



Since its establishment, the Sesame Business Network (SBN) Support Programme has been providing different types of supports to the Sesame Business Clusters (SBCs) in the northwest Ethiopia. The following part briefly presents the major activities done so far.

Workshops

- Baselines undertaken at *woreda* level (7 *woreda* workshops), and at SBC level (19 SBC workshops)
- Launching workshop at national level(15-16, May 2013)
- Participatory action planning workshop in the 19 SBCs
- Regional experience sharing workshop; 71 participants in Gondar; 110 participants in Humera
- Inventory meeting workshop with service providers

Training

- ToT on improved agricultural technologies for agricultural experts/Das (69 North Gondar; 285 west Tigray)
- On improved technology, contract farming & marketing for 320 farmers from Adebay and Bereket clusters,
- Training on sesame marketing and value chain for 107 management members of primary cooperatives and unions in Metema, Tach and Mirab Armachiho *woredas*

Extension/Technology scaling up

- 24 sesame demonstration sites; 15 in west Tigray (10 in farmer training centers & 5 in farmers plots); 9 in north Gondar (8 in farmers' plots & 1 in farmer training centers)

Field days /Exchange visit organized

- 7 field days in north Gondar zone; 374 participants
- 4 field days in west Tigray zone; 356 participants
- Humera investors visited agricultural technologies

Action research

- Yield analysis and harvest, storage and transport losses studies
- Credit and production cost study
- Financial support made to Gondar Agricultural Research Center for 7 selected research projects: fertilizer use, seed rates, pest & disease control, comparative analysis of major field crops, conservation agriculture & the production of basic and pre-basic seeds

- Expression of interest for the formation of 8 new clusters in Amhara and 9 in Tigray has been evaluated and provisionally approved

Communication

- Activities of SBN and its support programme were reported, filmed and documented
- 3 issues of newsletter, an introductory brochure and rollup banners were published in 3 languages
- Website (<http://sbnetiopia.org/>) & facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/SBNETiopia>) have been developed and updated regularly
- 15 minutes radio air time lease agreement signed with Dmetsi Weyane Tigray plc and Amhara Mass Media Agency
- SBN T-shirts, stickers & caps were distributed to cluster actors
- Launching workshop & post harvest loss film produced

Staff Capacity building

- CBI on export readiness and European market information (3 staff)
- 2SCALE on data gathering (7 staff)
- CDI of Wageningen UR on Optimizing the Performance of Producer Organisations (5 staff)

Looking ahead

- Conducting baseline surveys and action planning for the new clusters
- Evaluating and signing collaboration agreement with service providers and sesame producers/cooperatives/
- Organizing national workshop to share the SBN one year experience (May 15-16, 2014)

Building Blocks of SBN

19 clusters

5 Farmers Cooperative Unions

46 Primary Cooperatives

7 Woredas

54 Kebeles

48,071 households

2 Agricultural Research Centers

Offices of Agriculture

Banks

Microfinance Institutions

Cooperative Promotion Office

