EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE BASELINE REPORT FOR MAIZE AND RICE

AgroBIG is an agricultural value chain programme implemented in the Amhara region in Ethiopia. It aims at poverty reduction through agriculture based economic growth. In its pilot phase which is continuing until the end of 2016, the programme is focusing on four value chains: onion, potato, maize and rice.

This baseline study was conducted in October and November 2015 in two AgroBIG intervention woredas, namely Fogera and Mecha, to obtain information for major indicators of maize and rice value chains in the programme area. The data for rice is collected from Fogera and the the data for maize is from Mecha as there is no rice production in Mecha and vice versa.

The primary purpose of the survey is to provide baseline values for the key performance indicators of the programme's Logical Framework Matrix (LFM). The results of the survey provide a means to evaluate the programme's success by establishing the pre-implementation status of programme participants. These baseline values enable the programme management to formulate realistic targets to be achieved over the life of the programme. In addition, the survey is of value in highlighting the challenges faced by programme participants and allows a follow-up of selected households for further and more in-depth investigation.

This household study focused on collecting data on households' current socio-economic status added with the major outome indicators such as volume, value and yield of production, use of agricultural inputs and new technologies, post-harvest losses, use of credit facilities, and as a new indicator, nutritional status of the children under 5 years of age.

A total of randomly selected **368 households**, 188 from Fogera and 180 from Mecha, were interviewed. 18 of the interviewed households were female headed which is 6 % of the total households interviewed. In Fogera 8%, and in Mecha 3 % of the interviewed households were female headed.

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

Household characteristics
Average age of the respondents in the surveyed woredas is 42 years and the average family size is 6 members. 41% the household respondents have no education. Illiteracy is higher in Fogera (51%) when compared to Mecha (32%). Almost all the respondents (97%) have their own land. Average farm size is 1.3 hectares (Fogera 1.2 ha and Mecha 1.4 ha).

Volumes and values of agricultural production
The average production (overall volume) of rice is 17 quintals (1.7 tonnes) per harvest per household which on average accounts for the overall value of 18.278 ETB. The average production (overall volume) of maize is 27 quintals (2.7 tonnes) per harvest per household, which on average accounts for the overall value of 9.103 ETB.

Yield of agricultural production
The average rice yield is 22.51 quintals (2.25 tons) per hectare. The minimum value is 2 quintals per hectare, while the maximum value is 60 quintals per ha. The average maize yield is 42.88

quintals (4.3 tons) per hectare. The minimum value is 12 quintal per ha, while the maximum value is 96 quintal per hectare.

Farm-gate price
The average farm gate price of rice in the production area is 944 ETB. This is higher than the national average value obtained from Agricultural Transfornmation Agency (ATA) which is 633 ETB. The average farm gate price of maize in the programme area is 338 ETB. When compared to the national average of 633 ETB from ATA, it is much less.

On-farm post harvest losses
The study revealed that the average on-farm post harvest loss for rice and maize in the production area was 2.6 % and 1.2 %, respectively.

Access to financial services
Overall, the culture of using credit facilities in both woredas is low. On average, one quarter of the respondents (Fogera 29% and Mecha 20%) are customers of a bank. 22% are customers of ACSI and other MFI and 15% are customers of some RUSACCO.

Decision making in the househods
Males are the main decision makers in most of the households. Men participate in decision making regarding what crops are grown and on what is sold to the market in 96% of the households. Spouses participate in decision making in 68% and 80% of the households, respectively.

Nutritional status of children
Based on the data collected on dietary diversity of children under 5 and analysed using the indicators of WHO, dhildren in the programme area are not receiving a diet diverse enough to support their healthy growth and development. On average, only 20 % of the children under 5, receive minimum dietary diversity i.e. are consuming of food items from at least four different food groups. Average number of food groups consumed is 3.1.

CONCLUSIONS
Rice has a great potential for expansion as cash crop in Fogera but its yield in the production area is not up to its potential.

Comparing with the regional average, the yield of maize in the production area is higher. The yield of rice is lower compared with the regional average.