



## **Discussion with representative participants from Meket district on SI-MFS initiative activities implementation**

**Place:** Meket Woreda

**Date:** 21 – 22 Dec 2022

**Implementers:** Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT (ABC)

**Partners:** Meket woreda agriculture office and Sirinka agricultural research centre

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Method: Focus Group Discussion

**Activity:** Identification and up-scaling of superior durum wheat variety and strengthen Warkaye Tesifa Lidet seed producer group in North Wollo Zone, Ethiopia

### **Background:**

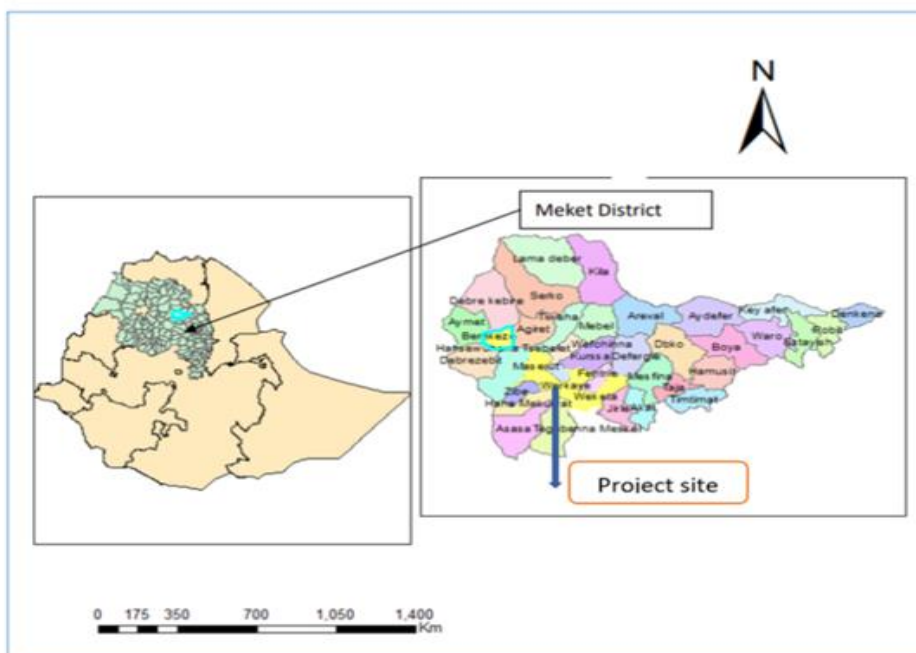
Meket district (North Wollo Administrative Zone) is almost wholly dependent on agriculture for the livelihood of its people. With an altitude range from less than 2000 to around 3,000 meter above sea level (masl), is characterized by a mix of agro-climatic zones, each of which presents a unique set of opportunities and constraints for subsistence farming (see annex 1). The farming system of Meket district is crop – livestock mixed system where both sectors strongly depend on each other.

Crop production and livestock rearing are the mainstay of farm communities in Warkaye. The major crops grown in the area include wheat, barley, teff and faba bean. Other crops like field pea, chickpea, lentil and grass pea are also cultivated by farmers of Meket district.

The major challenges in crop production sector are lack of adaptable and preferred varieties for the major and minor crops, climate change related biotic and abiotic stresses and shortage of community-based technology incubation centres. Warkaye Tesfa Lidet (WTL) community seed producer group, which was founded by Bioversity International before 8 years and having 83 members, is the only community-based seed producer in the Warkaye kebele.

Natural resources management: As Meket district is situated at high altitude receiving high amount of annual rainfall and exposed to deforestation pressures, there has been soil erosion and decline in soil fertility. Through safety net program being implemented for the last couple of years, there has been great efforts in natural resources management including soil and water conservation through bunds and terraces, reafforestation and the like. The community has shown interest to contribute to such ongoing efforts to sustain the productivity of their agricultural activities through natural resources management.

Livestock: the major livestock components of the area include cattle, sheep and goats, horses and donkeys. Poultry and bee keeping are also widely practiced. Despite having a wealth of livestock, shortage of fodder and feed becomes the major challenge farmers are facing.



Map of Meket district and SI-MFS implementing site

### Participants:

Sixteen participants (M= 15; F = 1) have represented the community in this discussion. The objective of the discussion was to introduce the concepts of Si-MFS initiative to the participants and discuss on possible areas of intervention under this initiative. Furthermore, the role of WTL to link crowdsourcing winner varieties of durum wheat and faba bean to the surrounding farmers. Besides, the project team has discussed with Meket woreda administration and office of Agriculture about the initiative, main agricultural sector problems and designed possible alleviation solutions.

Identified participants concerns:

- System wise thinking farm management is almost scanty

- Crop productivity has been declining due to interwoven constraints such as lack of farm input, climate related factors and marginality of their farmlands.
- Dependency on few and unadaptable crop varieties
- Seed storage problem
  - ✓ They have no storage facility and display room for their seed
  - ✓ It is mandatory for seed producers to reduce post-harvest losses.
- Slow varietal replacement leading to deterioration of quality and performance
- Lack of modern knowledge and skill of quality seed production, management and marketing
- Shortage of livestock feed and fodder, which has been leading to reduced animal productivity

Planned activity for SI-MFS initiative: Three major activities will be carried out during the implementation of SI-MFS initiative in Meket district.

1. Introduction, evaluation and selection of new crop varieties with emphasis on durum wheat and faba bean.
2. Up-scaling of crowdsourcing winner varieties of crops identified in similar areas of Ethiopia. The identified winner varieties for durum wheat and faba bean from different Bioversity crowdsourcing projects will be identified and upscaled to Meket district
3. Enhance the capacity of WTL seed producer farmer cooperative to producer quality seeds and market them efficiently
4. Evaluate the biomass (straw) of upscaled crop varieties for feed quality and integrate it into the livestock sector.
5. Provision of capacity building trainings to stakeholders at various levels in the district



Figure: Pictures taken from focus group discussion at Warkaye kebele



Annex 1. Characteristics of Warkaye Kebele in climate, altitude, soil types and land use land cover.

1. Climatic ~~condition~~ <sup>Reason</sup> → 1. Kola → 45%  
 2. wornadiga → 45%

2. Altitude from sea level → high - 2920  
 low - 2015.

3. major soil type	Area in (ha)	Percentage	Remark
1. Cambisols	1300.281	36.66	
2. Lithosols	346.92	9.78	
3. Nitrosols	389.05	10.96	
4. Vertisols	1510.309	<del>42.58</del> 42.58	
Total Area	3546.56		

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Land use TYPE and land cover

#	land use type	unit	amount	Percentage	Rem
1	Cultivated land	ha	2172.79	61.26	
2	Forest land	ha	252.95	7.13	
3	Grazing land	ha	380.23	10.73	
4	bare land	ha	194.16	5.47	
5	bush land	ha	320.23	9.04	
6	Settlement	ha	22.5	6.34	
#	Total		3546.56		

\* Major CROPS  
 1. wheat  
 2. Maize (Tefe)  
 3. mung  
 4. Sesame