



**PANE**

**Poverty Action Network in Ethiopia (PANE)**



**PROLINNOVA Ethiopia (PE) Country Platform  
CLIC-SR Project**

## **Field Study on Farmers' Innovation In response to Major Changes in Enebse Sar Mider (ESM), Mertule-Mariam**

### **Field Report**

**25 November, 2013**



**Supported by The Rockefeller Foundation**

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## **Introduction**

PE (represented by PANE) has signed an agreement with ETC Foundation to undertake a project in Ethiopia (Axum and Enebse Sar Mider – ESM) which aims at combining local innovation with scientific knowledge (CLIC-SR). This is funded by The Rockefeller Foundation. The local innovations are believed to be farmers' response to change. Change refers here to any factor/phenomenon/event etc that had impacts in affecting the lives of the people and their environment, positively or negatively. Changes could take place spontaneously but also over time. This could be identified from a field study that would take place in a participatory mode. Here the purpose of the field study is not to understand why those changes take place or how, but to learn from the innovative response of the farmers to the changes. Some community members could be able to grasp new opportunities when changes with positive implications are taking place. On the other hand, others could be able to respond to the undesirable and challenging changes innovatively. Sometimes it is even possible to see people changing the challenges into opportunities that could generate new values.

As part of this project, PE organized a meeting with community members in Enebse Sar Mider to understand what changes have occurred in the last five years and how the people were responding to them. This report gives an overview of the workshop organized at Enebse, as well as the guidelines to conduct the field study and to document findings.

**The learning workshop:** A workshop was organized to exchange ideas on the basic concepts of innovation and “change” as well as to make sure the study team – to be drawn from the workshop participants – is speaking the same language in terms of understanding the concepts and having similar attitudes and goals. 72 people attended the meeting; the participants were drawn from farmers (representing 18 *kebeles* or subdistricts), extension agents of the Office of Agriculture (OoA), Village Level Development Promoters of Aemberhan (the community-based association implementing the project in ESM), staff of the secretariat of Aemberhan, Board members of Aemberhan, heads and supervisors of the OoA, Women's Affairs Office, a representative from the Communication Office, representatives of Mertule-Mariam Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) college and a representative of the *Woreda* (District) Administration.

Three presentations were made to stimulate discussions with the participants. These included: How explanations were changing over the past 60 years in relation to the basic question: why farmers don't adopt technologies and ideas from outsiders; What do we mean by farmer/local innovation and what values does this approach add, who are innovators, how can we identify innovators, how can we document innovations and how can we initiate a Participatory Innovation Development (PID) exercise.



Partial view of the learning workshop participants in Enebse Sar Medir (ESM)

Moreover, a brief presentation was made on the CLIC-SR project, including the rationale, objectives, major activities and expected results. Finally, a very interesting session was held to identify the major changes that began to be visible in the area since the last five years. The participants were divided into three groups and came up with a number of changes (close to 40), and their implications for the lives of the local people was discussed extensively. It was found difficult to consider all these changes as points of departure to study the local innovations of the people but understanding was reached that a small group should be formed to summarize those points and keep a few important changes for further action. The team will also provide adequate explanation about the implications of the changes on the lives of the people. The short-listed changes will be used as entry points to find out how the local people were innovatively responding to those changes.

Part of the PE core team had also visited some farmers in the villages while the training was going on. This was very helpful to triangulate the "change ideas" generated by the workshop participants.

**The study team:** The study team was drawn from different institutions, including Alemberhan community-based organization (4 people), Mertulemariam TVET college (1), OoA (2) and Office of Women's Affairs (1) (See Annex).The study team was given two important missions: i) to summarize and finalize the change ideas of the workshop participants; and ii) to conduct the field studies.

## **The field study**

- **The team has agreed to reduce the number of changes listed down by the workshop participants to 7-10 points. The team will work to combine some of the points into more comprehensive statements, depending on how the points are related.**



Learning workshop participants discussing and identifying in groups perceived "changes" in recent years in Enebe Sar Medir (ESM)

- **The team will work in 3-5 *kebeles*, depending on easy access and ecological representativeness. It was agreed at least to choose one *kebele* each in the lowland, midland and highland agro-ecological zones.**
- **In each *kebele*, farmers will be selected from all walks of life including women, men, youth, landless, rich, poor etc. Random sampling will be used wherever appropriate; however, this is not the only way of choosing farmers for interviewing. Stepwise interviewing and snowball sampling (chain references) will be also used in the study.**

- The team will be also responsible to use these change points to develop checklists to find out innovations along the line. However, the generic questions to be asked to the interviewee may include:
  1. If the interviewee agrees or not with the list of changes generated by the workshop participants
  2. Which of the changes did he/she found more relevant to his/her circumstances? Why?
  3. Are there changes that make more sense to the interviewee, different from what was listed by workshop participants?
  4. How did that change affect life and environment in his/her area (positive or negative)?
  5. How did he/she respond to the changes?

*(If the interviewer found the response of the interviewee to the last question to be innovative (based on the discussions made in the training hall: of which the participants came up with their understanding of “innovative” as a person or group with new idea/s, experience/s to the area or mechanisms of organizing things in a different manner using own resources by themselves. They suggested a famer who managed to get water unusually across a steep rocky hill digging a long distance and cultivate his land in response to the serious water shortage), then the list of questions given under “guide for documentation” here below, will be used to generate more information about the innovation.)*



Group member presenting the identified “changes” in his group to the participants

## Guide for documenting innovations

### *Personal information*

- Name of the innovator
- Age
- Level of education
- Family size
- Mobility history
- Address: Region, *Woreda* & *Kebele*
- Typology: Farmer/pastoralist/woman farmer/craftsman/herd keeper etc
- Sector/Area of knowledge: Agriculture/crop, Livestock health, Livestock husbandry (including feeding), Natural resource management, Food processing, Marketing etc
- Title of the innovation
- Recorded by
- Date



PE members briefed the study team on the methods/approaches of carrying out the survey

### *Description of the Innovation*

- Short statement about the innovation (the practice/technology/methodology/process, organizational form etc)
- Reasons for calling it an innovation

- **When was the innovation started?**
- **Where did the idea come from?**
  - **New**
  - **External (modified)**
  - **Traditional (IK) – if so, what is new about it?**
- **Time spent to develop the innovation**
- **Labor used for the innovation**
- **Who else was involved in developing the innovation, and how?**
- **What conditions are required to use the innovation?**
- **Challenges that could prevent the innovation from being adopted**
- **Any ideas on potential solution?**
- **How many farmers have adopted the innovation so far? What changes did others make while adapting the innovation to own circumstances?**
- **What factors influenced them to adopt or adapt the innovation?**
- **How did the innovators (adaptors in the second category) find out about the innovations and when?**
- **How does the innovation affect the rest of the community?**
- **How is the innovation responding to climate issues (friendly/unfriendly)?**
- **To what extent is the innovation relevant to women and youth?**
- **To what extent is the innovation in agreement with government policies? (if not, explain)**
- **To what extent does the innovation add value to the market?**
- **To what extent is it helpful to address poverty and food security problems?**

### **Verifying and selecting innovation for scaling up and/or PID**

- **Each member of the study team is expected to generate a short report on the study process and the documented innovations based on the guide given above.**
- **The coordinator will compile the field report and the documented innovations will be also put together after editing and formatting.**
- **The same group of people, who have attended the training on PID, as well as the innovators identified by the study team, will be invited to a workshop.**
- **The field-study team will have a meeting to screen the type of innovations (if too many innovations are collected) to be presented in the workshop. The “ready-made” innovations for scaling up (sharing to the wider community) through different mechanisms (field days, exchange visits, inviting the innovator to a training session, innovation fairs etc) will be**

**chosen by the workshop participants from the short-listed innovations. The workshop participants are also expected to choose 3-5 innovations that should be explored further in farmer-led joint experimentation (PID).**

- **Another planning meeting will be organized with the selected group to work out the details of the PID exercises for the chosen 3-5 innovations**

**Annex:**

**Members of the study team along with their responsibilities:**

- ✚ Atalay Yigrem ( ABSHCBDA ).....Chairman
- ✚ Mamaru Melkie (from Finote Hiwot Ending Early Marriage (Jarco Consulting p.l.c)...Secretary
- ✚ Dagne Mamo (Dean of Agricultural College )-----member
- ✚ Alelign Desie ( Vice Head of Wereda Agricultural and Rural Development Office) ---member
- ✚ Abebaw Adigo ( Agricultural Extension Coordinator)-----member
- ✚ Alem Nigat (farmer and chair man ,board of ABSHCBDA)----member
- ✚ Tseganesh Tesfaw (she is vice head of wereda women, children and youth office )----member
- ✚ Meseret Tadese (innovative farmer)-----member
- ✚ Asnakew Alelign (farmer)---member
- ✚ Bereket Ebabu(field Officer in ABSHCBDA) ---member

**For details and communications, contact the PE Coordinator at PANE via the following address:**

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