-profit organization established in 2008. The consortium was established with a vision "to see Ethiopia with a sustainable use of resources, resilient ecosystems, sustainable livelihoods, and a healthy population". The organization has also a mission "to contribute to sustainable development in Ethiopia by promoting and enhancing the integration of population, health and environment through multi-sectoral approaches".

The consortium currently has 66 member organizations that are working in all regions of Ethiopia. It is also a member of Global Population and Sustainable Development Alliance (PSDA), and the PHE Eastern Africa and African PHE Network.

Population, health and environment (PHE) approaches acknowledge and address the complex connections between humans, their health, and their environment.

Web site: www.phe-ethiopia.org

Acknowledgment

Our deep gratitude and acknowledgment goes to many individuals that have helped us through contributing pieces for the Newsletter, editing contents and providing comments. Eco-region Newsletter Editors would like to extend appreciation and sincere gratitude especially to Van Roojen Daniel (PhD), Dessalegn Tadesse, Yasmin Abdulwassie, Tena Shiterek, Habtamu Yehualashet, Neville Slade, Husien Indris, Kumbi Haji and Semere Sileshi for their active participation and contribution in the preparation of this Newsletter.

Address

Farm Africa Ethiopia

PO Box: 5746, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel: +251 11 467 4129

+251 11 465 5156

+251 11 4663172

E-mail: ethinfo@farmafrica.org

Web site: www.farmafrica.org

SOS Sahel Ethiopia

P.O.Box: 3262, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel.: +251 (0) 11 416 0391

Fax: +251 (0) 11 416 0288

E-mail: SOS.Sahel@ethionet.et

Web site: www.sossahel.org.et

International Water Management Institute

P.O.Box: 5689, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel.: +251 116 172000

Fax: +251 116 172001

E-mail: iwmi-ethiopia@cgiar.org

Web site: www.iwmi.org

Frankfurt Zoological Society Ethiopia

Frankfurt Zoological Society

Nifas silk Lafto sub city

Wareda 03, Adot building, 7th floor

Office no.701

P. O. Box 100003, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel.: +251 113727907 (Addis Ababa)

+251 468 990643 (Bale)

Web site: www.fzs.org

PHE EC

P.O.Box: 4408, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia

Tel.: +251 116 634116/21

E-mail: info@phe-ethiopia.org

Web site: www.phe-ethiopia.org



Designed and printed by PHILMON PRESS PLC



END HUNGER >>> GROW FARMING
FARM AFRICA



SOS SAHEL
ETHIOPIA

