

Exchanging Experiences in Rural Development

Study visit to Japan

"Practical contribution of the research in rural development and good competitions among researchers and research stations were an important lesson to learn from the Japanese agricultural research system", claimed the researchers who participated in a 10-day study trip to Japan in July 2012. Mr Teha Mume of Oromia Agricultural Research Institute, Dr Girma Tegegn of Melkassa Research Centre, Dr Tadesse Desalegn of Bahir Dar University and Mr Hailay Mehari of Mekelle University visited Japan to exchange experiences in agricultural research and rural development with Japanese researchers. They visited Japan International Research Centre for Agricultural Science (JIRCAS), Tokyo University of Agriculture, Kyoto University and Nagoya University. They interacted with Japanese counterparts through seminars and field visits at each institute. They expect further collaboration between Ethiopian and Japanese research systems through various projects. A report of the study trip and papers presented at the seminars will be available from FRG II office soon.



Seminar at JIRCAS



Visit to a research station

FTC as a Platform for Technology Innovation

FRG at FTC

Farmer Training Centre (FTC) could be a place where researchers, Development Agents (DAs) and farmers work together to tackle priority needs of agricultural production in the community. FRG based trials conducted at FTCs (FRG@FTC) aim to investigate if FTC can be an efficient place to innovate. Responding to FRG II project's call for proposals, a large number of research teams applied and four proposals from Agricultural Research Centres of Assosa, Bako and Bonga, and Haramaya University were selected to implement FRG@FTC research projects. Fertilizer application for rice, field management of tef, soil conservation and tomato productions technologies are tested by each research team at FTC. These applied research activities are expected to indicate the efficient ways and approaches to create strong linkage between research and extension in addition to technology innovation that occurs at FTCs where many farmers frequently visit.

Improving Feed Management Technologies in Lowland Pastoralist area

Pastoralist/agro-pastoralist Research Group

Addressing food insecurity issues in arid areas of Ethiopia is one of the important areas of the agricultural research. FRG II project, in strong collaboration with the Livestock Research Directorate and Emerging Regions Coordination Office of EIAR, called research proposals on the theme of "Forage Improvement in Pastoral and Agro-pastoral Areas". Proposals submitted from Mekelle University, Fafen Integrated Livestock Research and Development Centre, Jinka Agricultural Research Centre and Yabello Pastoral and Dryland Agricultural Research Centre were selected for implementation. Research topics on forage varieties, forage seed production and rangeland forage management are currently implemented in collaboration with agro-pastoralists at each location. It is expected that research teams of the four research institutions will develop a participatory research guideline with pastoralists and agro-pastoralists as PRG/PAPRG approach.

FRG II Open Seminar

Reporting on rice production and cattle management training

Two researchers who have returned from training in Japan on rice production and cattle management presented their experiences on December 14 at EIAR. Mr Berhanu Arbissie of Tigray Agricultural Research Institute presented an overview of the experiment on planting density of irrigated rice which can be applied in the rice research underway in the Region. Mr Aemiro Kehaliew of Holetta Agricultural Research Centre introduced the contents of the training course on cattle management for meat and milk production along with the advanced cattle management technologies used by Japanese farmers. He also presented the extension materials developed during the training for silage making, artificial insemination, etc.

Learning from Uganda's Rice Development

Training programs at PRiDe in Uganda

Promotion of Rice Development Project (PRiDe), a JICA project in Uganda, has been a good partner of FRG II. PRiDe offers a number of training courses for African countries including Ethiopia. Recently, Ethiopian personnel from the research and extension attended two courses in October and November namely "Program Management on Rice Development" and "Rice Postharvest Management". The participants learnt well established linkages among research, extension and private sector in rice sector development and postharvest management. PRiDe is located within Uganda's National Crop Resources Research Institute at Namlonge and has various rice research and training facilities including fields of different rice growing stages for training.

Fogera Farmers on TV

FRG II covered by a Japanese TV program

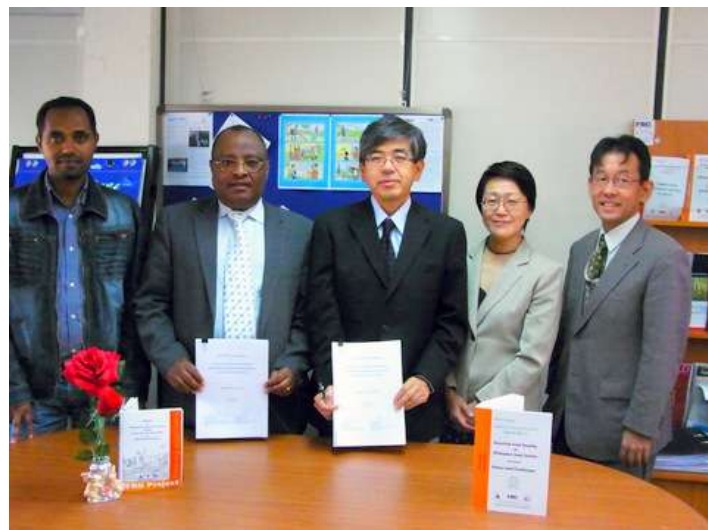
Mr Berhane Abebe, a rice farmer in Fogera, met a Japanese TV celebrity Mr Ru Oshiba and talked about his rice cultivation. Mr Ru was in Ethiopia as a TV reporter to introduce Japan-Ethiopia cooperation. Mr Sawagegne of Adet Research Centre and Mr Seo of FRG II were also there to explain how research and extension activities were participatory. The TV program was on-air in Japan on November 9th, and it helped to publicise the project's activity to the people in Japan.



Mid-term Evaluation of FRG II Project

A mid-term evaluation of FRG II Project was carried out in August 2012. The evaluation team consisted of five experts including JICA staffs from its headquarters, a staff of the EIAR Planning Section, a consultant, and an academic staff of Haramaya University. The evaluation was carried out to review performance of the project and identify ways for successful implementation of the remaining project period. The review was conducted based on five criteria namely, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. After interviewing project staffs, researchers, farmers and other relevant personnel and

visiting some FRG research sites, the team concluded that the project had been implemented as it was scheduled and would achieve its goal within the project period.



Mid-term evaluation team at FRG II Office, EIAR



Interviewing a FRG participating farmer (Bahir Dar)

National Rice Research and Training Centre

Designing work for National Rice Research and Training Centre (NRRTC) is underway since June 2012. NRRTC is planned to be established in the near future in Woleta District, Amhara Region to cater the development of rice production technologies and to train technical personnel for comprehensive rice development in Ethiopia. Rice has been promoted as a millennium crop of the country. The designing work is assisted by JICA and a master design of NRRTC is expected to be completed in January 2013.

OTHER INFORMATION RELATED TO THE PROJECT

- "Backing Rice Extension Rightly", proceedings of the seminar held in March 2012 is available at the project office and on the project web site.