

Story in the watershed

Terracing Increased Crop Yield and Improved livelihood: the case of Soro Woreda, SNNPR



Figure 1. Terrace farming in Dantala micro watershed, Soro woreda SNNPR, September 2021

Soro woreda is located in Hadiya zone in SNNPR which is about 265 km from Addis Ababa. The woreda has experienced various productivity challenges caused by various land degradation factors; such as cultivating steeply landscapes which caused high soil erosion and low soil fertility that significantly affected crop productivity in the area. Furthermore, the farmlands in the woreda are highly affected by soil acidity, which are aggravated by high level of soil erosion caused by over grazing and free grazing on communal/individual land. Although Soro woreda is characterized by mixed farming system, the overwhelming natural resource degradation occurred in the past few decades threatened the eco system and livelihoods of the community. In 2014/15, the SLMP and the woreda office of agriculture agreed to intervene and revert the severe landscape

degradation with the shared responsibility of the community.



Figure 2: Ato Lanbamo's two hectare of land with faba bean and wheat production in Dantala micro watershed, 2021

Ato Lanbamo Wote is one of the leading farmer who participated in the rehabilitation efforts in Dantala micro watershed. According to Ato Lanbamo, life in that area became difficult because the erosion wiped out the fertile top soil resulting in low productivity that does not payback the investment he put into in the farm. In such critical time, I have started working terrace

Story in the watershed

farming (Soil bund and Fanyajju) through SLMP support.

“When I started farming along a terrace in my plot, my neighbours advised me that the terrace would consume much of the farming area and I may not be able to harvest much. But, I did as the experts trained me and harvested better than I used to get before. Now, the land is paying me back for the hard work and investment. I have 30 rows of traces in my farm land with a length of 120 meters and each row was planted with desho grasses.” Said Ao Lanbamo while explaining the SLM practices on his plot.



Figure 3. Terrace ridges planted with Desho grass in Mr. Lanbamo farm land September 2021

Ato Lanbamo further elaborated that the grass has diverse benefits for him. “It holds the soil tightly and prevents erosion; the sale of grass root cuttings has enable me to earn 42,000 Birr annually. Furthermore, I sold the feed grass three times a year for a total income of 27,000 Birr and used some of the feed for my cattle” said Ato Lanbamo. He is thankful that

experts trained him to build the terraces which brought him all these benefits and increased household income. In the last six years, due to the project intervention, the problems related to soil erosion and land degradation is highly mitigated and farm plots are getting back to their fertility. “My two hectares of farmland is now creating more income by increasing the productivity from 10 quintal to 25 quintals per hectare for faba bean and 12 quintals to 30 quintals per hectare for wheat” said Ato Lanbamo with a bright and smiley face.



Figure 4.terraces planted with wheat, September 2021

“I have constructed a new house covered with corrugated iron sheet and planning to purchase more productive exotic breed cows. This is all happening because I treated the land properly. If anyone treats the land and implement technologies, it will pay back very well and gives a better life” said Ato Lanbamo while summarizing his successful experience with SLMP/RLLP.

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