Summary of Community Level Meetings

Lake Hawassa and its catchment (Photo: Wolde Mekuria)

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Summary

We conducted three meetings at community level (Pictures 1 - 3). The objectives of the meetings were to: (a) introduce the SIWI-Ethiopia project, (b) gather communities feedback on the ideas of the project, (c) identify existing technical gaps related to landscape restoration, (d) assess communities’ preference on training methods, and (e) better understand how the members of the communities contribute toward achieving the objectives of the project. Thirty-four to forty-seven participants were participated in the meetings (Annex 1 -3). Female participants ranged from 25 to 32 %. Nearly 50% of participants were youth.

The introduction of the project and the discussion was done using the local language “Sidamigna”. Watershed experts from the Sidama zone and the two districts (i.e., Hawassa Zuriya and Wondo Genet) introduced the project, and described project objectives, key activities, expected outputs/outcomes to the participants, and added how the communities were selected.

The participants welcomed and acknowledged IWMI, SIWI and the zone and district team for the initiative. They have also mentioned that they are keen to support the project during implementation. In this line, the communities demonstrated that they have experience of working with different development organization on soil and water conservation. However, the technical gaps persist due to lack of practical and continuous capacity building programs. Also, participants mentioned that they are suffering due to soil erosion including gully erosion, flooding and deforestation and emphasized that these problems need urgent interventions to reduce their impact on the livelihood of local communities and Hawassa lake.

The participants mentioned several technical gaps related to watershed management or landscape restoration. These include: (a) planning, designing and implementation of physical and biological soil and water conservation measures such as terraces, trenches and bunds, (b) gully rehabilitation and management, (c) designing and construction of micro basins and water harvesting structures, (d) proper agricultural land management practices including organic and inorganic fertilizers application and management, (e) income generating activities that can be integrated within restored areas, (f) agroforestry practices, (g) land use planning, and (h) livestock feed production and management.

The participants were also emphasized the need to provide awareness raising trainings. All participants mentioned that capacity building is important to properly manage their environment and reduce the negative consequences of land degradation. The participants preferred a combination of both theoretical and practical trainings. Few details on the outcomes of the discussion are are summarized in Annex 4 a, b, c.
Picture 1 – Community meeting at Borite watershed, Doyo Oticho Kebele, Hawassa Zuriya district (Photo: Wolde Mekuria).
Picture 2 – Community meeting at Anole-Suke watershed, Mekibassa Korke Kebele, Hawassa Zuriya district (Photo: Wolde Mekuria).
Picture 3 – Community meeting at Tachignaw Kechema watershed, Netera Kechema Kebele, Wondo Genet district (Photo: Wolde Mekuria).