

Report from the Basona Worena woreda community discussion on tree lucerne management and utilization, previous achievements and challenges, and future directions

Shimelis Mengistu and Temesgen Alene



Produced by

International Livestock Research Institute

Published by

International Livestock Research Institute

July 2016

www.africa-rising.net

The Africa Research In Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING) program comprises three research-for-development projects supported by the United States Agency for International Development as part of the U.S. government's Feed the Future initiative.

Through action research and development partnerships, Africa RISING will create opportunities for smallholder farm households to move out of hunger and poverty through sustainably intensified farming systems that improve food, nutrition, and income security, particularly for women and children, and conserve or enhance the natural resource base.

The three regional projects are led by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (in West Africa and East and Southern Africa) and the International Livestock Research Institute (in the Ethiopian Highlands). The International Food Policy Research Institute leads the program's monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment. <http://africa-rising.net/>



This document is licensed for use under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence.

This document was made possible with support from the American people delivered through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of the US Government's Feed the Future Initiative. The contents are the responsibility of the producing organization and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of USAID or the U.S. Government

Community discussion meeting on Tree Lucerne production

Venue: Goshe Bado kebele FTC (Farmers Training Center)

Experts/Researchers participated

1. Teferi Asefa (Agro forestry expert from Basona Worena office of agriculture)
2. Getabalew (Agro forestry researcher from Debre Birhan agricultural research center)
3. Temesgen Alene (Africa RISING research site coordinator)
4. Shimelis Mengistu (Africa RISING research site assistant coordinator)

Agendas of the meeting

1. Information on tree lucerne management and utilization.
2. Previous works and their outputs.
3. Challenges faced and obstacles for tree lucerne development.
4. Measures to be taken for successful tree lucerne development in the coming planting season.
5. Farmers' assessment on challenge for tree lucerne development.
6. Seedling preparation.

Information on tree lucerne management and utilization

- Suitable agro ecology for tree lucerne, its benefits, management and utilization was elaborated for the farmers.

Previous works and their outputs

- Number of participant and number of tree lucerne seedlings distributed was displayed.
- Survival rate and growth performance, supported with graph and picture, was displayed by comparing each farmer and kebele.

Observed challenges and obstacles for tree lucerne development

- Poor site selection and plot preparation.
- Uncontrolled free grazing.
- Poor management and protection.
- Awareness problem and lack of commitment.

Measures to be taken for successful tree lucerne development in the coming planting season.

- Proper site selection and plot preparation.
- Proper management (proper fencing, hoeing weed cleaning and watering)

Farmers' assessment on challenges for tree lucerne development

Following a presentation on tree lucerne management and utilization, the previous works as well as the challenges observed, farmers were given chance to raise ideas and discuss on major challenges that they consider to hinder or collapse the growth and development of tree lucerne. Based on that they raised different challenges that affected and also will affect the development of tree lucerne. Through the discussion, the farmers also raised the possible options they hope to alleviate those obstacles. The following points are the ones as directly stated by the farmers:

- There is awareness problem on the management and utilization. This leads to improper management resulted from lack of commitment and attention. But now, type of management, effect of site selection, and its use after development is clear. Thus, we will give necessary attention.
- How can we know whether the site/soil type we allocate is appropriate or not?.
- Once the site is confirmed suitable by concerned experts, it should be fenced in advance of planting tree lucerne.
- Rat/rodent attack is also one of the challenge that leads damage or loss of tree lucerne. So, we wonder if rat poison/chemical is provided for the farmers faced with this challenge.
- Almost all farmer said that uncontrolled free grazing is the biggest challenge resulting the major loss of planted trees including this fodder plant (tree lucerne). One farmer mentioning an apple damaged by bird, potato damaged by porcupine and tree lucerne lost by free roaming livestock. Another farmer (Gele Woldetsadik) said that avoiding free grazing may not seem to be easy and hence proper site selection and fencing will be the best and possible solution. This farmer said that if he plant tree lucerne on unclosed area and control his own animals, other neighbors will not do the same leading to conflict among neighbors. Hailu Abebe (another farmer) stand against the above idea by mentioning that such attitude will promote free grazing which is damaging the environment. Hailu also said that free grazing limits wider development of tree lucerne. Farmers would not have been restricted to plant small number of tree lucerne on very small area if there have not been free grazing.

Following farmers' opinion, possible options to reduce free grazing were indicated by experts. Village based free grazing control (through discussion and agreement of villagers) will be used as model to control free grazing on wider area. Free grazing control cannot 100 % be achieved at once. Proper site selection and strong fencing to protect tree lucerne from animal contact need to be given attention while working for the control of free grazing.

Farmers were then asked to give rank for each of the problems mentioned. Table 1 presents , the major problems, their ranks and possible solutions/measures to be taken.

Table 1: Problems identified, their ranks and possible measures to be considered

S/N	Problem/challenge	Rank	Options/measures to be taken
1	Lack of awareness	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training theoretic & practical. - Exchange visit to successful site/places. - They pointed out that eucalyptus is good example for this b/c we know its importance, we got something from it (construction material & sale) but for tree Lucerne we have awareness problem.
2	Poor site selection & pot preparation	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farmers need to take responsibility on allocating appropriate land and preparing pot properly. - Expertise need to confirm that the allocated land is appropriate and safe for the growth of tree Lucerne.
3	Free grazing	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper site selection and fencing - Controlling free grazing at village level. The village with better feed supply must be identified and the villagers need discuss on controlling existing free grazing.
4	Lack of proper management (fencing, watering, hoeing)	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The farmers need to consider proper fencing, hoeing and watering for the better development of the tree.
5	Rat	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using rat poison (chemicals) but farmers need to have access to it.
6	Labor / time shortage	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning according to the capacity of available labor.



Figure 1: Discussion with farmers at Goshe Bado

Seedling preparation

Africa RISING in collaboration with Woreda office of agriculture has prepared enough number of tree lucerne seedlings at Mush government nursery site so that every interested farmer can get enough seedling based on his or her available land.



Figure 2: Tree lucerne seedling at Mush nursery site

Table 2: List of farmers registered to participate on tree lucerne production in 2015 plating season

S/N	Name	Sex	Got/village	No. of seedling
1	Nebiyu Kibebe	Male	Kombel	50
2	Asefa Beletie	Male	Kombel	50
3	Hailu Abebe	Male	Shinet	100
4	Yeshigeta Dibaba	Male	Gochamba	50
5	Kiflie Demsie	Male	Kirtie	50
6	Kefelegn Moges	Male	Kirtie	30
7	Workneh Haileyes	Male	Gochamba	25
8	Nigatu Ayfokru	Male	Kombel	25
9	Tekeste Agidachew	Male	Kombel	30
10	Tadesse Abebe	Male	Kombel	50
11	Gele Woldetsadik	Male	Kirtie	50
12	Mengesha Tekletsadik	Male	Ardina senbogel	20
13	Mamaye Tefera	Male	Kombel	100
14	Aschenaki Kiflie	Male	Kirtie	20
15	Abegaz Ayifokru	Male	Kombel	30
16	Alemnesh Mulugeta	Female	Kirtie	20
17	Mulat Kiflie	Female	Kirtie	20
18	Kefelegn Teklegiorgis	Male	Kirtie	25
19	Wondewosen Tafesse	Male	Kirtie	25
20	Mengistu Zenebe	Male	Gashot	50
21	Aselef Mindahun	Female	Kirtie	20
22	Mamitu Teklie	Female	Kirtie	20
23	Workye Atlaw	Male	Kirtie	25
24	Sintayehu Dereje	Male	Kirtie	20
25	Teklu Getaneh	Male	Kirtie	30
26	Habtamu Seife	Male	Gochamba	25
	Total			960