



# Semi-Arid/Lowland Forestry Development Project - Verification Phase -



**Semi Arid Land** in Ethiopia covers nearly one-fifths of its territory. With rapidly increasing population, forest cover decreased significantly in recent years. Severe soil erosion and water loss resulted in decline of agricultural productivity, making lives of people unsustainable. To cope with the problem, Semi-Arid/Lowland Forestry Development Project: Verification Phase is implemented in collaboration between Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Oromiya Regional Bureau of Agriculture.

**Project Aim** is to promote tree planting and other conservation measures to prevent further land degradation. During Verification Phase, a set of technical experiments of farm forestry are introduced through a participatory extension approach called Farmer Field School (FFS). Such activities are small in scale and based on existing technologies using local resources, so as to be easily managed and replicated by farmer groups. After field-testing and local adaptation in selected pilot sites, they will be applied in wider areas in upcoming Main Phase.

**Target Sites** are selected in Liben Chukala District in East Showa Zone of Oromiya Region. It is one of the typical districts in semi-arid land which is left without sufficient support. About 80% of its land is already converted to farmland. Due to loss of vegetation cover in catchment areas, land is severely degraded. Free grazing custom discourages efforts of tree planting and natural regeneration. In order to prevent further environmental degradation, farm forestry activities on private land is promoted in seven (7) target sub-villages: Adulala 01 (Adulala), Harorecha (Dololo Jila), Cinni & Miecha (Adele Miecha), Awaro (Liben Gadula), Odo Jara (Jara Goro) and Temsaha (Gachi Daimo).



## Farmer Field Schools (FFS)

is a participatory and discovery-based adult, non-formal education approach. It was first developed in South East Asia in 1989 by FAO in "rice IPM" Programme. Since then, FFS approach is adopted globally in various subjects including other agriculture fields, animal husbandry, health and livelihood issues and even conflict management. In 2004, JICA introduced FFS for farm forestry in Social Forestry Project in Semi-Arid Areas in Kenya. It is reported to be the first FFS dealing with tree crops as main FFS component. Lessons of Kenyan project is later adopted in Participatory Forest Management Project in Belete-Gera Forest Priority Area in Ethiopia.

The Project will fully reflect and adapt good practices and lessons learned from these previous projects. In seven target communities, groups of 32 farmers (consist of 16 men & women each) organize FFS self-learning groups. The groups meet regularly at the village learning sites to implement comparative technology studies with support of trained FFS facilitators.

## Farm Forestry Activities

for FFS combines agroforestry to promote tree planting and other livelihood improvement activities such as vegetable garden and fruit tree orchard. Each activities involves simple comparative studies to test possible solutions for farmers own decision making.



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