

# Newsletter

January - June 2018

The Bilateral Ethiopia-Netherlands Effort for Food, Income and Trade (BENEFIT) Partnership unites five programmes (ISSD, CASCPAE, REALISE, ENTAG and SBN). It is funded by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is implemented with support from Wageningen University and Research (WUR).

In this newsletter, we bring you highlights of stories, updates and news about our initiatives over the last six months. Enjoy!

## BENEFIT PARTNERSHIP INFLUENCING SECTOR POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Evidence based policy development and strengthening enabling institutional environment for the agriculture sector, are two key service areas of BENEFIT Partnership. In just the last two years, the four projects (ISSD, CASCAPE, ENTAG and SBN) under the BENEFIT umbrella have registered a number of successes in influencing policy changes and institutional effectiveness. All four programmes agree that the level of visibility and credibility achieved under the BENEFIT umbrella paved the way towards changing specific task oriented projects into legally structured entities capable to influence policies, systems and behaviors. The following are few examples of successes achieved.

[Continued on Page 2](#)



## LEVERAGING OPPORTUNITIES TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN SEED PRODUCER COOPERATIVES (SPCs)

One of BENEFIT-ISSD's initiatives focus on identifying and leveraging opportunities to increase women membership and leadership in seed producing business through trainings, coaching, technical and financial support.

[Page 4](#)

## EFFECTIVE LEARNING THROUGH STRATEGIC CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND CASCADING APPROACH

BENEFIT-CASCAPE recent success in including CASCAPE Training of Trainers (ToTs) in the country's AGP (Agriculture Growth Program) 2019 plan for cascading is a testimony for the wide spread acceptance and trust gained on the value of CASCAPE's new approach and trainings provided to development experts.

[Page 6](#)

## ADDRESSING TRADE BARRIERS LEVIED BY INDIA AND PAKISTAN: THE CASE OF METHLY BROMIDE

To prevent a dramatic export cut and loss of foreign currency earning in the country, BENEFIT-ENTAG Legume Business Platform facilitated a meeting to find strategic solutions to resolve the trade barrier levied by India and Pakistan.

[Page 8](#)

## SCALING LOAN GUARANTEES TO ALLEVIATE FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS FOR SESAME GROWERS

BENEFIT-SBN, in collaboration with Agriterro and Cooperative Bank of Oromia (CBO), are implementing a financing scheme to reach more farmers through provision of output marketing loans to unions and cooperatives.

[Page 11](#)



**Integrated Seed Sector  
Development - Ethiopia**



**Capacity building for scaling up of evidence-  
based best practices in agricultural production**



**The Ethiopia- Netherlands  
Trade for Agricultural Growth**



**Sesame Business  
Network**

## BENEFIT PARTNERSHIP: INFLUENCING SECTOR POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

**Dr. Amsalu Ayana, BENEFIT-ISSD  
Ethiopia Programme Manager**

"I personally believe the most significant change under BENEFIT umbrella is our engagement at the federal level. The Ethiopia culture is dominated by top down approach, making it very challenging to upscale innovative ideas introduced at community levels. For example, in previous years ISSD struggled in promoting and sustaining its work in Direct Seed Marketing (DSM) and seed supply system. But that changed under BENEFIT coordination. Through BENEFIT legal status, ISSD signed an official MoU to work with Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Resource (MoALR). The MoU solidified ISSD's working relation with the government which allowed us to hold regular meetings with the ministry to address seed sector issues.

"Through this continuous engagement we were able to contribute to policy changes to improve the seed sector coordination and governance. We have been engaged in leading and conducting researches to understand the gaps at different levels and propose recommendations to improve the seed system in the country. So far, our efforts in DSM, recognition of SCPs/LSBs, improvements to seed laws and cooperative law have been very fruitful. The national seed unit we established is replicated at regional levels and the regional seed core groups are helping us understand the sector strengths and weaknesses at different levels to devise strategic plans to bring lasting solutions.

**"This year, in response to a special request from MoALR, our focus has been in facilitating the establishment of a sustainable and demand driven Early Generation Seed (EGS) production and supply system in the country. Accordingly we have met in February to review the four regions' (Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Tigray) 2018 cropping season plan for EGS production, learn from each other on demand driven planning process and ensure accountability.**

"The programme now have policy support to accomplish its plans and this wide spread recognition has created for us a platform to make systematic changes at higher level and reach the wider community."

**Dr. Eyasu Elias, BENEFIT-CASCAPE  
Programme Manager**

**"For CASCAPE, recent examples of successes achieved at federal level include, the role the programme plays in building effective technology generation and delivery through linking agriculture education, research and extension and ensuring CASCAPE Training of Trainers (TOTs) are cascaded through (Agriculture Growth Program) AGP capacity building programme.**

"Our engagement with the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) and Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock Resources (MoALR) is crucial to strengthen the competencies and leadership capacities to promote collaboration along the entire agricultural technology generation and delivery. The initiative started with CASCAPE supported study on gaps in methods and linkages along technology generation and delivery chain. The findings were shared at relevant meetings bringing a shift in thinking on the relevance of the issue. The government now believes there is a direct link between this effort and increasing the engagement of farmers in adopting new technologies introduced by the three entities. Therefore, MoALR has endorsed this partnership with direct request to meet regularly to create a shared vision and strengthen collaboration towards creating demand driven technology and delivery. Our recent meeting on May 24, 2018 was instrumental to understand the existing gaps and develop strategic action plans to promote high impact partnership among the three institutions.

"In the last six months, we also succeeded in ensuring BENEFIT-CASCAPE TOTs are included in the country's AGP 2019 capacity building plan. This shows the level of acceptance and trust we have gained on the value of CASCAPE's new training approach and TOTs provided to development experts."

**Demeke Wondimagegn, BENEFIT-  
ENTAG Poultry Sector Coordinator**

**In the last six months, ENTAG policy influence opportunities came through its poultry sector, influencing the poultry safety regulations.**

"One of the approaches BENEFIT-ENTAG uses to tackle the sector challenges is organizing platforms where key stakeholders meet to discuss opportunities and challenges of the sector.

"The poultry sector is very new in Ethiopia and these meetings were significant to highlight the lack of policy and regulations issues and take subsequent measures to develop a policy to address the key challenges identified.

"Our 6<sup>th</sup> poultry platform meeting in March 2018 focused on poultry safety regulation and researches towards expansion of private investment in Ethiopia. To address the associated lack of poultry disease service program, the ministry (which one?), gave us the opportunity to design a poultry disease management document. Even though the policy change is still in the development process, I feel very confident that we are heading in the right direction."

## IMPROVING COLLABORATION IN MAINSTREAMING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND NUTRITION

On February 15-17, 2018 BENEFIT Partnership conducted a three-day training on gender and nutrition. The training was organized by three of the four BENEFIT Partnership programs (CASCAPE, ISSD and SBN), to share experiences and identify areas of collaboration in their respective planning process. Over 20 participants from BENEFIT and cluster offices gathered to discuss gender mainstreaming in research, nutrition situation in Ethiopia, and review lessons learned from labour saving technologies trials and home gardening reports to identify approaches that should be actively taken in 2018 planning.

At the end of the training, lessons learned from ISSD training was translated into actionable activities for CASCAPE, identified potential approaches that could lead to effective nutrition and economic empowerment, and agreed to develop a BENEFIT wide SBCC (Social and Behavioural Change Communication) strategy for malnutrition.

The training that was funded by BENEFIT-CASCAPE was led by four Gender and Nutrition Experts – 2 from WUR/CDI and Gender and Nutrition focal persons from BENEFIT PCU (Program Coordinating Unit) and CASCAPE in Ethiopia.



**Dr. Geremew Terefe,**  
**BENEFIT-SBN Programme Manager**

"Coming under the BENEFIT umbrella got us closer to policy makers and gave us an opportunity to work at national level. **The regular meetings we had been having with the ministers helped us solve problems related to sesame production, especially on marketing and financial provision areas.** Even though SBN effort for policy reform started five years ago, the policy change that focused on better sesame marketing in ECX (Ethiopia Commodity Exchange) happened very recently. (date) This happened under the BENEFIT umbrella with well-coordinated effort of farmers, traders, MoALR, and Ministry of Finance and dedicated SBN staff.

In the new policy, the amount of produce farmers are expected to bring to ECX for marketing was reduced from 50 quintals to 10 quintals. Previously, only large scale farmers and traders who bought from the small scale farmers benefited from using ECX. This policy change gives small scale farmers an opportunity to benefit from direct sells.

In relation to sample size requirement, previously sample size taken was more than ten kilos, but now it is a kilo per lot. Sampling was done by unloading all quintals from vehicles, which added loading and unloading fee to the farmers. But now, sample is taken while the product is on the truck/car. In addition, you can keep your truck in the ECX compound, until the market sale price rises. In the previous policy, once a farmer had brought his / her products to ECX market centre, he was given 30 days to sell it even if it is at low price, and he /she was not allowed to remove it from ECX compound. On the contrary, now if a farmer doesn't want to sell his / her produce, he / she can take it back any time. In addition, another change is that each commercial farmer can process and pack his / her products for export.

These are few changes and the effect is already being seen through the increase in farmers' income, and increased farmers negotiation power where they can store and sell at any time at ECX. This is a great change. In addition, the prime minister put new directives to improve financial provision and measures are underway to implement these procedures.



## **BENEFIT-CASCAPE & ISSD COLLABORATION FOR HOME GARDEN INTERVENTION IN ETHIOPIA**

BENEFIT-ISSD and BENEFIT-CASCAPE are collaborating to facilitate home gardening intervention in CASCAPE areas where vegetable home gardens are being promoted. ISSD has the potential to support CASCAPE with the methodology and training necessary to identify local sources for vegetable seeds and support in addressing potential constraints for farmers in sourcing those seeds.

On February 15-17, 2018, a workshop was organized by BENEFIT-CASCAPE to share experiences and identify areas of collaboration in their respective planning process as well as to identify approaches that should be actively taken up in 2018 planning. The participants discussed about mainstreaming gender and nutrition in agricultural research and extension, linkages of gender and nutrition and use labour saving technologies to promote gender equality and food security.



## **BENEFIT-REALISE (REALIZING AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOOD SECURITY IN ETHIOPIA): NEW BENEFIT PROGRAMME REACHING THE CHRONIC FOOD INSECURE FARMERS IN ETHIOPIA**

Leveraging the last 7-8 years experiences of BENEFIT-CASCAPE and BENEFIT-ISSD Ethiopia projects, BENEFIT launched a new program to reach the chronic food insecure covered by the Ethiopia Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) woredas.

The three-year project, aims to contribute to sustainable livelihoods through the introduction of improved farming practices, innovations and institutional alignment, which are currently missing in the PSNP interventions. The programme will cover 60 woredas in four regional states (Amhara, Tigray, Oromia and SNNPR) of Ethiopia.

### **Programme goal**

Enhanced organizational and institutional capacities for validating, adapting and scaling best fit practices for small holder agriculture for increasing productivity and thus improving sustainable livelihoods in chronically food insecure woredas.

### **Programme outcomes**

- Developed best fit practices that meet expressed needs and have the potential to contribute to increased productivity and resilience are available for scaling in selected PSNP Woredas;
- Increased availability, timely delivery and use of quality seed of new, improved, and/or farmer preferred varieties through diverse channels;
- Enhanced human, organizational and institutional capacities for matching, adapting, validating and scaling best fit practices; and
- A conducive enabling environment exists for the institutionalisation of evidence based system innovations.

## **BENEFIT Partnership -**

BENEFIT-Partnership to promote food production, income and trade aims to improve sustainable food, income and trade among rural households in Ethiopia. BENEFIT unites five programmes: the Integrated Seed Sector Development in Ethiopia (ISSD Ethiopia), the Capacity building for Scaling up of evidence-based best Practices in agricultural production (CASCAPE), REALISE (Realizing Agricultural Livelihood Security in Ethiopia), the Ethiopia-Netherlands Trade Facility for Agribusiness (ENTAG) and the Sesame Business Network (SBN) support project .

[www.benefitethiopia.org](http://www.benefitethiopia.org)

## LEVERAGING OPPORTUNITIES TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN SEED PRODUCER COOPERATIVES (SPCs)

**One of BENEFIT-ISSD's initiatives focus on identifying and leveraging opportunities to increase women membership and leadership in seed producing businesses, through trainings, coaching, technical and financial support.**

In Ethiopia, the primary objective of SPCs is to produce farmer preferred seed varieties to significantly increase seed availability and quality, resulting in higher yields and incomes for both men and women farmers. However, in most cases, women are marginalized from participating and benefiting from these opportunities. The followings are highlights of interventions and successes achieved through continuous trainings, coaching, technical and financial support. Overall, ISSD supports over 150 SPCs, 50 directly and 100 SPCs through partners.

The initiative in Amhara region started in 2017 with a quick survey on 28 SPCs to better understand the existing gender inequalities in membership and leadership position. The study conducted by ISSD in collaboration with CASCAPE showed that 12% of SPCs members are women and from them only 18% participate in seed production. And women participation in leadership position was at 11%. To improve the participation and leadership of women, ISSD provided trainings on gender and nutrition concepts, mainstreaming gender and nutrition in SPCs annual plan and including women in the decision making process for over 50 SPC members, scaling partners, district level government officials and cooperative experts. In addition, ISSD took measures to ensure women membership and leadership gets due consideration before grants are allocated to SPCs.

In Tigray Region, there are over 80 women in five SPCs established by ISSD technical and financial support in collaboration with Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development (BoARD). The progress and successes achieved by women since their involvement in seed production was recently shared in the regional radio program of Mekelle University aired on VORT. Seven women were randomly selected to share their experience in seed production, marketing and membership obligation.



"The trainings on the importance of business plan for SPCs, market analysis, principles, strategy, opportunities and linkages helped us to analyze the market situation and make better decisions. Due to these multi-disciplinary trainings we learned how to become better seed producers and contribute to the success of our SPCs."

Biri Zebasil is deputy chairperson of Limat SPC found at Hintset sub district, wereda Asgede-Tsimbla, northwestern zone of Tigray regional state.

The gender assessment conducted in Oromia region showed that women membership is far less than that of men, even though women play a key role in seed cleaning and sowing (row planting). Cultural taboos are major factors for women's less participation. To address these issues, ISSD facilitated linkage to obtain seed cleaning machine and seed thresher machine and revised criteria for women membership to encourage women become members and leaders of their SPC. For example, in Moti SPC in West Showa Zone of Oromia Regional State, women registration fee was reduced to increase the number of women's participation in the SPC.



"The training helped us to systematically involve both male and female farmers in variety selection. It also gave us a general overview of what gender mainstreaming is and how to implement it in crowdsourcing and PVS (Participatory Variety Selection). Now we have the skill to empower rural women to fully engage in

the agricultural sector. We are committed to directly implement the training by equally involving women farmers in the Farmer Training Centers (FTCs), to increase production and productivity and to ultimately ensure food security."

Asnakech W/Rufael is a Gender Expert at Halaba Woreda Agriculture and Natural Resource Office.

### FIVE TECHNICAL NOTES DEVELOPED

ISSD Technical Note 1 – Promoting Integrated Seed Sector Development

ISSD Technical Note 2 - Seed Systems Analysis

ISSD Technical Note 3 - Seed Value Chain Analysis

ISSD Technical Note 4 - Seed Interventions Landscape Analysis

ISSD Technical Note 5 - Seed Enabling Environment Analysis

<https://issdethiopia.org/category/technical-notes/>

### BENEFIT- ISSD Programme

The objective of the ISSD is to strengthen the development of a vibrant, commercial and pluralistic seed sector in Ethiopia. Instead of a linear approach, it aims to enhance pluralism by matching food and seed security.

[www.issdethiopia.org](http://www.issdethiopia.org)



## STRENGTHENING EARLY GENERATION SEED (EGS) SYSTEM IN ETHIOPIA

**A sustainable and demand driven EGS production and supply system is needed to improve access and availability of improved seed and close critical gaps that is limiting certified seed production.**

In response to a special request from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Resources (MoALR) to facilitate the establishment of a national Early Generation Seed (EGS) production and supply system, ISSD has been conducting various activities in collaboration with the Ministry and national and regional research centers.

### EGS production and supply planning for 2018

On Feb 19 & 20, 2018 ISSD conducted a workshop focused on facilitating a demand driven planning for EGS production and supply for 2018 cropping season. Four regional 2018 cropping season (Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Tigray) plans were produced and agreement was reached on how to organize EGS marketing to ensure fair allocation of EGS to different producers.

### Contractual EGS production agreement signed in Amhara

Following strategic demand assessment and planning on expected demand for EGS crop and variety type preferred by farmers for the coming two years, ISSD organized a workshop to facilitate a signing of a contractual EGS production agreement among seed producers, research institutes, unions and buyers. The plan was approved by Amhara seed unit and core group and the signing of the agreement was mediated by Bureau of Agriculture (BoA).

Fiseha Woldehabet, Head of Regional Bureau of Agriculture said "...the legal and regulatory framework that we are discussing and signing before production is a significant factor in both access and availability of improved seed. This is a good start and the result did not come overnight. The demand assessment done prior to the planning, regional and core group and seed unit involvement and seed producers willingness to accept new approaches and systems is greatly appreciated."

## FARMERS GUIDING SEED VARIETY SELECTION AND DEPLOYMENT

BENEFIT-ISSD Ethiopia facilitates learning about variety suitability and farmers' preferences through participatory methods in testing, validation and promoting.

### Sorghum varieties in Tigray

There is often an assumption that sorghum varieties released in other regions of Ethiopia are not adaptable to Tigray agro-ecologies and hence not preferred by Tigrayan farmers. To test this assumption on suitability, ISSD Ethiopia's Tigray Unit conducted an evaluation of a large number of released sorghum varieties from the Melkasa Agricultural Research Center in Oromia and the Sirinka Agricultural Research Center in Amhara.

These sorghum varieties were tested by 200 Tigrayan farmers (of which 100 were female) through crowdsourcing and Participatory Variety Selection (PVS). The process revealed that some of the released varieties performed well in Tigray. These varieties were hence selected and are now well promoted by many farmers for wider scaling-up and adoption. This shows the need for validation of released varieties in different agro-ecologies in the country.

## BRINGING QUALITY SEED TO MARKET: THE JOURNEY TO BECOMING AN INDEPENDENT SEED BUSINESS

**BENEFIT-ISSD Ethiopia provides a variety of capacity building mechanisms: skill enhancement trainings, organizational system strengthening with the final goal of making SPCs autonomous, market oriented and sustainable entrepreneurs in the seed sector.**



Ato Tesfaye Babiso, Chairperson of Fate Dicha SPC, SNNPR

"Skill training on quality seed production and gender mainstreaming was provided for our members and committee leaders. They advised us to use row planting for our wheat, to properly use fertilizers and to weed and harvest on time. ISSD also provided financial support to build office and purchase office furniture, packaging materials, pallet and seed sack with print of logo of our union. The farmers' skill and awareness has increased that's why productivity increased and our union received Certificates of Competency (COC) from SNNPR Seed Regulatory and Quarantine Authority. In order to get the CoC, we were expected to raise our capital and hire an expert - which we did. The training on leadership and financial management also helped us manage our income."

## STRENGTHENING DEMAND DRIVEN DIRECT SEED MARKETING (DSM)

On February 20 & 21<sup>st</sup> 2018, BENEFIT-ISSD Ethiopia Programme organized a two-day training on in seed production, processing, marketing and distribution for public and private seed producers. The training was relevant to ensure more seeds are produced through DSM, leading to increased use of certified seed and hence decreased seed carry-over. It also was expected to contribute to a well-balanced public seed supply that meets the service demand (as part of its social obligation) and increase its profit margin to stay in business.

The participants learned demand-driven seed producing, marketing and distribution path, demand estimation and promotion, and how to be more effective in giving services and make reasonable profits services. Nineteen (18 male and 1 female) managers and marketing experts, representing Ethiopian Seed Enterprise, Oromia Seed Enterprise, Amhara Seed Enterprise and private seed companies in Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR and Tigray Regional States attended the training.

## BENEFIT-CASCAPE

BENEFIT-CASCAPE was initiated to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders on scaling up of best practices and newly introduce practices for agricultural production. In addition, BENEFIT-CASCAPE is to provide an evidence base for best practices. The approach aims at improving linkages between farmers, NGO's, the private sector, universities, research institutes and policy makers.



## EFFECTIVE LEARNING THROUGH STRATEGIC CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND CASCADING APPROACH

**BENEFIT-CASCAPE recent success in including CASCAPE Training of Trainers (ToTs) in the country's AGP (Agriculture Growth Program) 2019 plan for cascading is a testimony for the wide spread acceptance and trust gained on the value of the programme's approach and trainings provided to development experts.**

Capacity development is an integral part of BENEFIT-CASCAPE programme that focuses on empowering and strengthening the capacity of stakeholders in identifying, validating and disseminating best practices. Within that context, the programme implements various activities to promote new approaches to increase effectiveness of capacity development in the agricultural sector.

### Capacity development based on Training Needs Assessment (TNA)

Studies show, well planned continuous capacity development activities focusing on the frontline extension workers is key to build adequate performing Farmer Training Centers (FTCs) and creating a well performing farming system. In spite of many efforts by the government and various development agents, having a sustained capacity development that transforms the extension service is still a challenge. Using the conventional capacity development method, the country carries out capacity development without assessing critical gaps and limitations on the ground, trainings are planned in silos without due consideration to the government plan, the focus is on quantity and not quality, and do not address the current growing demands of the extension service.

Desalegn H/yesus, CASCAPE Capacity Building Senior Expert at NMPU (National Management Program Unit) explains, "All trainings and capacity development activities have to be need based, rather than just going and giving trainings to experts due to a mere demand of few experts and likes. CASCAPE approach starts with concept note, consultation with key stakeholders, and decision on tools, methodologies and design to use. This is followed by Training Need Assessment (TNA) across the programme implementation areas, four regional states of Ethiopia (Amhara, SNNP, Tigray, and Oromia). Intensive survey was conducted on capacity gaps of extension staffs at the woreda (SMS) and kebele (DAs) levels with the purpose of making all CASCAPE trainings need based. What we assessed was the capacity gaps which hinder extension workers from properly discharging the responsibility they are vested by the government. Capacity development is about addressing the missing link. What knowledge is needed? What is missing? Trainings have to be well planned, implemented and evaluated within training management cycle and monitoring activities are also crucial."

The national synthesis report of the TNA was shared with key stakeholders and process owner at all levels, including AGP and extension officials at federal and woreda levels. Desalegn added, "Priorities are set in consultation with CASCAPE experts across university clusters, woreda level Subject Matter Specialists (SMSs), kebele level Development Agents (DAs) and heads of woreda and kebele offices of agriculture offices. Top, medium and low priority areas were identified focusing on crops, natural resource management, socioeconomics aspects and general topics. Even though training is not new to extension workers, the art of facilitating introduced by CASCAPE that is vital for bridging capacity gaps is a new experience for most and was highly welcomed. Realizing its value, MoALR and Regional Bureau of Agriculture (RBoA) has begun to use findings of our TNA for their capacity development activities."

After the capacity development experts agreed upon a unified action plan, first and second phase ToTs were conducted for the majority of the woreda SMS and few DAs. In addition, cluster experts were given a number of inhouse ToTs as per the top priority areas set. Throughout the process, capacity development experts provided backstopping support to positively influence government's capacity deployment planning and delivery system.

### Ensuring effective cascading and sustainability

To ensure the success and sustainability of this effort and reach the set out target, the programme worked closely with AGP towards successful cascading efforts. Desalegn explained, "In Ethiopian context, cascading ToTs at woreda level, without integrating these ToTs within the government overall plan with proper budget allocation, is not possible. Throughout the intervention, the programme worked closely with Federal AGP Head, AGP Regional Coordinators and woreda level officials to ensure that CASCAPE ToTs get proper attention and budget needed to cascade the ToTs to trainees at the local level through several layers. Therefore, the fact that all CASCAPE ToTs have been added to AGP's 2011 E.C. (2018-2019) plan for cascading, is a big success for the programme."

He ended by saying, "The implementation of the new art of capacity development has begun in all CASCAPE intervention regions and beyond. The change in the training trend is impressive. It is great to see it being institutionalized and our trainings are reaching more experts beyond CASCAPE intervention areas."



## EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGY GENERATION AND DELIVERY

**BENEFIT-CASCAPE is facilitating the strengthening of capacities of current leaders to promote collaboration along the entire agricultural technology generation and delivery - linking agriculture education, research and extension.**

BENEFIT-CASCAPE in collaboration with the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) and Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock Resources (MoALR) organized a one-day high level stakeholders' workshop on "*Effective technology generation and delivery through linking agriculture education, research and extension*", on May 24, 2018 at Bin International Hotel in Debre Zeyit.

More specifically, the workshop objectives were:

- To share the findings of a study on gaps in methods and linkages along technology generation and delivery chain; a study commissioned by CASCAPE
- To establish functional linkages among institutions that are working on agricultural education, research and extension;
- To synthesize key policy and strategic inputs the Ministry's senior leadership team can promote to create demand driven technology generation and delivery and thereby ensure participation of the primary change agents and the farmers in the entire chain.

The workshop was a great success in understanding the existing gaps and develop strategic action plans to promote high impact partnership among the three institutions. At the end, the participants agreed this effort should be led by EIAR focusing on refining the guideline developed, ensure buy-in from MoARL and having people in place who are mandated to work on the linkage. The workshop was jointly organized by EIAR and BENEFIT-CASCAPE.

## USING RECOMMENDATION MAPPING FOR SCALING BEST FIT INNOVATIONS IN ETHIOPIA

BENEFIT-CASCAPE is developing a methodological tool that allows users generate maps that show how and where best fit innovations can be scaled in specific areas. The recommendation domain mapping method is a GIS based multi-criteria evaluation tool that builds on the suitability of each innovation taking biophysical, and socio-economic feasibility aspects into account.

Following the testing of the tool in 2017, a training was provided to capacitate CASCAPE scaling experts (biophysical and socio-economists from two regional centers of excellence (linked to the universities of Addis Ababa and Mekele). The first of the three trainings planned for 2018, was held on May 7-11 on "Mapping CASCAPE innovation recommendation domains. The training was facilitated experts from WUR and GeAgrofia.

## BENEFIT-CASCAPE PUBLICATIONS (January - June 2018)

- **Guideline for Vegetable and Fruit Home Gardening**
- **Best Fit Practices translated into simplified extension manuals for Subject Matter Specialists (SMS), Development Agents (DA) and Farmers**
  - Hudasse Wheat
  - Food Barley
  - Malt Barley
  - Papaya (Maroadol)
- **BENEFIT – CASCAPE Programme M&E Training Manual**

## CHANGING DATA INTO INFORMATION AND INFORMATION INTO WISDOM

**Shifting the mindset of CASCAPE staffs from action oriented effort to pragmatic and systematic engagement that showcase CASCAPE interventions.**

BENEFIT-CASCAPE held a Data Analysis and Synthesis Workshop on April 16-19/2018 to review three sets of data collected in CASCAPE phase I and II. The participants learned steps towards assessing data quality, cross fertilization, and how to interpret and transfer data collected into a stories that helps to gain insight.

The training was the first of three trainings planned for 2018-2019 with the aim of turning data into information and information into wisdom.



## ADDRESSING TRADE BARRIERS LEVIED BY INDIA AND PAKISTAN: THE CASE OF METHYL BROMIDE

**To prevent a dramatic export cut and loss of foreign currency earning in the country, BENEFIT-ENTAG Legume Business Platform facilitated a meeting to find strategic solutions to resolve the trade barrier levied by India and Pakistan.**

One of BENEFIT-ENTAG's recent interventions focused on facilitating immediate diplomacy effort to resolve the trade barrier levied by India and Pakistan. The recent decision by the two countries to impose methyl boromide fumigation requirement, increase import tariff, and ban import due to fungicide infestation detection needed immediate attention to prevent a dramatic export cut and loss of foreign currency earning in the country. To resolve these complex issues, ENTAG Legume Business Platform held a consultative meeting on 31st of March where high level government officials and sector participants discussed strategic intervention to address the issue.

India and Pakistan being the second and third major importers of Ethiopian legumes respectively, the recent decision (2017) by India to impose 60% import tariff and mandatory Methyl Bromide fumigation on pulses imported from Ethiopia were a huge setbacks to the government and private exporters, impacting the intermediate and long-term trade relation between the two countries. In addition, Pakistan decision to ban Red Kidney bean import due to detection of Fusarium Clamidosporum is discouraging the formal trade and impacting cross-border trade.

Methyl bromide is most often used to fumigate agricultural commodities against insects, termites, rodents, weeds, and soil-borne diseases, and has been banned or restricted by many countries because of its distraction to the atmosphere's ozone layer. Ethiopia is one of the countries that signed the Montreal Protocol that limits the use of methyl bromide. Therefore, the fact that India is now only accepting cargoes fumigated for pests with methyl bromide is a complex problem.

The consultative meeting that was held on March 31<sup>st</sup> looked at the two countries barriers, what has been done so far and find possible solution to address the issue. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Resources (MoALR), Ambassador of Pakistan, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, a representative from Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate, Ministry of Trade, ENTAG Legume Business Platform task force members, Oilseeds and Spices Processors and Exporters Association (EPOSPEA) and International Trade Center - Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa (ITC-SITA) representatives.

At the meeting, non-ozone depletion alternatives and use of chemical under controlled set-up and the possibility of working with India in capacity building and building infrastructure was discussed. It was also noted that the government is communicating with Pakistan assuring the quarantine system of the country and to open up the market.

At the end, a task-force was formed to frame the challenges of the trade barriers and bring it to the attention of H.E. Minister of Trade. Accordingly, a concept paper was developed and shared to the task force. ENTAG Legume Business Platform participants together with EPOSPEA agreed to take ownership and drive for the case.

The meeting was also a great opportunity to discuss other trade barriers including cost of logistics, Maximum Residual Limit (MRL) by EU market and laboratory facility that assures that MRL, quality of production, illegal border trade and its price, and institution that embraces the sub-sector (pulse) etc.

---

## FINANCIAL PRODUCT PROFILING - INSIGHTS INTO POTENTIAL INVESTMENT OPTIONS IN ETHIOPIA

There were over 350 companies who have accessed ENTAG services in the last two years. BENEFIT-ENTAG services are inclusive for a wide range of businesses. International investors and large local companies often seek front desk service in business landscape, market linkage and low-hanging business opportunities. Small and medium sized Ethiopian companies usually look for support to access finance, market and technology. Most of these companies have been in business for a few years and have seen the potential opportunities, but either lack the resources or the capacity to seize those opportunities. In particular, the fast growing, medium size and emerging companies prioritized lack of finance as critical bottleneck. As such, member companies have sought documents on available financial products and instruments to gain insights into potential investment options.

In response, BENEFIT-ENTAG developed a Financial Product Profiling document covering four types of financing schemes: grant, equity, loan and technical assistance and four levels of grants categories: national, regional, continental and international.

---

## INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG GRADUATES

BENEFIT-ENTAG launched an internship program to provide interns with a meaningful experience that enhances their employability and skills within agribusiness. The project also helps the Host Companies to select and test potential full-time employees without a permanent commitment. The program involves 150 BSc and MSc graduates from different universities in the country in agribusiness, horticulture and other agricultural disciplines.

In addition to playing a facilitation role to enhance the relationship between the two parties, the program provides . Intern's subsistence cost (3000birr) during their internship period (4 months). Office facilities, on job training and supervision is provided by a Host Company.

In the last few months a guideline to run the internship program was developed and the first 20 students selected are expected to start at the beginning of August 2018.

Graduates complying with the requirements can only apply online by completing "Interns' Application Form" on [www.entag.org](http://www.entag.org) while agribusiness companies interested in hosting interns can also apply on line by completing 'Host Companies' registration form'.

Interns' placement will take place continuously from MARCH 1, 2018 TO JULY 30, 2019.





## BENEFIT-ENTAG PLATFORM MEETINGS (JANUARY - JUNE 2018)



### Aquaculture

6th Aquaculture Platform Meeting and Business Tour - on the challenges and opportunities of aquaculture development in the SNNPR.



### Legumes

5th Legumes Sector Platform Meeting - trade negotiation with India and Pakistan; Ethiopian Pulse Council strategic roadmap and aflatoxin related challenges.

4th Soybean Business Platform Meeting - to better understand soybean supply and demand profile, share status of collection, supply and challenges of unions and create trade opportunities.



### Poultry

6th Poultry Sector Platform Meeting - poultry safety regulation and researches towards expansion of private investment in Ethiopia.



### Spices

6th Spices Platform Meeting - aflatoxin challenge in ensuring food safety and quality.

## INVESTING IN INNOVATIONS - 3RD ROUND ENTAG AGRIBUSINESS INNOVATION FUND AWARD

One of the components of BENEFIT-ENTAG focuses on innovation funding with a grant budget of € 0.8 million. The objective of the fund is to promote innovations in various agricultural sub-sectors in Ethiopia that benefit smallholder farmers. The fund, which has been operational since September 2016, provides matching funds for innovative projects, with a maximum grant amount of €25,000 each. Projects that take place in the poultry, aquaculture, legumes, spices, sesame, potato and dairy subsectors are eligible for co-funding.

The first-round innovation fund accepted a total of 136 applicants, out of which 15 projects have been selected for funding. All applicants and selected grantees in this fund are Ethiopian companies working on the eligible sub-sectors. Each beneficiary is required to make matching cash and in-kind contributions equal to or more than the grant fund he/she receives. At least 20% of the contribution is made in cash.

The second round announcement was also opened during August 2017. A total of seven innovative project ideas were finalists of the round, making the total amount of money granted about €169,324. The selected winners are in the process of signing contracts with ENTAG.

Concept note submission for the third round ended on 15 June 2018, and the deadline for submission of proposals for selected concept notes is on 17 August 2018. Preliminary selection was completed and second round selection is in progress.

## BENEFIT-ENTAG Programme

The Ethiopia- Netherlands Trade for Agricultural Growth (ENTAG) Programme has been supporting agribusinesses & entrepreneurs operating in Ethiopia. At impact level, ENTAG aims for improved sustainable food, income, and trade among rural households in Ethiopia. ENTAG Ethiopia's goal is to increase agribusiness productivity, trade and foreign direct investment by strengthening the private sector in working more effectively with smallholders in applying new technologies and accessing finance for investment purposes.

<http://entag.org/>



## SCALING LOAN GUARANTEE TO ALLEVIATE FINANAICAL CONSTRINTS FOR SESAME GROWERS

**BENEFIT-SBN, in collaboration with Agriterra and Cooperative Bank of Oromia (CBO) is implementing financing scheme, reaching more farmers through output marketing loans to unions and cooperatives.**

Accessibility of agricultural finance in Northwest Ethiopia is a critical problem, particularly for sesame growing areas. Most smallholder farmers are trapped in the vicious circle of depending on informal financial resources which increases production cost and minimizes selling prices resulting in cash shortage for next year. Especially during peak agricultural activities, it is difficult for farmers to find alternative cash providers. The formal money lenders like Banks, SACCOs, and MFIs are not actively involved in the sesame sector either because of risk factors or lack of human and financial resources. To overcome this burden, Benefit-SBN, in collaboration with Agriterra and Cooperative Bank of Oromia (CBO), is reaching more farmers implementing a financing scheme through output marketing loans to unions and cooperatives.

Based on a risk-sharing approach, a guarantee fund as partial collateral for the loan provided by CBO was established. Last year, 4 million ETB guarantee fund from Agriterra and Benefit-SBN and roughly 7 million credit fund from CBO was provided to Setit and Metema Unions. For the second year in a row, there were zero defaults. The success of the method and multiple benefits for different stakeholders allows scaling of the scheme including the inclusion of new banks and increasing the amount with CBO. Accordingly, in addition to CBO a new agreement was recently signed with Abay Bank.

In the last six months the programme focused on the followings:

### **2017 Guarantee loan activities reviewed and 2018 plan developed**

On March 10, 2018, BENEFIT-SBN and Agriterra organised a one-day workshop for about 45 participants convened from banks, Farmer Cooperative Unions, Primary Cooperatives and Cooperative Promotion Agency. The workshop was fruitful in terms of evaluating the 2017 performance of the guarantee fund activities, getting valuable input for 2018 planning, and encouraging other banks to participate in the sesame subsector.

It was also successful in bringing the two groups; the money supply and demand side together to discuss the challenges and possibilities for future interventions and for ensuring sustainability.

### **Training on loan management**

BENEFIT-SBN provided a three-day training on loan management for 50 individuals drawn from 10 farmers primary cooperatives on 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2018 in Gondar. The objective of the training was to build the capacity of the primary cooperatives and farmer cooperative union members so that they can properly manage the loan that they receive from Abay Bank.



Mr Mohamed Zaine, Metema Union Board Chairperson said, "The training is given in a very interesting way. This training helps the cooperatives not only in managing the loan that they get from Abay Bank but it also helps them to properly manage their own money in providing loans to their farmers."

## BENEFIT-SBN Progrmme

The Sesame Business Network (SBN) is largely an informal innovation network in northwest Ethiopia that is driven by local entrepreneurs and other stakeholders working in the sesame production and business sector. The vision of the SBN and its Support Project-Benefit-SBN is that stakeholders of the SBN jointly develop more competitive, sustainable and inclusive sesame value chains, for farmers income improvement and spill-over effect.

<http://sbnethiopia.org/>



## PROMOTING MARKET ORIENTED SESAME PRODUCTION

In relation to sesame and world trend, Ethiopia is the prime raw sesame exporter in the world. Western and north western part of Tigray especially Humera area makes Ethiopia known as raw sesame exporter in the Far East countries. To increase export standard sesame production, BENEFIT-SBN in partnership with other programmes organized Training of Trainers (ToTs) on production, management and marketing of sesame for agricultural researchers from May 28-30, 2018.

About 22 researchers from Humera and Shire Maytsebri agricultural research centers found on the sesame potential areas took the ToTs organized by BENEFIT projects [ISSD, CASCAPE & SBN]. The ToT was successful in bringing sesame researchers into one thematic research consensus in the sesame production, marketing and management around western and north western zones of Tigray.

The training was prepared to fill the gaps observed in the sesame production sector, to distinguish sesame management systems and to produce market oriented sesame production so as to compete in the sesame export arena. The major topics covered included integrated soil fertility management and soil nutrient balances; quality seed production in sesame; QUEFTS application (fertilizer recommendation); integrated pest management in sesame; storage management and pest control in sesame; and grain and seed sesame marketing etc.



Desale Gebretsadik, a socio-economist by profession and an associate researcher at Shire-Maytsebri Agricultural Research Center (SMARC) said "I learned about the national and international sesame market trend; export and import volume; how to plan, how much and when to produce; where to sale; determining factors on sesame price and how these factors could be addressed in the Ethiopian context; new techniques of seed production and integrated storage management practices; soil fertility and how nutrients flow and how they could be balanced etc.

"I can use these lessons to improve price of sesame and other main crops produced and provide consulting and training to producers on how to plan based on targeted buyer and available market. I will also give due consideration to the impact of PHL and storage management practices and soil nutrients balance to increase production efficiency and profitability.

"Generally, all the sessions impressed me, because they are part and parcel of the value chain in every commodity as that commodity incorporates inputs (seed), production, storage and marketing. So, for obtaining demandable quality product it is mandatory to use quality seed and store it in the recommended standards. If the consumer or the buyer is satisfied with the quality of the produce, he or she will be willing to pay higher price which means higher profit.

## USING TECHNOLOGY TOWARDS MODERNIZING THE SESAME SUB-SECTOR

### Piloting digital information management system

BENEFIT-SBN is piloting two digital data systems, Farmforce, and eProd, that are specifically developed to manage small-holder farmers in remote areas towards building a digital management information system in the sesame sector of Northwest Ethiopia. Both systems work with a mobile application to collect field level data including GPS locations. The collected data will be shared with a desktop application that allows extensive data analyses and can generate several reports.

To coordinate this activity, the programme works together with the Sesame Open project, focusing on organic sesame, in which each program takes the lead in testing one of the systems.

All stakeholders of the sector: Bureau of Agriculture (BoA), Cooperative Promotion Office (CPO), unions, and cooperatives, are involved to build a sector-wide information management system that meets their needs. A database with a profile of all sesame farmers in the area allows the government to review aggregated data on different levels, estimate yields, provide farmer training and easily coordinate public services such as weather forecasting. For unions and cooperatives, the information management system replaces the paper-based member administration. This allows frequent updates of changes in information and registering sesame transactions and loan management activities.



### Database management training

To improve skills in data-handling and processing and support stakeholders establish and maintain their database system BENEFIT-SBN in collaboration with GARC and HuARC organized a two-day database management training for 26 woreda experts drawn from sesame producing woredas. The training held on March 23rd & 24th, 2018 mainly focused on improving data collection, processing and analysing, compiling, storing, reporting and disseminating. Participants exercised the theoretical concepts from the training using the woreda baseline data. 12 computers bought by Benefit-SBN were given to 12 sesame producing woreda.



[www.BENEFITethiopia.org](http://www.BENEFITethiopia.org)

The Bilateral Ethiopia-Netherlands Effort for Food, Income and Trade (BENEFIT) Partnership unites five programmes (ISSD, CASCPAE, REALISE, ENTAG and SBN). It is funded by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is implemented with support from Wageningen University and Research (WUR).

**Dawit Alemu (PhD)**  
BENEFIT Manager, Ethiopia  
[dawitalemu.benefit@gmail.com](mailto:dawitalemu.benefit@gmail.com)

**Irene Koomen (PhD)**  
BENEFIT Coordinator, WUR  
[irene.koomen@wur.nl](mailto:irene.koomen@wur.nl)



<https://issdethiopia.org/>

**Amsalu Ayana Aga (PhD)**  
BENEFIT-ISSD Ethiopia Manager  
[aga.amsaluayana@gmail.com](mailto:aga.amsaluayana@gmail.com)  
+251 91 184 2210

**Gareth Borman**  
BENEFIT-ISSD Ethiopia Coordinator  
Centre for Development Innovation, WUR  
E-mail [gareth.borman@wur.nl](mailto:gareth.borman@wur.nl)  
Tel. +31 (0)317 486863



<https://www.cascape-benefit.info/>

**Eyasu Elias (PhD)**  
BENEFIT-CASCAPE Manager  
[eyuelias@gmail.com](mailto:eyuelias@gmail.com)  
+251 91 121 6258

**Eric Smaling (Prof.)**  
BENEFIT-CASCAPE Coordinator  
[eric.smaling@wur.nl](mailto:eric.smaling@wur.nl)  
+31-317-485277



<http://entag.org/>

**Gertjan Becx**  
BENEFIT-ENTAG Manager  
[gertjan.becx@gmail.com](mailto:gertjan.becx@gmail.com)  
+251 91 266 0725

**Monika Sopov**  
BENEFIT-ENTAG Coordinator  
[Monika.sopov@wur.nl](mailto:Monika.sopov@wur.nl)  
+31 317 481406



<http://sbnethiopia.org/>

**Geremew Terefe (PhD)**  
BENEFIT-SBN Manager  
[geremew.sbncoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:geremew.sbncoordinator@gmail.com)  
+251 91 111 3897

**Ted Schrader**  
BENEFIT-SBN Coordinator  
[ted.schrader@wur.nl](mailto:ted.schrader@wur.nl)  
+31 623 205 292

## BENEFIT -REALISE

**Tewodros Tefera (PhD)**  
BENEFIT-REALISE Manager  
[teferatewodros@yahoo.com](mailto:teferatewodros@yahoo.com)  
+251 92 162 8030

**Remko Vonk**  
BENEFIT-REALISE Coordinator  
[remko.vonk@wur.nl](mailto:remko.vonk@wur.nl)  
+31 645 204 837

### BENEFIT Partnership Address

SAN Building 2nd Floor  
Square Bisarata Gebriel  
Woreda 03, Kebele 05  
Nifas Silk Laphto Subcity

### For more information:

[info@benefitethiopia.org](mailto:info@benefitethiopia.org) or  
+251 911629149  
[www.benefitethiopia.org](http://www.benefitethiopia.org)

Selome Kebede  
BENEFIT Senior Communication Officer  
[Selome.benefit@gmail.com](mailto:Selome.benefit@gmail.com)