



## News story



*Integrated Seed Sector Development project Amhara Unit*  
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### **Regional seed core group traveling workshop held at project locations**

The Amhara region core group members visited the project sites aimed in monitoring and evaluate of the status and implementation of the innovation projects and overall ISSD program Amhara unit activities. In line with this, presentation on the progress of project status, discussion on the overall project prestige and feedback on some obscurities were also part of the traveling workshop.

#### **1. Official opening**

This year core group traveling workshop was officially opened on 1 September, by **Ato Tesfahun Mengiste, deputy head of Amhara region bureau of agriculture and chairman of the regional core group**. In his opening and welcoming remarks, emphasized participation by all delegates working together towards the creation of an integrated seed sector development was viable with the donor's active involvement in spawning new innovative and government's willingness to overcome seed sector challenges. From this, a core group which was organized by the initiative of ISSD aimed in bringing stakeholders together at regional level to discuss on seed sector challenges and come up with solutions were the one which contributes a lot in resolving sector challenges. This traveling workshop also reliefs us to know how far the innovation projects are practical and drives challenges we discussed at office level. He also mentioned that monitoring the progress of projects at a period of time comforts the core group members to timely decide and pointing out right phase in case of failure. So, this traveling workshop was organized to realize the above stated objectives of the project and core group members' enthusiasm to visit practical implementation of activities.



#### **2. Visited sites of the project**

The core group members first start out with traveling to Addisalem seed producer cooperative, which is found in south Gondar zone, Farta district. The cooperative have been supported by the project since 2011. Through direct scheme of ISSD Amhara unit and trusted to contribute a lot on the production and marketing of malt barley, potato and faba bean. In the visit the project scientific coordinator, Dr Dereje Ayalew indicated the projects vision on seed producer cooperatives responsibility to ensure viability of producing quality seed and involvement in the market competition. To achieve this, integrated seed sector development Amhara unit had sacrificed and engaged on the

organization, technical support, capacity building and fulfilling basic infrastructure of the cooperative.



**Workshop participants while visiting the screen house**

**Dr Dereje Ayalew, briefing on the LSBs status**

*He also adds the projects visualization of introducing new innovations and resolving challenges in the seed sector. From this, the investment made on addisalem cooperative in relation to producing diseases free potato have been an instance on the effectiveness of the innovation projects. The cooperative owned screen house through direct support of the project and starts production of disease free potato minituber. The project become visible with the regional research center cooperation on provision of local materials, plantlets developed from tissue culture laboratory and frequent technical support. Following the construction of the screen house, facilities like 1000 growing pots, one water container with 500 liter capacity and watering can were supplied and installed in the screen house to plant the plantlets growing in the tissue culture laboratory. As a result, the cooperative has harvested 13000 different size tubers which are sufficient to cover around half hectare of land.*

**Ato Gashaw Belay, ARARI tissue culture laboratory head**, on his part emphasized that, at the beginning farmers did not accepted the technology, faced for indisposed and unable to trust how diseases free potato would arise from such silly piece materials. Likewise, they start to think of free their land without gain, never trusted primarily, but after having shown practical steps of minituber production and demonstrated on the constructed screen house, they started to admit the technology. Moreover, they started to see potato plantlets which plants under stringent sanitary condition and it helps us to easily scale up. At first, our plan was enclosed with the Adisalem seed producer cooperative only, but now individual farmers started to produce potato plantlets in their own garden. This indicated that integrated seed sector development's role in inspiring farmers to adopt new technology was operative and we also proud to have such model disease free potato minituber center that helps us to impart the Amhara regions farmers.



Even if the region has high potential for the production of potato, vast majority of smallholder farmer's productivity is very low due to lack of supply of quality seed and occurrence of disease. As a result farmers use farm-saved seed potato obtained from local market and attempted for disease. Moreover, this leads unable to maintain seed quality or eliminate diseases such as bacterial wilt, or viruses. Considering the pay pack gained from building sustainable system, we invest to build this screen house with the involvement of stakeholders. Then, we fulfill the infrastructure, trained farmers the idea of resisting the technology turned to consent on the use of disease free plantlets coming from the screen house to produce clean minituber and avoid bacterial wilt.



*Mesfin Astatike*

*Value chain Expert of ISSD Amhara unit*

Afterwards, presentation was made on the last two and half year achievement of the project, discussion continued on some reflection, feedbacks and warmed with possible recommendations and resolution of challenges. The frequent rose questions and subsequent recommendation were summarized below.

### **3. Repeated questions and recommendations**

1	Issue of sustainability in overall innovations of the project	The core group trusted to take up sharing responsibilities for concerned organizations through sharing experiences and direct engagement on the activities.
2	ISSDs new focus/ innovation on the upcoming years and readiness for designing exit strategies	ISSD focus on new innovation which brings system change on seed sector and on the way to design exit strategies to handover the activities.
3	Strengthen the linkage with other stakeholder to share roles and responsibilities	ISSD should work closely seed producers, BOA, research centers and ATA
4	Consideration of existing seed marketing /LSbs should produce seed in relation to the demand of farmers, LSbs should think of what to produce ,how much to produce.	ISSD should work to build the capacity of seed producers and seed marketing.

#### **4. Way forward**

In summarizing the deliberations of the traveling workshop, Ato Tesfahun Mengiste, Amhara region bureau of agriculture deputy head, provided a way forward and highlighted the sequence of activities that should flow onwards from this workshop.

- ISSD must focus on sustaining innovation projects in the upcoming years
- This year draft innovations will then be presented to core groups for discussion and approval
- Cooperative and BOA should work to take up ISSD's best practices to improve the seed sector
- Seed producers must implement the new contractual seed production guideline to implement both parties

He then strongly discourses how the core group members will directly involve to support the oblige agendas of the project in the upcoming one and half years, direct to sustain at large the overall best practices of the project. To end, the workshops achieved the intended goal of creating common understanding and stopover with core group's great commitment to involve in the projects agendas, pledged to bargain the possible way out of the challenges during the upcoming implementation period of integrated seed sector development project.