

# RESILIENT LANDSCAPES AND LIVELIHOODS PROJECT (RLLP)

## STORIES IN WATERSHEDS



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## Enhanced production through Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) in clustered farms

Mr. Tibebu Assegidew is the chairperson of Endode Enbus watershed users' cooperative. The cooperative is established in Gumbichu woreda, Oromia Region which gets legal identity this year. The agro-ecology of the woreda is highly suitable to cultivate wheat, teff, chickpea, vetch and lentils. Despite this, the area has suffered from the impacts of climate change, soil erosion and gully formation; besides, the productivity has declined alarmingly threatening the livelihoods of the community.

In 2015, the sustainable land management program (SLMP phase one) started implementing soil and water conservation activities in collaboration with the Gumbichu woreda administration and the community. The intervention was first launched in 12 micro watersheds which were degradation hotspots. The intervention continued on deploying soil and water conservation practices to halt an ongoing degradation in SLMP (phase two) in the woreda. The rehabilitation activities have been continued with third phase with Resilient Landscapes and Livelihoods Project (RLLP) by introducing more technologies and alternative livelihoods approaches.

"Before practicing CSA we used to plough our farm four or five times and add three quintals of fertilizer per hectare which is three-fold than the agronomic recommendation. After these efforts, it takes more than five months for the wheat to be harvested. Yet, the crop was not vigorous, and the yield was low." said Mr. Tibebu

As part of the CSA intervention, Mr. Tibebu and his fellow farmers in Enbus micro watershed were trained how to implement conservation agriculture, integrated soil fertility management (ISFM), crop development and livestock production in a sustainable manner



*Figure 1 Mr Tibebu on crop residue leftover of wheat cluster farm, Ginbichu woreda, 2014*

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“First we organized 343 members of the watershed to cluster their farms and adopt CSA; 46 of them were women. Then, we started to prepare compost, plough the farm twice and planted improved wheat varieties.” said Mr. Tibebu. He further added that some of the members had doubt whether to implement CSA technologies or not; however, once the seeds started growing vigorously everyone started to get convinced.



Figure 2: Clustered Wheat farm from Endode Enbus micro watershed, Gumbichu woreda.

According to Mr Tibebu, reducing the prolonged time for maturity of the crop grants better market opportunity and with CSA, farmers in the Endode Enbus micro watershed were able to gain this benefit.

The Endode Enbus community members have also succeeded in the backyard livestock farming which was one of the reasons for degradation in the area. This is now resolved as members agreed to keep their cattle in the backyard under strict control and feed them crop byproducts and green forages with cut and carry system.

In addition to the cereals cultivated through CSA practice, farmers in Endode Enbus rotate the crops they plant to keep the land fertile and healthy. Mostly they plant pulse crops as per the recommendation of development agents who closely follow up and provide them technical support. “After implementing the CSA practice in our clustered wheat farm of 160 ha, the yield has increased from 16 quintals/ha to an average of 25qt/ha; furthermore, the production cost is reduced by 4800 birr/ha/year” said Mr. Tibebu Assegidew with excitement.

No	Activity	Unit	Reduced cost in birr	Total cost reduced
1	Fertilizer	Price /quintal	1800 *2	3600
2	To Plough the land	Price / Hectare	600 *2	1200
Total cost reduced per hectare				<b>4800</b>

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According to Mr. Tibebu and Gumbichu woreda officials, Endode watershed is now one of the best performing RLLP watersheds in Gumbichu woreda where neighboring farmers pay a visit and learn from the successful experiences.



*Figure 3: Mr Tibebu Asegidew, farmer and chairperson of Endode Enbus micro watershed.*

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