

Nikinake – an Agricultural Extension Campaign for Resource Management and Food Security: The Case of Bako-Tibe and Yem, Southwestern Ethiopia



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Introduction

- Land degradation is one of the threats to food security in Ethiopia
- Natural Resource Management (NRM) extension has been implemented through public mobilization locally known as “Nikinake”
- Nikinake has its root on the Saemaul Undong (SMU)-New Village Movement in South Korea (Douglass, 2013:3)
- Nikinake was adopted in Ethiopia in 2010/11 to reinforce implementation of agricultural extension and rural development
- Since 2011 all household member except the old and people with disability and health problem engaged in the four main regional states of the country
- Currently, the government of Ethiopia considered *nikinake* as suitable approach to NRM in which case farmers and youths provide free labor services (Fig. 1)
- However, the process and effectiveness of *nikinake* has not been given attention in research



Fig. 1 Watershed Management Campaign in Yem

Objectives

- To investigate and understand what role *nikinake* plays for social organization in farmers communities;
- To unveil *nikinake* as the approach used to implement agricultural extension and rural development in Ethiopia

Methodology

- Participant observation of an ongoing *nikinake* on NRM campaign in Bako-Tibe and Yem, SW Ethiopia (Fig.2)
- Expert and key informants interviews; on *kebele*, *woreda*, region to federal Ministry and research system
- Focus group discussions with male and female farmers; informal group discussions with experts and farmers

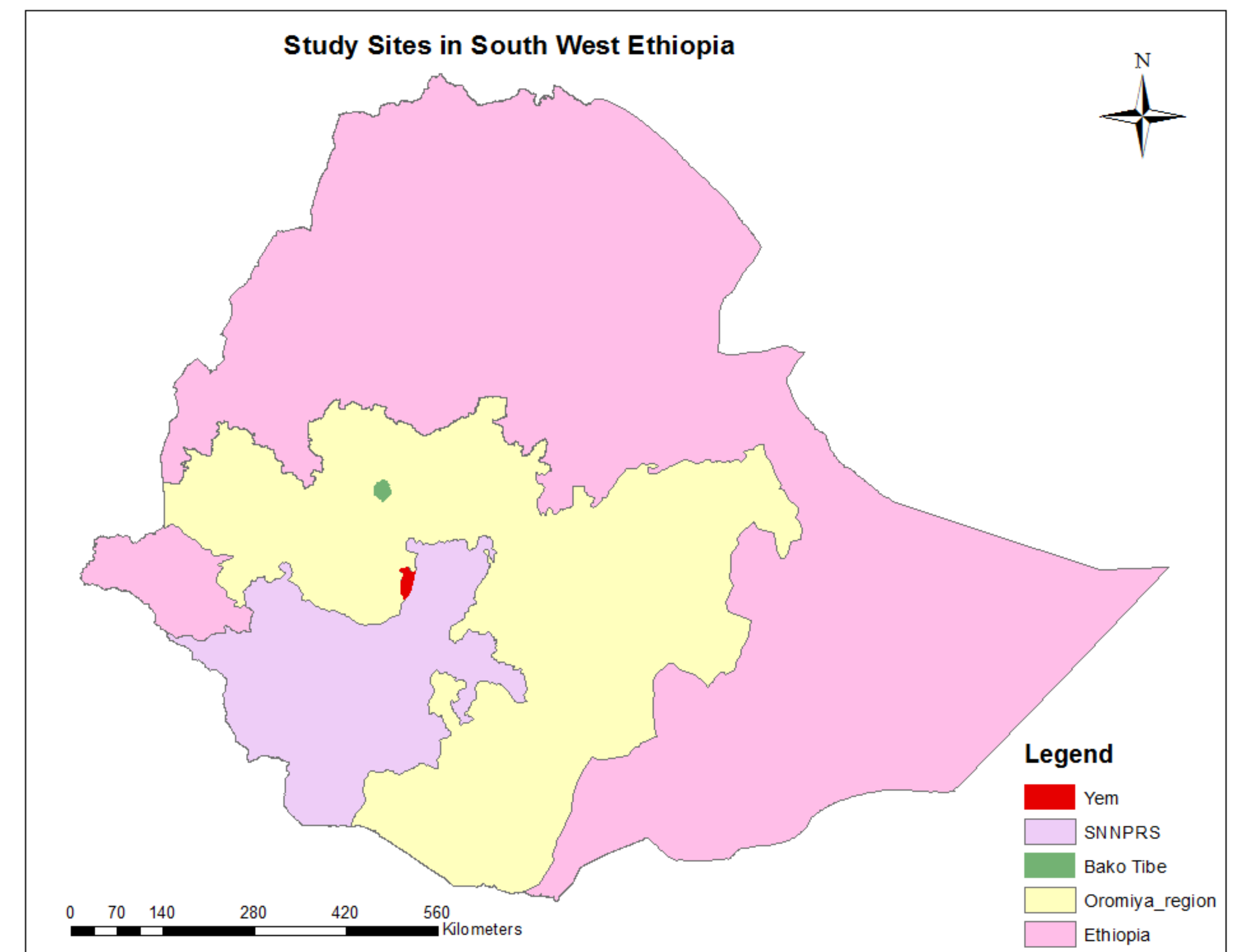


Fig. 2: Study districts in Southwest Ethiopia

Results

Nikinake:

- Is a public mobilization tool adopted to generate free labor forces for NRM;
- Enhances collective action for resources management;
- Indiscriminately involves household members but differ by districts;
- Is voluntary in principle; however, participation is enforced through extension groups and informal institutional bylaws;
- Plan fails to take in to account the prevailing agro-ecology and resource requirements;
- Impose the quota plan rather than creating demand among farmers

Conclusion

- Nikinake* needs to improve in terms of community participation, esp. in the planning, than entailing the community merely in implementing the top-down plan
- As public mobilization approach *nikinake* has to increase community awareness on NRM and avoid institutional pressure
- Nikinake* needs to shift the NRM from coverage focus to the outcome focus
- Improving experts' technical skills and combining the physical soil and water conservation structure with biological could boost the benefit from *nikinake*
- Nikinake* needs to better integrate maintenance of last years' activities in the new NRM plan