



NTFP

South-West Ethiopia

Non Timber Forest Products Research and Development Project in S-W Ethiopia

Strategy Framework **July 2003 – July 2007**



Mizan Teferi & Huddersfield

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Project Implementing Partners



The University of Huddersfield: With 18 years experience of field research, project management and consultancy / advisory work on natural resources in Ethiopia.



Jimma University: A newly formed university for south-west Ethiopia. It has a well developed faculty working on agriculture and natural resources that was formerly an agricultural college, established 50 years ago.



Wageningen University: The leading Dutch university working on environmental issues. It has a research unit with expertise in non-timber forest products and their potential for forest protection.



Ethio-Wetlands and Natural Resources Association: The first Ethiopian NGO to focus on forest and wetland issues. It has worked with most of the donors in the country and has run projects in three of the country's eight rural regions.



Sustainable Livelihood Action: A European Economic Interest Grouping which focuses on capacity building to support local NGOs and organisations in developing countries. Its staff have over 25 years of experience in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

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Abbreviations

CBO	Community based organisation
DA	Development Agent
EC	European Commission
EWNRA	Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resource Association
JU	Jimma University
JUCA	Jimma University, College of Agriculture
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
PAB	Project Advisory Board
PC	Project Coordinator
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
PMC	Project Management Committee
RDCO	Rural Development Coordination Office
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Action
UHUD	University of Huddersfield
WU	Wageningen University

1. INTRODUCTION

The “Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) Research and Development Project in South-west Ethiopia” started in July 2003. It will run initially for four years until July 2007. The full title of the project is

“Rural Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Forest Management and Protection through the Development of Non-Timber Forest Products and Community Institutions in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS), Ethiopia.”

The project is funded primarily by the European Union from the Tropical Forests budget line. It has also received funding from CIDA and NORAD in Ethiopia. CIDA is supporting the development and initial implementation of a gender sensitive approach to NTFP development and forest management. NORAD is supporting a variety of community-based activities which are seeking to develop local capacity and skills for improved NTFP production in ways which help enhance the role of these products in improving food security and livelihoods.

The project is located in the highlands of south-west Ethiopia at altitudes of between 1000m and 2500m amsl. The precise operational area is in the north-western part of SNNPRS, in Sheka, Kefa and Bench-Maji zones, and more specifically in five focal *woredas* therein - Masha, Anderacha, Gesha, Sheko and Bench. Within these *woredas*, the project has identified 10 Peasant Associations (*Kebeles*) for initial intervention (Fig. 1).

The project is implemented jointly by five partners : the University of Huddersfield (UHUD) in the UK, Jimma University (JU) and the Ethio-Wetlands and Natural Resources Association (EWNRA) in Ethiopia, and Sustainable Livelihood Action (SLA) and Wageningen University (WUR) in the Netherlands. The project has an agreement with SNNPRS, and works in close collaboration with its offices at the state and zonal levels. Operational agreements have been made with the five Woreda Rural Development Coordination Offices and field implementation is undertaken in collaboration with, and through, their staff.

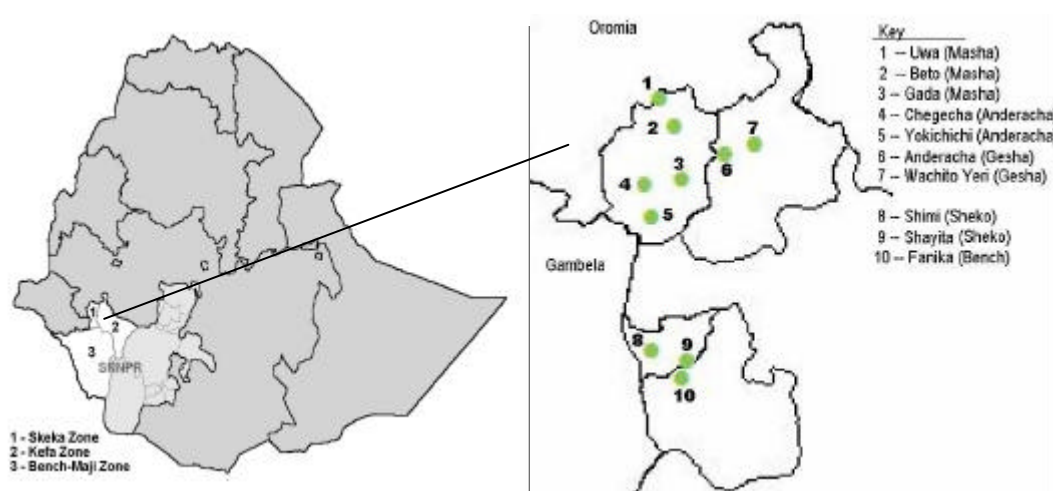


Fig 1: Project area: zones, focal *woredas* and *kebeles*

2. PROJECT AIMS

Within the **overall goal** of poverty reduction through improved livelihoods, the project has two **specific objectives**. These are:

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

Through the CIDA and NORAD funded elements, these objectives have been complemented by more **strategic objectives**:

- a) To develop and contribute to the implementation of a gender sensitive approach to rural poverty alleviation, in the context of improved NTFP use and trading and village forest management,
- b) To support the sustainable management and trading of NTFP forest resources through the development of community-based organizations, and
- c) To enhance household capacities for improved food security and sustainable livelihoods from NTFP based economic activities.

The project has a “research and development” orientation, in which it combines an integrated technical approach to the sustainable use and management of forest resources with a participatory and gender/equity sensitive strategy for improved rural livelihoods. The project tries to explore and disseminate improved NTFP production, processing and marketing as well as participatory forest management arrangements.

Through the direct involvement of government institutions in project implementation and the dissemination of project findings and advocacy for policy discussions, the project aims to ensure the sustainability of its initiatives and their scaling up.

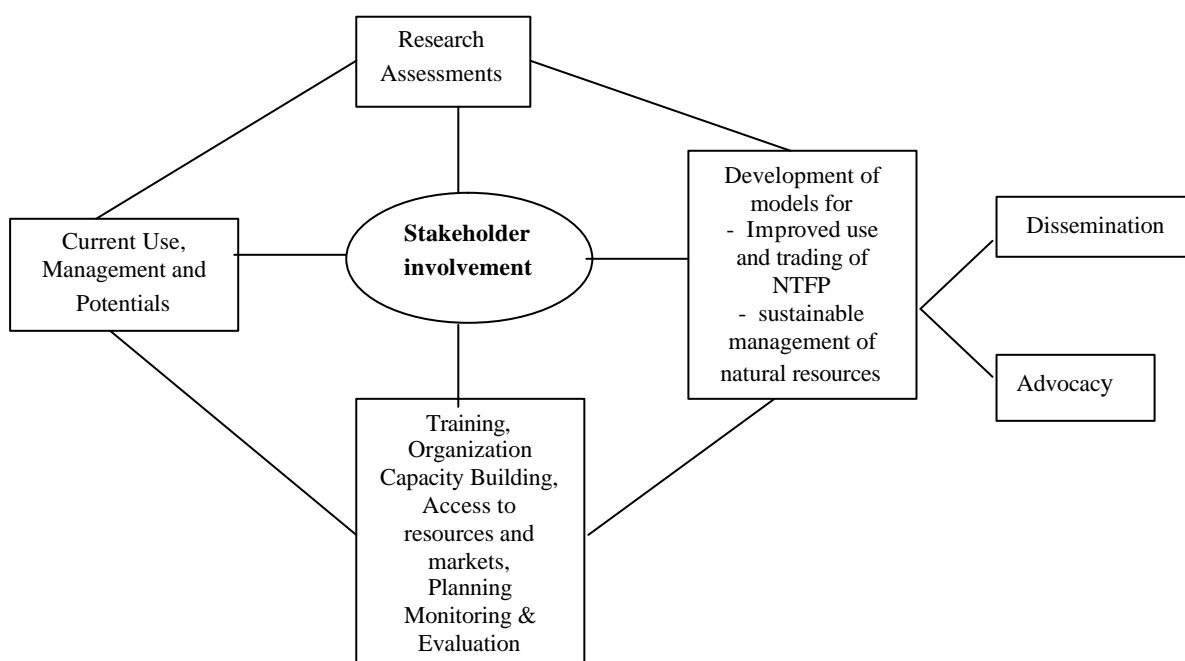


Fig. 2: General approach of the project

3. TECHNICAL APPROACH

The project focuses on three related elements of an integrated technical approach, namely:

- a) Sustainable management of forests and natural resources,
- b) Production and processing of NTFP, and
- c) Utilization of NTFP for trading and household use.

Through this technical approach, together with the elements of the strategic approach focusing on local capacity building (see Section 4), the aim is to enhance a sustainable, forest-based, rural development process which will contribute to the overall goal of poverty reduction and improved livelihoods.

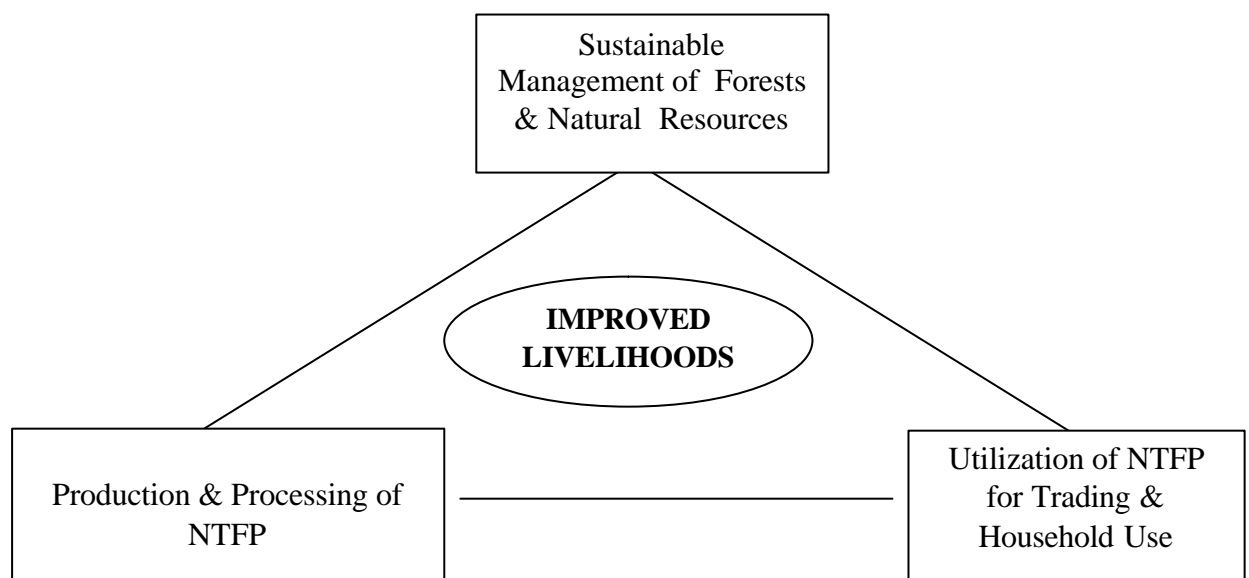


Fig. 3: Linkages among the three elements of the technical approach

Sustainable management of forests and natural resources

The sustainable management of forests and related natural resources is essential for maintaining the resource base which supports the production of NTFP. At the same time, this will also maintain the existing biodiversity as well as the ecological and hydrological functioning of the forests.

Sustainable management of these resources implies the need for not only technical knowledge of forest management, but also, and even more importantly, clear and recognized access rights to these resources as well as multi stakeholder agreements on the objectives and modalities of forest management. The project promotes the management of forest resources in the light of the increased, though sustainable, use of existing NTFP from the forests. At the same time, the reintroduction and /or integration of NTFP in degraded forests and their domestication in agro-forestry systems in farmland are important elements for promoting sustainable land use in a wider context for improving rural livelihoods. These measures could also contribute to reducing pressures on the remaining forests.

The project provides technical support for, and enhances, the role of forest dependent households and community institutions in the management of these resources. It uses a

Participatory Forest Management (PFM) approach, building on local knowledge and institutions (including bylaws) for forest management to support the diversified use of forest resources in ways which are sensitive to local social arrangements and economic needs. The existing knowledge is assessed through multi-stakeholder processes, in the light of the current forest management, and other related, policies. Recent experiences in PFM are being taken into account, both those from within the country as well as ones from abroad.

Utilization of NTFP for trading and household use

Currently, NTFP are produced both for household use and income generation. Many NTFP are used to directly meet household needs for food, construction, medicine, tools and household equipment. A small number of NTFP (mainly honey, coffee, and to a lesser extent spices and bamboo) are sold and contribute significantly to household incomes. Depending on the socio-economic status of the households, NTFP play an important role in food security, mostly through income generation. For the poorer households, NTFP provide a safety net, especially through the open access condition of some of these products.

On the one hand, the project focuses on improved access to markets for the NTFP with commercial potential. These include domestic markets, but especially also international niche markets that can provide better prices per unit of production. In this context, local organizations are being promoted and relevant institutions strengthened (e.g. cooperatives, and associations of small traders), to reduce marketing costs, benefit from economies of scale and improve market access. Better market information is also being provided and support given for appropriate certification of NTFP to improve income.

On the other hand, the project takes care that access to NTFP for household use is not impacted negatively by the focus on enhanced trading opportunities. This is especially important for women and resource poor households who depend heavily on forest resources for their livelihoods. The involvement of women in NTFP trading activities is supported by building on the production, processing or trading activities in which women have traditionally been engaged, such as the processing of honey, as well as spice collection, processing and trading.

Production and processing of NTFP

In order to have better access to markets and get better prices for NTFP, it is extremely important that a constant supply of quality products is guaranteed. Currently, this is one of the major bottlenecks for better market opportunities. Irregular supply and variable quality are common because there is no possibility of obtaining preferential treatment or premium prices in the existing trade relations. High quality standards and regular supplies can only be met for most of the NTFP through improved production and harvesting techniques, as well as post harvest handling, storage and processing methods. In addition, the domestication potential of NTFP production is not fully developed.

The project focuses on improved, yet sustainable, production of NTFPs with a commercial potential. A differentiation in the choice of NTFP to be supported is made according to their current uses and potentials, which is related in the first place to availability of the resource. Care is taken that production, harvesting and processing methods have minimum negative impacts on the biodiversity and ecological functions of the forest environment. Another focus is on the harvesting, post harvest handling and processing of the NTFP, to meet the requirements of the different market opportunities that are being identified.

New technologies are being assessed through participatory research. On-farm trials are led by interested producers and the findings promoted through farmer to farmer visits and training. Skill development for production, harvesting and processing activities involves both men and women, depending on the specific interests and intra-household task divisions. Producers' organizations are being supported in a variety of ways.

Linkages

These three elements of the project are inter-dependent. It is expected that there will be positive feedback between the activities under each element and between the activities for different elements. One example is the way in which raising the value of NTFP through better marketing adds value, both to the NTFPs and to the existence of the forest environment which produces these products. In turn, this can encourage, and provide incentives for, improved forest management and protection, especially if the participatory forest management approach and clear access rights can ensure that benefits are spread across the community, and that the forests are managed in a sustainable manner to try to ensure the long-term nature of these benefits. This will require the development of community groups who are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for forest management and utilization. Improved production, post harvest handling and processing will also facilitate marketing by making the products more attractive to traders.

It is recognised that if one of the three areas is not addressed progress in the other two will suffer and so the project has to ensure that all three technical areas progress in line with each other.

4. STRATEGIC APPROACH

Introduction

A number of strategic elements of the project's approach can be identified. These are important for ensuring that the project meets the needs of local communities, is sensitive to the government policy in the area and supports government and local community institutions to ensure sustainability.

Collaboration with Woreda RDCO's and other relevant institutions:

Collaboration with the Rural Development Coordination Offices (RDCO) in the selected *woredas* takes place in the context of decentralization and democratisation. The project activities are considered as part of the implementation of the *woreda* strategic development plans. A focal person is assigned in each *woreda* to the project and the project's activities are undertaken according to annual workplans, with involvement of the relevant *woreda* experts and the Development Agents (D.A.) assigned in the selected *kebeles*/communities. These government staff function as liaison officers between the project and the community and take responsibility for the implementation of all project activities, as stated in the collaboration agreements and the joint annual activity plans.

Collaboration with relevant government institutions, NGO's and individual specialists in the country is sought in order to enhance the project's implementing capacity. Active participation in inter-institutional, geographic and/or thematic networks is on-going for the exchange of information and advocacy.

Active participation of stakeholders:

The project is undertaking joint implementation with different stakeholders. These include local government institutions, community based organizations (CBOs) (such as producers groups, forest users groups, cooperatives), local traders (individually or as associations) and individual households. The project acts as a *facilitator*, helping the development of linkages between stakeholders and promoting networking activities.

In this facilitating manner, the project is developing a *participatory extension approach* through which it seeks to involve all stakeholders in an equitable manner. Active participation and decision making of the stakeholders in the different phases of the project cycle (planning, implementation, monitoring/evaluation) is ensured and is oriented towards the empowerment of community based organisations and household members. Social equity is one of the guiding principles of this project and therefore the participation of resource poor households and especially women is supported.

The implementing partners of the project are active stakeholders, and provide specific expertise for technical or management support to the project through different modalities.

Gender-sensitive approach:

Mainstreaming gender is seen by the project as a way to enhance the poverty alleviation efforts and achieve the livelihood improvement goal of the Project given its emphasis on the conditions of resource poor and marginalized community members. Gender issues are treated as cross-cutting through all components (NTFP Production, Marketing, Participatory Forest Management, Community Capacity Building) of the project. A gender strategy has been being developed with the local government partners and communities. This constitutes a binding instrument to guide the overall operational activities. It will help ensure the equitable and equal participation and empowerment of men and women throughout implementation

The focus of the project regarding the involvement of women is:

- on practical activities to support their livelihoods and to address food insecurity, as far as these contribute to the project's objectives in terms of NTFP-development and trading as well as management of natural resources and poverty reduction, and
- on the involvement of women in decision making processes on NTFP related issues, even if implementation of activities will be by men due to existing division of roles.

Capacity building of CBOs and household members:

PRA information shows that there are few traditional CBOs in the communities of the project area on which development initiatives can build. However, the project considers that CBOs are important instruments for enhancing local development and empowering communities. Therefore, the project is promoting the establishment of organized groups around specific interests, such as NTFP-production, trading, participatory forest management, and women's interests. These groups can develop into legalized CBOs, such as Cooperatives, Associations or others.

Capacity building of these groups includes leadership and organizational training, development of bylaws, skill development of their members in line with the specific interests of the group and material support for their initiatives. Exchange between groups, through farmer-to-farmer training, is being supported. At the community level, linkages between the different interest groups that may develop in the community is facilitated to ensure the integration of the different project components at that level.

Individual households can be supported for initiatives undertaken as a result of training activities with technical assistance and limited material support.

At *kebele* (or *inter-kebele*) level government supported primary multi-purpose cooperatives have existed for many years, but most of them are currently very weak. The current policy framework encourages the revitalization of cooperatives as farmer-led enterprises. The project supports this process through training of trainers workshops for government staff and technical support of these trainers in capacity building activities for the Cooperative Executive Committee Members and other group leaders.

Genuine CBO's, cooperatives, local institutions and individual farmers, both men and women, benefit from the capacity building activities of the project. All capacity building activities are highly interactive and practical, with a learning-by-doing approach. These activities focus on the integration of the different technical elements of the project approach and the socio-economic aspects of these.

Capacity building of institutional project partners:

Capacity building of the institutional project partners aims at creating an enabling environment for achieving the project objectives and contributing to the scaling-up of the project findings. Training will cover all required technical and strategic elements of project implementation, based on needs assessment. Different activities are foreseen, in accordance with the role of each of the partners:

- Tailor made Training of Trainers events and on the job training (RDCO, NGO and project staff),

- Institutional development of the implementing partners through involvement in project management, research and training activities, and
- Specific short courses (project partner staff).

Research strategy:

All research activities of the project are of an applied and participatory nature and will increase the knowledge base required for achieving the goals of the project and wider application of its findings. Three types of research have been identified:

- Information Gathering: Data collection includes both baseline information and practical information needed for project implementation. This will be done through a PRA-type of situational assessment and collection of secondary information.
- Scientific Research: The project identifies needs for applied scientific research (preferably with a participatory approach) within the scope of the project and facilitates this type of research to be carried out in the project area. The academic responsibility for these is with the Universities involved in the project.
- Participatory Technology Development: An identification of ‘best practices’ in the production and processing of NTFP is being realized through the implementation / monitoring / evaluation of on-farm trials with the direct involvement of interested producers. In a similar way, best practices of forest management are being developed through participatory impact monitoring of forest management practices.

This type of research is the direct responsibility of the project and is undertaken jointly with the local stakeholders involved in implementation.

Participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation

A Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation system (PPME) has been set up, in which all stakeholders are involved. The system provides the information for project management and reporting back to the donors, in accordance with their specific requirements.

At the same time the system is an important instrument to generate a joint learning process for the stakeholders throughout project implementation. The system consists of a series of reporting mechanisms and two-way information flows, as well as specific events for reflection, analysis of information and ongoing evaluation of progress, outcomes and impacts at different levels (*kebele*/community, *woreda*, project, Project Management Committee [PMC], and Project Advisory Board [PAB]). The PAB is the level in which all stakeholders are represented.

The PPME is a strong instrument for integrating the different elements of project implementation through planning at each level of intervention: *kebele*/community, *woreda* and project.

Linkage to policy debate:

The project is convinced of the importance of contributing positively to the policy debate on forest management and related issues in Ethiopia, especially in relation to the different challenges raised by the current policy framework whose recently started implementation may have a strong impact on the project’s objectives and the livelihoods of the local population. Key policies include the agricultural investment policy, resettlement policy, land certification and provisions for participatory forest management in the regional forest proclamation. The project is contributing in a proactive manner through the provision of information, advice, awareness raising and support to the relevant government institutions. This is done through the organization of, or participation in, workshops with different

stakeholders, participation in inter-institutional networks on relevant themes and dissemination of project findings.

Sustainability and phasing out:

The project focuses on supporting the development of existing and new institutions at the community level and strengthening support to these through training of leaders and members, the provision of technical guidance and enhancing the capacity of government staff. Both community groups and cooperatives are supported, while all such groups, individual households and government staff receive training in different forms. In addition links are being developed with private sector actors, especially traders, in order to better link local producers and traders to the domestic and international markets. With time, as such trade develops, local representation of the national and international traders may be established in the area.

The intention is to ensure that by the end of the project the local groups will have the necessary skills and experience to be self-sufficient and self-sustaining in the activities covered by the project and will have the potential to obtain advisory support from the local government staff at the *kebele* and the *woreda* levels. The community groups will be involved in detailed discussions during the project's operation about further development and some linkage to the Ethiopian partners in the project, EWNRA and Jimma University, may be developed. In particular, it is envisaged that EWNRA, which has on-going work in the south-west and is specialised in community development, could be a partner for these communities as they seek to develop further initiatives to improve their livelihoods.

5. DETAILS OF IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. NTFP-Production, Processing and Post-Harvest Handling

Introduction

The PRA and in-depth studies carried out by the Project show that communities within the focal *kebeles* depend on subsistence harvesting of a number of non-timber forest products. These include honey, forest coffee, Ethiopian cardamom (*korerima*), bamboo, palms, vines (lianas), medicinal plants, tree fern, bush meat, foraging for livestock, wood for farm implements, long pepper (*timiz*), various edible plants, etc. While most of these NTFPs are utilized only for household consumption, the trading of a limited number of NTFPs - honey, coffee and spices, provide income to cover, to a large extent, the non-food basic needs of rural households. It is seen that some of these NTFPs have an important potential for improving rural livelihoods through their generation of income which allow purchases to help achieve household food security and meet other needs. Beyond the household and community levels, these products have the potential for developing NTFP-based enterprises and for increasing foreign exchange earning. These can only be fully achieved if relevant quality and quantity requirements of the market can be met, whereas sustainable production criteria can help access niche markets which can provide a high price for the NTFPs. Based on these premises it was decided to focus NTFP development efforts on the sustainable production of high quality NTFPs with major commercial potential, namely honey, forest coffee, spices and bamboo.

Specific Objective

The specific objective of the ‘NTFP production, processing and post-harvest handling (PHH) – component’ is to promote the sustainable production and utilization of NTFPs of commercial importance.

Strategic Focus

Strategic focus of NTFP production, processing and PHH will be on the following products:

- Honey,
- Coffee, especially Forest Coffee,
- Spices, with emphasis on the local cardamom (*korerima*) and long pepper (*timiz*), in a forest environment as well as in agroforestry systems.
- Bamboo

General Approach

- Carry out participatory technology development of production and processing methods through on-farm trials in different environmental conditions, with the direct involvement of interested households (including men and women).
- Promote production, processing and PHH technologies which will contribute to better trading opportunities for rural households, considering the specific situation of resource poor households and women.
- Promote production technologies which contribute to the sustainable management of forest resources and minimize negative impacts on biodiversity and forest functions from increased NTFP production.
- Support the enhanced involvement of farmers and CBOs in NTFP production, processing and PHH, considering gender and equity aspects
- Take into consideration the ecological and social potential of each NTFP to prioritise the project’s focus on specific NTFPs in each focal *woreda* and/or *kebele*.

- Strengthen capacities of GO staff and CBOs for promoting improved NTFP utilization as a way of improved livelihoods and conservation of the forest.

Geographic Focus

NTFP	Zones	Focal woredas	Focal kebeles
Honey	Sheka	Masha,	Beto, Uwa
		Anderacha	Yokochichi, Chegecha
	Bench	Sheko	Shimi (Majengir communities)
	Kafa	Gesha	Anderacha, Wachito Yeri
Coffee	Bench Maji	Bench	Fanika
		Sheko	Shimi, Shayita
	Sheka	Anderacha	Yokochichi
Spices * Ethiopian cardamom (<i>korerima</i>) and long pepper (<i>timiz</i>)	Sheka Kafa Bench Maji	All focal <i>woredas</i>	All focal kebeles, except for Gadda
Bamboo	Sheka	Masha	Gadda

Specific approach and major activities related to spice development

a. Background

The most important spices which occur naturally as NTFP in the SW highland forests include Ethiopian cardamom (*corerima*) and long pepper (*timiz*). The first one can be found mainly in patches in the lower parts of the forest, whereas *timiz* is distributed widely in the forest, especially in the higher parts.

Corerima is currently being collected for household use and commercialization; *timiz* only at a small scale for commercialization. *Corerima* is reported to have a low productivity, due to the lack of proper management and the fact that its ripe fruits are highly appreciated by monkeys. Spices are considered open access resources and collection is normally done by men (in combination with traditional beekeeping activities), whereas marketing is being done by, mostly poor, women. The sale of spices is an important source of income for these women, providing a safety-net. Spices are being sold either fresh or sun-dried, mostly through small traders and meant for the national market, after being processed to powder. Currently, market prices for *corerima* have been increased significantly (up to 25 Birr/kg dried fruit). There seem to be a high market potential for *corerima*, both for the national and international (Arabic countries), as powder and as or extracts.

Applied Spice Research has been conducted in Tepi Research Station (EARO-JUCA), with the objective to promote spice development for poverty alleviation in the area. The research focus has been mainly on exotic spices, to be produced in agricultural production systems. Both sun grown and shade grown species have been considered (Indian cardamom (*hail*), chili pepper (*konder-berberie*), black pepper, yellow root (*ird*), *Schinus molle* (red pepper), ginger etc). High expectations have been raised among farmers on the opportunities of spice development in agricultural land or home-gardens. Spice development for poverty alleviation has been considered in the strategic plans of several *woredas*. However, an environmental impact assessment of the proposed spice development has not been carried out and

environmental aspects have not been considered when selecting different options for spice development.

b. Specific approach for spice development

- Participatory research to promote the development of those spices which can generate income for rural households, while at the same time contributing to the conservation of forest biodiversity and forest functions.
- In this context, a special focus will be given to the development of the local spices of *korerima* (Ethiopian cardamom) and *timiz* (long pepper) in a forest environment, aiming at value adding of the forest and buffering the encroachment in the forest.
- Production technologies for spices will be environmentally friendly and include minimum disturbance management and expansion of natural stands of spices in high forest, the introduction of *corerima* and *timiz* in degraded forest areas, forest edges and forest patches with appropriate shade management, and the integration of shade grown spices and local shade tree species to establish appropriate agro-forestry systems in home gardens.
- Training and support of groups of producers for spice production, PHH and processing.
- Support to the establishment and management of community nurseries for multiplication of spices, agro-forestry and shade trees, fruit trees, etc.
- Especially women and resource-poor households will be targeted for these income generating activities, building upon their traditional involvement in forest spice collection, spice trading and home garden production.
- Ongoing farmer led trials including exotic species (hail and black pepper) will be subject to ass, only in home garden agro-forestry systems, avoiding interference with biodiversity aspects in the remaining forest.

c. Major activities for spice development

- Farmer trials for improved management and harvesting of corerima and timiz in high forest environment (PFM sites)
- Farmer trials on spice plantation in forest edges and degraded forests
- Farmer trials for establishment of agroforestry sites including shade grown spices
- Identify best practices for each situation
- Support farmer’s nurseries (individual or grouped) for spice production
- Explore market opportunities and potential trade links for corerima and timiz
- Proactive approach for women and poor HH involvement in spice development
- Ensure spice production in PFM planning and negotiation on use rights
- Establish CBO for supporting spice development and trading

d. Linkages of spice development with other elements of project approach

Marketing	Clear market potential for corerima, timiz more doubtful → Potential for improved income generation through organized trading
NTFP-production, phh, processing	Improved spice management in the forest → improved productivity of local spices

	Spice plantation (local species) in forest edges, degraded forests and agroforestry plantations → increased production Improve harvesting and PHH techniques → Better quality for value adding and market access
PFM/Access to resources	Local Spice production will add value to forest land → Include spice production in forest management objectives → Develop sustainable forest management practices for local spice production → Open access can be converted in exclusive rights within PFM agreements
Impact on Improved livelihoods	→ income generation → sustained availability of spice for HH use → skill development → empowerment of poor HH and women → Empowered CBO's
Impact on Sustainable management of forest and land	→ buffer for further encroachment in the forest → expansion of forested landscape pattern within agricultural area

5.2. NTFP Trading

Introduction

Based on the findings of the PRA studies conducted by the project at *kebele* and community levels and the in-depth study of the marketing of NTFPs in south-west Ethiopia, the current marketing system for NTFPs has been identified and the key actors and their behaviour examined. The marketing study analysed the system using the four P's - product, price, place and promotion. The outcome of this and the other in-depth thematic studies identified NTFP marketing as one of the key aspects for achieving improved and sustainable livelihoods in the area and therefore for achieving the project's objectives. However, this must be done in an integrated way, with both production and forest management related activities, as explained in Section 3.

Specific Objectives

In order to achieve increased benefits for local stakeholders from trading of NTFPs (main purpose), the following strategic objectives have been set:

1. Improve prices per unit of product through promotion of speciality products - especially organic and forest products;
2. Increase the volume of sale of NTFPs, (which may be achieved through increasing the current level of supply of the respective NTFPs and improving access to the domestic market and/or by finding overseas niche markets for speciality products); and
3. Reduce the marketing cost through organization, thereby benefiting from economies of scale.

Strategic Focus

The strategic focus of the marketing component is on:

- support of producers to link with Ethical Trade Initiatives;
- enhancing the role of Rural Cooperatives in NTFP marketing;

- capacity building for government staff to enhance their role in supporting cooperatives and farmer groups;
- capacity building for cooperatives' Executive Committee Members; and
- facilitate the set-up of a market information network.

Specific approach and major activities related to Ethical Trade Initiatives

Ethical trade is the trade in goods or products produced under conditions that are socially and/or environmentally sound as well as economically responsible. Linking farmers to ethical trade initiatives helps them have access to niche markets which provide higher prices. Therefore the project focuses on:

- Review of information on certification criteria and the procedures of different certification bodies, such as Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement (IFOAM) and Fair-Trade Labelling Organizations Int. (FLO).
- Support to farmers for certification of their products, through awareness raising on speciality trading opportunities, information on product requirements, procedures and direct support to the certification process for ethical trade.
- Advocacy on, and promotion of, the speciality character of NTFPs of the area and the need for the reclassification of the (wild) forest coffee for Bench and Sheko Woredas.

Specific approach and major activities related to rural cooperatives and trading groups

Environmental management and sustainable development require productive organizations that perform at high levels with respect to the economic, social and environmental services they provide to the local and regional economies. Individuals acting alone cannot preserve biodiversity, manage landscapes or protect watersheds. With this insight, the project is enhancing the role of primary cooperatives in the project intervention areas for improved trading of NTFPs, within the context of sustainable management of natural resources of the area. Special attention is given to:

- Support for the establishment and strengthening of small traders' groups or cooperatives, as a first step to improve the current marketing system of honey.
- Participatory assessment of the current situation of nine primary cooperatives, identification of potentials for improvement and joint elaboration of a strategy for strengthening these cooperatives.
- Support the establishment and functioning of two commodity based marketing Cooperative Unions (forest honey and forest coffee).
- Facilitate arrangements for the sustainable provision of financial services through regular channels for delivering credit services for the improved production/collection practices and marketing of NTFP.
- Development of extension materials on the potentials and prospects of NTFPs production and trading.
- Other support activities, such as legalization, linkages, financial/material support to be identified as practical experience develops and institutional analysis of the cooperatives or groups is undertaken.

Specific approach and major activities related to capacity building

Capacity building focuses on the revitalization and development of democratic, free-market oriented, and professionally managed rural cooperatives, enhancing their potential role in NTFP marketing as a way to contribute to improved livelihoods, poverty reduction and the development of sustainable natural resource management. More specifically the project will focus on:

- Training of WRDCO staff involved in cooperative organization, to enhance their role as facilitators of the process of strengthening genuine farmer-led organizations.
- Capacity building of Executive Committee Members of cooperative and farmer / trader groups through a tailor-made training programme, including formal training, in-service training and exchange visits, enhancing especially managerial and organizational skills.
- Establishing linkages and strengthening the working relations with Cooperative Unions in the SNNPR, government organizations, NGOs, international organizations and those private traders who support and believe that farmers should get fair prices.

Specific approach and major activities related to the set-up of a market information network

Information for producers on NTFP market opportunities, prices, production, processing and packaging criteria, access to micro-loans, grants and the potential role of cooperatives in NTFP processing and marketing are considered of crucial importance for achieving the goals of poverty reduction through NTFP development in the area.

Specific attention is given to:

- Working out and supporting the set up and institutionalisation of a market information flow from the national level to the project area, with special focus on the opportunities for ethical trade.
- Facilitating seminars, workshops, etc. to raise awareness of the innovative NTFP producers and the traders involved in NTFP processing and trading.

5.3. Participatory Forest Management

Introduction

Based on the outputs of the baseline studies and participatory planning events, it was decided to opt for a Participatory Forest Management (PFM) approach as the most secure way of achieving the sustainable use and management of the remaining forest resources. At the same time it is envisaged that this will guarantee that the local communities will benefit from their forest management initiatives and so improve livelihoods.

The project, within the current policy framework, supports the involvement of local communities in the sustainable management of natural resources for their livelihoods. At the same time, the project contributes to the further development of methods for successful implementation of the PFM approach and shares these experiences through contributions to policy debates.

In the Ethiopian context, Participatory Forest Management is understood as the co-management of forests by a ‘community’ and government, with specific roles, rights and responsibilities for each of these stakeholders. The community is further defined as a recognized CBO (existing or purposely established) under Kebele administration, which normally is composed of one or more ‘user groups’, residing within or around the forest resource and depending on the forest resource, in one way or another. The management of the forest should be undertaken within the legal framework on forestry with special conditions negotiated based on a forest management plan and agreement, including technical aspects, definition of user groups and their access rights, organizational features and the benefits and responsibilities of the stakeholders involved. Eventually, the signed agreement could serve as the support document required for the registration of the forest area

for management as a community property, in accordance with the current land certification scheme.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the Participatory Forest Management activities are to:

1. Create conditions for the sustainable utilization and management of selected forest sites through the facilitation of a PFM approach with the relevant community and government stakeholders;
2. Contribute to the development of methods and tools to support PFM in the area and increase local capacities for the implementation of a PFM approach at woreda level; and
3. Contribute to improved forest/environmental policy regarding PFM at sub-regional, regional and national level.

Strategic Focus

Strategic elements of the Participatory Forest Management element are to:

1. Develop appropriate PFM models in selected forest areas, these being oriented towards an improved use and development of NTFP, building on local knowledge, existing forest management arrangements and opportunities for improvement through technical support, local organization and implementation of the current policy framework.
2. Link project activities related to PFM with other government initiatives in the area, related to land-use, land tenure and natural resource management.
3. Contribute to the policy debate at the sub-regional, regional and national levels through linkage with PFM networks and other ways of information exchange.

Geographic focus

In each of the focal woredas, at least one site will be selected for PFM related activities.

The selected sites will be representative of the different forest conditions / NTFP development potential in the area, including relatively undisturbed high forest area, coffee forest area, secondary or degraded forest area and bamboo forest area.

Woreda	Kebele	PFM Community	Forest type
Gesha	Wachitoyeri	Oma	Secondary forest
	Anderacha	Shuka	High forest
Masha	Uwa	Yigo-1	Secondary forest
	Gadda	Cheri	Bamboo forest
Anderacha	Chegecha	Yaga	High forest
	Yokichichi	Mechechi	High forest
Sheko	Shimi	Usika	Coffee forest
	Shayita	Waruka	Coffee forest
Bench	Fanika	Denbi	Secondary forest

Definitions:

- High forest: - those areas found around and within the montane broad leaved forest. Characterized by broad leaved forest with dominant upper story of *Angeria*, *Olea*, *Syzygium* and *Prunus* species.
- Secondary forest: - Highly disturbed forest, altered some time ago and now dominated by young trees and very few (scattered) old trees.
- Coffee forest: - those areas where wild coffee dominates the lower storey.

Specific approach and major activities related to PFM

Major steps in the PFM approach in the field include:

1. Awareness creation workshops for government authorities and technical staff at *woreda* and zonal level, in order to create a common understanding of PFM and its potentials for sustainable rural development and obtain the political support to initiate PFM related activities.
2. Training of government staff in the principles, processes, procedures, methods and tools for facilitation of a PFM approach.
3. Site selection undertaken jointly by the community with government staff, and wherever possible linked with government preliminary initiatives on PFM, such as those of the World Bank funded Woody Biomass Project and the EU supported Coffee Improvement Project.
4. For each site, a participatory analysis with stakeholders will be made to assess the current socio-cultural, organizational, physical resources and technical situation, as well as the legal aspects of forest management.
5. Facilitate the establishment and support the development of local forest management groups (CBOs) as the key actors for PFM.
6. Participatory planning of PFM in the selected areas, including setting of the goals, identifying stakeholders' rights and responsibilities, establishing local forest management institutions, clarifying expected products/benefits, and exploring technical aspects of forest management and environmental monitoring.
7. Facilitation of the negotiation process between local stakeholders and government to formalize a PFM agreement through the establishment of a PFM-forum at *kebele* or *woreda* level in which representatives of all stakeholders will participate.
8. Support to implementation of the agreement.

5.4 Gender Sensitivity and Poverty Reduction

Specific objectives

The following are the specific objectives of the Gender Strategy and poverty reduction objective of the project:

- To progress towards gender equality and equity in NTFP production, processing, post harvest handling and marketing activities with enhanced participation of women, poor households and marginal groups, as well as project partners and stakeholders.
- To strengthen the institutional capacity and sensitivity of the project and partner government institutions so that their poverty alleviation efforts could ensure the equal participation of men and women.
- To strengthen the gender and poverty sensitivity in monitoring and evaluation activities and to streamline and guide the day to day activities of the project in a gender and poverty sensitive manner
- To enhance gender responsiveness, accountability and transparency within the project context
- To help develop a gender and poverty sensitive Natural Resource Management approach which will ensure the sustainable utilization of the forest resource base among project target communities in order to alleviate poverty.

Strategic focus

Through identifying the practical needs and strategic interests of women, the poor and marginalised groups in the project area, activities such as capacity building, material support for NTFP production and marketing, participatory research, dissemination of findings and replication of lessons, the project will carry out its tasks in a sensitive manner which seeks to reduce gender inequalities and reduce poverty and the marginalisation of groups. Sensitivity to gender and poverty issues will remain cross-cutting across all project components and activities.

Specific approach and major activities related to gender

- Organization of gender and poverty awareness workshops for government staff from RDCO and Women Affairs Desks, Project Staff, CBOs, community leaders and members of women NTFP Groups.
- Training of Trainers on Gender and Development awareness for selected Woreda level government staff.
- Target both men and women of all ethnic groups to ensure equal opportunities by gender and group, and to work out ways to enhance equity in a progressive manner.
- Dis-aggregation of all information generated from project components and activities at all levels along gender and wealth lines.
- Enhancement of the capacity of staff through continued awareness raising discussions and reflections to further ensure the envisaged tasks and responsibilities are undertaken.
- Networking and linkage with like-minded entities.
- Support CBO members with local technologies to ease the burden created by domestic responsibilities.
- Encouraging men and women to equally play a role as decision makers in different development-oriented groups, associations, cooperatives among target communities.
- Research, dissemination and advocacy regarding gender, poverty and marginalisation aspects.
- Integration of relevant tasks in component-by-component approach, considering that gender, poverty and marginalisation are cross cutting issues across project activities.

5.5 Capacity building of CBO's and household members

Introduction

The overall aims of the CBO and household capacity building element of the project is to enhance the capacity of local structures (voluntary NTFP producing groups, NTFP income generation groups, PFM groups and primary cooperatives) and the NTFP production, processing and post harvest handling skills at group and household levels. This, in turn, facilitates the way towards the improvement of the livelihood conditions of the local community and helps ensure the sustainable utilization, management and ownership feeling of local communities over the forest resource base

Specific Objectives

The specific objective of the capacity building of CBOs and household members include:

1. To strengthen the capacity of local institutional structures to enhance sustainable management of the forest resource base and to improve NTFP production, processing, domestication and marketing.
2. To enhance the capacity of men and women farmers at the household level in a way that they could be able to boost the income generated from their NTFP-related livelihood base.

Strategic Focus

The term CBOs includes all organized groups for the purpose of NTFP production, domestication, marketing and forest management activities. In this case, men and women farmers who are organized to collectively undertake activities for one or more of the NTFPs (beekeeping, spice, coffee, bamboo, etc.) and those who form groups to be part of the PMF intervention, are seen as CBOs. These groups of farmers get direct technical and material support from the project. Training is foreseen in beekeeping, spice domestication, production and harvesting, accessing market outreach, market information, participatory forest management, organizational development and leadership. Appropriate training manuals and extension materials are being distributed to these CBOs and supported by training sessions. The project also disseminates improved, user-friendly, technologies for beekeepers and supports the establishment of nurseries for farmers who are interested to engage in spice production and domestication.

A key constituent activity of the CBOs capacity building aims to help individual farmers to improve their NTFP production, utilization, marketing and forest management capacities. Thus, the focus of the CBO and household capacity building activities includes encouraging the development of farmers groups on a voluntary basis and also the involvement of individual farmers who have the interest to engage in one or more of the NTFP production, domestication, marketing and forest management activities.

Specific approach and major activities related to CBOs and household members

Specific activities include:

- Training workshops for skill development of interested household members, men and women, on different thematic issues.
- Training for CBO leaders on conceptual, organizational and managerial aspects.
- Training of Trainers and facilitating workshops for Cooperative Executive Committee Members to enhance revitalization of existing cooperatives.
- Farmer to farmer training through field visits and exchange of information

- Recognition and development of existing local knowledge and local institutions, as well as gender specific knowledge.
- Participatory research on technical innovations through on-farm trials.
- Technical assistance and limited material support for implementation of farmers' initiatives.
- Material support for innovations and strengthening of CBOs.
- Participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation.

5.6 Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PPME)

The project's overall emphasis is on the involvement of the local community and the development of capacities therein for long-term sustainability. Hence a key element is the involvement of the communities in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of project activities.

Specific Objectives

1. Provide information for project management and donors, regarding progress, results at output and outcome level, as well as impact.
2. Provide a tool for joint learning of all stakeholders in the project.
3. Provide an instrument for the integration of the different components of the project at the field level.

Strategic Focus

The PPME system will ensure a two-way and horizontal communication among the stakeholders at different intervention levels. This aims to empower the local stakeholders and create ownership of the project outcomes by the local stakeholders.

Specific approach and major activities related to PPME

- Develop a common understanding on PPME and the need for it.
- Baseline gathering, in the first place through participatory assessment and, where needed, with more conventional methods such as baseline surveys.
- Participatory design of a PPME system, including reporting mechanisms, information flow among partners at all levels, and regular monitoring and evaluation workshops at different levels of intervention.
- Joint strategic and operational planning, with participation of project staff, PMC members and government partner organizations.
- Facilitate workshops for the elaboration of work plans at *kebele*, community, CBO and *woreda* levels and for ongoing monitoring/evaluation with the relevant stakeholders.
- Involve all stakeholders with equal voice in the Project Advisory Board annual meetings.

PME INFORMATION FLOW BETWEEN DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PROJECT INTERVENTION

Level of intervention	Who responsible for information gathering and reporting	Frequency of information gathering	Reporting to whom	Frequency
KEBELE 1) CBO's 2) Individuals	1) CBO leader 2) Individual	To be determined by technical staff; depending on type of activities	1) and 2) Develop Agent and Kebele Chairman	Every two weeks
EXTRA-KEBELE Primary Cooperative, Traders groups and other CBO's	1) Cooperative Chairman 2) CBO-leader	idem	1) DA (in case Cooperative covers only one kebele) 1 and 2) Focal person WRDCO in all other cases	Every two weeks
WRDCO DA Woreda Experts* Focal person WRDCO Coordinator	1) – 2) – 3) Focal person		1) Focal person 2) Focal person 3) PCU (technical, financial, administrative report), WRDCO Coordinator	1) Every two weeks 2) monthly 3) monthly
WOREDA Cooperative Union other CBO's	1) Union Chairman 2) CBO-leader		1) PCU, Zonal RDCO 1) PCU	1) and 2) monthly
PCU Technical Staff Admin staff PC	1) - 2) - 3) PC	3) when not arriving on time	1) PC 2) PC 3) PM 4) PMC 5) PAB	1) monthly 2) monthly 3) monthly 4) every 3 months 5) annually (summary)
Project Manager (HUD)	PC	monthly	EU, PMC, Zonal Admin	annually

PMC	-	-	-	-
PAB	Secretary (= PC)	annually	Zonal, Woreda, Kebele Administration	annually
EWNRA	PC, AFO	1) quarterly (DPPC format) 2) every 6 months	1) DPPC 2) CIDA 3) NORAD	1) quarterly 1) 6 months 2) first year: 6 months; later annually

* Experts which are involved in project related activities; these may include Cooperatives, honey, coffee, spices and women affairs expts.