

SUMMARY

This is the 2014 annual report of Agro-BIG Programme. The report includes detailed descriptions of activities per output as well as chapters on programme management and technical assistance performance. The annexes include a breakdown of the programme budget utilization per activity as well as accomplishments drawn from the programme monitoring & evaluation database.

Our major achievements in the year that passed include:

- **Establishing a seed system for onion and potato** for the first time in the Amhara National Regional State. This system has been established to secure the production and availability of certified seed. This work on seeds has had an impact on the programme area by increasing farmers' incomes and by raising awareness of the importance of quality seeds as a starting point for commercialized agriculture and efficient value chains.
- **Creation of jobs for unemployed youth** through promoting private sector service delivery. Overall 95 landless youth groups have been trained to become service providers for farmers in the programme area. The topics they have been trained in include for example integrated pest management and responsible application of chemicals in farming, pump maintenance, manual well drilling and irrigation canal maintenance. This innovative approach has combined creation of jobs with a human rights based approach with environmental sustainability issues.
- **A buying contract agreement between ET Fruit and producers** in the programme area has been initiated. This provides marketing opportunities and contributes to the objective of Agro-BIG to create efficient value chains and linking small-scale farmers with markets. Furthermore, the local union of producers has been involved in the process of drafting the contract agreement. This could indicate that such an agreement could well continue without Agro-BIG assistance in the future.
- **Grant funds – Innovation, Demonstration & Research Fund, Value Chain Fund, Matching Grant Fund and Loan Fund - are operational** and accessible for producers, cooperatives and entrepreneurs in the programme area. Furthermore, innovations such as M-Birr mobile money will target 5000 farmers in the programme area. Hundreds of farmers are being trained in family financial training.
- **Monitoring & Evaluation system established** together with available baseline information provides an excellent tool for assessing programme progress. Bimonthly newsletters are being published, a programme photo gallery is available in Flickr and the programme website is up and running with frequent news updates.