

Proceedings Of The Sixth National Planning, Monitoring, And Evaluation (PME) Forum

Bishoftu

February 13 to 15, 2017
Bishoftu

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Acronyms

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Agri-MIS | Agricultural monitoring information system |
| AGTP | Agricultural Growth and Transformation Plan |
| AKLDP | Agricultural Knowledge, Learning, Documentation and Policy Project |
| ATA | Agricultural Transformation Agency |
| BoANR | Bureau of Agriculture and Natural Resources |
| CSA | Central Statistical Agency |
| DA | Development agent |
| FCA | Federal Cooperative Agency |
| FTC | Farmer training center |
| ICT | Information and communication technology |
| M&E | Monitoring and evaluation |
| MIS | Management information system |
| MoANR | Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources |
| MoFEC | Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation |
| MoH | Ministry of Health |
| MoLF | Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries |
| NNP | National Nutrition Programme |
| NNSAS | National Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture Strategy |
| NPC | National Planning Commission |
| NRM | Natural resource management |
| NSA | Nutrition-sensitive agriculture |
| PME | Planning, monitoring, and evaluation |
| PPD | Planning and Programming Directorate |
| PPO | Planning and Programming Office |
| PPP | Planning and programming process |
| PSNP | Productive Safety Net Programme |
| SHF | Smallholder farmer |
| SNNPR | Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region |
| SRF | Strategic results framework |

Preamble

This sixth planning, monitoring, and evaluation (PME) biannual forum proceedings is an output of the forum jointly organized by the Planning and Programming Directorate of Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (PPD/MoANR), the Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA), and the USAID/Ethiopia Agriculture, Knowledge, Learning, Documentation and Policy Project (AKLDP), implemented by the Feinstein International Center, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University.

The purpose of the forum was to promote federal-regional experience sharing and capacity building of staff and organizations involved in the PME of the second Agricultural Growth and Transformation Plan programs, projects, and activities.

The first day started with opening remarks by the Director of the PPD/MoANR. He elaborated on the purpose of the biannual forum organization, emphasizing its importance as a platform where federal and regional planning and programming experts assemble to learn from each other, to coordinate and align with each other, and to have a common understanding of the agriculture sector's (covering both crops and livestock) national PME agenda. He also underscored the importance of the forum in strengthening the national agriculture sector planning and programming capacity as well as the capacity to measure the sector's annual planned activities implementation performance and their contribution to the overall goal of the AGTP II. Regional states, except Gambella and Afar States, presented AGTP II implementation progress in the last one and a half years of implementation. A brief report from the federal level was also presented. Issues, questions, and comments raised and discussed are documented in these proceedings.

The second day was used for presentation on AGTP II target alignment and the progress made in developing and mainstreaming of the nutrition-sensitive agriculture (NSA) strategy. Experts from ATA, AKLDP/Feinstein, Ministry of Health (MoH), and the Training and Communications Directorate of the MoANR Nutrition Case Team made lead paper presentations. Group discussions and feedback were part of the presentations and deliberations of the alignment agenda. On both the alignment and the NSA agendas, bulleted statements on the presentations, comments, and discussion, as well as actions agreed on after group discussions, are contained in this proceedings document.

The third day continued with presentations and group and plenary session discussions on matters related to alignment of PME functions and the institutional survey. The presentations and discussion focused on developing common guidelines for smooth PME regional-federal workings. Bulleted points covering planning alignment expected benefits, current practices and constraints, and expected roles and responsibilities of federal and regional target institutes are documented in these proceedings. The presentations and discussion on the institutional survey dealt with a general overview of institutional mapping, which is one major component of the broader agricultural monitoring information system (Agri-MIS). The list of the identified agriculture institutions, the scope of service the institutions provide, the criteria to measure those institutions' capacity and functionality, and proposed indicators to measure their capacity and functionality are recorded in these proceedings.

Final wrap-up discussions and agreed-on actions are also part of these proceedings. These are presented in sub-sections covering issues of AGTP II progress, alignment, nutrition, the institutional survey, and coordination. The annex contains the three days' program agenda and a list of participants.

Day One:

AGTP II progress by regions and at the federal level

1. INTRODUCTION AND OPENING

Zena, the PPD/MoANR Director, welcomed the participants to the sixth biannual forum and made the following remarks in his opening speech:

- The purpose of the PME biannual forum is to promote federal-regional experience sharing and capacity building of staff and organizations who are involved in the planning, monitoring, and reporting of AGTP II.
- This is the sixth biannual forum. So far, we have achieved remarkable milestones on the preparation of a strategic results framework (SRF) through consultations with you all. We have tried to make the SRF as comprehensive as possible by also including nutrition, which is the reason we have included nutrition sessions in the forum.
- Our transformation agenda, evidence-based PME, needs an intensive effort from all of us, and this biannual forum is part of that effort. We are also working with the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) and the Ethiopian Development Research Institute to develop our PME system and help it encompass analytical aspects and establish data management systems.
- We are making efforts to mobilize resources to ensure continuity of this forum, as it is a key mechanism for strengthening PME and engaging with programs such as AKLDP and other donor-funded projects. Therefore, we need sustainable financial sources, which can be secured by showcasing the fruits of this forum in order to convince the government and other financial sources.
- He stressed that this forum is not meant to discuss regions' plans vs. achievements, but is an important platform to learn from each other, to coordinate and align with each other, to have common understanding on the "big picture," the national agendas in PME, and to strengthen our capacity on the system of measuring sectoral performance to contribute to the overall goal of the AGTP II.

2. DISCUSSION ON SECOND AGRICULTURE GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROGRESS BY REGIONAL STATES AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

- All regions, except Gambella and Afar, presented AGTP II progress focusing on major achievements, lessons, and challenges during the last one and a half years of implementation of the plan in their respective regions. A brief report at the federal level was also presented.
- Zena gave an overview by focusing on how to make planning and reporting result and evidence based. He mentioned that we are more or less following the same direction as we have already agreed on in strategic areas. There are efforts made to develop regional capacity. Now it is time to implement as we have gone a long distance in finalizing the SRF of Second Agriculture Growth and Transformation Plan with indicators at all levels of the results hierarchy. We need to link our system to real data.
- It is observed that there are differences in reporting styles and content that are occurring due to the absence of commonly agreed-on guidelines on the format of the forum in general and content of the presentations in particular. We will solve this by adhering to the five strategic objectives of AGTP II and selected indicators of national importance to track at the national level. So, federal PPD will facilitate this, in collaboration with ATA.
- The PME should follow the new extension approach that is being implemented, such as commercialization cluster, value chain, and transformation to industrialization of the sector. Some areas such as irrigation, input utilization, improved technologies, commercialization, natural resource management (NRM) (areas rehabilitated and giving benefits), land use plans, soil information systems, food security, mechanization, and rural job creation are elements of our program, and as such we must track and report on their progress.

Some of the challenges mentioned in most reports are common across regions and also hold true at the federal level:

- Staff turnover is high.
- Farmer attitude, knowledge, and skills to adopt new technologies and practices is wanting.
- The role of cooperatives is undermined in the transformation process.
- Linkage with training and research institutions is weak and fragmented.
- Market linkages for strategic crops are needed.
- Emergence of new diseases and pests is posing new challenges to crop productivity, especially in the case of maize.
- Input supply for treating acidic soil is not adequate.

2.1 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

1. The presentation and reporting style for this forum is not uniform and needs to be improved.

This happened due to the absence of a common template and clear guidelines regarding the style and content of reports for this useful forum. The information provided says 10–15 slides on major AGTP II achievements and lessons. However, regions prepared reports as they pleased due to the absence of clarity on the content.

2. All presentations are good and informative. But where is PME performance report as this is a forum particularly on PME?

It is legitimate that PPD should have to address and present PME achievements since the last forum. However, some of the achievements such as the development of the SRF, PPD/Planning and Programming Offices' (PPOs') organizational structure review by the consultant, PME alignment guideline development, and capacity development efforts were highlighted during the opening remarks.

3. Are we ensuring capacity building for farmers to create smallholder farmers (SHFs) who can absorb the technologies we are prompting? Are there efforts to educate farmers?

These days, farmers are moving ahead of the experts and government officials in trying new technologies. Millions of educated farmers were created over the last decades by universities, farmer training centers (FTCs), NGOs, and adult education programs. In some areas, it is becoming difficult to respond to farmers' needs regarding modern farming technologies. The problem regarding farmers' capacity to apply new technologies is not universal to all regions or woredas.

4. In order to bring transformational changes, short-term training sessions are not enough for development agents (DAs) and experts. As a result, they are leaving their work and changing their professions. What is planned to upgrade skills and knowledge for frontline workers and development cadres?

Staff management must be improved in order to maintain experts at all levels. Are we rewarding well-performing staff based on their merit? Do we have clear technical performance evaluation criteria without discrimination? The government is providing long-term training opportunities for DAs and has improved their salary scale to retain them in kebeles. The government also has a strategy for DA skill upgrading and a Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) program.

Modernizing and strengthening FTCs should be materialized (equipped with information and communication technology (ICT) and other facilities). On the other hand, the linkages between regions, through research and universities, are good opportunities for capacity building and modernizing the sector.

5. Why was the extension delivery system not mentioned in this forum? Why has there not been any improvement in our approach, such as use of ICT for extension education and reporting? And there are different strategies and guidelines followed by different regions.

There are gradual changes in our extension's approach to market-oriented extension, which needs the addition of a set of knowledge and skills. There are initiatives in this regard with a donor-funded program. Updating strategies and guidelines is important. Linkage with research, universities, and ATA's role is expected in this regard (manuals, teaching materials, etc.)

6. In most of the presentations, strengths are reported on while weakness and challenges are not reflected upon, many of which are important, such as graduation from the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), the input supply system, the effect of climate change, etc., and how we overcame the need to report to different audiences. This should be improved as it will make our reporting comprehensive and enhance learning from our failures and challenges.

This will be solved with the uniform presentation format and content as agreed above.

7. Market linkage is one of the biggest challenges facing most regions, where there is a surplus of production. How much does our planning and implementation consider the issue?

A cluster approach is being implemented, basically to solve the market linkage issue. There are good examples in this regard, especially for industrial and high-value crops (Dire Dawa for vegetables, Oromia and Amhara for malt barley, etc.). But we need to work on value addition, creation of agroprocessing, and linking production with market niches. Above all, our production should be led by market demand. Overall, the role of cooperatives is critical in solving the market problem. For instance, coops started exporting maize to Kenya and started agroprocessing. The working relationship among coops across regions is also a major aspect to strengthen.

8.

Basing reports on real data and evidence has always been an issue in reporting. But currently, there are improvements as we have started shifting focus from activities to results (Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR)). However, there is a clear technical gap on verifying the data coming from kebeles and woredas. So, we need a mechanism for ensuring data quality and what the federal PPD is planning to do in this regard.

Data falsifying is a criminal act and should be taken seriously as doing so is one aspect of good governance. Government officials, heads, and leaders are accountable for ensuring that what is reported from their office/department is always true and verifiable. We must always cross-check our data with other sources such as CSA before reporting.

9.

There are good experiences with regard to NRM (including integrated water management) from Amhara and good work on resilience and community mobilization in Tigray, and on market linkage and NRM in Dire Dawa. So, we need to share these experiences with others.

There is experience from all regions in different areas of the program. It is important to identify, synthesize, and share this experience with others, and organize cross-learning visits with tangible action plans, accompanied by political commitment.

10.

Categorizing SHFs into groups and making model farmers is not an easy process. There should be agreed-on criteria at a national level based on scientific benchmarks (i.e., wealth status).

Experience sharing is important.

11.

Some strategic objectives and outcomes such as commercialization, job creation, land use plans and administration, cooperative development, etc. are not covered in the reports. In addition, most of the reports are based on process and activities, and need to be result oriented.

Indicators must be reported on, and templates are needed as a guide, with other guidance from PPD.

12. It is known that a timely and appropriate input supply is critical for the transformation of the agriculture sector. But there is no accountability mechanism for improved seed as compared to chemical fertilizers, and as a result there is always carryover. So, we need a stronger mechanism, with clear accountability with regards to inputs.

The comment is well taken and the relevant directorate needs to act.

13. We expected updates on Agri-MIS from regions but have not heard much. What is the status and what are the challenges?

Training was provided in pilot zones, and some regions expanded the training to all zones/woredas. There is a plan to provide training on the Excel version on the MIS (management information system). Data entry was started in all pilot zones but interrupted due to network connectivity problems.

2.2 SUGGESTED WAYS FORWARD/FUTURE FOCUSES

- Work on market linkages as a strategy.
- Mechanization needs more attention as it can help create job opportunities for youth groups, on top of enhancing productivity.
- Strengthen FTCs and start implementation of Agri-MIS. Start implementation of capacity development and retention for DAs and other staff. Civil service is giving due attention, but DAs and FTCs need special attention.
- Promote best-practice sharing on irrigation scheme management, NRM, mechanization, youth employment, market linkage through cooperatives, etc.
- M&E (monitoring and evaluation) and an information management system should be implemented as urgently as possible, learning from others' good practices (regional or federal agencies).
- Transformation agenda deliverables are progressing with potential to address most of the concerns. The agenda needs the support of and ownership by all of us.
 - Agri-MIS will solve data and report quality issues.
 - PME guidelines will be a key step in addressing concerns related to alignment in planning, monitoring, report flow, timeliness and quality, and analysis functions.
 - Organizational structure will enhance the implementation capacity of PME functions.
- Include PME works progress in this forum.
- Accountability is a government direction. Data falsification must be fought against at the leadership level.
- ICT should be implemented in extension and PME functions as technology should get attention.
- Extension strategy and updating guidelines and working manuals should be revisited.
- Strengthen and ensure continuity and regularity of the PME forum.

Agreed-on actions

1. Federal PPD will prepare a format including the content of the presentations based on AGTP SRF, in collaboration with ATA.
2. Regions and PPD will prepare and present progress in PME functions starting with the next PME forum.
3. PPD will communicate the issue of different extension approaches to extension and training directorate and report the feedback at the next forum.
4. PPD, in collaboration with relevant directorates, will provide guidance to regional PPOs on areas of good practice. Regions will synthesize experience and present at the next forum, supported by videos as appropriate.
5. To solve the issue of data quality and making reporting evidence based, we need to start a web-based (e-monitoring) system and link our activities and interventions to technological innovations such as the geographic information system (GIS). The federal PPD has a critical problem of human resources but will work with technical directorates and other stakeholders to speed up implementation of the Agri-MIS and the desktop version (Excel-based) data collection and reporting that will improve data quality.

Day Two:

Target alignment and nutrition-sensitive agriculture

3. AGTP II TARGET ALIGNMENT

The presentation covered:

Rationale for target alignment

Areas of misalignment:

- Issue #1: Federal level targets are not equal to the sum of regions;
- Issue #2: Differences in the ways indicators are articulated;
- Issue #3: Gap. Out of 258 indicators, only 60 have targets; only 2 indicators have targets that cover all regions.

Discussion points for breakout sessions

3.1 Comments on the presentations

- The misalignments are expected as we have been doing planning and target setting separately. Though the general direction was given from the federal level during the AGTP II planning and target-setting process, there have not been efforts to cross-check the alignment between federal and regional targets on strategic objective indicators. A bottom-up approach with top-down direction and feedback might have been a better approach.
- Target setting on basic elements such as production and area coverage at the federal level could have been done by consulting regions or after regions had completed their targets. However, it is not expected that all indicators will be aligned.
- Most of the gap happened because the alignment exercise was done based on a newly agreed-on set of indicators, as per the SRF of the program, and it is possible to set targets for most of them. Alignment was not planned for but emerged as an issue in the federal system.
- The causes include less attention given to planning and weakly staffed planning departments at all levels, which resulted in weak coordination of the planning process. Above all, the absence of a common framework, guidelines, and an accountability mechanism is the main reason behind misalignment between federal and regional targets.
- However, the challenge is to change targets approved by regional councils and those submitted to the National Planning Commission (NPC) by the federal ministry. On the other hand, there is a possibility and opportunity of requesting/proposing a mid-term review followed by revision of targets.
- In the effort to create one economic society, we need to be consistent and harmonize our interventions towards a common goal. All regions should see themselves in terms of their contribution to national targets on strategic objectives. In some cases, cascaded targets may be needed, targets in which regions take their parts.
- The level of ownership and knowledge of the AGTP II plan differs across all levels of government, which also leads to poor planning and then to poor implementation.
- Fragmentation or structural differences among regions and the federal level regarding certain agencies such as coops, land administration, biodiversity, etc. created gaps in having full and consolidated targets.

“ In the effort to create one economic society, we need to be consistent and harmonize our interventions towards a common goal. All regions should see themselves in terms of their contribution to national targets on strategic objectives. In some cases, cascaded targets may be needed, targets in which regions take their parts. ”

3.2 Actions agreed on after group discussion

The workshop participants agreed on the following approach to be followed in addressing the issues:

- Before directly engaging in the technical work needed to address the issues, the workshop participants will brief their respective bureaus of agriculture leadership about the issues around target alignment that have been presented and discussed in the workshop. The leadership is expected to provide guidance/direction to the regions' planning and programming process on how to address the issues.
- The planning and programming process will debrief on the areas of misalignment to the regional bureaus of agriculture leadership and will further work with the federal PPD/MoANR and propose solutions for addressing issues of misalignment as per the guidance from the decision makers.
- Federal PPD will provide a targeting template based on an agreed-on set of indicators from the AGTP II SRF.
- Regional bureaus of agriculture planning and programming process, together with the relevant technical process, will fill out the template and figure out the areas of misalignment. They will also convert units of measurement to commonly agreed-on ones, indicate which are difficult to set targets for, and make remarks on indicators that are new and different from those previously approved by regional councils.
- Federal PPD will do target alignment again, conduct analysis, and provide feedback to regions.
- Each region should try to align their units of measurements on key targets as per the units of measurement used for the agreed-on indicators in the consolidated SRF. This will be carried out soon, while regions are working on this year's planning and budgeting (Ethiopian Fiscal Year (EFY) 2010 plan should address most of these issues based on the units of measurement agreed on for SRF indicators).
- There is agreement on the need to change the way targets are articulated as per validated indicators for consolidated/comprehensive SRF. Target modifications/refinements and inclusion of additional or new targets is possible when we do a mid-term review of AGTP II.
- There is a need to disaggregate the data on the respective main categories of indicators and targets. Disaggregation makes it easy to trace back and verify the information. It also makes it easy to undertake policy and strategy recommendations for forthcoming initiatives.
- These all will be done based on the following two actions by PPD/MoANR (jointly with ATA):
 - Completion of indicator handbook (with indicator definitions, including calculation, unit of measurement, detailed disaggregation and its articulation, data sources, methodology and frequency of data collection, etc.)
 - Using CSA's agriculture sample survey manual/data collection format to ensure consistency in units of measurement and improve administrative data quality.

4. NUTRITION-SENSITIVE AGRICULTURE

4.1 Topics of presentations

The session consisted of presentations on an overview of NSA (concept and instrument of implementation), the National Nutrition Programme (NNP), and the NSA strategy presented by experts from AKLDP (Feinstein), MoH, and MoANR nutrition case teams respectively.

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture (concept and instrument of implementation) covered: AGTP II and nutrition security; the conceptual underpinning of nutrition; institutional issues; PME and grassroots activities; home gardens as an instrument in NSA implementation; and concluding remarks.

The overview of the NNP covered the following content: Why does nutrition matter?; the global and national burden of malnutrition; the consequences of malnutrition; opportunities; NNP II strategic objectives/more on NSA strategy; nutrition-sensitive interventions across agriculture; the NNP II coordination mechanism and linkage; what has been done so far; and challenges/the way forward. The NSA covered nutrition and malnutrition, nutritional status in Ethiopia, cost of undernutrition, and the National Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture Strategy (NNSAS).

4.2 Discussion and way forward

1. Nutrition pyramid should not be generalized as it needs to consider the population with diabetes.

It is difficult to have such general trends for all specific segments of population. We use a framework that works for the general population.

2. Regulation on food safety and fortification needs to be given due attention. There are many roadside restaurants in Dire Dawa and other places (selling simple dishes that mix pulses, cereals, and vegetables, but without safety precautions).

Engaging with roadside food markets is a good strategy to promote nutritious food, especially when there is a surplus in production. However, food safety is an issue.. MoH is working on the issue with the food safety and standard/grading institute.

3. The role of the media is not magnified in the area of nutrition.

There are radio programs and messages transmitted by national radio stations with the support of different donors and MoH. But it is not enough and needs strengthening.

4.

The concept of nutrition security as a function of food security (i.e., nutrition security = food security, which includes care practice, hygiene and sanitation, food preparation and utilization) is very clear. But which factor is more explanatory or more important for nutrition security?

There are several studies regarding this. But the take-away message from the presentations on nutrition is “Everybody should play his/her role, as nutrition results need multiple stakeholders because the causes of malnutrition are from multiple sources.” Nationally, we have declared that we are food secure, but that is at a national level and not at the household level. Nutrition security is more appropriately seen at the household level, and we are not any closer to having nutrition security at household level. This needs mainstreaming of nutrition in all stakeholder institutions, agencies, and the government structure.

5.

Inclusion of nutrition in the second agriculture growth and transformation plan is legitimate as per the NNSAS and NNP presented. But how practically will that happen?

As can be seen from the SRF of the second agriculture growth and transformation plan, nutrition is included at the strategic objective level, and indicators are set for the measurement of nutrition-related results at objective and outcome levels.

6.

We understood that there is a knowledge gap and each of us are not nutrition conscious in our daily food habits. The behavior should start from us.

It is correct, behavioral change did not happen, regardless of education level.

7.

Mainstreaming nutrition in the cooperative development area is a missed opportunity as we have more than 15 million coop members.

The coop agencies need to mainstream nutrition in coordination with the federal nutrition case team. There are efforts to train affiliated agencies by the team, and that will continue.

8.

Is NNSAS a standalone strategy as we have a nutrition strategic objective in AGTP II? And how is it aligned?

Using the NNSAS and NNP.

9. How can we link and align NSA with the discussion on the second agriculture growth and transformation plan alignment? We tried to include nutrition objectives and indicators in the second agriculture growth and transformation plan. So, we ask the NNSAS/nutrition teams to inform/comment on the the second agriculture growth and transformation plan SRF before finalizing.

This is a good opportunity to incorporate missing nutrition elements in the A second agriculture growth and transformation plan, and the team can comment on the SRF and link with NSA (share SRF with nutrition teams).

10. Nutrition is critical in Amhara Region. We have a surplus production of major crops but there is a big gap in utilization. We started coordinated efforts on nutrition, and nutrition staff deployment is done at woreda level. So PPD initiative is good but needs further strengthening in measuring results.

These days, farmers are moving ahead of the experts and government officials in trying new technologies. Millions of educated farmers were created over the last decades by universities, farmer training centers (FTCs), NGOs, and adult education programs. In some areas, it is becoming difficult to respond to farmers' needs regarding modern farming technologies. The problem regarding farmers' capacity to apply new technologies is not universal to all regions or woredas.

11. It would have been better if nutrition study results and best practices were presented in this forum.

This is a good idea and needs to be included in the next forum.

12. There are good start-up initiatives on nutrition such as staffing at federal and some regional levels. But that is not enough as nutrition needs behavioral changes that should be promoted through practically oriented activities, especially on food preparation.

Practical aspects, guidelines, accountability, and other needed activities are included in NNP and NNSAS. But for the purposes of this forum, the presentations on NNP focused on strategic and coordination issues. Practical education is being undertaken. Documents are prepared, training has been conducted and will be cascaded to local levels. We are planning to coordinate with projects and donor programs to do more training and behavioral change communication on nutrition.

Day Three:

Alignment of PME functions and the institutional survey

5. DEVELOPING COMMON GUIDELINES FOR THE REGIONAL-FEDERAL WORKING RELATIONSHIP FOR SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF PME

5.1 Presentation

The presentation focused on:

What problem are we trying to solve? Background and problem statement

The solution (objectives, expected result)

Themes for group discussion

5.2 Breakout sessions on alignment of PME functions

Alignment of planning

Expected benefits of alignment

- Common understanding and vision on bigger picture. Synergy and collaboration enhanced, etc.;
- Realistic/better-informed plans that can lead to better results, with strategic allocation of resources;
- Broader ownership, commitment, and understanding;
- Equitable development. Provide basis for monitoring and reaching intended ambitions.

Expected roles and responsibilities

Expectations from federal level:

- Provide guidance to own bigger picture (awareness creation on joint planning, common format, etc.);
- Based on long-term perspectives and strategies, provide strategic direction for high-level parameters;
- Technical support and capacity building;
- Develop a framework, with the agreement of the regions;
- But implementation of the framework (planning) should be contextual;
- Bring everything together, recommend changes;
- Manage consultative platform and experience sharing for planning.

Current practices and constraints

- Awareness creation is not done for agriculture as a whole sector but it is done by some federally affiliated agencies (e.g., Federal Cooperative Agency (FCA)), and these efforts have a common format. Need to consolidate/incorporate into a sectoral plan;
- Parameters and strategic direction is being done;
- Consultative forum is ongoing;
- Framework is not being done;
- Implementation of framework is not happening;
- Technical support is very minimal.

Constraints

- Attitude towards the importance of planning
- Fragmentation/differences in organizational structure;
- Mobilization issues. Related activities deflect attention from the regular plan. Can we manage urgent issues better without affecting other priorities?
- Additional work sent to regions directly from Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC).

Alignment in analysis and knowledge management function

Expected benefits of alignment

- If the analytical need is a national issue and cuts across all regions, a joint analysis should be carried out with a leading role by PPD/MoANR in collaboration with regional PPOs;
- Joint analysis enhances knowledge sharing and learning across organizations and levels of governments;
- The sector-leading institutions (federal and regions) will get an opportunity to identify issues that need sector studies.

Current practices and constraints

- There has not been joint analysis conducted by the federal level or regions;
- Though there is effort to make reports more analytical, there is limited analytical work at the federal level;
- At the regional level, a case team under the agricultural extension process conducts a yearly assessment study on the performance of technologies and practices generated from research and disseminated to farmers through the extension system;
- There is no systematic sector learning and knowledge management practice.

Constraints

- Inadequate analytical capacity;
- Weak institutional structure/ institutional set-up to support the analytical and knowledge management functions;
- Lack of a common data framework, which makes accessing data for analysis hard.

Recommendations

- Strengthening linkage between the federal level and regions through an integrated agriculture sector management information system (Agri-MIS);
- Strengthening institutional structure of PPD/MoANR and Regional Bureau of Agriculture (RBoA)-PPPs by putting in place a dedicated team for analysis and knowledge management;
- Strengthening linkage between agriculture sector and NPC, both at federal and regional level.

Alignment of data management, monitoring, and reporting

| | Expected benefit | Expected roles and responsibilities for strengthening the alignment | |
|-----------------|--|---|---|
| | | Federal | Regions |
| Data Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematic data flow across levels of government as well as holistic and regular information exchange (through reporting on sectoral development), resulting in ease of accessibility to information and timely decision making. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data quality (together with CSA and regional stakeholders); Compile, aggregate, and consolidate data from all regions (after checking for quality) and then analyze it; Provide feedback on those data/that information; Produce and distribute relevant documents/manuals for data collection, quality assurance, and other resources for running the MIS; Capacity building on data collection, data quality, data management, and MIS in general; ICT infrastructure and sustain/maintain MIS; Avail sufficient and skilled staff. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data quality (together with CSA and regional stakeholders); Compile, aggregate, and consolidate data from all woredas. Provide feedback and analyze the data (after checking for quality); Cascade capacity building made by the federal level to the zones and woredas; ICT infrastructure and sustaining/maintaining the MIS; Avail skilled and sufficient staff. |

(Continued on next page)

Alignment of data management, monitoring, and reporting

(Continued)

| | Expected benefit | Expected roles and responsibilities for strengthening the alignment | |
|------------|--|--|---|
| | | Federal | Regions |
| Monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback on reports (from bodies who receive reports) will be made and learning will occur; A reliable source of data/information and quality data will be produced, leading to efficient use of resources (wastage will be reduced as we allocate our resources/budget efficiently by making informed decisions); Check and balance will happen, and real problems will be identified for solutions, enhancing the image of the nation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce and distribute relevant templates/tools on monitoring of sectoral performance (developed jointly); Periodic sector review; Joint monitoring of sectoral performance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regions should carry out regular and systematic monitoring using those documents (tools, procedures, and templates on top of their own additional tools and systems); The region will do day-to-day monitoring and ensure data that come from monitoring processes are of a high quality and up to the standard. |

(Continued on next page)

Alignment of data management, monitoring, and reporting

(Continued)

| | Expected benefit | Expected roles and responsibilities for strengthening the alignment | |
|-----------|--|---|---|
| | | Federal | Regions |
| Reporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountability across stakeholders will be ensured—hence no resistance to providing information/reports to the federal level; Difference in information reported to different federal agencies during the same reporting period on the same issues will be reduced (no/fewer conflicting reports and less distortion); Credible information from regions will be aggregated to be used at the federal level for decision making (not only to be used in the respective regions for the consumption of regional decision makers); The guideline (if developed) is more useful, not only for planning people but also for sub-sector processes owners/technical directorates; Participation of all stakeholders in PME functions and shared understanding from monitoring and reporting information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardized and uniform reporting format/template; Feedback on regional reports; Compile and consolidate (cross-check) regional reports with federal reports—their completeness; Reward good performers and learning from the problems/failures—create a culture of also reporting underachievement; Periodic reports (reporting frequency). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting must be evidence based (based on quality data); Reporting must be results based—need to report on results instead of activities; Completeness and consistency of the report is key for a quality report; Reward good performers and learning from the problems/failures—culture of reporting failures should also be encouraged for learning purposes. |

6. INSTITUTIONAL SURVEY

6.1 Presentation

The presentation included a general overview of institutional mapping, which is one major component of the broader Agri-MIS. During this session, the list of the identified agriculture institutions, the scope of service the institutions provided, criteria to measure those institutions' capacity and functionality, and proposed indicators to measure their capacity and functionality were discussed.

6.2 Agreed-on actions and next steps

Agreed-on points:

- The identified institute categories should be: direct service providers and suppliers; indirect service providers and suppliers (as a replacement of support bodies); and regulatory and oversight bodies;
- It was also agreed that commercial farm services are different from agrodealers, because in addition to inputs they also provide advisory services, which none of the other agrodealers do;
- It was agreed that cold storage should be considered under cooperatives since they are initiatives to improve the cooperative storage facilities;
- We agreed to include banks/microfinance institution branches, Ethiopia Commodity Exchange branches, market places, licensed traders, warehouse renters, self-help groups/associations, and watershed users associations and to define scope of services, criteria to assess capacity, and indicators to measure functionality for each of the additional institutions, with the help of stakeholders from the region.
- It was agreed to expand cooperative categorization into four sub-categories:
 - Producer cooperatives;
 - Service cooperatives;
 - Multipurpose cooperatives;
 - Rural savings and credit cooperatives (RUSACCO)s.
- Institutional mapping is basically surveying and visualizing institutions that are working and/or providing services at woreda and kebele level. However, mapping of indirect service providers may go beyond woreda level, to include zonal, regional, or federal levels.

Next steps:

The immediate next step agreed on was to organize regional consultative workshops in the four regions for further refinement of identified institutions and to validate and collect feedback for acknowledged indicators to measure the capacity and functionality of the institutions. Additionally, the workshop will help get regional buy-in for the preliminary stage of institutional mapping. The workshops will happen in the four major regions, with the inclusion of emerging regions based on their proximity.

7. FINAL DISCUSSION AND AGREED-ON ACTIONS

AGTP II progress and presentations:

- The observed difference in reporting style and content by regions is due to the absence of commonly agreed-on guidelines on format of the forum and content of the presentations specifically. This must be solved by adhering to the five strategic objectives of the AGTP II and selected indicators of national importance, to be tracked at national level. So, the federal PPD will facilitate preparation of a guideline for the presentations (style and content), in collaboration with ATA.
- PPD and PPOs will summarize and formally present PME achievements for the next forum. So, as an action it is agreed that regions and PPD will prepare and present progress in PME functions starting with the next PME forum.
- Regarding capacity building and retention of DAs and experts being a challenge, we need to have skill upgrading and experience sharing by linking our interventions with existing research centers, universities, and programs funded by donor agencies. Manuals, guidelines, and technical reference materials are critical, important inputs that we need to get from the different partnerships and engagement mentioned above.
- There is experience in all regions in different areas of the program. It is important to identify, synthesize, and share this experience with others, and organize cross-learning visits with a tangible action plan accompanied by political commitment. Therefore, PPD, in collaboration with relevant directorates, will provide guidance to regional PPOs on areas of good practice, and regions will synthesize experience and present at the next forum, supported by videos as appropriate.

Alignment:

- Regarding alignment of PME functions between the federal level and the regions, we understood and agreed that we are not aligned on all PME functions through the three-day discussions and presentations.
- As a recommendation, federal PPD will create a targeting template based on the agreed-on AGTP II result framework indicators with a uniform unit of measurement. Regions are expected to fill targets for all national, agreed-on indicators.
- Overall alignment will be solved by a binding guideline as per the recommendation agreed during this workshop. We got useful ideas on how to align and we will have further contact with regions in the process of developing a common PME alignment guideline. Currently, we have a good working relationship with regions, a result of our efforts over the last few years. But we need to have stronger working relationships, with a commonly agreed-on and binding guideline. We discussed how to do this and agreed on its importance, which is one step in the process of strengthening our working relationships.
- We will request a mid-term review of the AGTP program and look for ways to update the plan and target as we have agreed on the importance of alignment.
- Importance of reliable and realistic information and its flow is also a very critical area that we agreed on as a bottleneck to achieving an evidence-based PME system.
- We have started the web-based and the Excel versions of the Agri-MIS. The web-based MIS is being piloted in some regions despite challenges, and Excel-based templates have been developed based upon agreed-on indicators.
- So, we are planning to provide training on this. This will increase our efficiency by reducing the amount of time we spend on collecting, exchanging, and reporting.

Nutrition:

- We understood that it is an issue of saving the next generation. We need to further sensitize and create more awareness to achieve mainstreaming.
- We need to strengthen already started initiatives, such as having nutrition case teams at the federal level and in some regions and supporting the implementation of the NNSAS.
- Regarding mainstreaming, we need to update our indicators based on this understanding and NSA strategy and mainstream nutrition in PME functions at all levels and across agencies.
- Extension communication and teaching at kebele level must include nutrition messages and skills by focusing on women, as production is not an end in itself.

Institutional survey:

- Regarding the institutional survey, a good job has been done by ATA. Further institutions have been identified, and the same survey needs to be continued with Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (MoLF). We are planning to use a similar MIS.
- Furthermore, we need to know our institutional capacity and utilize the resources that are already available such as human resources, infrastructure, facilities, and technologies (250 Tablets have already been distributed by ATA for this purpose).
- As we agreed on, further validation of indicators identified for the institutional survey will be conducted in the four main regions, and emerging regions will be invited to their closest region to participate in the validation and as a capacity-building mechanism.
- We need also to link our work on the institutional survey with other initiatives such as the digital green project to avoid duplication of efforts and for cross-learning as we all working toward the same goal.

Coordination:

- We need to strengthen our coordination as we can achieve better results to grow our country if we work together in a coordinated manner. We are just at the initial stage regarding this, and we are observing progress (of which this forum is an example).
- We must capitalize on existing flagship programs, engage more projects/programs, and strengthen current efforts to attract more resources for stronger PME that will support evidence-based policy decisions for the sector.

8. Annexes

8.1 Workshop agenda

Inter-Regional PME Forum, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources Bishoftu, February 13 to 15, 2017

| | Time | Activity | Facilitators/ presenters |
|----------------------|----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Day One Morning | 08:30–09:00 am | Registration | |
| | 09:00–09:20 am | Introduction and opening remarks | Zena H/Wold |
| | 09:20–09:40 am | AGTP II progress, challenges, and lessons (Amhara Region) | Regional PPO head |
| | 09:40–10:20 am | AGTP II progress, challenges, and lessons (Oromia Region) | Regional PPO head |
| | 10:20–10:50 am | AGTP II progress, challenges, and lessons (Tigray Region) | Regional PPO head |
| | 10:50–11:20 am | Coffee break | Organizers |
| | 11:20–12:00 pm | GTP2 II progress, challenges, and lessons (SNNPR) | Regional PPO head |
| | 12:00–12:30 pm | Updates from developing regions (Somali, Afar, B. Gumuz, Gambella, Harar, Dire Dawa, and Addis Ababa) | Regional PPO heads |
| | 12:30–02:00 pm | Lunch break | Organizers |
| Day One Afternoon | 02:00–02:20 pm | AGTP II progress, challenges, and lessons (federal level) | Ermias (PPD) |
| | 02:20–03:40 pm | Discussion on the presentations (focusing on lessons on how to improve implementation, monitoring, and reporting) | Zena |
| | 03:20–03:40 pm | Coffee break | Organizers |
| | 03:40–05:30 pm | Discussion on overall progress, challenges, and ways forward | Organizers |

| | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|--|----------------------------|
| Day Two Morning | 09:00–09:30 am | Target alignment for AGTP II (sector-wide planning), current status, and gaps based on existing plan | Ebrahim J |
| | 09:30–10:10 am | Discussion on target alignment | Zena/Laketch |
| | 10:10–10:30 am | Tea break | Organizers |
| | 10:30–11:40 am | Group discussion on target alignment | Participants |
| | 11:40–12:30 pm | Group report back and plenary discussion | Laketch/Retta |
| | 12:30–02:00 pm | Lunch break | Organizers |
| Day Two Afternoon | 02:00–02:30 pm | Nutrition-sensitive agriculture: Concept and practices | AKLDP |
| | 02:30–03:00 pm | National Nutrition Programme—expectations from agricultural sector | NNP Secretariat |
| | 03:00–03:30 pm | Discussion (questions and answers on both above) | Participants/presenters |
| | 03:30–04:00 pm | Tea/coffee break | Organizers |
| | 04:00–04:20 pm | Status of National Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture Strategy | Agricultural Ext. Director |
| | 04:20–04:40 pm | Setting the scene: M&E in nutrition-sensitive agriculture and the role of PPD/PPOs in PME of cross-cutting agendas | Zena |
| | 04:40–05:30 pm | Questions/discussion and ways forward on mainstreaming nutrition in the agriculture sector | AKLDP/Dr. Demise/ Zena |
| Day Three Morning | 09:00–09:20 am | Regional-federal working relationship for smooth functioning of PME | Retta |
| | 09:20–10:40 am | Group discussion on regional-federal working relationship in PME | Participants |
| | 10:40–11:00 am | Coffee break | Organizers |
| | 11:00–11:50 am | Plenary discussion on working relationship | Participants |
| | 11:50–12:30 pm | Presentation on institutional survey | Tsehayou/Hudad |
| | 12:30–02:00 pm | Lunch | Individual |
| Day Three Afternoon | 02:00–02:40 pm | Plenary discussion on institutional survey | Laketch |
| | 02:40–03:30 pm | Wrap-up and ways forward | Zena |

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