



2SCALE

Building capacity in Ethiopia

Photo: Dr Eyasu Abraha (left), Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources, presents the award to Addis Teshome, 2SCALE country team leader

The 2SCALE project builds partnerships for development. Equally important, it builds capacity, empowering farmers, farmer cooperatives and unions, agri-entrepreneurs, extension staff and others with skills and business linkages to help them grow.

Capacity building programs have made significant impacts, and these efforts have been noted by the Ethiopian government. On 10 June, the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Federal Cooperative Agency recognized 2SCALE as Best Capacity Builder/Project of the Year. The award was presented by Dr Eyasu Abraha, Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources, at a function in Hawassa.

Mr Usman Surur, Director General of the FCA, said: "2SCALE is awarded the trophy not for the amount of money it has put into the project, but rather it is for the fact that it has shown the government and development partners a better way of doing market-oriented inclusive agribusiness projects with relatively limited funding."

2SCALE capacity building programs cover not only technical training (e.g. production, quality control, processing, post-harvest management) but also business skills such as accounting, budgeting and cost-benefit analysis, and organizational strengthening (e.g. management of cooperatives).

For example, a training-of-trainers program in February 2017 brought together coaches from three farmer unions (Liben, Meki Batu and Robi Berga) that grow potatoes and green vegetables. The training covered simple record-keeping, financial budgets and farm credit, i.e. sources of credit, loan criteria and procedures. A similar program for the maize and soybean sectors involved eight coaches from three unions (Anger Abaya, Hunde Chewaka and Sidama Elto), which support 33 cooperatives that

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produce maize and soybeans for sale to another partner, food processing firm GUTS Agro. The coaches are now working with leaders (and especially finance officers) from the union's constituent primary cooperatives. This 'cascade' approach ensures that financial and enterprise management innovations reach very large numbers of farmers while keeping training costs low.

To date, more than 30 maize and soybean Primary Cooperatives, with several thousand farmer-members, have received training on production methods, post-harvest handling, marketing and other areas. More than 25 coaches, 10 Unions (as local business support service providers) and 25 local SMEs are involved in 2SCALE interventions. To reinforce the training, manuals have been produced and distributed in Amharic and Afaan Oromo.

In the four regions, 2SCALE project implementation has targeted ten Farmers' Cooperative Unions (FCUs), a private dairy processor and a consumer product distribution technique to reach low-income households, in partnership with a food processing company. Project facilitation helped establish contract arrangements for 102,900 tons of different grains and vegetables, directly benefiting 11,874 smallholder farmers under 121 Primary Cooperatives. In addition, 130 Primary Cooperatives were also assisted to supply inputs to their members. As the 2SCALE project focuses on creating a commercially sustainable farming system, to help the farmers and also

to build the capacity of the existing extension system, nine area-specific extension guides were developed in partnership with relevant stakeholders and over 20,000 copies were distributed. Over 16,000 farmers were trained on practical agronomic skills.

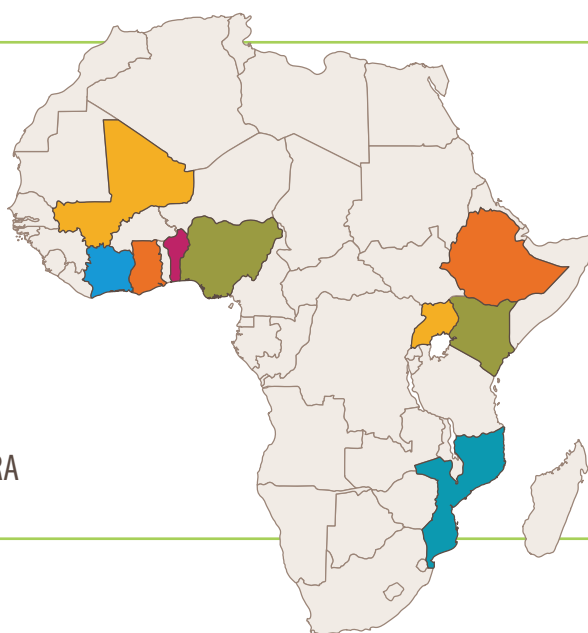
For improving the capacity of 50 Primary Cooperatives, learning modules were developed in partnership with FCA and over 350 cooperative leaders were trained. Ninety-five Primary Cooperatives were also supported to improve their post-harvest handling with the introduction of new grain storage techniques. In addition, 10 Cooperatives were assisted to build a new warehouse for aggregating produce harvested by their members. This has increased their bargaining power with buyers.

In order to reduce the cost of production associated with disease and pest control in the vegetables cooperatives, 49 spray service providers selected by the Primary Cooperatives and the Unions were trained and provided with all the required equipment including personal protective gear. This will enable more than 2,000 smallholder vegetable farmers to receive spraying services at a relatively low cost.

2SCALE in Ethiopia works on multiple crops with multiple partnerships. Circumstances, market needs and technical requirements are different in each partnership. But two things remain constant – our commitment to building local capacity, and our experience in designing training programs customized to local needs and priorities. ■

The 2SCALE project

- Funded by the Netherlands government
- 9 countries, multiple commodities
- 556,000 farmers, 1,400 cooperatives and producer organizations, 1,300 private firms (as of June 2016)
- Implementing partners: International Fertilizer Development Center, BoP Innovation Center and ICRA



www.2scale.org

The 2SCALE project is funded by the Netherlands government and implemented jointly by IFDC, ICRA and BoP Inc. 2SCALE was launched in June 2012. By December 2017 we aimed to provide technology, training, market linkages and other support to 500,000 farmers and 2,500 cooperatives and small businesses. These targets have already been exceeded, six months ahead of schedule.