**Collaborative value chain innovation: a partnership for sustainable intensification - the case of Gusha Shinkurta Area, Awi Zone, Ethiopia**

Misganaw Teshager1, Getachew Alemayehu2, Enyew Adigo2, Yoseph Twodros3, Jörn Germer4, Folkard Asch4, and Bernhard Freyer3

*1Bahir Dar University (BDU), Institute of Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Studies, Ethiopia*

*2Bahir Dar University (BDU), College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Ethiopia*

*3University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU) Vienna, Austria*

*4University of Hohenheim (UHOH), Germany*

*Abstract*

In Ethiopia cash crop (maize, cereals, potato) based farm systems are widely promoted. To increase productivity and to better understand how to cope with Climate Change (CC), this study presents a farmers value chain (FVC) analysis to identify challenges and innovative practices, and viable adaptation options. Secondary documents were consulted to characterize, explore and analyze chain actors and linkages in the value chain. Qualitative interviews were held with ten respondents at regional, zonal and Woredas level, and 120 farmers were interviewed at Kebele level. Non-structured in-depth interviews were administered to 30 case farmers at the Kebele. Twelve focus group discussions composing 10-12 farmers were held. Moreover, a verification/validation workshop was held which drew participants from actors/partners in the chain to gain an understanding of prioritized needs and innovations. In the whole discourse farmers recognized the following agronomic practices as a possible adverse reduction measures to Climate Change: scheduling and optimizing of sowing dates, appropriate planting methods like row planting which has a notable contribution to fertilizer management and weed management, lower planting density, organic matter fertilization and crop residue maintenance, composts and farmyard manure, optimization of crop rotation, replacing bare fallow with fallow crops, use of leguminous crops such as clover, lentil, pea, and bean intercropping, and supplement irrigation at critical growth stage of crops. The core challenges from farmer’s perspective were: absence of irrigation scheme, lack of marketing cooperatives, inappropriate brokering, weak output market and absence of sustainable finance. From the market chain analysis it was found very little best practices to scale up, which is associated with farmer’s unwillingness to cooperate, and untimely arrival of rainfall. Training, farm visits and workshops helped farmers to enhance their capacity in terms of selecting an appropriate climate change adaptation options. The government with other relevant actors should establish a farmers marketing and economic cooperatives to optimize farmer-market relations. An inclusive financial sector should be in place, promotion of the existing one (like microfinance) for accessing loan to the sustainably work of the value chain (e.g., energy saving stoves, vegetable farming etc.), linking to service providers (e.g., improved seeds).

*Key words: Climate Change adaptation, Value chain, Innovation, Collaboration*