N2Africa - Putting nitrogen fixation to work for smallholder farmers in Africa

Jimma Cluster Partnership: Achievements, Lessons & Way Forwards

Gabresilase Hailu, Beza Erko, Getachew Kebede

Introduction

- Targeted districts: Tiro Afeta and Kersa districts, Jimma zone.
- Targeted legume: Soybean
- Partners and collaborators: EIAR-Jimma Agricultural Research Center, Facilitator for Change (FC), OARI-JAMRC, Farmers Marketing Organization (FMOs), PCs/Unions, Woreda BoAs.

Main Achievements/Progresses

Capacity Development

- ToTs were provided for 135 male and 97 female participants constituted from farmers, DAs and agriculture experts on techniques of rhizobium inoculation, improved agronomic practices, post harvest management and soybean recipe.
- Feedback from trainees showed that they can implement according to the trainings but they have challenges on accessibility of rhizobium, lack continuity of trainings particularly on soybean recipe.

Dissemination

- Disseminated legume technology through:
  - Demonstration trials (20 farms),
  - Adaptations (122 male and 84 female farmers)
  - Technology evaluation,
  - Field days (593 farmers): organized in Tiroafeta in Decha Nedhi kebele .
- Amount of input distributed: 1505 kg of soybean seed (Clark 63K variety), 824 kg NPS, 310 sachets of inoculants (MAR1495 and USB-12) were used.
- Farmers groups technology evaluation and field day events are cost effective and innovative approach in reaching more farmers.

Input Supply

- FMO played vital role in input demand assessment and distribution. Moreover, It is the main source of soybean seed. In 2016,
- Gafo Burkabaso FMO multiplied soybean seed on 3.75 ha of land. The FMO accessed basic seed from JARC .
- FMO and JARC produced 1840 kg of certified seed and 400 kg of basic seed, respectively.

Market Linkages

- Jimma cluster tried to support FMOs to link with cooperative and/or unions and Menagesha Bio-fertilizer industry. The cluster has a gap in linking legume grain producers / FMOs with cooperative/unions and soybean processing industry.

Challenges faced in Implementations

- FMOs are not well organized and lack capital.
- Vehicle problem to carry out the activities particularly at planting and harvesting period.
- The main gaps in input supply chains was no authority to certify soybean seed and accessibility of inoculants.
- The gaps in capacity development were trainers in ToTs did not train as much farmers as needed and trainings regard to soybean recipe was limited to women farmers.
- Data collecting tools are multidisciplinary & time taking.

Lessons Learned

- The involvement of all concerned stakeholder in planning and implementation phase contribute a lot for the successful achievement of activities.
- Organizing partner platform contribute a lot to achieve the objectives of the project.
- Participation of women in every stages of activities result in getting reliable feedback and information.
- Legume technology evaluation approach confirms the effectiveness of bio-fertilizer technology dissemination..
- The highest grain and biomass soybean yield was obtained from application of starter fertilizer and inoculants.
- Legume technology dissemination needs market linkage to sustainable income generation.

Opportunities Identified

- Existence of organized farmers groups and women associations
- Suitable whether condition for soybean production
- JARC start soybean value chain project besides N2Africa project
- Legume has multipurpose importance.

Way Forwards

- Link soybean producers with unions and other buyers
- Provide soybean recipe training for women in urban.
- Organize and train women and self help groups in soybean value addition.

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ILRI-N2Africa
Box 5689 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia ● +251 11617 2200/25/33/35
ilri.org ● n2africa.org ● n2africa-Ethiopia.wikispaces.com
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