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PREMIUM



**Proposal for Setting up Agriculture Innovation and  
Development Centers to support Small Farmers**

## Overview

Ethiopia, is a landlocked country in the Horn of Africa. It shares borders with Eritrea to the north, Djibouti to the northeast, Somalia to the east and northeast, Kenya to the south, South Sudan to the west, and Sudan to the northwest. Ethiopia has a total area of 1,100,000 square kilometres (420,000 sq mi). As of 2022, it is home to around 123.5 million inhabitants, making it the 12th-most populous country in the world and the 2nd-most populous in Africa after Nigeria. The predominant climate type is tropical monsoon, with wide topographic-induced variation.

The Ethiopian Highlands cover most of the country and have a climate which is generally considerably cooler than other regions at similar proximity to the Equator.

Agriculture constitutes around 85% of the labour force. However, the service sector represents the largest portion of the GDP. Many other economic activities depend on agriculture, including marketing, processing, and export of agricultural products. Production is overwhelmingly by small-scale farmers and enterprises, and a large part of commodity exports are provided by the small agricultural cash-crop sector. However, just five percent of land is irrigated and crop yields from small farms are below regional averages. Market linkages are weak, and the use of improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides remains limited. Despite these challenges, agriculture-led economic growth that is linked to improved livelihoods and nutrition can become a long-lasting solution to Ethiopia's chronic poverty and food insecurity.

## Project Rational

Through the project, we are supporting the transformation of the agriculture sector by promoting technical support for higher productivity to generate greater incomes. Agricultural investments improve the competitiveness of value chains system. We also strengthen small- and medium-sized enterprises by providing access to credit and technical support. These activities bring jobs and income opportunities for rural households to lead brighter and more prosperous futures. We would like to improve Ethiopia's structural weaknesses in the agricultural sector.

Although its infrastructure harnesses research and development, the institutions lack financial and human resources to conduct research and taking action on the government's land reform programmes could be a lengthy and tedious process hence, Agri Growth Centers could change the dynamics of this issue. Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers are a boon for the needy farmers. Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers, the center will focus on delivering their expert services and advice to the farmers regarding.

- Soil and crop protection by scientific method and best practices
- Usage of technology in agriculture sector
- Improve Cropping practices
- Awareness of market demand
- Clinical services for animal health to assist in the productivity of farms and other economic activities.

They also provide training to students of agriculture horticulture, animal husbandry, fisheries and dairy, veterinary, poultry, pisciculture & other allied activities thereby tapping the expertise available in the large pool of agriculture graduates and skill experts of country so that they could either assist there or set up their own agri-clinics or agri-business centers later.

Farmers would learn how to:

- Improve infiltration capacity and fertility of the soil
- Reduce soil erosion
- Build up organic soil content etc.
- Use the right combination of nutrients to enhance productivity
- Improve market access

This would enhance not just agricultural production but income of the farmers.

## **Project Implementing Agency**

ABC foundation is a non-profit, and non- governmental charitable organization established in the year 1 XXX with a view to alleviate poverty from the backward regions of country. The mission of ABC is to improve the livelihoods of the poor people and farmers through the adoption of scientific methods and technological advances. Over the last three decades, we are striving to empower the illiterate and poverty stricken people of this region, and mainstream them into the society. The organisation has implemented several projects on agriculture, livelihood improvement in the area, and therefore is well equipped to implement the project successfully.

Project Goal: To enhance the agriculture productivity and income of small farm holders by capacity building

## Project Objectives

- To establish Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers in 10 locations of country to provide necessary support to small farm holders.
- To mobilize 1500 small farmers through capacity building thereby expanding their knowledge on various aspects of agriculture.

## Project Activities

### Objective 1

**Setting up Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers:** As part of the project, we shall be establishing 10 Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers in the project site to provide advisory services to farmers to enhance their agriculture productivity. The following activities will be undertaken to set up the Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers.

- **Selection of sites:** We shall be selecting sites based on accessibility, land availability and ease of farmers to visit the site.
- **Procurement of land:** We shall be procuring the land to set up the growth center.
- **Construction of Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers:** Each center will have the following rooms and design:
  - Training room- To accommodate 150 farmers/trainees
  - Demonstration Field
  - Soil testing Lab
  - Pest and disease Lab/clinic
  - Small equipment and agriculture tool room
  - Processing Room

**Equipping the Growth Centers:** The following tasks will be undertaken for the successful functioning of the Growth Center:

- Procurement of quality seeds
- Procurement of small farm equipment and tools
- Procurement of fertilizers, pesticide and insecticide
- Setting of the soil testing lab
- Printing and publishing field manuals for trainees

**Hiring staff to run these growth centers:** Each growth center will be staffed with 6 full time experts, this will include:

- **Center Incharge (1)-** The center incharge will be responsible for running the center. S/He shall be hiring the other staff and shall ensure that the various training programs are timely completed. S/He shall also be taking care of the outreach and awareness drive to mobilize the farmers to visit the center.
- **Soil expert (1)-** The soil expert will be heading and working in the soil testing laboratory. S/he shall be testing soil samples to understand the soil composition, nutrient distribution, soil ph etc.
- **Trainer (2)-** The trainers will be training the small farmers on improvised agricultural best practices to enhance productivity of their farms.
- **Agri experts (2)-** The two agri experts will be conducting field trials and undertaking field surveys to understand the issues that the farmers face.

**Activities in the Growth Center:** The following set of activities will be undertaken at the training center.

- Training of farmers
- Soil Testing
- Research on improving yield
- Demonstration
- Providing advisory services to the farmers
- Providing agri- inputs at subsidised rates to farmers
- Developing market linkages
- Facilitating linkages with financial institutions
- Carrying out extension activities

## **Objective 2**

### **Baseline Survey**

We will be conducting a baseline survey to gather the following information:

- Soil and climatic features of the selected area
- Availability of the resources, land, labour & capital
- Present level of utilization of resources
- Annual income of farmers
- Average landholding size
- Managerial skill of farmer
- Markets accessibility
- Financial institution

Data collected during the baseline study will help in identification of major issues/constraints and opportunities associated with agriculture in the area and the major concerns of farmers. This data will be collected through individual interviews, household surveys, stakeholder meetings, cognitive mapping, resource mapping, collecting historical climate data, present day climate variability data etc.

### **Awareness Generation**

Awareness generation will be carried out in the project site and during this session, we shall inform the farmers about our growth centers and how our centers can help them in improving farm productivity. Audio- Visual material will be developed and distributed to the farmers to make them understand the importance of adopting Good Agricultural Practices.

### **Identification of direct beneficiaries**

We will be selecting 1500 small farmers. Selection will be done based on the data collected during the baseline survey.

### **Build Capacities of the selected farmers**

A 15-day training program will be conducted for the identified farmers. Training will be conducted in the Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers. Each center will cater to 150 farmers and each batch will comprise 25 farmers. Area specific technologies that are aligned to agro-ecological, cultural and socio-economic conditions of the area will be promoted. Trainings and capacity building will be carried out in the following four areas:

- Enhancing Crop Production
- Diversification of farming
- Water and Soil Conservation
- Primary Processing
- Using tools and equipment
- Post harvesting technology
- Identification of crop diseases, pests
- Package of Practices
- Marketing
- Processing

### **Exit Strategy**

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Formation of a Trained Member Association to manage and run the Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers. We shall be selecting 150 youth members from each area to run the centers after the project terminates. These youth members will be elected by the local communities and will be completed on various aspects of managing the growth centers. For every growth center there will be 15 trained youth members to manage the work and the operations of the growth center. From among these 10 members, 5 members will be elected for 1 year to run the center, while the other 10 will closely monitor the process and will be involved for carrying out extension services in the neighbouring villages.

## Activity Chart

S. No.	Activities	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
1.	Setting up Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers			
2.	Equipping the Growth Centers			
3.	Hiring staff to run these growth centers			
4.	Activities in the Growth Center			
5.	Baseline Survey			
6.	Awareness Generation			
7.	Identification of direct beneficiaries			
8.	Build Capacities of the selected farmers			

## Project Results

- Increased awareness among the residents of project location on improved agriculture practices.
- Improvement in agricultural productivity by 35% in the selected districts.
- Enhanced income of 1500 farmers families by 45% through selling of agriculture products.
- Establishment of market linkages with the nearby markets, hotels, shops and other government departments.
- Fully functional 10 agriculture development and improvement centers successfully established.

## Monitoring & Evaluation

We will be developing a strong monitoring and evaluation system for the project. The project team will regularly update the progress made against stated objectives of the project and will make adjustments to tackle any delay in the deliverable.

Also, we plan to have a multi level review and evaluation system that will help in keeping track of the project and also advising amendments to cope with any challenge. During the construction of the agriculture development and improvement, we shall be conducting financial audits, to ensure that there is no corruption or malpractice. All the bills will be filed properly and all financial transactions will be carried out only after the approval of our financial officer and project director.

For reviewing the project activities, we shall develop a multi level review system, which will comprise of the Project Director, Setting up Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers Incharge, Project Manager and Field Coordinators. Our senior project team will conduct field visits every quarter to meet the project team and assess project progress.

## Sustainability

The trained member association will ensure long term sustainability to the project. As the growth centers will be run and managed by the local communities and their elected representatives, they will take ownership of the center. Our teams will regularly monitor and provide necessary support to the members, so that they can continue with the extension services and managing the center.

Also, there will be a nominal fee for the training and services provided at the training center, which will be used for maintaining the growth center.

## Budget

Total Fund require for project is USD \*\*\*\*\*

Project Budget Outline	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Project Personnel			
Travel			
Training and capacity building			
Construction of Agriculture Innovation and Development Centers			
Furniture for Growth Centers			
Tools and Equipments			
Agricultural Inputs			
Awareness Sessions			
Baseline Survey			
Communication and Documentation			
Monitoring and Evaluation			
Contingency/Administrative cost and overheads			
<b>Total</b>			

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