

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

Annual Report 2004- 2005



Mizan Teferi and Huddersfield

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The authors are solely responsible for the opinions expressed in this document, and they do not necessarily reflect those of the funding organisations.

Contents

	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS	4
2.1 Management Structure	4
2.2 Project Management & Participatory Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation	4
3. PROGRESS IN YEAR II	5
4. DESCRIPTION OF ACHIEVEMENTS BY EXPECTED RESULTS	6
Result 1.0 Project Operations	7
Result 1.1 Surveys & Research of NTFP Utilization, Production & Potential	7
Result 1.2 Strengthened GO/NGO Institutional Capacity	9
Result 1.3 Community-Based Institutional Development	11
Result 1.4 Dissemination of Project Activities and Findings	12
Result 1.5 Participatory Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation System	12
Result 2.1 Enhanced Involvement of Farmers in NTFP Production, Post-Harvest Handling and Processing	16
Result 2.2 Increased Benefits from NTFP Trading to Farmers	17
Result 2.3 Sustainable Forest and Land Use Management Activities at Village and Farm Level	18
5. ACTIVITY PLAN YEAR III	18
6. CONCLUDING REMARKS	19
ANNEXES	
Annex 1	List of Project Working Documents
Annex 2	List of Project Staff

Abbreviations

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DA	Development Agent
EC	European Commission
EWNRA	Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resource Association
GAD	Gender and Development
HU	Huddersfield University
JU	Jimma University
NORAD	The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
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
WU	Wageningen University

1. INTRODUCTION

The NTFP-Research and Development Project SW Ethiopia aims to contribute to the alleviation of rural poverty through developing the role which non-timber forest products (NTFP) can play in the livelihoods of the rural poor. The project is funded primarily by the European Commission, with matching funds provided by the offices of CIDA and NORAD in Addis Ababa and by two of the project partners, Jimma University and Wageningen University.

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

The project operates 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, are a key partner for the project, while community institutions, CBOs, farmer groups and local traders are also key stakeholders with whom the project interacts. The project seeks 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 is 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 project is located in three zones in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People’s Regional State (SNNPRS) in the south-west part of Ethiopia.

The present progress report covers the period of 1st August 2004 to 31 July 2005, which corresponds to Year II of the four year EU grant period of the project.



Figure 1: Project Implementation Area

2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

2.1 Management Structure

The project is implemented jointly by Huddersfield University (HU), Jimma University (JU), Ethio-Wetlands and Natural Resources Association (EWNRA), Sustainable Livelihood Action (SLA), Wageningen University (WU) and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State (SNNPRS). The first five implementing partners are partners to the EU for the project grant and form the Project Management Committee (PMC) which is responsible for guiding the project's strategy, policy and operation, in such a way that the project objectives will be met through the implementation of its annual work-plans. The PMC meets three times a year. Huddersfield University, based in UK, is the contracting partner for the project. It chairs the PMC, advises and approves all aspects of project orientation and activities, and has the final responsibility for all accounting and reporting on the project. The other of the implementing partners have roles varying between technical advice to providing administrative and logistical support.

The Project Coordinator (PC) and the technical and administrative staff, based at the Mizan Teferi and Masha field offices, form the Project Coordination Unit (PCU). With support from the Technical Advisors, provided by Sustainable Livelihood Action, Huddersfield University and Wageningen University, the PCU is responsible for supervising all field activities, implementing specific field activities, preparing research and strategy papers, annual work-plans, budgets and reports which will be reviewed and approved by the PMC. The PC also serves as the secretary of the PMC and participates in the PMC meetings, with voice but without vote.

A Project Advisory Board (PAB) has been established, in which all local stakeholders involved in the project are represented. This Board includes the *Woreda* Administrators and heads of RDCOs in the five *woredas* where the project operates. The majority of the PAB members are representatives of the communities where the project is operating. New stakeholders can be included in the PAB, as they become involved in project activities. The PAB meets 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.

2.2 Project Management and Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Field operations of the project are oriented by the project document, annual plan and strategic decisions of the PMC in the light of feedback from the participatory monitoring and the evaluation process (see Section 4. Result 1.5), which includes discussions in the PAB. Review of progress and adjustments of planning are made in the light of the following: monthly reports by the PCU, monthly staff meetings chaired by the Project Coordinator, bi-monthly coordination meetings between PCU and *woreda* government staff, four monthly PMC meetings, annual review and planning meetings at *kebele*, *woreda* and project level, and annual PAB meeting.

3. PROGRESS IN YEAR II

The project is working 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 Peasant Associations (*Kebeles*) for further intervention, which include a total of 51 communities. The areas where activities are on-going are given in Table 1, below.

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

Table 1: Project Intervention *Weredas*, *Kebeles* and Multi-purpose Cooperatives

The *kebele* constitutes the target unit for communication, participatory planning and monitoring of activities at field level and for CBO strengthening. All communities are represented in the planning and monitoring meetings. In this local planning process, community members select interested farmers, groups and/or communities for participation in different project activities. Additionally, the existing primary cooperatives, which are operating at an inter-kebele level, are considered as targets for limited CBO strengthening activities.

General project progress follows the annual work plan. In Year II there was approximately 80% achievement of the planned activities. The main activities during Year II included:

- Secondary information gathering on technical issues to support implementation,
- Studies on different technical and social aspects of NTFP development,
- Completion of baseline information,
- 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 governments 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 and implementation 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 of potential trade links for beekeeping products,
- Identification of opportunities for coffee certification, and
- Initial actions in the PFM planning process in selected areas.

4. DESCRIPTION OF ACHIEVEMENTS BY EXPECTED RESULTS

Implementation of the project takes place according to the approved project document, including its logical framework and the general time-schedule. The project activities aim at the achievement of the two project purposes:

1. To increase local institutional capacities for improved NTFP use and sustainable forest management, and
2. 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.

Year I activities were mainly oriented towards project set up, participatory assessment of different aspects related to NTFP-development and sustainable forest management, complementary studies and joint development of a project intervention strategy. Year II activities covered all aspects of the project and contributed – to a greater or lesser degree - to the achievement of each of the eight expected results.

A summary overview of general project achievements after two years of implementation, in relation to the project's logframe, is included in Annex 1 and a list of project working documents is included in Annex 2. The reasons for the delay in some areas relate to changes in project staff, high turnover in government staff, an underestimation of the time needed to develop activities in the field and the postponing of certain activities which were considered premature. This experience is understandable, considering the complexity of an integrated approach 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.

Details of achievements during Year II, with reference to each of the expected results, are given below. Details for Year I achievements can be found in the corresponding progress report.

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

Result 1.0: Project Operation

1.0.1 Registration

The project continues to have good relations with the Regional, Zonal and *Woreda* authorities. During this year the two matching fund activities – with CIDA and NORAD funding - were registered with the Regional DPPC.

1.0.2 Staff Recruitment

The project recruited three new technical staff during the year. Two were replacements for staff who left, while one was an addition to cover the gender and capacity building issues. Details of the current project staff are provided in Annex 2

1.0.3 Procurement of Equipment

The motorcycles have been stationed in the RDCO offices in each *woreda* to support the fieldwork. These are under the responsibility of the focal person in each *woreda* and an agreement concerning their use has been signed with each RDCO office.

1.0.4 Co-ordination with Project Donors and Project related GO's and NGO's / Projects
Working relationships have been continued and developed with a number of organisations for different reasons:

- EU-Delegation Addis Ababa: for co-ordination of project implementation following 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 include:
 - EU-funded Coffee Improvement Programme,
 - Institute for Biodiversity and Conservation Research (IBR),
 - FARM Africa/SOS Sahel (Bonga),
 - Netherlands-funded Kefa Development Project (Bonga),
 - EARO/Center for Development Research of Bonn University,
 - PPP project on wild forest coffee marketing,
 - EnatAfer (beekeeping promoting NGO in Masha),
 - ATVET in Mizan Teferi (Vocational Training Center for Agriculture and Natural Resource Management).
 - Holeta Research Station on Beekeeping Development
 - Tepi Research Centre on Spice Development

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

1.1.1 Institutions involved in Spices, Coffee, Bamboo and Beekeeping

A survey was undertaken of institutions involved in support for the production of, or processing and trade in, the NTFPs found in the project area. The contacts from this survey have provided sources for technical advice, as well as trade contacts.

1.1.2 NTFP Certification

The possibilities of farmers benefiting from certification of some of their NTFP products and the development of ethical trade links in the area has been explored. Various potential certifying bodies have been contacted and information obtained. These organizations have included IFOAM, FLO, Utz Kapeh, and ABC.

A workshop was conducted in Mizan Teferi by a representative of Utz Kapeh and samples of coffee were sent to that organization's contacts in Norway and the Netherlands. These have been assessed positively and arrangements are being followed to prepare for certification before the 2005 coffee harvest.

1.1.3. Participatory Assessment of Rural Cooperatives and other Institutional Forms

An assessment was made of the strengths and weaknesses of the rural cooperatives in the project area in order to assess the potential for working with such groups and using this model for the development of new institutions to support project initiatives. The potential for other forms of community-based organizations is also being considered and the legal options explored.

1.1.4 Gender Strategy Baseline

A survey was conducted within the communities where the project is operating to identify the way in which gender influences socio-economic status and livelihoods. This supplements the PRA-findings and livelihoods study undertaken in the first year and will provide a baseline for the assessment of project impact.

1.1.5 Biodiversity Study

A period of four months of fieldwork was undertaken in the field area and with project support by a staff member from Jimma University for his Ph.D. The focus was on assessment of the biodiversity status in the NTFP-rich forests of South-western Ethiopia. The results of this study will help the project with baseline information on biodiversity aspects of the forests and implications NTFP-use and sustainable forest management.

1.1.6 Beekeeping Study

A period of two months of fieldwork was undertaken in the project area with project support by an Ethiopian student at Wageningen University studying for his M.Sc. The topic was the interactions in tree and bee management and their dynamics. The results from this study will assist in the development of improved production systems for honey, which aim at improvement of beekeeper's livelihoods and sustainable forest management.

1.1.7 PFM Assessment

A major part of the year has been spent assessing the experience with PFM and the different approaches both in Ethiopia and more widely. This has been supported by a local assessment of the socio-economic and policy conditions relevant to PFM. This process has taken time but this has been essential for developing an approach which is relevant to the local conditions and so will be effective. The PFM approach chosen is one which will be more straightforward / streamlined than has been the case so far in Ethiopia, with an emphasis upon the broad zoning of areas for different types of use and the clarification of access rights and management practices in these different zones.

Result 1.2: Strengthened GO/NGO Institutional Capacity

1.2.1 Awareness Raising and Training of GO Staff in Participatory Forest Management (PFM)

Three awareness creation workshops on Participatory Forest Management, at Zonal (1) and *Woreda* (2) levels, were conducted and a common understanding of PFM and the processes were reached. Participants included staff from RDCO and women affairs desks at each level.

In total, 23 Government staff (18 male and 5 female), from the *woreda* RDCOs and the *kebeles* where the project is operating, have received an initial three-day training on PFM, covering the concepts, principles and steps in the PFM process, as well as the provisions for PFM in the national and regional policy framework. During the training an action plan for six months was developed for joint implementation between the project and GO staff. The training was complemented with a two day study tour for seven selected staff members to Bonga, to visit FarmAfrica's experiences in PFM.

1.2.2 Leadership and Management Training for Cooperative Organizations

Twelve government staff (10 male and 2 female) were trained in cooperative organization, leadership, management and NTFP marketing principles and practice. This training had the characteristics of a "training of trainers" (TOT), and was accompanied by a manual for trainers involved in cooperative development.

1.2.3 Training in Apiculture

In collaboration with the Holeta Beekeeping Research Station, a ten day practical training on honey production and processing was given to 12 staff members (of which one was a woman) from four WRDCO's, Jimma University and a coffee farm in the project area. These trainees, in turn, have trained other GO field staff (Development Agents - DA's) and farmers for five days in their respective *woredas*. These included eight DA's working in the *kebeles* in which the project is operating and, on request of and paid by WRDCO, 20 DA's from other *kebeles* to support beekeeping activities in these *kebeles*. (See also Result 2.1)

A refresher training in beekeeping was undertaken in May with support of Holeta Research Station. This involved both staff and farmers. In total this included 17 *woreda* staff, two staff from Jimma University and one member of staff from a local NGO. As part of this programme an assessment was made of the progress with the beekeeping activities. (See also Result 2.1)

1.2.4 Training in Spice Production

In collaboration with Tepi Agricultural Research Centre, a five day training course was provided to 15 GO staff members (among which one was a woman) in spice production and post-harvest handling for forest and home-garden production. As part of the training a draft action plan for each *woreda* was developed; the plan was intended for direct implementation by WRDCO, additional to the project interventions. A manual was provided to guide the participants for further training and support on spice development.

The trainees provided training to farmers and other DA's in the five woredas; a total of 15 DA's were trained, among whom five were women. (See also Result 2.1)

1.2.5 Gender and Development

The gender specialist of the project had the opportunity to participate in a Training of Trainers (TOT) meeting on Gender and Development provided by one of the project partners, EWNRA.

With the support of an external consultant, a participatory process of developing a gender and development (GAD) strategy in the context of NTFP-development was undertaken. Government staff (18 participants, 13 female and five male from *Woreda* RDCCO and Zonal Women Affairs Desk) were involved in this process, providing inputs and participating in a workshop at which an early draft of the strategy was discussed. They participated also in a four-day Training of Trainers GAD workshop. The Gender Strategy document is being translated into Amharic for wider use in training and sensitization activities.

A two day Gender and Development Training was organized in the five target *woredas*. The training was facilitated by the government staff who took the Gender TOT training and was directed towards DA's, Community Leaders and Women Associations. A total of 20 DA's participated in the training. (see also Result 1.3.4)

1.2.6 Training on Participatory Project Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PPME)

A five day training of trainers was organized on PPME, which included the design of a PPME system for project use. The training included 11 staff from the project, and project partners - JU and EWNRA.

Project staff organized four day- theoretical and practical- training workshop in PPME for 23 staff from all the five project intervention *woredas* to facilitate their active involvement in this essential part of the project's operation.

1.2.7 Extension Materials

Training materials (in English and Amharic), for use as reference material of WRDCCO staff, for training DA's, and for supporting fieldwork, have been produced on the following subjects:

- a) Beekeeping,
- b) Cooperative Management and Leadership,
- c) Spice Production
- d) Participatory Forest Management
- e) Gender and Development
- f) Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Result 1.3 Community-Based Institutional Developments

(Note: some activities had been planned under Purpose 2, but are reported in this space for better coherence among all CBO-related activities.)

1.3.1 Establishment and Training of Community Teams for PFM

Kebele and community leaders of the nine pre-selected areas for PFM interventions have been involved in awareness raising workshops for consensus building on PFM principles and agreement on areas for further interventions.

Eight PFM planning teams have been established. One more remains to be formed, once political agreement is reached on PFM intervention in the Kontir Berhan coffee conservation site. These teams will take forward the whole PFM process, including boundary identification, stakeholder analysis, resource assessment, and preparation of forest management plans. They will also facilitate the establishment of a formalized CBO for PFM implementation and monitoring.

The eight community teams have received training in PFM and have begun to practice this in the identification and demarcation of forest areas for PFM activities.

1.3.2 Beekeepers Groups

Eight beekeepers groups have been established with project support as a result of discussions during the training in beekeeping and honey production, and have opened bank accounts. Although the groups have been set up for trading and processing, their members are in the first place honey producers and, as such, involved in production related activities of the project (see Result 2.1). The groups have received continuous project support through training, management support during follow-up visits, and financial and material support for processing and trading activities.

One of the groups has obtained the legal status of Beekeepers Cooperatives, through their own initiative and with support of project and RDCO. Significantly the members of this cooperative are from the Mejengir people, a minority group in the area – the organisation being called the “Mejengir NTFP Producers Cooperative”.

1.3.3 Leadership and Management Training for Cooperative Organizations

Three-day trainings on Leadership and Management Training for Cooperative Organizations were organized in each *woreda*, for a total of 114 leaders drawn from 17 organizations. These included the beekeepers groups and nine existing multi-purpose cooperatives. Extension materials were provided in Amharic

1.3.4 Gender and Development Training

The training was organized in the five target *woredas*, with the participation of a total of 251 community members, of whom 109 were women and 142 men. They were drawn from farmers (211), Community Leaders (23) and leaders of Women Associations (17).

Result 1.4: Dissemination of Project Activities and Findings

1.4.1 Regional and National Dissemination via Mass media

The project has provided information to the local representatives of the mass media (ENE and FANA) and on four occasions reports have appeared in the press and on national television.

1.4.2 Local and National Workshops

The project was represented at the CIP IV Workshop on the Management of In-situ Conservation of *Coffea arabica* and presented a paper on its approach to PFM and community participation in relation to this subject.

1.4.3 Dissemination of Project Documents

A summary version of the first year annual report and the strategy document were distributed to government offices at the regional level and at the *woreda* level in the project area. Libraries are being established in each of the *woreda* RDCOs for project documentation, while a flier has been prepared for general circulation. The latter is also being produced in Amharic.

Summary reports of PRA studies in the project area, and a study on certification options for NTFP from SW Ethiopia, especially coffee and honey, have been prepared for distribution.

1.4.4 Website

A website of the project has been set up and is regularly updated with information on the project and research findings. It can be found at: <http://forests.hud.ac.uk>

Result 1.5 Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System

1.5.1 Implementation of Reporting Mechanisms

Reporting mechanisms and corresponding formats were developed by the project for use by *woreda* RDCO and project staff for monitoring project progress, both technical and financial. An overview is given in the following Table 2.

1.5.2 Planning and Monitoring Meetings at kebele level and for Cooperatives

Annual planning meetings were held in all 10 focal *kebeles*, and seven Multi-purpose Cooperatives. The outputs of these meetings are the basis for reviewing project intervention and feed into the project work plan development. Several monitoring meetings were held during the year for monitoring and re-planning of on-going activities in each of the project components.

1.5.3 Monitoring Meetings with woreda RDCO

Based on the working plans in each *woreda*, bi-monthly meetings between project staff and RDCO staff involved in project intervention are being held for on-going monitoring and planning of joint activities.

1.5.4 Annual Evaluation and Planning Workshops

A series of workshops at the *kebele* and *woreda* levels were organized at the end of Year II to review progress, identify problems and challenges, and review lessons learned.

The reports from these experiences throughout the project area were presented at the Year II Annual Review Workshop held in Mizan Teferi on 1st and 2nd July. This was attended by all *woreda* focal persons for the project as well as representatives of the RDCOs and Womens' Affairs offices at the *woreda* and zonal levels. A report of this workshop has been produced.

Feedback from this meeting was used, along with the lessons learned and experience from Year II, for the planning process undertaken in July by the PCU with support from the Chief Technical Adviser.

The outcomes of the Annual Review Workshop, along with the preliminary plans for Year III, were presented at the PAB in late July for comment and approval. Detailed draft annual plans were prepared for *woreda* and *kebele* levels, which were discussed and amended in planning meetings at each level.

1.5.5 PAB Meeting

The second PAB was held on 25 July in Masha. This included heads of the RDCOs in the five *woredas* where the project is operating as well as representatives of the communities/*kebeles* chosen for implementation activities. The process for the selection of these persons was outlined in the Year I report. The PAB was chaired by the General Manager of EWNRA (the Vice Chair of the PAB) in the absence of the President of Jimma University (the PAB Chairman), who was detained by work pressures.

1.5.6 PMC Meetings

PMC meetings were held three times during the year, with an interval of four months.

1.5.7 EU Monitoring Visit

A four day visit to the project by Nicolas Petit of the EU Delegation was made in May. The close working relation with government was appreciated and the progress towards market linkages was encouraged. The need to further clarify the forest management and livelihoods linkage was noted, and the issue of sustainability was stressed.

Table 2: PME INFORMATION FLOW BETWEEN DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PROJECT INTEI

Level of intervention	Who responsible for information gathering and reporting	Frequency of information gathering	Reporting to whom	F
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 tv
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 tv
WRDCO DA Woreda Experts* Focal person WRDCO Coordinator	1) Focal Person	During field visits	1) Focal person 2) Focal person 3) PCU (technical, financial, administrative report), WRDCO Coordinator	1) 1 2) 1 3) 1
WOREDA Cooperative Union other CBO's	1) Union Chairman 2) CBO-leader	Monthly	1) PCU, Zonal RDCO 1) PCU	1) and 2
PCU Technical Staff Admin staff PC	1) PC	1) Continual	1) PC 2) PC 3) PM	1) montl 2) montl 3) montl

			4) PMC 5) PAB	4) every 5) annually
Project Manager (HUD)	PC	Monthly	EU, PMC, Zonal Admin	annually
PMC	Project Manager	Four monthly	Participating Partners	Four mc
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 later annually

* Experts who are involved in project related activities; these may include Cooperatives, honey, coffee, sp

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.

(Note: some activities planned under Purpose2 are reported under Result 1.3 for better coherence among all CBO activities.)

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

2.1.1 Honey Production

A five days training on improved beekeeping was provided to 74 interested farmers (including 16 women) from the eight selected *kebeles*. Participants were asked to select among them 22 farmers (including six women) to participate in farmer-led participatory trials in each *kebele*.

The trials were designed for testing five types of modern or intermediate technology beehives for their performance in local conditions, as compared to the traditional beehive production system. Criteria for performance were established together with the farmers and included site selection, the use of construction materials, ease of construction and handling, bee colonization, production volume, and quality of honey and wax.

All non-local materials for trial implementation were provided by the project and follow-up for technical assistance was provided on the spot. Sharing of experiences among trained farmers within each *kebele* has been promoted.

A field assessment of the trial sites was made in collaboration with Holeta Beekeeping Research Station. This was combined with an experience sharing workshop with all farmers and DA's involved in the trials. An assessment report has been produced, with important recommendations for further project intervention.

Although a lot of technical improvement is still needed and further promotion, first honey harvest of the trial sites was made and preliminary results are such that farmers are starting to change their attitudes towards the feasibility of innovating from their traditional beekeeping system. Some indicators of this change include the spontaneous replication of construction/purchase of newly introduced beehive models by some farmers; also expectations are raised, among women farmers and those who do not have *kobo* rights for traditional beekeeping, that honey production is becoming within their reach.

Besides the farmers involved in the trials on improved technologies, an additional 12 trained farmers started, on their own initiative, to try out new technologies, especially the bamboo and mud-made hive types.

2.1.2 Spice Production

Training on spice production in an agroforestry environment was organized in the five *woredas* and facilitated by RDCO staff formerly being trained in the subject. The training was attended by 63 male and 41 female farmers from 10 *kebeles*.

Fifty farmers (32 male and 18 female from nine *kebeles*) were selected for the establishment of spice production trials in an agroforestry environment. A total of 5450 seedlings of *korerima*, Indian cardamom and black pepper were distributed to these farmers for planting in the trial sites, (together with tree seedlings for shading and support of the spices).

The required seedlings have been produced mainly in the RDCO nurseries, while small family nurseries were established for this purpose by five interested individual farmers in Sheko *woreda*.

Currently 9230 seedling are still in RDCO nurseries ready for the coming planting season.

2.1.3 Workshops on Processing, Packaging and Marketing Options

Six workshops were held with leaders of the beekeeping groups and Cooperatives on post-harvest handling and marketing options for honey and wax. Conclusions will be drawn with the groups in the coming months after assessment of the economics of the different options.

Result 2.2 Increased Benefits From NTFP Trading to Farmers

2.2.1 Honey Trading

One beekeepers Cooperative and five beekeepers groups have begun buying honey with support from the project in order to explore how they can develop trading skills and gain increased livelihood benefits by being involved in NTFP trade. At the end of the year a total of 7500 kgs of raw honey – with wax, had been purchased and was being prepared for sale. Economic analysis of the best ways to manage this process is under progress and the different options for sale are being considered.

2.2.2 Market Information and Prices

Guidelines were developed for the collection and analysis of local market information on NTFPs. A system is now in place to collect and disseminate this information. RDCO staff collect market information on the weekly market days in the *woreda* towns and this information will be provided to the beekeepers groups and Cooperatives, as well as being shown at public places.

As a result of project activities, the price to producers for raw honey at the local market sites has risen by 50-100%.

An assessment has been made of potential honey and wax traders in the country, and initial negotiations have started to explore the possibility of developing trade links with these companies and the beekeepers groups and Cooperative.

2.2.3 Coffee Certification

Contacts have been established with Utz Kapeh, a coffee certification body based in the Netherlands, who certifies ‘responsible coffee’ for mainstream market outlets in Europe, USA, Canada and Japan. Utz Kapeh coffee certification is being recognized by Eurepgap as an official benchmark.

A first workshop and field assessment was given by an Utz Kapeh representative, with involvement of project and WRDCO Cooperative staff; a high potential for certification of both forest and garden coffee was identified. Samples sent to some European coffee traders have been assessed positively and the first steps in certification procedures are currently being undertaken.

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

2.3.1 PFM Start-up / Planning Teams

These teams have been established in eight of the nine PFM areas and given initial training.

2.3.2 PFM Field Activities

Identification of the forest areas in which PFM will be undertaken has been realized in nine *kebeles* and agreements on this have been made with *kebele* administration and communities involved.

Boundary identification and field inspection has been finalized in eight *kebeles*. In some cases boundary conflicts have been identified in specific sites and negotiation with neighbouring *kebeles* is due for these sites.

The process will lead on to the other activities - stakeholder analysis, vision development resource assessment, planning meetings and preparation of management plans, negotiation of management plans and implementation.

Field activities are guided by the training materials for these various elements in the PFM, which are being prepared as the process progresses.

Field activities in one of the *kebeles* (Shimi) are temporarily suspended, since the selected area is the Kontir Berhan forest, which has the formal status of conservation site for *in situ* coffee biodiversity conservation. Political decisions on the PFM approach to be used in this area are expected in the coming months.

2.3.3 Sustainable Land Management

The project recognizes the importance of improved land management within the farmed areas in order to prevent erosion and reduce pressure for forest clearance. However, it has been decided that the project must give priority forest management at present given the limited resources in the field. As a result this element has not been directly addressed in Year II.

5. ACTIVITY PLAN FOR YEAR III

The activities for Year III have been developed through the participatory review, monitoring and planning process. The work will include all of the areas of work outlined above in the report. The major focus will be on supporting production, capacity building,

institutional development and market linkages. Some of the major areas of activity are as follows:

- Coffee certification and market development
- Honey product characterization and market development
- Follow up of participatory research sites for NTFP-production (honey, spices, coffee, bamboo)
- Skill development in NTFP production, processing and marketing
- PFM process, including mapping, resource assessment, group development, forest management planning
- GO / NGO/CBO strengthening including institutional and technical issues
- Awareness raising, training and regarding gender issues and support to women
- Participation in regional and national policy networks including organizing workshops
- Student research studies

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

During the second year the project has worked closely with local government officials and local community groups to implement the field activities foreseen in the project document. These have been fine-tuned through the participatory planning process developed and applied by the project. It is important to note that the project is working closely with government staff to develop capacity to support NTFP-related and forest management activities which will help ensure the sustainability of the projects initiatives. It is also helping local community groups form and develop, even to the stage of cooperatives, in order to facilitate local co-ordination and collaboration in production, processing and marketing of NTFP. As these groups develop they will be centres for the dissemination of information, skills and knowledge about NTFPs, which can support government field staff, and they will act as nodes for market oriented activities.

The project activities are already having some impacts upon NTFP marketing with a major increase in the price of honey. Further increase in benefits for farmers are expected in the coming year as certification of coffee is achieved. The involvement of women and poor households in these benefits is being supported, and a considerable raising of gender awareness has occurred this year through the Gender and Development strategy formulation and training process. Support to the sensitization of all stakeholders in this respect will continue throughout the project.

It is encouraging to see that the project is stimulating local initiatives, such as that by the Mejengir NTFP Producers Cooperative. The interest by formerly marginalized, minority groups, such as the Mejengir, in the project is an indication that some success is being achieved in reaching the more remote communities in the project area.

Further development of community institutions is on-going with the PFM process and this will be a major challenge in the coming year, along with NTFP production and marketing.

The PFM groups will be the key to sustainable forest management and the link between resource management and forest-based livelihood development.

All this fieldwork has to be seen within the policy environment in the area, which includes a large range of issues such as land certification, forest policy, agricultural investment, *in situ* conservation of coffee and resettlement. The project will continue to engage in the debates on these issues drawing on its field experience and the professional expertise of its staff.

ANNEX 1. LIST OF PROJECT WORKING DOCUMENTS

The present list gives the overview of all working documents that were elaborated during the project life, until the end of Year 2. Copies (in digital and hard copies) are available in the project archives in Mizan Teferi office.

Administrative documents

1. Framework and MoU's between Huddersfield University and other implementing partners
2. Minutes of PMC meetings 1 – 7
3. Minutes of PAB-meetings 1 – 2 (in Amharic)
4. Mission Reports of Technical Advisors from SLA (9), HUD (3) and WU (1)
5. Project Administration Procedures, including safety measures
6. Financial Management Procedure
7. Progress report July 2003 – July 2004, September 2004
8. Summary progress report July 2003 – July 2004, September 2004
9. Progress report August 2004 – July 2005, September 2005
10. EWNRA, Progress report July 2004 – January 2005 'Rural poverty alleviation and livelihood development through a gender sensitive approach to NTFP utilization and village level forest management' (CIDA funded matching fund project), February 2005
11. EWNRA, Progress Report August – December 2004, 'Developing a new approach to food security for forest areas: Local institution development for improved livelihoods through NTFP production and village level forest management, March 2005

Reports

1. Report on the Selection of *Woreda's* as focal areas for the project, November 2003
2. Minutes of Project Familiarization Workshops, zonal and *woreda* levels, December 2003
3. Afework Hailu, A Consolidated Report on PRA Training Undertaken in Masha (January 21 – 30/2004) and in Mizan (February 2 – 11/2004), May 2004 Minutes of the Workshop on Study findings and project intervention strategy (draft), July 2004
5. Minutes of the seminar cum workshop on 'Non-timber forest products: Potentials and prospects in poverty alleviation', Jimma University College of Agriculture & NTFP SW Ethiopia project, July 5 – 6, 2004 (draft)
6. Proceedings of Participatory Forest management workshops at zonal and *woreda* levels (3), December, 2004
7. Different reports on all training events for government staff, CBO's and farmers.

Technical documents

1. Participatory Rural Assessments – Kebele level, April 2004
2. Participatory Rural Assessments – Community (got) level, April 2004
3. Tadesse Woldemariam Gole (PhD) and Ararsa Regassa, Forest Biodiversity, Management Practices and NTFP production, July 2004
4. Berhanu Taye Tola & Olani Wirtu, Marketing Study of NTFPs in South Western Ethiopia, July 2004
5. Fiona Flintan, Report on gender issues and NTFPs in relation to the SW Ethiopia NTFP-Research and Development project, July 2004 Million Bekele and Dereje Tadesse, Local Forest Management Study (draft), August 2004
6. Tamene Tiruneh, Livelihoods and non-timber forest products in SW Ethiopia (draft), August 2004
7. Olani Wirtu, Participatory assessment of the functioning of rural cooperatives in south-west Ethiopia, November 2004
8. Fiona Flintan, Report on issues related to, and recommendations for, the further development of a gender strategy and the inclusion of women in the ntfp-research and development project, south-west Ethiopia, December 2004
9. J. van Beijnen, I. Mostertman, G. Renkema, J. van Vliet Baseline description of project area: Summary of appraisal data at kebele and got level, Wageningen University, December 2004
10. Q. Chowdhury, R. van de Graaf, S. Hazenberg, E. Erniwati, W. Maris and P. Tesfaye, Options for certification of coffee and honey for poverty alleviation and forest conservation, Wageningen University, February 2005
11. Tefera Belaye E., Dynamics in the management of honey production in the forest environment of SW Ethiopia: Interactions between forests and bee management, June. MSc. Thesis Wageningen University, June 2005
12. Strategy Framework July 2003 – July 2007, June 2005
13. Gender Strategy, June 2005
14. Ephrem Tesema, Community based organizations (CBO's) for improved NTFP development, trading and sustainable forest management, July 2005 (draft)
15. Dr. Nuru, Field assessment of beekeeping trials, June 2005 (draft)

Training and extension materials

1. PRA manual for the NTFP Research and Development Project SW Ethiopia, January 2004. Olani Wirtu, Cooperative Development: A manual for Trainers, December 2004
2. Training on Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation: guidelines for facilitators and handouts, September 2004
3. 1st Training on Participatory Forest Management, guidelines for facilitators and handouts, January 2005
4. Dr. Nuru: Training Manual on modern beekeeping and honey processing, Holeta Beekeeping Research Station, December 2004
5. Training Manual on spice development, Tepi Agricultural Research Station, December 2004

ANNEX 2: LIST OF PROJECT STAFF

I. Field Offices Mizan Teferi and Masha

Technical Staff

Abebe Haile	Project Coordinator
Olani Wirtu	Marketing Specialist
Ephrem Tesema	Gender, Community Development and PPME specialist
Abiyu Lencho	NTFP Specialist
Eban Yigezu	Forest Management Specialist

Administrative Staff

Tola Torkoba	Administration and Finance Officer
Lulit Regassa	Cashier Accountant

Support staff

Wubetu Abera	Driver Mechanic
Legesse Kassaye	Driver
Girum Tadesse	Guard
Ademe Gebre	Guard
Belay Mengaw	Guard
Eyasu Kabtet	Guard
Feleke	Guard
Kebedech W/Argay	Cleaner
Sintayehu	Cleaner

II. International Advisors

Prof. Adrian Wood	Livelihoods Development
Els Bognetteau	Participatory Natural Resource Management
Dr Freerk Wiersum	NTFP and Local Forest Management