A brief on Innovation Platforms in the Nile Basin Development Challenge (NBDC)

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Training of Trainers workshop on the use of the Livelihoods Characterization/Benchmarking Tool (SLATE), Jeldu, Ethiopia, 1-5 April 2013
How do we address these issues?

One component of the NBDC project has been focusing on establishing multi-stakeholder ‘innovation platforms’ to develop integrated rainwater management strategies which address some of these issues:

1. Jeldu Woreda
2. Diga Woreda
3. Fogera Woreda

Participants include: Government line departments (Admin, Agriculture, Natural Resource, Water, Women, Cooperatives, Land Use, Livestock), Agricultural Research Centers, Ethio-Wetlands and Natural Resources Association (NGO), community representatives.
Overview of NBDC project...

Nile Basin Development Challenge aims to improve the resilience of rural livelihoods in the Ethiopian highlands through a landscape approach to rainwater management.

Base-line research conducted in three NBDC sites at the start of the project identified the following NRM issues:

- Focus on isolated technical interventions
- Lack of cross-sector collaboration and coordination
- Weaknesses in technical design
- Poor follow up and monitoring
- Lack of relevance to local priorities
- Lack of voluntary collective action
Why Innovation Platforms?

Push RWM interventions & technologies

→ Achieve short term quotas

Or...

Empower & engage actors in RWM strategies

→ Achieve sustainable landscapes & improved livelihoods
But how do innovation platforms change how things are done?

- Contributes to new knowledge
- Includes different sources of knowledge
- Facilitates learning
- Builds capacity to innovate
- Encourages local actors to own the process
- Addresses wide range of issues
- Improves communication between stakeholders

Changes habits and practices
Empowers actors
Leads to joint action
Involves wider institutions, policies and markets
First steps...

Joint identification of common NRM issue to ensure collective action

This takes time!
Platform meetings...
Community engagement
## Issue Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Main issue</th>
<th>Related issue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IP members</td>
<td>Unrestricted grazing</td>
<td>Land degradation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Restricted grazing</td>
<td>Shortage of grazing/fodder</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Water scarcity</td>
<td>Shortage of water</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Soil conservation</td>
<td>Organization of campaign work</td>
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Fodder development was chosen as a priority issue for pilot interventions due to the common concerns around the issue of grazing.
IP fodder interventions to complement SLM campaign
Innovation Fund

- 80,000 ETB was allocated to the platform to fund action research activities
- Proposals and action plans were developed by IP members according to defined criteria
- Actions should be cross-sectoral, participatory, designed to address RWM issues and targeted to suitable area
- A site was selected within the designated NBDC watershed
- Action to take place at household level, farmland and communal land
Pilot interventions to date

- Activities started in faced difficulties due to lack of community engagement
- Pilot interventions were moved to Limbichosh village which has so far proved more successful
- Few households are involved with the current activities which include enclosure and improvement of communal grazing area and backyard fodder development
- A field day was organized in the three woredas to review the activities and share knowledge with other farmers
Technical Group Members in IP

1. Woreda livestock agency
2. Woreda natural resource
3. Research Centre
4. University
5. NGO (Local Facilitators)
   • Active participation in IP meetings,
   • Design and assist the action research on fodder intervention
   • Providing trainings
   • Facilitating and coordinating the linkges
Stakeholder Capacity Building

A lot of talk about ‘participatory planning’ but difficult to put it into action.

WAT-A-GAME- Participatory planning for NRM
(www.watagame.info)