

QUARTERLY REPORT OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2013/SUMMARY

The Agro-business-Induced Economic Growth (Agro-BIG) Programme, Ethiopia is an Agricultural Development programme using the Value Chain Development Approach to develop selected agricultural value chains in the part of Tana Beles Growth Corridor that falls within Amhara National Regional state in north-western Ethiopia. The idea is to address the value chain constraints of specific selected agricultural commodities.

The overall objective of the Programme is to contribute to poverty reduction through agriculture based economic growth in the Programme area. The purpose of the Programme is to establish efficient and profitable value chains of selected crops/products benefitting the involved actors and stakeholders along the chain (farmers, processing industries, traders and buyers). The activities designed to address the purpose of the Agro-BIG are grouped into three vertical components: 1) Component 1: Value Chain Development 2) Component 2: Service Delivery Development 3) Component 3: Access to Funds and Financial Services

The programme is designed initially as a three years programme and started in January 2013. This report captures the progress of the programme for the final quarter (Oct. – Dec 2013) of the first year. As the first nine months of the programme were planned for the inception phase, the main thrust during the first quarter was to consolidate the inception phase activities and make due preparations for the first year implementation

Accordingly during the reporting period major achievements include:

- Finalization of various study documents which will be used as a framework for agro-BIG programme, such as value chain studies, funding guidelines, M& E frameworks etc.
- Successful preparation and deliberation of the first supervisory Board meeting held on November 6 2013;
- The onion seed certification process kicked off in both target woredas;
- Complementary studies with respect to the value chain analysis like environment, gender and onion seed assessments are well underway;
- The required preparations for the baseline study are made;
- Activities by the Bureaus like identification of research themes along the chosen value chains by ARARI and the preparation of training manuals by BoA are well underway;
- A study tour to Kenya was successfully conducted by the programme stakeholders and
- The required guidelines for the three programme funds (IDRF, VCF and MGF) were made ready for the approval of the SVB.
- Programme document revised, and inception report prepared and submitted for SVB

Some activities planned by the Bureaus (CPA and BoTT) however, has not progressed as planned; this is due to lack of attention by the respective Bureaus, lengthy procurement procedures and inadequate consultancy service providers in areas like market information system and radio programme. There has also been an absence of incentive mechanisms to undertake studies using expert pool/staff of the Bureaus.

Seen overall, as the programme document is now getting clear and the first year Annual Work Plan and Budget are approved by the SVB, there is a solid base to start actual programme

implementation in the next quarter. Details of the summary are described in the subsequent sections.