



NTFP

South-West Ethiopia

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**Rural Poverty Reduction
and Sustainable Forest Management and Protection through the
Development of Non-timber Products and Community Institutions
in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State.**

**SUMMARY FINAL REPORT
8th July 2003 – 7th July 2007**



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Abbreviations

ARDB	Agricultural and Rural Development Bureau
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DA	Development Agent
EC	European Commission
EWNRA	Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resource Association
FLO	Fair Trade Labeling Organisation
GAD	Gender and Development
HU	Huddersfield University
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
JU	Jimma University
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
PAB	Project Advisory Board
PC	Project Co-ordinator
PCU	Project Co-ordination Unit
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
PMC	Project Management Committee
RDCO	Rural Development Coordination Office
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Action
WPO	<i>Woreda</i> Project Officers
WU	Wageningen University

1. INTRODUCTION

This report covers the four years of operation (July 2003 to July 2007) of an intervention which was exploring the role of non-timber forest products (NTPF) in poverty reduction and forest protection. The project was located in Bench-Maji, Sheka and Kafa zones in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State (SNNPRS) in the south-west part of Ethiopia.

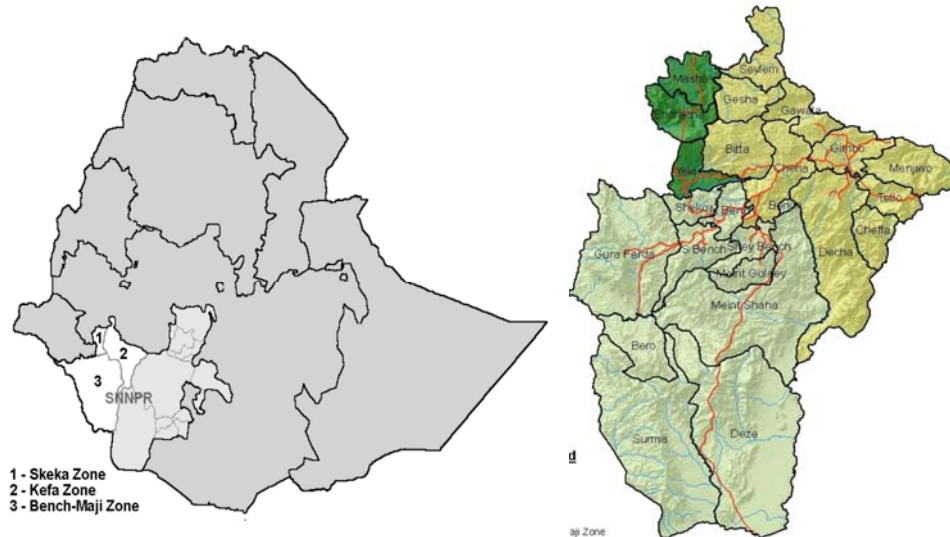


Figure 1: Project Intervention Area

The project had two main purposes:

1. To increase local institutional capacities for improved NTPF use and sustainable forest management, and
2. To promote sustainable utilization and trading of NTFPs as well as sustainable management of forest and land resources, for the benefit of local communities and with their active participation.

The project had a “research and development” oriented approach and included a focus on the poor, especially women and land-short households, who often are traditionally engaged in the use of NTFPs (especially honey, forest coffee and spices) to support their livelihoods and reduce poverty. In particular, with the matching fund support, the project sought to develop a gender-sensitive approach to NTPF development, and to enhance the role of NTFPs in improving food security in the project area.

The project operated in a participatory manner, involving all stakeholders in different forums for discussing the planning, progress and evaluation of project activities. Local government institutions, especially the RDCOs at *woreda* level, were key partners for the project, while community institutions, CBOs such as PFM groups and farmer trading groups, as well as local traders, were also key stakeholders with whom the project interacted. The project sought to enhance the capacity of these institutions and persons to

support, and be involved in, NTFP production, use and trade, as well as the sustainable management of forest and other natural resources. The sustainable management of forest and land resources was promoted in the light of increased NTFP-production, through technical support and enhancement of the role of forest-dependent households and community institutions in the management of these resources.

The management structure for the project involved a partnership of five organisations, two in Ethiopia and three in the European Union. These were Huddersfield University (HU), Jimma University (JU), Ethio-Wetlands and Natural Resources Association (EWNRA), Sustainable Livelihood Action (SLA), and Wageningen University (WU). In addition, in the project area, the Rural Development Coordination Offices (RDCOs) of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State (SNNPRS) were associate partners. The first five organizations were the implementing partners, in terms of the EC contract for the project grant, and formed the Project Management Committee (PMC). This was responsible for guiding the project's strategy, policy and operation, in such a way that the project objectives were met through the implementation of its annual work-plans. The PMC met three or four times a year. Huddersfield University, based in UK, was the contractor for the project.

The Project Coordinator (PC) and the technical and administrative staff, based at the Mizan Teferi and Masha field offices, formed the Project Coordination Unit (PCU). With support from the Technical Advisors, provided by Sustainable Livelihood Action, Huddersfield University, Wageningen University and EWNRA, the PCU was responsible for supervising all field activities, implementing specific field activities, and preparing research and strategy papers, annual work-plans, budgets and reports which were reviewed and approved by the PMC. The PC also served as the secretary of the PMC and participated in the PMC meetings.

A Project Advisory Board (PAB) was established, in which all local stakeholders involved in the project were represented. This Board included the *Woreda* Administrators and heads of RDCOs in the five *woredas* and three zones where the project operated. The majority of the PAB members were representatives of the communities where the project was operating. New stakeholders were added to the PAB, as they became involved in project activities. The PAB met once a year to evaluate progress and provide advice to the PMC and PCU on project implementation and any required changes or specific emphasis needed to meet the goals of the project.

The project was funded primarily by the European Commission (80%), with matching funds provided by the Norwegian Embassy and CIDA's Tsion Dessie Memorial Gender Fund in Addis Ababa and by two of the project partners, Jimma University and Wageningen University.

The project operations in the field were based on two field offices, the main one in Mizan Teferi and a sub office Masha. These were fully operational from November 2003. In addition desks were obtained for the *Woreda* Project Officers (WPO)s in their *woredas* after the appointment of these staff in early 2006. Intervention in the *woredas* of Masha, Anderacha and Gesha was coordinated from the branch office in Masha, whereas the activities in Sheko and Bench *woredas* were carried out from the Mizan office.

2. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AREAS

The project worked in Bench-Maji, Kefa and Sheka Zones in the south-western part of Ethiopia. Within these zones five *woredas* (districts) were selected in Year I as focal areas for project intervention. Within the five *woredas*, the project identified 10 *kebeles* (formerly Peasant Associations) for specific field intervention, and these included a total of 51 communities (*gots*) (45 with direct implementation and 6 through coops). The areas where activities were undertaken are given in Table 1, below. In addition, through the coffee certification work with the Aman and Gizmeret cooperatives the project had impacts in several other *kebeles*.

Table 1: Project Intervention Woredas, Kebeles, Gots and Multi-purpose Cooperatives

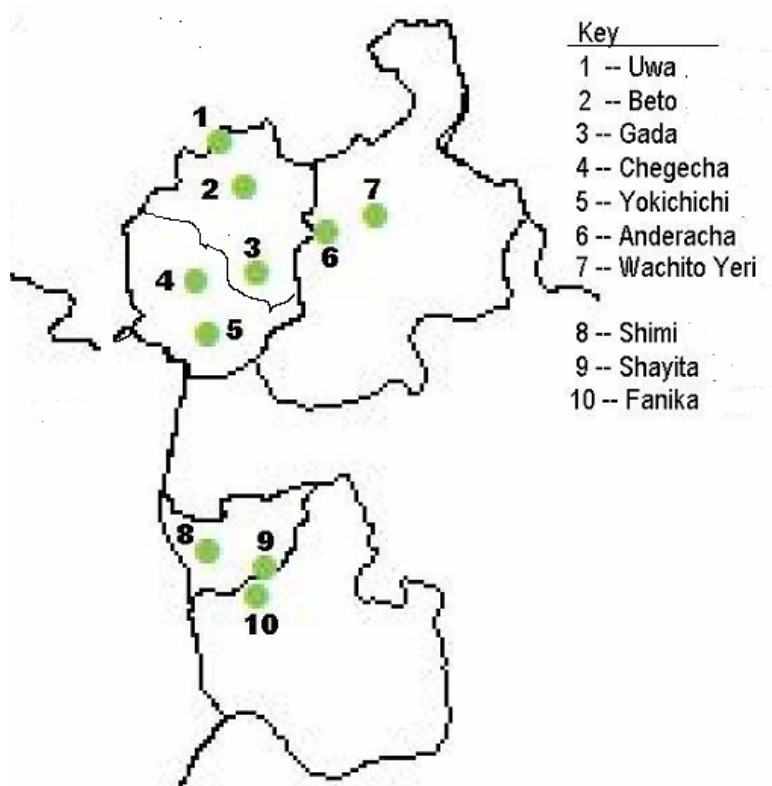
Zone	Woreda	Kebele	Gots	Multi-purpose Cooperatives
Sheka	Masha	Beto	4	Techito Ganobai
		Uwa	4	
	Anderache	Gadda	1	
		Yokochichi	4	Teramed Wedefit
		Chegecha	4	Gomiti
Kafa	Gesha	Anderacha	4	Anderache Wachito Yeri (beekeeping)
		Wachito Yeri	4	
Bench Maji	Sheko	Shimi	8	Gizmeret Mehal Sheko Shimi
		Shayta	3	
	Bench	Fanika	7	Kite Aman

The selection of the areas for field implementation involved a process of field assessment and the use of specific criteria. During the first year an assessment was made of the *woredas* in the three zones the project was required to operate in. Based on this survey, and the Project document, a set of criteria was elaborated which permitted the selection of the most appropriate areas for intervention. According to these criteria and in coordination with the Rural Development Coordination Offices in the three zones, a pre-selection of six *woredas* was made as potential focal areas for intervention. After this assessment in the field and discussions with government staff from each of the *woredas*, the project team suggested focusing on five *woredas* for intervention. The assessment was agreed during the second PMC meeting (November 2003) and the selection of focal project areas formalized. Agreements were reached on this selection with the respective zonal and *woreda* government administrations.

The *kebele* was the target unit for communication, participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation of activities at field level and for CBO development for trading purposes. All communities (*gots*) were represented in the planning and monitoring meetings. In this local planning process, community members selected interested farmers, groups and/or communities (*gots*) for participation in different project activities. The *got* level was used for PFM work and *kebeles* for honey marketing. Additionally, the existing primary cooperatives, which operate at an inter-*kebele* level, were considered as targets for limited

CBO strengthening activities and coffee certification, although the later also included the Bench Maji and Kaffa Cooperative Unions for trade of certified coffee.

Figure 2: Intervention *kebeles*



3. ADAPTIVE PLANNING

The Project took an adaptive approach to implementation. The reality on the ground is always evolving and growing understanding of the situation led to several decisions to adjust the project's way of operating and its spatial focus. The first of these concerned the area of operations.

Although originally the project intervention was supposed to take place in 27 communities distributed in a total of 9 *woredas* from three zones, the project team reduced the number of *woredas* to five (while maintaining the 27 communities). This decision was made after the initial assessment of the project area and recognition of the size of the area, accessibility, communication problems, on-going activities by other projects and the limitations of project human and financial resources. It was felt that this adjustment was needed in order for the project to have greater impact through more concentrated activities.

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) was another factor which led to major adjustments in operational arrangement. This Review took place in October 2005. Its major findings were as follows:

- Progress: Project progress is generally good, although some components are lagging behind for which additional staff are required.
- Relevance: The Project objectives and purposes remain relevant and are in line with zone and *woreda* concerns and plans, the region's rural development strategy, and the community concerns over loss of access to forest. The matching funding related to the gender component is fully relevant and constitutes an indispensable complement of the EU-approved project.
- Effectiveness: The structure of Project is found to effectively facilitate the incorporation of the views of both Project staff and Project implementing partners. Most activities have been effective, but improvements are needed (follow-up of trials and PFM planning teams, marketing activities at the national level, cooperative development training and RDCO training in PFM.)
- Efficiency: The field activities have been implemented with a high degree of efficiency. Where there is less efficiency this has been largely due to shortage of staff, time and the extent of the intervention area.
- Sustainability: The two-pronged approach, of working closely with GO offices and establishing local CBOs and building their capacities, should in the long run prove appropriate for the sustainability of the Project outcomes.
- Impact: To ensure impact of the Project's outcomes, communication with the regional Agricultural and Rural Development Bureau (ARDB) needs to be improved, so that the Project's experiences are considered in policy reviews concerning natural resources at regional and also national levels.

The general recommendations of the MTR were the following:

- Increase project staff, with new staff to be stationed at the *Woreda* level as facilitators to support implementation of field activities.
- Maintain the close collaboration with RDCOs, especially at *woreda* level

- Build strong linkages with the Government Authorities at Regional and National levels to start dissemination of project findings and ensure that local experiences will contribute to policy reviews regarding natural resources at these levels.
- Prioritise the quality of interventions instead of quantity; where needed a scale down of activities should be considered
- Identify outcome indicators to complement the progress/output indicators of the project logical framework to facilitate the final review of the project
- The need for reinforcement of ongoing activities to work towards sustainability and up-scaling of activities
- A second phase is needed for consolidation and institutionalization of the project approach

An exhaustive analysis of the MTR report was made by the project team, in order to identify the appropriate follow-up activities for responding in the most effective way to the recommendations of the Review Team. This led to the project making the following adjustments in its operations:

- Creation of new posts for *Woreda* Facilitators (now WPOs) based in the *woreda* headquarters,
- Creation of a new post for a marketing liaison officer in Addis Ababa,
- Increased liaison with government, especially at the regional level with a view to contributing to policy development,
- Improved data collection, analysis, documentation,
- Increased use of participatory monitoring,
- Increase in number of exposure/exchange visits,
- Development of materials for dissemination and advocacy at different levels,
- Production of high quality NTFPs to match favourable market requirements,
- Registration and legalization of CBO's,
- Development of forest management plans and registration of PFM areas as collective forest land,
- Consolidation of long-term trade links,
- Re-invigoration of implementation of the gender strategy,
- Focus of training at GO, CBO and farmer's level towards sustainability and up-scaling of project activities.

A Final Evaluation was undertaken at the end of the four years of project operations. These findings are included in the rest of this report when outcomes are considered and incorporated through quotations in the conclusions. The lessons from the Final Evaluation have been used in the development of a second phase for this project which will scale-up the models of NTFP development and PFM activities developed in the phase reported here so that the benefits may reach a wider population in the forests of the south-west of Ethiopia.

4. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS BY YEAR

The Project had a range of different emphases in its activities over the four years. Year I activities were mainly oriented towards project set up, participatory assessment of the field situation, as well as complementary studies. Year II activities saw implementation of training and interventions in NTFP production and marketing, especially honey production and marketing, as well as spice trials. Year III saw a major scaling-up of activities with the additional staff, especially Woreda Project Officers (Facilitators), employed following the MTR recommendations. There was much progress in the PFM area and the first coffee certification achieved, as well as studies on CBO legalization. Year IV saw emphasis on registration of the PFM and marketing groups and dissemination of the project findings. Some further details are provided below.

The main activities during Year I included:

- establishment of the project's infrastructure and management structure,
- initial field assessment and selection of focal areas for intervention,
- training of project and government staff in participatory methods,
- undertaking PRA *kebele* studies and in-depth subject studies, and
- strategic and operational planning with stakeholder involvement.

The main activities during Year II included:

- Assessment on different technical and social aspects of NTFP development,
- Training of trainers for government staff in aspects of honey production/processing, spice production, cooperative development, participatory forest management, gender and development, and participatory planning and monitoring,
- Awareness raising of local government and community leaders on participatory forest management (PFM), and gender and development,
- Training of Cooperative and other CBO leaders on leadership and management issues for CBO development,
- Development and dissemination of strategic documents, training materials and extension materials,
- Establishment of a participatory planning, monitoring, and evaluation system,
- Training of farmers, men and women, in aspects of honey production/processing, spice production, cooperative development, participatory forest management, gender and development, participatory planning and monitoring,
- Participatory research through on-farm trials for honey and spice production,
- Establishment and support of *kebele* level CBO's for honey processing and trading,
- Identification and operation of new trade links for beekeeping products,
- Identification of opportunities for coffee certification, and
- Initial actions in the PFM planning process in selected areas.

The main highlights during Year III included:

- Mid-Term Review and associated adjustment of project activities and recruitment of four additional staff at *woreda* level,
- Strengthened relations with the Regional level technical staff and zonal technical and administrative staff through a field-oriented workshop in April 2006 with a view to developing better links as a basis for policy discussions,

- Certification of coffee from Aman and Gizmeret coops at Utz Kapeh (responsibly produced) and organic standards,
- Achieved honey marketing for second year via Bezamar with technical input from this company prior to harvesting,
- Progressed PFM through most stages in all communities, and all stages in two communities - the latter obtained agreements with the local RDCO for implementation,
- Further developed skills amongst farmers and community groups in a range of NTFP production activities, especially honey production through trials and training, and spices through pilot plantings and training, and in organizational skills,
- Strengthened local community based groups involved with honey production and trade and PFM, and also coops involved in coffee trade,
- Increased networking and dissemination of project information,
- Undertook specific studies to assist in project implementation, especially on CBO legalization, quality of honey, mapping for PFM, valuation of NTFP by local communities, policy and practice on forest management, biodiversity and payment for environmental services,
- Training for GO staff and CBO leaders in a variety of skills, and
- Continued using and developed the participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation system for project management.

In Year IV the major achievements were:

- Widespread consultation (259 persons) on legalisation options for CBOs
- Legalisation of CBOs as PFM Associations (7) and Honey Marketing PLCs (7),
- PFM forest management plan training for GO staff and creation of 7 plans, all of which were approved by the local RDCOs,
- Training for GO staff and Union staff in Competence Based Economy for Formation of Enterprises,
- Training of GO staff and then CBOs in Development Education and Leadership Team in Action (DELTA) and also in Conflict Management.
- Locally adapted training materials for PFM and bee keeping (latter in Amharic) developed,
- Additional trading linkage for honey established with Tutu and her Family PLC,
- Final dissemination workshops at Yirgalem (110 participants), Mizan Teferi (67 participants) and Masha (143 participants),
- Distribution of policy briefing notes and CD with project materials,

While the project made considerable progress, it must be recognised that not all of the outputs sought were fully achieved or reached on schedule. The reasons for most delays relate to changes in project staff – especially in PFM production and capacity building/gender, high turnover in government staff, political instability after the elections, an underestimation of the time needed to develop activities in the field – especially spice trials and PFM, and the postponing of certain activities which were considered premature – land use dynamics. This experience is understandable, considering the complexity of the integrated approach being followed and the promotion of innovative development issues in an area with a highly differentiated ecological and social environment, with limited local institutional development, and without earlier NGO-interventions.

5. DESCRIPTION OF ACHIEVEMENTS BY EXPECTED RESULTS

As explained in the introduction, the project activities aimed at the achievement of the two project purposes:

- To increase local institutional capacities for improved NTFP use and sustainable forest management, and
- To promote sustainable utilization and trading of NTFP as well as sustainable management of forest and land resources, for the benefit of local communities and with their active participation.

These were to be achieved through nine areas of activity:

1. Project establishment
2. Surveys and research on NTFP utilization and production,
3. Strengthening of GO/NGO institutional capacity for NTFP use / trade and sustainable forest management,
4. Community based institutional development for NTFP use / trade and sustainable forest management,
5. Dissemination of Project findings and lessons,
6. Participatory monitoring and evaluation of activities,
7. Farmers, especially resource poor, involved in NTFP production, and post-harvest handling and processing,
8. Increasing the benefits from NTFP trading to farmers, especially resource poor,
9. Sustainable forest and land management activities at village and farm levels.

For each of these areas a number of specific activities were undertaken and outputs and outcomes sought. This section reports on the activities undertaken to achieve each result.

Purpose 1: To increase local institutional capacities for improved NTFP use and sustainable forest management

Result 1.0: Project Operation

1.0.1 Co-ordination with Project Donors and Project related GO's and NGO's / Projects
A key aspect of the project has been the working relationships developed and maintained with a number of organisations for different reasons:

- EU-Delegation Addis Ababa: for co-ordination of project implementation, with the project benefiting from the decentralization of monitoring functions for projects of the Tropical Forest budget line.
- Matching funding agencies: CIDA and NORAD.
- GO's, NGO's and projects, especially those with related activities in the zones of Kefa, Bench Maji and Sheka. These included:
 - EU-funded Coffee Improvement Programme (CIP IV)
 - SNV – Support to business organisations and their access to markets: Honey and Beeswax Chain Development Programme
 - Utz Kapeh, responsible coffee certification
 - APINEC, PPP project funded by the Dutch PSOM programme (Bonga)

- ATVET in Mizan Teferi (Vocational Training Centre for Agriculture and Natural Resource Management).
- Holeta Research Station on Beekeeping Development
- Tepi Research Centre on Spice Development
- Netherlands-funded Kefa Development Project (KFD - Bonga),
- SOS Community Development, (linked to KFD Bonga)
- FARM Africa/SOS Sahel (Bonga PFM project),
- EARO/Centre for Development Research of Bonn University: CoCe Project – Conservation of Wild Coffee in Ethiopia
- PPP project on wild forest coffee marketing,
- Cooperative Unions from Bench Maji and Kafa Zones
- Networks:
 - PFM network
 - Ethiopian Coffee Forest Forum (ECFF)
 - Melca (Movement for Ecological Learning and Community; forum for environmental advocacy)
 - Association of Ethiopian Honey and Beeswax Chain Stakeholders
 - Forum for the Environment

1.0.2 Outcomes of Project Operation

The major outcome in terms of the project's operation was noted by the Final Evaluation to be its "implementation strategy (of) catalysing and learning by doing." This was seen to be "very good". This involved developing capacity in the RDCOs and the communities to undertake training and the implementation of project activities, so that project staff were in a supportive rather than implementing role. In addition, the RDCOs, the communities and other stakeholders were involved in the project planning process with the result that local ownership of project activities was developed. This approach was crucial for the long-term sustainability of the initiatives introduced by the project.

Following up the close links with the RDCOs and communities, the Project established a wide network of linkages which were important for ensuring that relevant lessons were learned by the project. Through this network, the project's lessons were disseminated, thereby widening the impact of the project.

Result 1.1: Surveys and Research of NTFP Utilization, Production and Potential

1.1.1 Initial Assessments

At the start of the project three types of assessments were undertaken:

- Rapid Reconnaissance and *Woreda* Assessment Survey
- Participatory rural appraisal of 27 selected communities
- Specialist In-Depth Studies

1.1.2 Other Studies by Project Staff

- Institutions involved in Spices, Coffee, Bamboo and Beekeeping
- Certification
- PFM Assessment

1.1.3 Research Student Studies

- Certification of Coffee and Honey
- Livelihood Categories and NTFP-based Options for Development
- Forest and Bee Management
- Valuation of NTFP for Local Communities
- Ethiopian Policy and Practice on Collaborative Forest Management
- Payment for Environmental Services
- Characterisation and Mapping of Honey
- Coffee and Spice Marketing
- Summary of PRA Studies

1.1.4 Other Studies

- Quality of Honey
- Participatory Assessment of Rural Cooperatives and other Institutional Forms
- Gender Strategy Baseline
- Options for CBO Legalization and Development
- Biodiversity in NTFP Forests
- Role of Women in Local Institutions
- Alternative Local Technology for Rural Women

1.1.5 Outcomes of Surveys and Research

The major outcomes of this result were mostly in the form of better understanding, within the Project and more widely, of the environmental and development situation in this remote part of Ethiopia. In particular, there was developed a body of information on the natural resources and livelihoods in the project area, including the role and situation of women in these communities. Specifically for the Project's concern, information was built up on the potential of the major NTFPs with market involvement – coffee, honey and spices, which helped inform project activities and design. The same was true for the acquired knowledge on local forest use and management regimes and the capacity of local traditional institutions in this. The legal framework for forest and natural resources management was also studied and this informed project planning. There were some wider impacts from these studies through the Project's advocacy work at regional and national levels about policies for natural resource management and some reached the EU's new Environment Strategy.

Result 1.2: *Strengthened GO/NGO Institutional Capacity*

A preliminary assessment of training needs of the project staff and the Rural Development Coordination Offices of the five focal *Woredas* was carried out during the reconnaissance visits in Year I. This understanding of training needs was developed further as a result of working with the RDCOs and in the light of the specific project activities.

The capacity building programme included a variety of activities: Training of Trainers, practical training for technical skill development, practical training on facilitation skills, workshops, study tours / exchange visits and on-the-job training. Most training for Government staff at *woreda* level was given by project staff and/or external specialists using the Training of Trainers approach. Training of DAs, CBO leaders and farmers was normally given by the Government staff, with project staff in a supportive role.

1.2.1 Facilitation Skills

- Participatory Approaches and PRA

1.2.2 NTFP Production and Processing

- Apiculture / Beekeeping
- Spice Production

1.2.3 Marketing

- Coop Development
- Certification
- Business Development / Community Empowerment
- Competence Based Economy for Formation of Enterprises (CEFE)

1.2.4 Awareness Raising & Training GO Staff in Participatory Forest Management (PFM)

1.2.5 CBO Development

- Leadership and Management Training for Cooperative Leadership
- Development Education and Leadership Team in Action (DELTA)
- Conflict Resolution

1.2.6 Gender and Development

1.2.7 Beyond Project Area

1.2.8 Training Materials

1.2.9 Outcome of Strengthening GO / NGO Institutional Capacity

The major outcomes under capacity building was at the government level, rather than the NGO level which is covered more in 1.3 and Purpose 2. However, the outcomes with government have been limited by the very considerable turnover of government staff. This problem was noted in the Final Evaluation which stressed the need to “move from individual capacity building to institutional capacity building”.

The PRA training and its repetition part way through the project had a major impact on the way the government offices, especially the RDCOs, operate in terms of how they communicated with the communities and undertook extension. A change was seen in terms of a less top-down, and more facilitatory, approach, as well as a more subject-oriented evaluation of their work. The analytical capacity of GO staff improved after attending various trainings delivered by the project, and their ability to plan and monitor progress with the local community and their awareness of gender issues improved. The training of trainers approach built capacity in the government offices which could be used beyond the project area. There was also a new understanding in the government offices of the need to engage lawyers, the courts and legal bodies in project implementation, especially PFM. The libraries established in each WRDCOs also provided support for this capacity building and change in attitude.

A direct outcome of this approach to training was that RDCO staff were able to provide training and follow-up with DAs and communities, some of which occurred even beyond the project intervention areas.

Result 1.3 Community-Based Institutional Development

CBO development activities during the project focused on: 1) Support to Beekeepers Marketing Groups, 2) Support to Coffee Cooperatives and Unions, 3) Support to PFM Groups, and 4) Exploration of options for CBO legalization.

1.3.1 Awareness Raising of Community Leaders and Members

- PRA
- PFM Awareness
- Gender and Development
- CBO Development Options

1.3.2 Capacity Building

- Leadership and Management Training for Cooperative Organizations
- Coffee Export and Certification Management

1.3.3 CBO Development

- CBO legalization
- Primary Coops and Union
- PFM Groups
- Honey Marketing Groups
-

Table 2: PFM Associations established with Project Support

<i>Woreda</i>	<i>Kebele</i>	<i>Got</i>	Members (of which female)	Total Popn	Forest area (ha)	Agriculture & Settlement area (ha)	Total Area (ha)
South Bench	Fanika	Denbi	44 (2)	-	651	184	835
Sheko	Shayita	Waruka	48 (27)	225	230	75	305
Masha	Uwa	Yigo-1	50 (6)	293	651	111	762
Anderacha	Chegecha	Yaga	43 (2)	154	1844	354	2198
	Yokichichi	Mechechi	45 (3)	350	2672	237	2909
Gesha	Anderacha	Shuka	111 (3)	519	625	339	964
	Wachito-Yeri	Oma	108 (3)	-	1172	594	1766
Totals			449 (46)		7845	1894	9739

Table 3: PLCs established with Project Support

Name of Trading CBOs / PLCs	Location			Members			Capital (Birr)
	Zone	Woreda	Kebele	Male	Female	Total	
Anderacha NTFP Business PLC	Kafa	Gesha	Anderacha	13	6	19	35,600.00
Bahato Genet NTFP Business PLC	Kafa	Gesha	Wachitoyeri	44	6	50	39,420.00
Chefedale NTFP Business PLC	Sheka	Masha	Uwa	13	4	17	37,600.00
Gada NTFP Business PLC	Sheka	Masha	Gada	14	0	14	37,700.00
Shatto NTFP Business PLC	Sheka	Masha	Beto	15	4	19	46,400.00
Eniti NTFP Business PLC	Sheka	Anderacha	Yokichichi	25	1	26	35,400.00
Yeshiti NTFP Business PLC	Sheka	Anderacha	Chegecha	20	1	21	39,100.00
Mejengir NTFP producers Marketing Cooperative Ltd CO						50	
Totals				144	22	216	271,220

1.3.4 Outcomes of Community-Based Institution Development

The major outcomes under CBO development are the establishment and registration of seven PFM Associations for forest management and eight PLCs for honey marketing. These are major innovations which are empowering the communities and showing them options for organisation within the laws of the country but beyond the usual cooperative form. These developments are based on a major series of studies and verification meetings which themselves are important outputs on which other organisations can draw for CBO related work. The wider impacts of these new organisational forms are changes in the relations between the communities and government offices and also with traders. Communities, through these organisations, have greater self confidence and are able to gain more respect from GO staff and private sector organisations, while within these CBO organisation they are able to hold their own discussions free from external influences. These are major changes in the situation for communities. As the Final Evaluation said “these kind of fora were (non) *inexistent* in the village before” and by developing them “the project has contributed well to building social capital”.

There have also been some spin offs, or impacts, from project initiatives with respect to the local cooperatives with enhanced capacity in these to produce quality coffee to meet international standards, while nine cooperatives have diversified into honey trading.

Result 1.4: Dissemination of Project Activities and Findings

The focus of the Project was mostly on field activities for the first two years. However, the MTR recommended that the Project already had material which it should be disseminating and so from Year III increased attention was given to this, in part through networking and presentations at workshops but also through the Project’s own activities.

1.4.1 Raise Project profile through mass media

1.4.2 Communications with Zonal, Regional, Federal GOs and NGOs

1.4.3 Dissemination of Project Documents

1.4.4 Extension materials

Training materials (in English and Amharic), for use as reference material by WRDCO staff, for training Development Agents, and for supporting the work with communities, have been produced on the following subjects:

- Beekeeping,
- Cooperative Management and Leadership,
- Spice Production
- Participatory Forest Management
- Gender and Development
- Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Farm manual for coffee certification
- Bamboo management,
- PRA
- Business Development/community empowerment
- Competency Based Economy For Formation of Enterprises(CEFE) Trainers' Manual
- Coffee certification

1.4.5 Outcomes of Dissemination of Project Activities

The main outcomes in the dissemination of project activities and findings are in the form of wider understanding of the approach and concepts used by the project within the government offices and communities in the project area, but also with regional and national government agencies and amongst NGOs. Specifically there are channels of communication to government offices and networks in which NGOs and government agencies operate through which the projects lesson and findings can be disseminated. Some of this dissemination, especially the policy briefs, is having wider impacts by contributing to advocacy activities and discussions on policy issues.

Observable impacts are the increased knowledge in the networks about the south-west highlands and the potentials and problems in this area, as well as the potential role of NTFPs which it seems are now becoming elements of most forest projects in Ethiopia. A better understanding of the potential of forest-based rural development as an alternative for agriculture-based development is also appearing. Some wider impacts of the dissemination work are also seen in the changed way in which the government operates, as mentioned under Result 1.2.9.

Result 1.5 Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System

The Project established a set of reporting mechanisms to ensure coordination, recording and review of project activities. A Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System contributed to a sense of ownership of the project achievements among all stakeholders. This was seen as essential for the sustainability of the activities.

1.5.1 Design of reporting mechanisms

Table 4: Reporting mechanisms

Responsible	Destination	Technical reporting	Purpose	Financial reporting	Purpose
Project staff	Project coord.	Individual monthly progress reports	Monitor progress, identify problems, provide feedback and adjust planning;	Monthly time sheets	Payment of per diems
RDCO field and expert staff	Focal person in RDCO			Monthly time sheets	payment of per diems
Focal person in RDCO's	Project coord.	Consolidated monthly reports of staff activities	Monitor progress.	Use of motorcycles	Allocation of transport funds.
Project Coordinator/ Administrator	Project Manager	Consolidated monthly progress reports of PCU	Monitor progress and provide feedback	Monthly financial report	Monitor financial management
PMC members/ Technical advisers	Project Manager	Mission reports. Annual report of activities	Information. Input to annual project report	Time sheets Expenditure reports	Payment of services. Project accounting
Project Manager	EU-Delegation	Annual progress report	Project monitoring	Annual financial report and audit report	Financial monitoring and disbursement of funds
EWNRA	CIDA NORAD DPPC	Semestral/ annual progress reports	Matching fund projects's monitoring	Annual financial report and audit report	Financial monitoring and disbursement of funds

1.5.2 Planning and Monitoring Meetings at kebele level and for Cooperatives

1.5.3 Monitoring Meetings with woreda RDCO

1.5.4 Annual Evaluation and Planning Workshops

1.5.5 PAB meeting

1.5.6 PMC-meetings

1.5.7 Monthly staff meeting

1.5.8 CBO data base

1.5.9 Monitoring missions

1.5.10 Evaluation missions

1.5.11 Outcomes of the PPME System

By using a PPME approach, the involvement of local stakeholders in the project has been enhanced and local understanding and ownership of the Project has been developed. This has helped the Project be responsive to local needs and take an adaptive and process type approach. The involvement of the local stakeholders in the PPME should ensure improved sustainability of the project.

Purpose 2: To promote the sustainable utilization and trading of NTFPs and the sustainable management of forest and land resources, for the benefit of local communities, and with their active participation.

Result 2.1 Enhanced Involvement of Farmers in NTFP Production, Post-harvest Handling and Processing.

Activities in this component focused on improved production and processing of honey, production of spices in an agro-forestry environment (domestication), and to a lesser extent the production/processing of forest and garden coffee. Activities concerning bamboo production were curtailed partly to conform with the recommendations of the MTR, and partly because of the phenological status of the main bamboo forest in Masha *woreda* (dying out after generalized flowering).

2.1.1 Honey Production

2.1.2 Spice Production

2.1.3 Coffee Production

2.1.4 Outcomes for Enhanced Involvement of Farmers in NTFP Production and PHHP

The outcomes with respect to farmer involvement in NTFP production and processing has seen over 200 farmers benefitting from training in modern beekeeping and 70 using that training. With respect to spices 105 farmers were trained in spice production and 80 farmers involved in spice trials. Twenty coffee promoters were trained and they have trained 250 coffee farmers.

The trials and trainings have helped identify relevant improved systems for honey production, increased awareness of the value of forest for producing livelihood benefits, and shown the potential of home garden bee keeping. Farmers have also come to understand the special value of forest coffee and its demand on the international market.

Result 2.2 Increased Benefits from NTFP Trading to Farmers

2.2.1 Honey Trading and Market Linkages

2.2.2 Coffee Certification and Marketing

2.2.3 Market Information and Prices

2.2.4 Outcomes of Benefits from NTFP Trading to Farmers

The outcomes of these project activities have reached the communities in the project area in a number of ways. Improved market access and linkages is the main outcome of this work,

as well as better understanding of how the markets operate. Farmers have become more aware of the link between prices and quality, and have realised how they can play a greater role in setting the prices for the NTFPs they produce. This has been facilitated in part through the development of a market information system and through the development of long-term marketing links for honey with two specific processing organizations.

There have been impacts beyond the direct project intervention organisations. As the Final Evaluation stated “the project not only supported the new PLCs in marketing honey but also stimulated the existing cooperatives, who previously were not involved in honey marketing, to get involved in honey marketing.”

The improved marketing arrangements have led to impacts in terms of better prices for honey (almost 300% increase) through long-term market linkages and for coffee through certification (16% increase).

Result 2.3 Sustainable Forest and Land Use Management Activities at Village and Farm Level

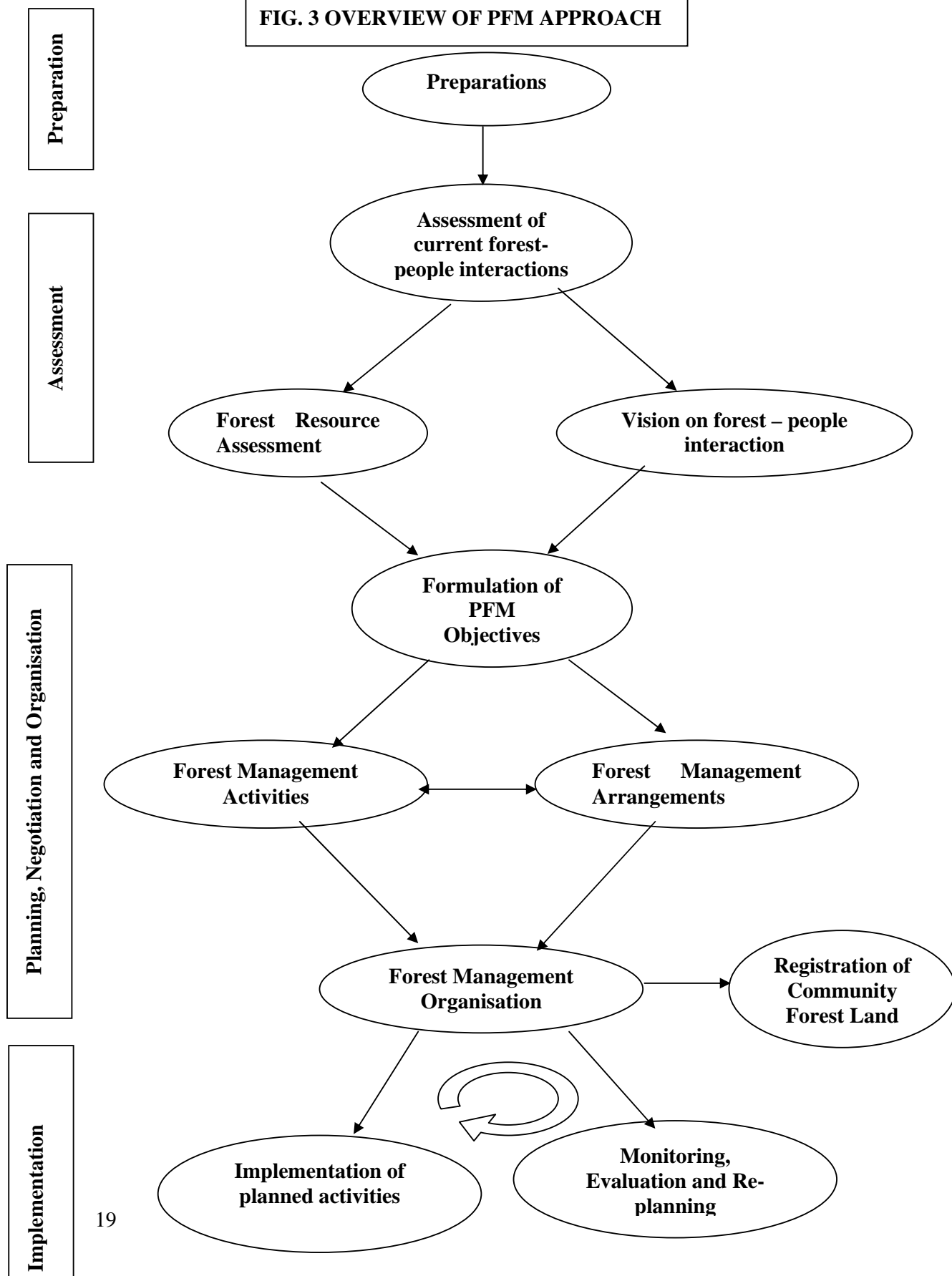
2.3.1 PFM Assessment

Based on the Year II assessment of the experience with PFM across Ethiopia and beyond, and the different approaches both in Ethiopia and more widely, PFM guidelines were developed and applied by the project. There was a strong feedback and learning element in this work which led to several revisions of the guidelines in order to have simplified and clear procedures which were relevant to the field conditions.

Field activities on PFM were undertaken in seven communities. The activities followed the different steps in the PFM planning process (See Fig. 3). The PFM process involved a number of steps including:

- Boundary negotiation and demarcation
- Stakeholder identification:
- Vision of development:
- Participatory Forest Resource Assessment (PFRA):
- Management Unit Classification:
- Feedback meetings:
 - Develop a Draft Forest Management plan:
 - Organization of PFM Group:
 - Sign agreement for implementation:

FIG. 3 OVERVIEW OF PFM APPROACH



2.3.4 Outcomes on Sustainable Forest and Land Use Management

Outcomes with respect to sustainable forest and land use activities are difficult to judge in terms of forest management and forest status as limited monitoring of PFM areas has been possible in the two years that this work has been operating on the ground. However, through the application of the simplified PFM methodology, progress has been made to set up the mechanisms – local PFM Associations and their byelaws, through which sustainable forest management can be achieved in the seven pilot PFM sites. It is already reported that in the PFM sites, forest destruction in terms of pit-sawing, clearing for agriculture, and settlement, has been almost completely stopped. Through its outreach activities the project has also increased awareness about access to, and use of, forest resources in the government agencies and has helped them realise the value of a PFM approach.

The Final Evaluation concluded that the Project's PFM approach "is highly innovative in the region and considered to be one of the major successes of the project." Key to this is the agreement which "has been signed between the Kebele Administrative Office, the WRDCO and the PFM association in which the rights and responsibilities of all parties are stated."

However, the project was not able to work on the land use in the farming areas with a view to developing more sustainable use of this land which would help reduce the pressure for forest clearance for farming. Attention to agro-forestry systems within which NTFPs can be produced is a future area of attention if an integrated approach to overall land and natural resource management is to be achieved.

6. OVERALL ASSESSMENTS

6.1 Impacts by Purpose

a) Local Institutional Capacity for Improved NTFP Use and Sustainable Forest Management

The building of local capacity has been a central element of the project. This was reflected in its mode of operation, which was through supporting the development of skills and innovative changes in the mind-sets in government offices and within the communities. The latter included taking a participatory approach, integrating activities, using a forest-based approach to development (rather than agriculture-based), and having a livelihood focus (instead of conservation focus). Project implementation involved an approach whereby the project staff acted as facilitators and supporters of government staff and community members who had received training in a number of subjects using the “training of trainers” format.

The impact of the training has been seen in the establishment of new community-based organizations in the communities where the project is working. These are seven PLCs for honey marketing and one cooperative for the same purpose, as well as seven legalized PFM Associations. The establishment of these organizations also created fora for discussing local development issues among farmers and also with the local authorities.

The impact of the training and the development of these CBOs has led to an empowerment of the communities in their relationships with the outside world and a democratization of their own internal processes and leadership – through improved representation, self confidence and conflict management. In particular, the PFM Associations have been empowered so that they can negotiate with the local government to develop agreements for the management of forest areas, while the trading groups are able to negotiate the price of honey with traders now that they are organized and have a considerable volume of honey to supply.

In addition, the PPME process in the Project, which includes the PAB, has led to considerable involvement of local stakeholders in discussions about project activities and priorities, and this has helped to generate a feeling of local ownership over project activities and approaches amongst the communities in the project intervention areas.

Wider impacts from the Project have been felt through the dissemination of project materials and through field exchange visits and workshops. Two project developments are of particular importance for wider application:

- the simplified PFM approach, which makes this a much more community-based and quicker activity, and
- the CBO development which shows how communities can develop their own institutions for specific purposes, within the letter of the law as Associations and PLCs.

b) Sustainable Use and Trading of NTFPs and Sustainable Forest and Land Use

In terms of the economic and environment impacts sought through this purpose, there are impacts in the honey production system and changes identified for spice and honey production to increase production and quality. In all cases there is now a clearer recognition

of the need for improved quality in order to obtain and sustain higher prices, while the ways to achieve this for honey and coffee are documented and have been disseminated through training of trainers. There are also environmental benefits of the new production technology: through the management of bee colonies, instead of chasing them away at harvesting time, and the use of mud and sticks/bamboo for beehives instead of wooden logs (of protected species).

PFM management is beginning to become established and has begun to achieve some impacts in terms of reduced forest destruction and forest enrichment for NTFP development. As well as restricting pit sawing and logging, there is planting of honey flora trees to provide forage for the bees, thereby increasing the carrying capacity for beekeeping. There is also an increased sense of ownership of the forest by community members as the value of forest resources is recognised and this is providing a strong motivation for the conservation and sustainable management of these areas.

The wider land use issue has only been addressed tangentially through the studies of the local communities and livelihoods. However, this has led to recognition of the need for a forest landscape approach (see Policy Briefing Note 2), the importance of addressing farm land management and degradation, and the need for exploring agro-forestry methods linked to NTFP production.

6.2 Lessons and Challenges

The Project has achieved four key innovations which are critical for reaching its goals and for wider dissemination. These are:

- the identification of ways to increase income from the forest through improved NTFP production and marketing,
- the development of a simplified PFM approach which can engage the communities and is acceptable to the local and regional government offices,
- the development of community-based institutions through which communities can be empowered to address NTFP trade and forest management issues, and
- the widespread acceptance by communities and government offices of the need for a participatory approach to development, recognizing the importance of communities and farmers as key actors and sources of knowledge.

At the same time a number of challenges have been identified in the work that need further consideration in future activities. These include:

- the linkage of PFM Associations and NTFP Trading PLCs so that some of the trade profits are used to ensure the sustainable production of NTFPs,
- the need to resolve conflicts which occur over access to and use of PFM areas,
- the better linkage of prices to quality and the wider recognition of this and use of methods to improve NTFP quality,
- the need to cover certification costs in a way that allows the bulk of the increased price due to certification to reach the producers and so provide an incentive to them to engage in sustainable production methods and conservation of forest resources,
- sustainability of approach due to limitations in RDCOs, especially the high staff turnover within the government offices, and

- inconsistent government policies lead to rapid forest conversion and the loss of opportunities for forest-based livelihoods and depletion of the conservation and environmental values in the area.

6.3 Widening Impacts

Despite the challenges faced the project-supported activities have clearly been of interest to the communities in the area and there has been evidence of a multiplier effect occurring in several areas beyond the project intervention area and on several issues. The Final Evaluation stated that:

“Some of the activities of the project have a multiplier effect. For example, some farmers have replicated the beekeeping without project support. Also interest in PFM by villagers not yet addressed by the project indicates a potential for sustainability. There is also a strong tendency to incorporate some findings of the project in the Jimma University curriculum. The EU, the main project donor, has given NTFP a prominent place in the environmental profile of the Country Strategy Paper.”

6.4 Sustainability

Drawing on the Project’s Final Evaluation, it can be concluded that the project has made important steps towards developing an approach to forest management and rural livelihood development, focusing on NTFP development and marketing. Critically, this has been undertaken in a manner which pays considerable attention to the issue of sustainability through the training of trainers and development of capacity in government and in the communities. For instance the Final Evaluation stated:

“Though it is still too early to assess the sustainability of the project, there are good indications that the project is moving into a direction of sustainability. Both villagers and local government have highly accepted the project activities. Thus, due to their direct involvement, ownership of project activities is quite high. The approach of facilitating development and conservation activities by local government and CBOs instead of direct implementation by the project staff will strongly contribute to the sustainability of the project activities. The establishment of PLCs and linking them with a national honey company (Bezamar) contributes to sustainability in the honey production and benefit generation.”

6.5 Alleviation of Poverty through Improved NTFP Use and Trade and Sustainable Forest Management

In terms of the overall Project Objective, the work to date has shown that income can be increased through improvements in NTFP production and marketing. In some cases, such as modified hives, access to NTFP income can be widened, for instance to women, but in others cases, such as the honey trade, those who are already involved tend to be the ones who benefit most. There is, as yet, in global terms, little evidence of the way NTFP development can reduce poverty and enhance forest protection. In this project only a few examples of the former have been seen, while it is too soon for the latter to show evidence given the recent establishment of the PFM Associations and the still to be formalised links between them and the PLCs. Also the NTFP development potential of the forest areas is not known due to a lack of information on current carrying capacity and options of management practices to enhance an increased but sustainable use of the forest resources.

However, the potential for linking some NTFPs to improved incomes has been confirmed, while the linkage of NTFP development to forest conservation is beginning to occur.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion the Final Evaluation should be quoted. It stated:

“The implementation of PFM by the NTFP R&D project as (a) pilot in selected *woredas* of SNNPRS is relevant and helps the country’s policy and legal framework that underscore the need for community participation for forest conservation to evolve. The project also addresses the demands for forest conservation in the region and closely works with local governmental institutions and CBOs in building capacity and implementing project activities. The project goes beyond other projects on participatory forest management in the region, in being more innovative.”

“NTFP development is a new initiative for the region as well for the country. The first phase of the NTFP project should therefore be considered as a learning phase..... We can conclude that given the relatively short time of project implementation, the project has been very successful. The many challenges still ahead are inherent to such an innovative project.”

“We conclude that the project has done a great job in the relatively short time of implementation. The project has developed innovative approaches towards participatory forest management and community-based marketing of NTFPs and is well-recognised in the region for this pilot role.”

While the Project staff appreciate such comments, they realize that there are major challenges ahead to face so that this approach can help address the issues encountered in sustainably managing the forested highlands in the south-west of Ethiopia.

The Project realises that there are important policy issues which need to be addressed and that advocacy and further dissemination activities are key tasks in future work in this area. It is also realised that this Project has to ensure that its approach is disseminated across the whole of the south-west highlands as these forests are of considerable local, national and regional importance (see Policy Briefing Note 1). Indeed, this project is, in many ways, a test case for the watershed management challenges faced by the Nile Basin Initiative, while it is also able to contribute to the global issue of conserving coffee genetic resources. As such it has relevance well beyond the sites where it has worked.

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Abbreviations

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DA	Development Agent
EC	European Commission
EWNRA	Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resource Association
FLO	Fair Trade Labeling Organisation
GAD	Gender and Development
HU	Huddersfield University
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
JU	Jimma University
MTR	Mid Term Review
NORAD	The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
PAB	Project Advisory Board
PC	Project Co-ordinator
PCU	Project Co-ordination Unit
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
PMC	Project Management Committee
RDCO	Rural Development Coordination Office
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Action
WU	Wageningen University