

# Story in the watershed

## Old coffee with new friends for change



*Figure 1 stumped coffee with soil and water conservation practices, 2021*

MR. Amente Adele is one of the farmers applying agroforestry practices in the Wonsho woreda of the Sidama Region with the support from the Resilient Landscapes and Livelihoods Project (RLLP) and the previous SLMP projects. Back in 2004—2007 EC, Amente planted an improved coffee variety on 4.5 hectares of land and obtained a coffee yield 7.2 qt /ha in 2014/15 GC. However, the production started

to decline gradually after five year of planting to one third of the original yield obtained before (2.5 quintals /ha) seven years after planting . For Amente the soil erosion that wiped out the fertile soil of his farm was responsible for making the coffee tree's yield lower than he expected.

At that time the Sustainable land management program (SLMP) started implementing activities in his

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kebele by training farmers on various soil and water conservation practices and coffee development packages to enhance productivity.



*Figure 2 Old coffee plantation at Mr. Amente's farm (2014)*

In 2016 GC Mr Amente was therefore one of the early adopters of the SLM practices on coffee stumping, soil bund construction, composting, mulching and planting desho grass followed by shade trees.

After two years the stumped coffee trees have given 5.25 quintals of coffee beans which convinced Amente to continue the practice.

In the year 2018 GC and 2020 GC with the support of RLLP he repeated stumping two hectares of coffee tree and deployed various SLM practices which increased his yield by more

than two quintals per hectare. These figures are above the regional average of 4.8 quintals per ha as documented by the central statistical Agency<sup>1</sup>.



*Figure 3 Mr. Amante stumped coffee farm, 2021*

“The Desho grass in my coffee farm is a source of feed for my cattle and it also reduced the soil erosion by tightly holding the soil” said Mr. Amente while explaining the added benefits of combined SLM practices.

As a result of integrated efforts, in 2020 GC, Mr. Amente collected a monthly average production of 30,000 kg clean coffee from platted and stumped coffee land with an average production of 6 qt/ha. In addition, to that the Regional state gives an export licence for coffee farmers having more than two

<sup>1</sup> CSA (Central Statistical Agency) (2020). *Agricultural sample survey: report on area and production of major crops of*

*private peasant holdings for meher season of 20119/20*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Central statistical Age

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hectares of land, Amente took this opportunity to start a coffee export business and built a coffee store close to his farm. Thanks to a considerable increase in revenues Mr. Amente has now built a residence house in Yiragalm and Wonsho woreda town.

According to Wonsho woreda Agricultural office, the experience of Mr. Amente is a clear demonstration that deploying various SLM practices and engaging in agroforestry practices enhances coffee production. An important lesson from Mr. Amente's experience is that coffee production needs to integrate with physical and biological conservation measures (including animal feed production) to sustain productivity, and reduce land degradation.

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