

RLLP CHANGING THE ENVIRONMENT AND LIVELIHOODS

Farmer Kabu Aba Gero is one of the exemplary farmers in Lilu Dima micro watershed, Omonada woreda. The Woreda is among the areas in Jimma zone of Oromia Region, where the former SLM project, now RLLP, has launched its soil and water conservation (SWC), livelihood and Climate smart agriculture interventions since 2012.

While working with RLLP, farmer Kabu and his fellow farmers learnt how livelihood diversification could reduce poverty, enhance food security and mitigate climate shocks. With this understanding the community has deployed several SWC techniques followed by livelihood diversification activities.

“When the soil and water conservation interventions introduced in our village in 2004, I took the opportunity to rehabilitate three hectares of my



Figure 1: Tree plantation of farmer Kabu

Farmland which has lost its fertility and yielding only 5-6 quintals of maize per hectare. Furthermore, I had two hectares of tree plantation plot that was highly threatened by a gully alongside and needed immediate treatment; it was a right decision I made back then” said farmer Kabu.

The RLLP and community in Lilu Dima have constructed bench terraces across the hilly farmlands, planted forage trees and deployed soil and water conservation measures to heal the degraded farmlands, communal plots and forest areas.

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Figure 2: Farmer Kabu ploughing his farm plot with his own tractor

“Once the bench terraces are built, trees planted and erosion tackled, the farm started to regain its fertility and gradually recovered. As a result, I have begun to harvest up to 30 quintals of maize per hectare” said farmer Kabu

In addition to the soil and water conservation activities, the RLLP supported farmers to engage in mixed farming techniques, coffee fruit and vegetable production, bee keeping, bull fattening and other livelihood options. Farmer Kawo is among the farmers who benefitted, from this diversified livelihood interventions. Keeping the cattle in the backyard feeding them freshly cut feed, bull fattening and

Bee keeping are alternative livelihood engagements for Kabu and the community in Lilu Dima micro watershed.

“Along with crop production, I have started to engage in bee keeping and so far, the average yield is 30 kg from a single hive.” said Kabu with delight.



Figure 1 honey production on kabu Aba Gero farm

“With the support from RLLP I have recovered my land’s potential, alleviated the threat caused by soil erosion and gully formation in my farm.

“From excessive eight years effort I bought a tractor last year with all accessories and started to plough my land and transporting all crops and by products. Also the tractor serves the

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Community to plough their land with 1000 birr per hectare, says Obo Kabu. Now, with diversified income source, I am raising my nine children, of whom three are graduated from university and others are still in school” Said Kabu proudly.



Figure 4: farmer Kawo’s backyard bull fattening

In addition, farmer Kabu explained how the RLLP supported soil and water conservation interventions, lessons provided to enhance his income generating activities and other technical supports enabled him to improve his land, the environment, and his livelihoods.

“I have constructed a new house with iron sheet cover and deposited of 500,000 ETB in my bank account; this all happened due to the SLMP and RLLP support and I would like to thank them” said farmer Kabu as a final remark.

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