

## Project summary

# BENEFIT-Partnership to promote food production, income and trade



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BENEFIT aims for improved sustainable food, income and trade among rural households in Ethiopia. BENEFIT unites 4 programmes: the Integrated Seed Sector Development in Ethiopia (ISSD Ethiopia), the Capacity building for Scaling up of evidence-based best Practices in agricultural production (CASCAPE), the Ethiopian-Netherlands Trade Facility for Agribusiness (TAG) and the Sesame Business Network support project (SBN).

### Enormous potential for agricultural growth

Rural households in Ethiopia [still rely on food assistance](#) and at present 25 million are considered vulnerable to malnutrition. Many institutions still struggle to make crucial agricultural inputs such as quality seed, fertilizers and credit available at the right time and place, in required quantities of acceptable quality at affordable prices. Furthermore, loosely organized commodity value chains receive limited support from agricultural service providers whilst the enabling environment lacks certain capacities to both develop and implement effective and efficient policies for regulating and developing the sector.

**Title:** BENEFIT-partnership to promote food production, income and trade

**Project duration:** January 2016-December 2019

**Funded by:** Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs / DGIS

**Budget:** 30 million Euro

**Partners:** Ethiopian universities of Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, Jimma and Mekelle; Agricultural Research Institutes of Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Tigray; Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research; Agricultural Growth Programme (AGP); Agricultural Technical Assistance programme (ATA); Advance Consult; Fair & Sustainable; Terrafina; Agriterra; Rabobank; Shayashone Consultancy

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation (CDI) is the knowledge broker of Wageningen University & Research. We foster and contribute to sustainable and inclusive food systems through actions in four specified and interlinked focus areas: Agriculture and Markets, Climate and Environment, Food and Nutrition, and Governance and Partnerships. Our staff has the unique combination of substantive knowledge, an international network and excellent process management qualities.

The Government of Ethiopia prioritizes agricultural development as key to accelerating growth, overcoming poverty and enhancing food security. Under the country's spearhead Agricultural Growth Programme, important objectives set are increasing agricultural productivity; creating market access for priority commodities; capacity strengthening; scaling up best practices; the adoption of improved and sustainable cropping systems; and encouraging large-scale enterprise in agriculture. For the Dutch Government and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in particular, increasing food and nutrition security, brokering Dutch expertise, and stimulating trade are [key priority areas](#) for support to Ethiopia.

### Partnership for improved sustainable food, income and trade

The Bilateral Ethiopian-Netherlands Effort for Food, Income and Trade Partnership - BENEFIT Partnership, [aims to improve sustainable food, income and trade among rural households in Ethiopia](#). What is meant by 'improved food' refers not only to quantity, but also quality, including nutritional value.

Furthermore, the project aims to improve the practice of food production and trade. In doing so, it focuses on sustainability and the inclusion of disadvantaged groups in society, such as women smallholders.

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## Uniting four projects under a supportive coordination unit

The BENEFIT Partnership unites the four following agricultural development projects:

- The Integrated Seed Sector Development in Ethiopia ([ISSD Ethiopia](#)) project, which supports the development of a vibrant, pluralistic and market oriented seed sector in the country;
- The Capacity building for scaling up of evidence-based best practices in agricultural production ([CASCAPE](#)) project, which improves agricultural productivity through promoting evidence-based best agricultural practices;
- The Ethiopian-Netherlands Trade Facility for Agribusiness ([ENTAG](#)), which supports private sector development and trade in Ethiopia;
- The Sesame Business Network support ([SBN](#)) project, which supports stakeholders of the SBN in developing competitive, sustainable and inclusive sesame value chains in Ethiopia.

The BENEFIT Partnership coordination unit will provide leadership and support to the four projects in the areas of project coordination and management, financial control, monitoring and evaluation, gender and nutrition. The BENEFIT Partnership coordination unit will be hosted at the BENEFIT projects' office in Addis Ababa, where all project managers will be based.

## Increased effectiveness through an integrated value chain approach

The strength of the BENEFIT Partnership is that through combining efforts, it will be able [to achieve a higher impact than working in isolation](#). For instance, CASCAPE, TAG and the SBN support project often encounter shortages of quality seed as one of the bottlenecks in bringing their innovations to scale. ISSD Ethiopia aims to improve that situation, but realizes that high quality seed only comes to its full potential when combined with good agricultural practices, which is focused upon by CASCAPE and to a more narrow extent the SBN support project also. Furthermore, farmers are unlikely to invest in quality inputs and good agricultural practices unless they are linked to well-functioning commodity markets. That is the main concern of ENTAG.

## Increased efficiency in management and administration

The BENEFIT Partnership will share finance and administrative staff, an officer for monitoring and evaluation and communication, and a gender and nutrition expert, thereby reducing the number of staff members combined across the four projects in their

current organisation. Moreover, uniting the finance streams in one unit in Ethiopia and one within Wageningen University & Research, will create better oversight, financial efficiency, improved transparency and control, and unity among the projects' staff. Lastly, joint planning and alignment of annual plans at national level, and where relevant at regional and woreda level, will result in more synergistic intervention strategies that prevent overlap and the duplication of efforts. For instance, in those woredas where fodder crop production has a high priority among farmers, ISSD Ethiopia and CASCAPE will jointly plan for fodder seed production and appropriate fodder crop production practices.



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