

Resilient Agriculture for Inclusive and Sustainable Ethiopian food systems - RAISE-FS

Resilient, inclusive and sustainable food systems in Ethiopia

Annual report 2025

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Summary Sheet

Programme title	Resilient Agriculture for Inclusive and Sustainable Ethiopian food systems (RAISE-FS).
Vision	The vision of RAISE-FS is more **resilient, inclusive** and **sustainable food systems** in Ethiopia.
Impact	The overall impact of RAISE-FS is increased productivity, enhanced value chain performance and improved human nutrition for improved food security while minimizing the impact on the environment and ensuring social inclusion.
Goal	Creating evidence for practices that contribute to transformation of the food system by addressing leverage points in relation to productivity, enhanced value chain performance and improved human nutrition for improved food security while minimizing the impact on the environment and ensuring social inclusion.
Country	Ethiopia
Programme duration	4 years (September 2021–December 2025)
Contract holder	Stichting Wageningen Research, Wageningen University & Research P.O. Box 88, 6700 AB Wageningen, The Netherlands
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Budget	Total budget: € 12,000,000

Executive summary

Key achievements

Across the five outcome areas, activities in 2025 centred around three main areas: (i) generation of evidence on innovations addressing critical systemic bottlenecks, (ii) demonstration of innovations for scaling, and (iii) capacity building to support the mainstreaming of evidence for sustainability.

In addressing systemic bottlenecks, several key results were achieved. The project provided technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) in the development of major policy and strategic frameworks, including the Pluralistic Extension Services Proclamation; the Ethiopian Food Systems Transformation and Nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Roadmap; the Food Safety Advocacy Guideline and Tools; and the Resource Mobilization Plan for the implementation of national strategies on nutrition-sensitive agri-food systems, postharvest management, and food safety and quality. Additional support was provided in organizing the UN Food Systems +4 Summit and in the preparation of the ADPLAC guideline. We undertook a range of assessments to generate evidence and identify key leverage points for action and scaling. These assessments covered thematic areas such as agricultural messaging, pesticide use in horticultural crops, the One Health approach, postharvest loss, and the potential contribution of traditional and indigenous fruits and vegetables to dietary diversity. Support was provided to the establishment and strengthening of multi-stakeholder platforms and taskforces. These included community-level Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA) learning platforms; sub-sector platforms for poultry, oilseeds, and spices; and national and regional food safety coordination platforms and technical working groups. Efforts were made to strengthen bottom-up planning. *Woreda* profiles were developed and disseminated for three *woreda*s in Tigray, and the *Woreda* LMAT approach guideline was prepared to promote evidence-based, integrated planning at the local level.

Finally, to contribute to agricultural value chain development, several innovative financing mechanisms were designed and piloted. These included the Innovation Fund (IF), Youth Challenge Fund (YCF), and Guarantee Fund (GF), which were implemented through competitive, innovation-based approaches. In addition, an asset-building fund scheme supported war-affected women in the Tigray region. To further enhance quality and safety across value chains, standardized guidelines were developed for poultry, red pepper, and sesame, incorporating Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Good Handling Practices (GHP), and Good Management Practices (GMP).

Achievements related to the demonstration of innovations for scaling include several key interventions. The project piloted small-scale agribusiness models—such as sheep and goat fattening, seed supply systems, vermicomposting, and poultry production—to enable women and youth to expand their income-generating activities and strengthen their financial independence. Innovations in sustainable agricultural practices were scaled using a scaling readiness approach. This included crop diversification, integrated soil fertility management, integrated pest management, and crop–livestock integration. Particular emphasis was placed on addressing scaling bottlenecks through the strengthening of seed systems and multi-stakeholder platforms, thereby facilitating institutionalization. The project piloted integrated home garden production and utilization, complemented by Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) and Social Analysis and Action (SAA) approaches to enhance nutrition outcomes and community engagement. Small-scale technologies and postharvest innovations were introduced to reduce postharvest losses and mitigate food safety risks.

Capacity-building interventions were undertaken to strengthen partner institutions and enhance the effectiveness of program implementation. A training workshop on "Towards Food System Transformation in Ethiopia" was delivered over a two-month period using a blended approach, combining virtual and face-to-face sessions, reaching 130 participants. In collaboration with MoA, the Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI), and other partners, a series of trainings on food systems concepts and approaches were provided to a wide range of organizations and stakeholders. Gender sensitization training, based on a couple's approach, was integrated as a core component across all scaling activities in 2025. Similarly, a Farm to Fork for Food Safety course was delivered to multiple stakeholders. To strengthen capacities for scaling, Training of Trainers (ToT) on the scaling readiness approach was provided to focal persons from implementing partners, including research centres and universities and subsequently cascaded to implementation teams and scaling partners. In addition, training on Integrated Risk Management (IRM) was delivered to experts from MoA and

EIAR. Recipients of the Youth Challenge Fund received training in business development, financial management, and reporting. Journalists in the Amhara Region were trained to promote improved practices and awareness in food safety and nutrition. At the community level, couple-focused training was conducted for farmers, alongside capacity-building activities for development agents, health workers, experts, elders, cooperatives, religious leaders, and local administrators. These efforts contributed to improved knowledge and attitudes toward better nutrition practices. Farmer capacity was further enhanced through the host–follower extension approach, experience-sharing mechanisms, and training on integrated innovation bundles.

Lessons learned

The RAISE-FS implementation experience in 2025 generated several important lessons for advancing sustainable and inclusive food system interventions. A critical factor for achieving long-term impact is institutional embedding, which enhances coordination, accountability, and ownership. Tools and approaches such as gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) innovations, SBCC, Innovation Recommendation Mapping (IRM), and bottom-up planning are more sustainable and effective when integrated into partner institutions at all levels (*kebele*, *woreda*, and national) rather than remaining project driven.

Women and youth empowerment proved most effective when economic and social pathways were addressed simultaneously. Livelihood and business interventions strengthened skills, confidence, and income opportunities; however, access to appropriate financial services remains essential for sustaining and expanding these gains. Integrating livelihood support with gender-transformative approaches such as couples' engagement and SAA dialogues further improved household collaboration, agency, and control over resources.

Agricultural scaling efforts demonstrated that bundling improved production practices with complementary innovations such as training, market linkages, stakeholder engagement, follower farmer networks, and field days, guided by the scaling readiness approach can significantly expand outreach, enhance adoption, and improve productivity. In addition, strengthening seed systems, particularly for crops that are not well supported by formal channels, showed that decentralized mechanisms, such as revolving seed schemes, can effectively address local seed shortages.

Nutrition-related interventions highlighted that increased production alone does not guarantee improved dietary outcomes. Sustained behaviour change support, community engagement, and practical demonstrations are essential to promote diversified and nutritious food consumption.

At the implementation level, joint planning, backstopping, and capacity building contributed to improved scaling at the *woreda* level. Significant progress was made in evidence generation and data management through the use of harmonized data collection tools, mobile-based systems, and continuous technical support, resulting in improved data quality and documentation. Delivering interventions through nearby research centres, in close collaboration with *woreda* and *kebele* stakeholders, proved particularly effective even under challenging conditions.

Overall, the integration of institutional collaboration, gender-transformative approaches, food system outcomes, and bundled innovation packages, combined with bottom-up planning, emerged as essential for achieving sustainable food system transformation. Furthermore, providing technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture and other partner organizations offers a valuable opportunity to institutionalize the evidence generated by RAISE-FS project, ensuring that research findings are effectively embedded into policies, programs, and practices.

Main steering implications for the next reporting period

In 2025, planned interventions were implemented effectively, supported by targeted training, timely technical backstopping, and continuous follow-up. Scaling activities were carried out in alignment with the scaling readiness approach, ensuring a systematic focus on addressing bottlenecks and enhancing uptake. In 2026, the strategic focus will shift toward consolidation and institutionalization. This will include finalizing the documentation of evidence and key outputs, such as working papers, proceedings, and food systems–based best practice manuals. In addition, a series of regional and national events will be organized to facilitate the handover of validated evidence and promote its uptake and institutionalization by relevant stakeholders. Efforts will also be made to establish and operationalize sustainable mechanisms for the continued use of guarantee and revolving funds, with a particular focus on empowering youth and women. While no new grassroots-level implementation will be undertaken with partners, selected field activities and studies will continue in the South as part of the new agrologistic outcome (RAISE-FS LOGIC).

1 Introduction

a. Description of programme and intervention strategy

The vision of the Resilient Agriculture for Inclusive and Sustainable Ethiopian food systems (RAISE-FS) project is more resilient, inclusive and sustainable food systems in Ethiopia.

- **Resilient** to biophysical and economic shocks
- **Inclusive** of women, youth, smallholders, low-income communities and marginalized groups
- **Sustainable** environmentally, socially and economically

The overall impact of RAISE-FS is increased productivity, enhanced value chain performance and improved human nutrition for improved food security while minimizing the impact on the environment and ensuring social inclusion. An additional impact and a spin-off of the implementation modality is that the research capacity in food system transformation at Universities and ARIs will be strengthened.

The goal of RAISE-FS is creating evidence for practices that contribute to transformation of the food system by addressing leverage points in relation to productivity, enhanced value chain performance and improved human nutrition for improved food security while minimizing the impact on the environment and ensuring social inclusion.

Five outcomes contribute to the above:

i. Social and economic empowerment of women and youth in food systems
ii. Efficient and environmentally sustainable production
iii. Sector performance and value chains
iv. Availability of safe and nutritious foods
v. Enabling environment for systems change

It will do this by generating evidence for scaling up through research for food system transformation (R4FST).

b. Review of follow-up measures taken since the last reporting period (2024)

Learning from previous year's demand for capacity building on scaling readiness, training, backstopping and timely monitoring and support were provided to the implementing and scaling partners as a result of which the scaling activities planned in 2025 were properly implemented. Farmers participated in home garden interventions were linked to vegetable seed source in some *woredas*. Strong tracking and follow up was made on the implementation of the projects supported by youth challenge fund and innovation fund. This helped to identify projects that can be completed in the planned time and those which have to be discontinued.

c. Relevant contextual changes and their potential impact

The following issues are major contextual changes expected to affect the project:

- The general election planned for June 1st will make the officials busy and create delay in event organization for institutionalization;
- The prevailing security problems in Amhara that have been managed through adaptive planning and extensive collaboration with implementing and scaling partners (see Annex 1) may influence the institutionalization. The security situation in Tigray is also deteriorating again.

2 Progress towards outcomes

a. Progress towards our outcomes

Five outcome areas are being addressed: (i) social and economic empowerment of women and youth, (ii) efficient and sustainable agricultural production, (iii) sector performance and value chains, (iv) safe and nutritious food and (v) enabling environment for system change. Activities for each of the outcomes take place both at the national level as well as by the partners in the regions.

Social and economic empowerment of women and youth in food systems

This outcome consists of two intermediate outcomes: i) Increased women's and youth's decision-making in agriculture and ii) increased income for women and youth in the food system. The overall progress in 2025 is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 ***Progress Social and economic empowerment of women and youth***

Outcome 1	**Social and economic empowerment of women and youth increased**
Intermediary outcome 1.1	Increased women's and youth's decision-making in agriculture
Results	Twenty eight action and learning platforms (community, community leaders and staff level) were established and sustained aiming at increasing women's and youth's decision making. • Sustained community action and learning platforms: Across four regions, over 240 community participants and 152 partner researchers continued to engage in regular SAA dialogue sessions, meeting monthly and completing the full cycle of facilitated discussions outlined in the SAA guides. These platforms enabled women, men, and youth to collectively reflect on gender norms, household decision-making, workload division, and social relations affecting agricultural and livelihood outcomes. • Strengthened local leadership and platform sustainability: To ensure continuity beyond project facilitation, each community action and learning platform elected inclusive leadership structures (chair, co-chair, and secretary). The elected leaders have taken responsibility for convening regular meetings of SAA champions and coordinating follow-up actions. In parallel, saving groups were formed in all four *woreda*s, creating an additional incentive for regular interaction and reinforcing collective action and peer accountability. • Empowering endline data collection linked to community action planning: An empowering facilitation tool was developed to collect endline data on SAA-related changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices using non-extractive, participatory methods. Rather than functioning as a conventional survey, the process enabled community participants to reflect on their own change journeys. At the conclusion of the process, SAA champions and community core group members jointly developed forward-looking action plans, ensuring that the exercise strengthened ownership and momentum rather than serving only as data collection. Preliminary evidence of SAA endline data reveal significant changes across individual, relational, and structural levels: • At the individual (agency) level, women reported increased confidence, stronger voice in household discussions, and more active participation in agricultural and community decision-making processes. • At the household and gender relations level, communities reported improved sharing of household tasks, increased joint decision-making between spouses, and greater involvement of women in income-related decisions, including increased control over earnings from agricultural activities. • At the structural and normative level, shifts were observed in restrictive social norms, including reduced food taboos affecting women, increased acceptance of women's mobility for training and market engagement, and growing community recognition of women's roles as economic actors. • Capacity strengthening of project staff through experiential learning: Project implementing staff from all four regions convened to pilot the newly developed empowering endline tools. Staff practiced facilitation skills through role-play simulations, followed by field-based endline discussions in two *kebele*s. After this joint learning process, staff returned to their respective regions and successfully conducted community endline discussions using the new tools. • Institutional-level learning through staff reflections: Eight experts from implementing partners were trained on facilitating empowering data collection and led interactive endline discussions on staff reflection outcomes. Using newly developed tools, these experts facilitated discussions with staff from 16 partner organizations (universities and research centers), capturing evidence of changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices resulting from organizational-level SAA reflections. This process strengthened

	institutional learning and reinforced GESI integration within research and implementation environments. • Gender-transformative change: In each of the four regions, *woreda*-level recognition events were organized to acknowledge SAA champions who completed the facilitated dialogue cycles. Participants included representatives from the two participating *kebele*s, neighboring *kebele* leaders, community facilitators (development agents and health extension workers), *woreda* experts and administrators, and relevant sector offices. During these events, SAA champions shared personal stories of change, performed community dramas illustrating shifts in gender norms and decision-making, and engaged in dialogue with local authorities on sustaining the action learning platforms. • Formal recognition and emerging local ownership: SAA champions and community facilitators received certificates of recognition, reinforcing legitimacy and motivation. In addition, RAISE-FS received certificates of recognition from two *woreda* administrations, acknowledging the project's contribution to advancing gender equality and social inclusion. *Woreda* institutions proposed concrete ideas to assume greater ownership of the platforms, signaling a pathway toward sustainability and institutionalization. • Embedding the couples approach in scaling activities: As part of scaling agricultural technologies and business models in 2025, the couples approach continued to be systematically applied across regions. Husbands and wives were jointly targeted for training, demonstrations, and follow-up support, reinforcing shared decision-making in production, marketing, and income use. This approach has been instrumental in sustaining women's engagement and reducing household-level resistance to women's participation in agricultural and economic activities. • Inclusive targeting as a non-negotiable scaling principle: Inclusive targeting was applied in all scaling activities, with a minimum of 50% women and youth participation consistently enforced across regions. This deliberate approach ensured that women and youth were not only beneficiaries but active participants in technology uptake, field days, innovation pilots, and capacity-building activities, strengthening their visibility and voice within local agricultural systems. • Gender sensitization integrated as a strategic scaling activity: Gender sensitization training was embedded as a core component of all scaling activities in 2025. Basic gender awareness sessions were delivered alongside technical interventions to promote reflection on household roles, decision-making, and resource control. This strategic integration ensured that scaling reached entire households, contributing to more supportive environments for women's and youth's participation and decision-making.
Intermediary outcome 1.2	Increased income for women and youth in the food system
Results	Women- and youth centered business were implemented across regions, aligned with local contexts and market opportunities: • A goat fattening business model was demonstrated in Oromia. Access to finance was facilitated through a revolving loan guarantee with Burka Gudina Saving and Credit Cooperative Union, strengthening sustainability and scalability. Some women initiated a second fattening cycle before completing the first, demonstrating early profitability and confidence. • Improved poultry production was demonstrated with women-headed households, targeting asset building and resilience in conflict-affected contexts of Tigray. Beneficiaries received improved breeds and training in poultry husbandry, business management, and nutrition. • Business model interventions, particularly sheep fattening in Angot *woreda* and poultry production in Zequala *woreda*, were implemented in Amhara region. Women reported increased control over income, acquisition of personal bank accounts for the first time, and greater involvement in decisions related to sales, savings, credit repayment, and household investments. • Across all regions, year-round vegetable production consistently emerged as a strong pathway for women's economic empowerment, enabling regular income flows, improved nutrition, and increased control over earnings. • Youth Challenge Fund winning agripreneurs received seed funding for diverse agri-business and income-generating ventures, expanding livelihood and income opportunities for young innovators while demonstrating viable, youth-led business models.

Efficient and environmentally sustainable production

There are three intermediate outcomes under this outcome: i) efficient and sustainable production system enhanced, ii) improved input supply chain systems, and iii) strategic planning for agricultural development improved. The 2025 progress is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 *Progress Efficient and environmentally sustainable production*

Outcome 2	**Efficient and environmentally sustainable production increased**
Intermediary outcome 2.1	Efficient and sustainable production system enhanced

Results	• Seven types of sustainable agricultural practices and innovations promoted including intercropping, Commodity specific innovations with ISFM, and IPM, IRM, crop diversification (food oat introduction), home garden, alternative feed source. • 28 bundles of sustainable production practices promoted around food barley, sorghum, teff, food oats, potato, sweet potato, lentil, soybean, faba bean seed, maize, common bean, mung bean, pearl millet, chickpea, sesame, sunflower, carrot, shallot, onion, spices, home garden vegetables and fruits. • Proceedings are being drafted by all implementing partners on the selected project interventions; • In collaboration with researchers from Wageningen Social & Economic Research, we tested the ABCD framework for assessment of food system resilience by applying the framework in the RAISE-FS project setting at Welmera *woreda*.
Intermediary outcome 2.2	Improved input supply chain systems
Results	• Continued supporting the mechanisms to strengthen input supply systems, particularly around improved seed access and sustainable input use. Key results include the establishment and support farmer groups of onion seed, seed potato and faba bean seed producers; farmer-managed mini-tuber production; shallot, and carrot seed businesses. The project also operationalized a seed revolving fund that enhanced local availability and affordability of quality seed. • In addition, market and institutional linkages were created, including connecting potato seed producers with tissue culture companies and linking all scaling commodities to reliable, sustainable seed sources. The promotion of Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) further provided a sustainable, locally adaptable input option, especially for farmers with small landholdings. Collectively, these interventions significantly improved the resilience and efficiency of the input supply system across targeted areas.
Intermediary outcome 2.3	Strategic planning for agricultural development improved
	The innovative recommendation mapping continued to support woreda planning and the system ws made more user-friendly. • The automation of the most time-consuming and error-prone task extracting and processing spatial data from global sources. This automation now enables rapid preparation of key such as climate (temperature, rainfall), soil physical properties (texture, coarse fragment, depth), land (drainage, slope, land use) road network etc.; • Automation and incorporation of transcribed crop information into IRM undertaken; • Developed an automated Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) data collection system in a KoboToolbox-based tool that can be run from any android mobiles for collecting *kebele* level spatial and farmer information. It was tested by collecting AHP data for all *kebele*s in 13 *woreda*s • A user guide was developed facilitating the use of AHP tool and data collection process • User-friendly graphical interface for IRM was created, complemented by detailed help documentation and a step-by-step user guide that was piloted and refined. This significantly improved accessibility for non-technical users. • IRM lead paper submitted to a journal: Mapping recommendation domains for agricultural innovations in Ethiopia: a novel approach to crop suitability • Use case paper drafted for a journal: "Enhancing Innovation Recommendation Mapping for *Woreda* Planning of scaling of innovations in a Crop-Based Subsistence Farming System • IRM maps developed for 24 scaling *woreda*s, bringing the total to 29, to support *woreda* scenario planning; • One general IRM workflow report prepared for use cases.

Sector performance and value chains

Sector performance and value chains outcome consists of four intermediate outcomes: i) improved sector competitiveness; ii) market linkages created; access to market information improved; iii) innovation and technology transfer in subsectors enhanced; and iv) access to finance enhanced (inclusive to youth and women). The progress made in 2025 is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 *Progress Sector performance and value chains*

Outcome 3	**Sector performance and value chains enhanced**
Intermediary outcome 3.1	Improved sector competitiveness
Results	• Constraints and opportunities related to the sectors and market linkages were discussed in a total of 13 agricultural market platforms that were organized in 2025 across Oromia, Amhara, and Tigray regions to strengthen value chain coordination and market linkages. The platforms focused mainly on poultry, shoat fattening, oilseeds, and spices. Poultry platforms were conducted at *woreda* level in Bishoftu (Oromia), Seqota (Amhara), and Frewoyni (Tigray), while shoat fattening platforms were organized in Wukro, Woldia, Mekele, and Mohoney at *woreda*, zonal, and regional levels. In addition, one regional oilseeds platform was held in Bahir Dar, and a spices platform took place in Bekoji, Oromia. Despite these achievements, the planned national poultry and spices platforms were not conducted due to officials' mobility challenges and instability in some areas. • To contribute to agriculture sector value development and specifically to agri-business enhancement in Ethiopia, the innovation fund (IF), youth challenge fund (YCF), guarantee fund (GF) and asset building fund schemes continued to be implemented across the country through innovation-based competition, except the later where priority was given to war affected women in Tigray region only. 30 chickens were provided to 40 household each.

	Family poultry production became more effective through several complementary innovations. These included improved housing and handling practices, capacity building for farmers, reliable feed supply and proper feeding, scheduled vaccination programs, better market linkage and information, and the establishment of woreda-level stakeholder platforms. Together, these interventions created a supportive environment that helped farmers manage poultry production more efficiently and sustainably. As a result of these changes, productivity improved significantly. Farmers gained better knowledge and skills in poultry management, while household egg consumption increased, contributing to improved nutrition. Women farmers experienced higher incomes, enabling them to cover school fees and educational resources for their children. Many households also diversified and expanded their businesses, particularly in poultry and sheep production. In addition, farmers began practicing savings through banks and microfinance institutions, strengthening their financial security. The impacts extended beyond income generation. Improved knowledge and dietary diversity contributed to healthier families and children with normal body weight. The program also supported trauma healing and helped families restart businesses and rebuild their livelihoods after difficult circumstances. However, important lessons were learned during implementation. Providing chickens alone was not sufficient. Without adequate feed supply and proper vaccination support, poultry production could become a burden rather than a benefit for farmers. Several helping conditions supported the success of the initiative, including the commitment of partners, the willingness of farmers to participate, the economic situation of the community, and strong market demand for eggs. Despite these achievements, challenges remained, such as high feed costs, limited access to commercial feed, shortages of improved chicken breeds, disease outbreaks, and weak extension services. Therefore, strengthening family poultry production requires sustainable feed systems, regular vaccination schedules, stronger linkages with financial institutions, and improved extension services. With these supports in place, family poultry can continue to increase farmers' incomes while improving household nutrition and livelihoods. • The innovation, guarantee and youth challenge fund financing activities went well though some delays were encountered due to security, limited financial situation of beneficiaries in contributing their share and technical limitations of entrepreneurs in operating the purchased equipment, and physical activities according to the set schedules. This forced for 3-6 months' extension of the implementation period. • The established businesses created employment opportunities for youth and women's and generated income thereby contributing to nutrition improvement and food security and increasing their options to access funds from formal institutions. The schemes helped business start-ups to demonstrate the models and innovations and provide quality products or services to the community thereby enhancing value addition, product diversification, and marketing.
Intermediary outcome 3.2 Market linkages created; access to market information improved	
Results	• The set-up of a digital poultry marketing system for the Amhara region was supported; the call centre is stationed in Bahir Dar. The digital platform facilitated the distribution and marketing of a wide range of poultry-related products. These included day-old chicks (DOCs), pullets, live and slaughtered chickens, eggs, veterinary equipment, and medicines. In addition to products, the initiative also delivered essential services such as veterinary care, feed and medicine delivery, and market linkage support through call centers. These services improved communication and coordination among stakeholders in the poultry industry. Through this effort, the project has contributed to employment creation, improved market access, and strengthened service delivery within the poultry sector. The project planned to create 200 jobs and successfully achieved 89 jobs. Among these, 5 were permanent positions while 84 were temporary opportunities. These employment opportunities supported many individuals engaged in poultry production, marketing, and service provision activities. The project benefited a broad spectrum of stakeholders including poultry farms, hotels, restaurants, cafés, traders, and consumers. By integrating these actors into one digital system, the initiative enhanced market efficiency and expanded access to poultry products and services. In terms of outreach, the project demonstrated notable achievements. It targeted 15,000 farmers and reached 20,000 farmers, exceeding its original goal. It also engaged 6 cooperatives out of the planned 10, reached all 3 targeted hatcheries, and connected with 8 feed companies from the planned 10. Additionally, the initiative worked with 10 input suppliers as planned and supported 104 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) out of a target of 200. The project further reached 1,760 commercial farms from a planned 2,000 and supported 38 veterinary service providers out of the intended 50. It connected 14 transporters and collaborated with 3 meat processors. In the hospitality sector, 50 hotels were targeted and successfully reached, while 128 cafés and restaurants benefited from the services. The initiative also supported 15 poultry farms and 9 institutions. Customer outreach was another key success of the project. Although the target was to reach 50,000 customers, the initiative successfully served 20,000 customers. Moreover, the number of chickens sold to hotels and restaurants increased significantly, ranging from one to ten chickens per transaction, demonstrating improved market linkage and growing demand. • The efforts made to link producers with processors and/or exporters were unsuccessful due to security challenges in most of the project sites. • The market information provision specifically for ECX platform traded commodities like sesame, soya bean, and seed spices was not satisfactory as ECX is marginalized.
Intermediary outcome 3.3 Innovation and technology transfer in subsectors enhanced	
Results	• The main mechanism to achieve this is through the various funds and access to finance mechanisms, see next section.
Intermediary outcome 3.4 Access to finance enhanced	
Results	• The innovation, youth challenge, and guarantee funds are summarized in the tables below. • The innovation fund, whereby grantees contribute 50% of the grant themselves is nearing completion, see overview.

One of the most remarkable companies that received challenge funds is Benu. Benu initially planned to source raw materials directly from more than 100 smallholder farmers, but challenges such as government taxation policies, political instability, transportation restrictions, and farmers' limited processing capacity made direct sourcing difficult. To address this, Benu partnered with a large intermediary manufacturer that sources from over 100 small farmers, enabling the company to continue supporting local agricultural communities while ensuring product quality and regulatory compliance. Benu also supported one supplier to expand its operations beyond peanut butter into spices and traditional foods by investing in new facilities and grinding equipment, increasing both supply volume and product diversity. Through this intermediary-based approach, Benu maintained indirect engagement with farmers and plans to establish a collaborative platform to strengthen connections with small producers in the future. Overall, Benu exceeded most of its original targets, with the only shortfall being the number of male employees hired, mainly due to eligibility limitations among applicants and the company's affirmative action hiring practices prioritizing underrepresented groups.

Company	Region	Activity supported	Contribution RAISE-FS*	Status
KSMA Agro-Industry and Processing PLC	Oromia	Enhancing Poultry Breed Value Chain through Dual Purpose Koekkoek Chicken Production Models	€ 19.357	Completed
Tiruwork & Hailemariam partnership	Amhara	Integrated poultry, fish and pig farming (Circular economy model)	€ 24.920	Completed
Tesfaye Admassu	Amhara	Digital Solution for poultry marketing system in Ethiopia	€ 41.500	Completed
Birhanu Woldegiorgis	Central Ethiopia	Potato seed production DLS service	€ 25,527	Discontinued. The grantee could not settle the second disbursement he received to provided training to out grower farmers due to crop loss by untimely rainfall which destroyed the crop in the field.
Haramaya Area Farmers' Cooperative Union	Oromia	Integrating conventional seed tuber production with rapid multiplication technique for sustainable year-round supply of quality planting materials for potato production (ICS-RMT for QPMP)	€ 36,473	Discontinued Though a lath-house has been constructed, G1 potato plant was destroyed by frost. The grantee didn't settle some portion of the 2nd disbursement & showed weak performance
Benu Manufacturing Share Company	Addis Ababa	Production of high energy biscuit	€ 24.857	Completed
Desalew Tadesse	Oromia	Nutri eggs as solution to address nutrient deficiencies in children and supporting healthy foetal development in pregnant women	€ 23.690	Completed
THEDAY agro industry PLC	Oromia	Dehydrating fruits and vegetables	€ 46.000	Completed
Yewubdar Sintayehu	Amhara	Multiplication of Nafis Onion variety Seed	€ 16.005	Discontinued The grantee didn't settle the grant amount she received as a 2nd disbursement

				due to security problem in the project site, Amhara
Awash Urban cooperative Society	Oromia	Enhancing quality vegetable and fruit production through environmentally sound technologies to ensure food and nutrition security	€ 39.073	Ongoing
Girma Erkeyesus	Amhara	Production of quality animal feed for producing nutritious & safe animal protein products	€ 39.230	Discontinued The grantee couldn't contribute his share to receive the 2nd disbursement & couldn't continue project activities due to security problem in project area, Amhara
Wisdom Enterprise	Amahara	Production and marketing of universal moisture indicator for mycotoxin prevention in durable food commodities	€ 13.000	Completed
Gebreegziabiher Kassa	Tigray	Mobile veterinary service delivery in North-Western of Tigray Region	€ 13.361	Completed
Maheder Admassu	Addis Ababa	Transform soybeans into flour varieties for enhanced nutrition and wellness	€ 49.560	Ongoing, delayed due to foreign currency shortage and unavailability of equipment locally

* 50% cofinancing by RAISE-FS, the remaining funds grantees had to contribute in a combination of cash and in kind

- A youth challenge fund, with financial support from RAISE-FS and technical backstopping also by the 4 participating universities, Tigray, Amhara, Haramaya and Hawassa, addresses technological and practical challenges in harvesting, seed processing, waste management, human nutrition and health through innovative ideas.

Company	Region	Activity supported	Contribution RAISE-FS*	Status
Amensis Teshome	Oromia	Portable potato harvester manufacturing	€16,555	Completed
Hedassie Fish processing & Value Chain Addition PLC	Amhara	Establishing improved fish handling and processing plant at Renie cense dam (GERD)	€14,764	Ongoing
Belayneh Bazzie	Amhara	Rearing earth worms for cost-effective chicken feed, chicken egg and vermin-compost production from organic wastes	€15,600	Ongoing
Bereketab Ketaro	South Ethiopia	Bioplastic production from Banana/Enset pseudo-stem	€19,943	Completed
Kalayu Mesfin	Tigray	Poultry feed production from fish byproducts	€18,609	Completed
Kibrom Kalayu	Tigray	Production of plant-based RUTF and Nutritious food paste	€18,274	Completed
Green Glow briquettes PLC	Sidama	Sustainable charcoal production from waste materials	€17,774	Completed

Megersa Dereje	Oromia	Manufacturing integrated rice threshing, cleaning and dehulling machine	€13,596	Ongoing
Mohammedjuhar Mussa	Oromia	Multi-powered home-made poultry egg incubator and chick production	€15,823	Completed
RAY Cosmetics PLC	Amhara	Cosmetics production from agro-waste fish skin	€16,892	Completed
Tadele Gidey	Tigray	Vermiworm and Vermicompost Production	€15,292	Completed

* YCF projects were 100% financed by RAISE-FS

- The guarantee fund (GF) scheme contributed to solving the financial institutes marginalized smallholder women and youth in rural areas. The GF has supported women and youth to start small businesses that were piloted with RUSACCOs in Amhara and Oromia; Omo Bank in Sidama, and Dedebit microfinance in Tigray regions. The financial support scheme improved youth and women income through piloted poultry raising, sheep and goat fattening business models. It contributed to improvements in household nutrition and food security. The guarantee fund approach has proven to be a successful model, encouraging rural youth and women to engage in self-managed business activities when provided with access to credit services. This financial product not only benefits participants but also strengthens cooperatives by increasing membership and generating income.
- The business model activities piloted on sheep and goat fattening, poultry raising, and black soldier fly (BSF) rearing were conducted in Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, and Tigray regions in collaboration with financial institutes taking zero to 70% risks, zero in Sidama and 70% in Amhara and Tigray, 50% in Oromia.

Support to	Region	Activity supported	Financial institution	RAISE-FS	Financial Institution	Total loan (ETB)	Status
Youth, men & women	Angot in Amhara	Sheep fattening	Bisrat Union	463,333	926,667	1,390,000	Ongoing
	Raya Azebo in Tigray	Sheep fattening	Dedebit MFI	650,000	1,274,000	1,924,000	Ongoing
	Atsbi in Tigray	Sheep fattening	Dedebit MFI	420,000	700,000	1,120,000	Ongoing
	Enderta in Tigray	Sheep fattening	Dedebit MFI	420,000	900,000	1,320,000	Ongoing
Youth, men & women	Enderta in Tigray	Goat fattening	Dedebit MFI	380,000	620,000	1,000,000	
Youth, men & women	Babile & Kersa in Oromia,	Goat fattening	Burka Union	815,000	815,000	1,630,000	Ongoing
Youth groups	Hawassa Zuria in Sidama	Poultry	Sidama Bank	600,000	0.00	600,000	Ongoing
Youth, men & women	Ziquala in Amhara	Poultry	Firtata & Bebe Serew RUSACCOs	194,000	388,000	582,000	Ongoing
Youth, men & women	Tsaeda Emba in Tigray,	Poultry	Dedebit MFI	585,000	765,000	1,350,000	Ongoing

Availability of safe and nutritious foods

Availability of safe and nutritious foods outcome consisted of three intermediate outcomes: i) increased availability of nutrient-dense food, ii) increased utilization of safe and nutrient-dense foods, and iii) the national food safety system is strengthened. The summary of progress made in 2025 is given in the Table 4.

Table 4 *Progress Availability of safe and nutritious foods*

Outcome 4	**Availability of safe and nutritious foods increased**
Intermediary outcome 4.1	Increased availability of nutrient-dense food
Results	In order for people to consume nutritious food, it must be available either through their own production or locally in the market. To enhance the availability of nutrient-dense food different nutrition-sensitive agriculture mechanisms were piloted. • Institutionalised home garden production and consumption of vegetables in multiple *woredas* across food-insecure and food-secure areas, emphasising nutrient-rich vegetables like Swiss chard, Ethiopian kale, beetroot, carrot, head cabbage, and cauliflower. This enhanced vegetable intake, knowledge and skills, created income, and build strong social bond via family and neighbourhood sharing of products. Most home gardens cultivate three to five varieties. • The home garden approach was showcased during field visits and cooking demonstration events as a learning platform for various stakeholders. During the field visit, farmers observed the best performing fields and farmer to farmer knowledge and experience sharing took place towards production and utilisation of home garden vegetables. • Host farmers from the previous year reported continuing home garden production using their own savings, indicating the sustainability of the practice due to the benefits they have acquired from the intervention through practical demonstration and follow-up. • Various crops were further promoted such as short harvest fruit (avocado, banana) in in Amhara and Southern regions; recipes for leafy vegetables and root crops by Melkasa ARC; production and consumption of orange fleshed sweet potato (OFSP) in Tigray and the Southern regions. • Access to nutrient-rich legumes, whole grain and oil seed increased through intercropping and sole cropping mechanism, including scaling of common bean, faba bean, soya bean, oats, sorghum, sunflower, and sesame, across the regions. These crops and practices generated high interest and is recognised for its potential to improve household food security and provide additional income. • Hermetic storage to reduce the post-harvest loss was promoted in southern Ethiopia. • Goat fattening and poultry business models to improve the chicken supply chain and increase availability of animal-source foods in Amhara, Sidama, Tigray and Oromia regions contributed to improved diets and income. • An assessment of the potential contribution of traditional and indigenous fruit and vegetables to dietary diversity has been conducted in Amhara, Oromia, South Ethiopia, Tigray, Central Ethiopia, and Sidama.
Intermediary outcome 4.2	Increased utilization of safe and nutrient-dense foods
Results	While many agricultural interventions were successful in their ability to increase food production, this does not necessarily lead to improved nutrition, with nutritious crops often sold and used to purchase less nutritious foods. Here is the project's innovative approach enhance to consumption of diversified diet. • Nutrition education integrated across project activities improved knowledge on nutrition, dietary practices, safe production and food hygiene among farmers and local actors. Increased use of improved cooking and food handling practices was observed during follow-up visits. • A couple-focused training for farmers and capacity building for development agents, health workers, experts, elders, cooperatives, religious leaders, and administrators across the region was given, improving knowledge and attitudes toward better nutrition practices. • Social behaviour change approaches for the implementation of the Ethiopian Food Based Dietary Guidelines (EFBDG) was piloted across five *woredas* in Amhara, Oromia, Central Ethiopia, and Tigray, using home gardening and poultry asset building as entry points. • Context-specific SBCC material, especially posters, translated to Oromiffa, Tigrigna, and Amharic versions as part of the EFBDG action research was developed. • Organised recipe demonstrations and field days across regions to reinforce theoretical knowledge, showing increased community interest in preparing and sharing dishes; recipes covering six food groups were highly rated for taste, appearance, and texture, with a focus on vegetable cooking techniques to reduce cooking time and nutrient loss. • Community mobilisation sessions for food handlers, including women, spouses, and local key actors, to improve cooking skills and promote new recipes using soya bean, common bean, mung bean, OFSP, and vegetables were conducted; vegetable cooking techniques and consumption of beetroot, Amaranths, and OFSP leafy greens were enhanced. • Soybean SBCC training sessions were organised at Mirab Armacho *Woreda* with BDU, to enhance the utilization of soya bean based recipe at food handler, experts and farmers' level. • Supported processing by small-scale companies via the innovation fund, which supported a food processing company in Addis Ababa to produce high-energy biscuits made from oats, peanuts, and soya beans using locally manufactured processing equipment. • Engaged the various national platforms and shared the project experience such as NNAFS Forum and Food system cluster meeting.
Intermediary outcome 4.3	The national food safety system is strengthened
Results	The project has played a key role in strengthening and establishing the Food Safety Technical Working Group platform at both national and regional levels/Amhara.

	• The Ethiopian Agricultural Authority (EAA) provided recognition certificate for our project for supporting and valuable contribution for strengthening food safety control system and regulatory aspects • Collaboration with EAA and national food safety technical working group, organized validation workshop and incorporate the feedback and finalised a standardised guideline based on GAP, GHP and GMP, to ensure quality and safety throughout the value chain. For poultry, red pepper and sesame sector. • Farm to fork food safety blended course was provided for experts from key food safety actors such as EFDA, EAA, MoTRI, MoA, universities, research centres, private sectors and other relevant actors in various regions • To empower media voices, journalists were trained to drive change in food safety and nutrition in the Amhara Region. The objective of: raising awareness among media specialists about food safety hazards, risks, and nutrition challenges; equipping media professionals with knowledge and tools to translate complex technical information into accessible public messaging; piloting advocacy approaches and documenting lessons for potential scale-up; recognising achievements, addressing challenges, and developing solutions, and establish sustainable partnerships and plan resource mobilisation for continued advocacy. media platforms (radio, television, newspapers, web and social media) from Amhara Media Corporation, Amhara Communication Bureau, Fana Broadcasting Corporation, and Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation were included. • In partnership with Bahir Dar University, small-scale technologies to reduce the development of mycotoxins were piloted, including moisture testers, solar dryers and hermetic bags. • The Amhara Region Food Safety Technical Working Group was established, creating a formal multi-stakeholder platform with clear leadership, agreed governance, and initial knowledge products; two consultative meetings identified critical gaps, and secured commitment for practical actions and periodic reviews. • Contributed alongside EAA, EFDA, and other key actors to strengthen the national food control system.

Enabling environment for systems change

There are three intermediate outcomes under the enabling environment for systems change outcome. These are: i) Bottlenecks in policy and its implementation addressed, ii) Organizational and institutional capacities strengthened, and iii) Collaboration and alignment among stakeholders enhanced. The progress made in 2025 is summarized in Table 5.

Table 5 *Progress Enabling environment for system change*

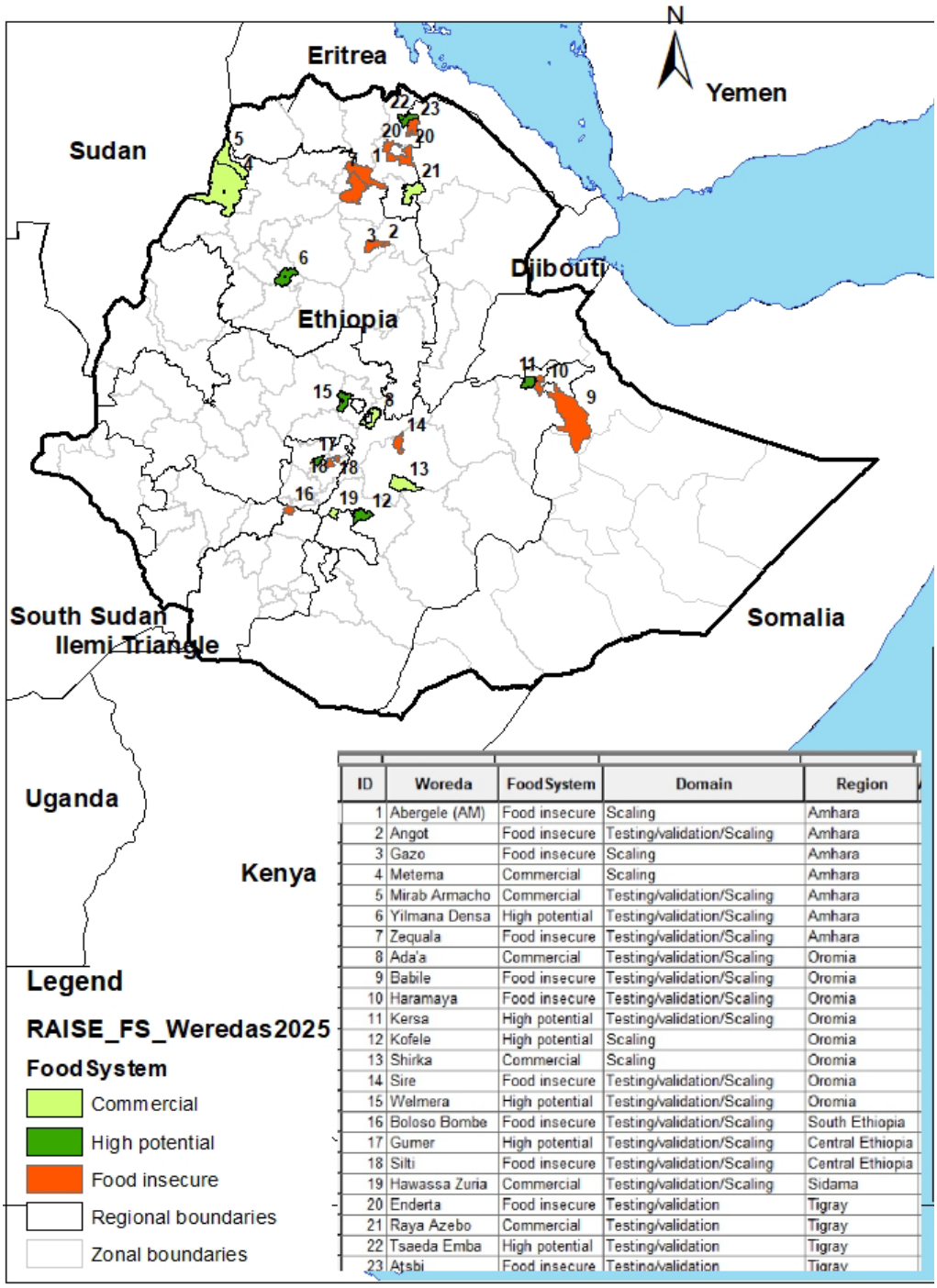
Outcome 5	**Enabling environment for system change enhanced**
Intermediary outcome 5.1	Bottlenecks in policy and its implementation addressed

Results	• Agricultural messaging assessment was undertaken, and the results showed several critical challenges in agricultural communication. The major ones include the lack of media specifically dedicated to agriculture, a limited demand-driven and participatory approach to developing agricultural content, and weak coordination among media outlets, research institutions, and extension services, a disconnect between agricultural messages and the actual conditions faced by farmers, inadequate feedback mechanisms, and limited capacity development in the field of agricultural journalism.
	• In order to address these challenges, the following recommendations are proposed:
	  ○ Developing message outlets (TV, radio stations) that are dedicated to agriculture and creating robust feedback mechanisms that ensure continuous message relevance and quality.
	  ○ Improving tailor-made agricultural message content design, which includes mainstreaming scientific communication/ science journalism, establishing a platform that brings together media outlets, research institutions, and extension services, improving the involvement of pertinent stakeholders in the development of agricultural content for media outlets as well as disseminating tailor- made, relevant and comprehensive agricultural messages.
	  ○ Promote professionalism in agricultural science communication: This includes establishing agricultural journalism programs in higher learning institutions and providing in-service training for journalists.
	• The status of One Health (OH) policy adoption and integration in Ethiopia was assessed. The findings showed several critical challenges, including challenges in governance and policy, collaboration and coordination, capacity, communication, advocacy, and monitoring and evaluation. As a part of the assessment results, the following recommendations were provided to address the challenges: Strengthen the national One Health policy, enhance linkage and coordination, bolster workforce skills, increase investment in infrastructure, support One Health research and education, enhance advocacy and communication, foster community engagement, develop a national One Health monitoring and evaluation framework for consistent progress tracking, and implement a centralized knowledge-sharing platform to facilitate information exchange and continuous learning.

	• Pesticide use assessments were undertaken in Oromia, Tigray, Sidama and Southern Ethiopia regions. Major problems like lack of awareness from food producers, pesticide traders and food consumers, improper use of pesticides, limited regulatory support were identified. • Postharvest loss measurement tool for potato is being developed, and the tool is believed to help monitoring post-harvest loss over time and facilitate informed decision-making. • A draft guideline for *Woreda* Profiling, Planning, and Implementation through Local Mandating for Effective Agricultural Transformation (*Woreda* LMAT) has been prepared. Its primary purpose is to support evidence-based, integrated bottom-up planning at the *woreda* level, tailored to the unique production potential and socioeconomic realities of each locality. The planning approach, *Woreda* LMAT has four key components, namely (i) mandating of relevant actors for collaborative governance and implementation, (ii) *woreda* food system profiling, which - undertaken through the Rapid Food System Appraisal and quantitative baseline surveys – aims at identification of *woreda* specific leverage points and priorities, (iii) Identification of suitable locations and required inputs for specific innovation bundles using Innovation Recommendation Mapping, and (iv) *woreda* bottom-up planning considering the actual coordination for implementation, monitoring and scaling of specific innovations. • Supported the MoA in preparation of pluralistic extension proclamation, developing Resource Mobilization Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategies on Nutrition Sensitive Agri-Food System, Postharvest Management, and Food Safety & Quality. • Supported MoA and ATI in the preparation of Ethiopian Food Systems and Transformation and Nutrition M&E framework.
Intermediary outcome 5.2	Organizational and institutional capacities strengthened
Results	• Short-term training on agricultural value chain analysis was provided in two sessions: (i) the first session was for MoA officials and senior experts, and (ii) the second for RBOA officials and senior experts, which also covered the development of a joint position paper entitled "Intervention Options to Strengthen Agricultural Value Chains in Ethiopia" expected to serve as a guide. • Contributed to the continental and nation discussions as panellist in different forums, including (i) From Policy-to-Practice: Scaling CSA for Sustainable Food Systems & a Climate Resilient Africa at the A side-event of the Second Africa Climate Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, September 8 – 10, 2025; (ii) Beyond Agriculture: Diversifying Rural Economies to Propel Ethiopia's Next Wave of Transformation, organized by ATI on Dec 2, 2025; and (iii) Dairy Research for Impact: Commercialization of Research Outputs at the BRIDGE+ ALEC side event entitled "Dairy Research for Impact: Catalysing Collaboration with the Private Sector", organized by SNV on November 1, 2025; • A food system-oriented manual (e.g., on lentil) has been prepared. The manual presents a comprehensive guide and experience document focused on utilizing a food systems approach. • Enhanced farmer capacity through the Host-Follower Approach, which helps fostering peer learning and facilitating the uptake of agricultural technologies. • A training workshop on "Towards Food System Transformation in Ethiopia" was facilitated using a blended approach, combining virtual and face-to-face sessions over a two-months. • Technical support was provided to the training workshop on the concept of food systems organized by ATI and the Ministry of Agriculture collaboratively where experts from 15 ministries, NGOs, Directors of the Ministry of Agriculture, private sector representatives, and others participated. • Supported organizing UN FOOD Systems +4 summit when Ethiopia co-hosted the UN Food Systems Summit+4 stocktaking. • Supported the MoA in the preparation of agricultural policies, strategies, roadmaps, and program manuals, ADPLAC guideline.
Intermediary outcome 5.3	Collaboration and alignment among stakeholders enhanced
Results	• *Woreda* Food Systems Profiles were prepared for three *woredas* (Enderta, Atsbi and Azebo) of Tigray. • The *woreda* and regional validation workshops were systematically organized bringing relevant stakeholders together across the regions where RAISE-FS implementing partners operate. The workshops played a crucial role in validating and aligning the interventions and ensuring that they are relevant and effective in addressing local needs. • Participated in various clusters of the Ethiopian food system roadmap.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning & Communication

The year 2025 marks the final year of implementation, with seven regions; Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, Central Ethiopia, Southern Ethiopia, and Tigray executing planned activities at full capacity (See the Figure below). The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (ME&L) activities primarily focused on harmonizing endline evaluation tools across projects to ensure consistency and comparability of results, designing and implementing standardized data collection tools and protocols for monitoring and evaluation of both demonstration and scaling innovations, harvesting and documenting change stories resulting from planned activities, building capacity on the implementation of the monitoring framework to track progress toward achieving the intended outcomes of the RAISE-FS program. These efforts aim to strengthen evidence generation, ensure accountability, and support learning for improved program impact.



ID	Woreda	Food System	Domain	Region
1	Abergele (AM)	Food insecure	Scaling	Amhara
2	Angot	Food insecure	Testing/validation/Scaling	Amhara
3	Gazo	Food insecure	Scaling	Amhara
4	Metema	Commercial	Scaling	Amhara
5	Mirab Armacho	Commercial	Testing/validation/Scaling	Amhara
6	Yilmana Densa	High potential	Testing/validation/Scaling	Amhara
7	Zequala	Food insecure	Testing/validation/Scaling	Amhara
8	Ada'a	Commercial	Testing/validation/Scaling	Oromia
9	Babile	Food insecure	Testing/validation/Scaling	Oromia
10	Haramaya	Food insecure	Testing/validation/Scaling	Oromia
11	Kersa	High potential	Testing/validation/Scaling	Oromia
12	Kofele	High potential	Scaling	Oromia
13	Shirka	Commercial	Scaling	Oromia
14	Sire	Food insecure	Testing/validation/Scaling	Oromia
15	Welmera	High potential	Testing/validation/Scaling	Oromia
16	Boloso Bombe	Food insecure	Testing/validation/Scaling	South Ethiopia
17	Gumer	High potential	Testing/validation/Scaling	Central Ethiopia
18	Silti	Food insecure	Testing/validation/Scaling	Central Ethiopia
19	Hawassa Zuria	Commercial	Testing/validation/Scaling	Sidama
20	Enderta	Food insecure	Testing/validation	Tigray
21	Raya Azebo	Commercial	Testing/validation	Tigray
22	Tsaeda Emba	High potential	Testing/validation	Tigray
23	Atsbi	Food insecure	Testing/validation	Tigray

Figure 1 Overview of the intervention *woredas* in 2025

Living Income

A living income survey was conducted in 2024 and followed by comprehensive analysis and publication in 2025. The working papers on analysing living income benchmarks, annual household income, and the cost of healthy diets at both regional and national levels were published. These publications generated robust evidence that contribute to policy dialogue, and strengthen the project's knowledge and learnings using project results within broader livelihood and food system contexts

Most Significant Change (MSC) Stories

Most Significant Change stories were collected from farmers directly involved in project activities and serving as host farmers for promoted innovations. Using the MSC approach, host farmers were asked to reflect on the most significant changes they experienced in their livelihoods and practices since beginning implementation of the project-supported activities. Farmers were purposively selected across different innovation areas to ensure coverage of key project outcomes.

The collected stories were documented in written and videos to capture and communicate transformative changes and intended outcomes of the project. In total, about 15 MSC stories were collected, filmed, and analysed. The analysis supported a holistic identification of good practices, outcome pathways, and key lessons learned, contributing to qualitative evidence for learning, communication, and adaptive management.

Follow up on the efficiency and progress of planned activities

As part of routine project monitoring and learning, field-level visits were conducted to follow up on the progress of planned project activities. These visits aimed to assess implementation status, identify operational challenges, and gather feedback from stakeholders and implementers to inform adaptive management.
Field level visits of the project activities including field day have been made by both national and regional liaison offices together with implementing partners at different stages of implementation. Field visit reports were prepared to support monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes. These reports generated evidence on field-level performance following the approval of activity proposals, enabling comparison between planned and actual implementation. This iterative follow-up improved implementation efficiency, and enhanced learning across project activities

Backstopping to implementing partners

Similar to previous years, quarterly backstopping sessions were conducted face to face and virtually with regional experts to review progress, assess performance, and discuss implementation challenges across activities. These backstopping meetings generated feedback and actionable recommendations, which informed follow-up actions at regional level. Based on the key issues highlighted, regional liaison offices engaged in targeted discussions with implementing and scaling partners to promote early awareness and support the institutionalization of project activities and approaches. This combination of periodic backstopping and routine coordination strengthened oversight, adaptive management, and cross-institutional ownership of project interventions. During the backstopping meetings, participants shared lessons learned, prioritized urgent follow-up actions, and reviewed data collection processes to improve data quality and timeliness.
Annual MEL data were systematically collected, compiled, and validated to support monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes. In order to facilitate the flow of communication and strengthen the existing data flow network, harmonized database was created for all the M&E data collected and analysed. Harmonized data collection tools were used for bringing disparate data/information from various sources together into a single location to collect the food system responsive & high-quality data and assess the performance of pilots to generate evidence-base for policy & scaling recommendations. This consolidated dataset was used for performance analysis, progress tracking against indicators, and evidence-based assessment of effectiveness implementation. Aggregate reach data for 2025 (Figure xx and Annex 2) indicate that all targets will be met with some overachievement against several indicators, largely due to the transition of multiple interventions into the scaling phase.

Endline Data Collection

As RAISE-FS approaches completion, endline data collection was initiated at multiple levels to assess outcomes, learning, and sustainability of project interventions. The endline design targets implementers, scaling partners, stakeholders, and farmers participating in the promoted innovations, using a mixed-methods approach that includes structured questionnaires, focus group discussions (FGDs), and key informant interviews (KIIs). Qualitative endline data collection among implementers and scaling partners has been completed and has entered the summarization and sense-making stage. Quantitative and additional qualitative data collection activities will continue into 2026 to ensure comprehensive coverage and robust evidence for final evaluation and learning.

Table 6 *Key performance indicators 2025*

Impact	**Increased productivity; enhanced value chain performance; and improved human nutrition for improved food security While minimizing the impact on the environment and ensuring social inclusion and Research capacity in food systems at universities and ARIs strengthened**				
Outcome	Outcome.1.1: Social and economic empowerment of women and youth	Outcome.1.2: Efficient and environmentally sustainable production increased		Outcome.1.3: Sector performance and value chains enhanced	
Outcome indicators	# of female and young (<36) small scale food entrepreneurs directly reached with activities to increase income **2025: 11326** 2024: **15029** 2023:**5020** 2022**: 477**	# Of small-scale food producers directly reached with activities to increase productivity/income **2025: 31180** 2024: **24461** 2023: **8,351** 2022: **1,162**	# of sustainable agricultural practices innovations validated/demonstrated * **2025: 25** 2024: **25** 2023: **4** 2022: **1**	# of platform meeting dialogues **2025: 5** 2024**: 3** 2023: 1 2022: **3**	# key issues sector identified and discussed, acted on **2025: 5** 2024: **5** **2023: 4** 2022: **2**
	# and type of learning and action platforms aimed at increasing women's and youth's decision making established * **2025: 28** 2024: **28** 2023: **2** 2022: **1**	# of input supply systems strengthened * **2025: 13** 2024: **13** 2023**: 6** 2022: **2**	# MoUs between research, extension and knowledge institutes **2025: 6** 2024**: 5** 2023**: 8** 2022: **6**	# of mechanisms improving access to finance * **2025: 3** 2024: **3** 2023: **2** 2022: **1**	# of direct beneficiaries with improved access to finance **2025: 447** 2024: **209** 2023: **48** 2022: **0**
Outcome	Outcome.1.4: Availability of safe and nutritious foods increased		Outcome 1.5: Enabling environment for system change enhanced		
Outcome indicators	# of mechanisms adapted for increased availability of nutrient dense foods **2025: 8** 2024: **8** 2023: **3** 2022: **2**	# of government officers, university staff and researchers trained in food safety **2025: 35** 2024: **185** 2023:**20** 2022: **20**	# of policy and policy implementation bottlenecks addressed in relation to outcome areas **2025: 4** 2024: **4** 2023**: 2** 2022: **2**	# of mechanisms adapted for increased collaboration in food systems **2025: 4** 2024**: 2** 2023: **3** 2022: **1**	
	# farmers/food handlers trained on food safety and nutrition **2025: 3706** 2024**: 1678** 2023: 612	# of food safety mechanisms developed and/or strengthened* **2025: 8** 2024: **7** 2023: 2	# scaling partners supported * **2025: 25** 2024: **33**	# Publication (policy brief, issue brief, working paper, ,Experience brief) **2025: 20** 2024: **10** 2023: 26	

RAISE-FS communication

RAISE-FS employed different communication methods and channels to communicate progress, innovations and lessons with stakeholders, partners, and the public. The project's website, quarterly newsletter, social media platforms, and other written communication outputs were used to disseminate information. Both printed and electronic communication outputs were produced and disseminated. Furthermore, all communication outputs, including images and video footage, were carefully documented and archived for future reference.

Website and social media analytics

The RAISE-FS website has seen a significant increase in traffic, with 3,165 visitors and 7,000 visits over 16 posts. The international audience is diverse, including visitors from Ethiopia, Netherlands, USA, Germany, France, and other countries.

Similarly, the RAISE-FS LinkedIn page has shown substantial progress in audience reach and interaction. By sharing 32 pieces of content in the first half of 2025, the page garnered over 66,000 impressions and now boasts a follower count exceeding 6,100. These metrics highlight strong audience engagement and a growing interest in RAISE-FS initiatives and partner activities.

Quarterly newsletter

The 11th,12th,13th and 14th editions of the RAISE-FS newsletter have been published and sent to over 1,200 subscribers in our database. Electronic versions have been made available on our website and social media platforms, while 100 hard copies of each edition were produced and handed out at various events.

Publications

In 2025, a total of ten publications has been produced. These include four working papers, four experience briefs, and two issue briefs, which have been widely distributed through various channels. By disseminating knowledge and evidence-based innovations, the RAISE-FS project aims to play a pivotal role in informing the public and promoting positive change within the food system.

The working paper publications are:

- The ABCD[E] of Food Systems Resilience: Framework Testing and Co-creation
- Harmonizing nutrition behavioural change communication materials using the new Ethiopian Food-Based Dietary Guidelines: A scoping review
- Cocoa sector development in Ethiopia: potential impact and provisional roadmap
- Exploring the growth potential of Ethiopia's spice industry opportunities for development

The topics of the experience briefs are:

- Enhancing food systems through home gardens
- Business opportunities for Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato processing in Ethiopia
- Turning youth vision to action: Lessons from the Youth Challenge Fund in Ethiopian agriculture
- Using a food systems approach in practice: The case of lentil innovation in the Oromia Region of Ethiopia

The topics of the issue briefs are:

- Stakeholders' collaboration for enhanced food safety control system in Ethiopia
- Analysing agricultural messaging in Ethiopian media strategies for improvement

The RAISE-FS project is approaching its conclusion this year, and preparations are underway to publish proceedings that will document the project's achievements, lessons learned, and challenges faced. This plan has been communicated with partners during technical backstopping sessions, resulting in the submission of over 70 manuscripts from RAISE-FS partner institutions.

For the RAISE-FS institutionalization workshop eleven two pagers were prepared, with attractive layout and design and printed. The two pagers were used during the workshop and uploaded on the RAISE-FS website. The two pagers are summary of the RAISE-FS experiences, and associated publications that are available on the website. Additionally, introductory briefs (4), posters (12), banners and brochures were produced.

Website and social media

The RAISE-FS website and social media platforms have been kept active to share news stories and major project activities and latest developments in the Ethiopian food system. Information and project documents have been made readily available on the RAISE-FS website, and updates have been shared on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook. The LinkedIn page has particularly seen active engagement, getting over 6,500

followers. In 2025, the project has posted more than 65 pieces of content, including publications, newsletters, images, and videos, garnering over 135,000 impressions and reached 15,183 members. The feedback received from stakeholders has been encouraging, with many comments being shared with the relevant experts involved in the project.

Documentation

Documentation is an essential process of the project, as it allows for the preservation of key information and provides evidence of the efforts made. Pictures and footage from events and activities implemented by RAISE-FS have been documented and archived to provide a historical record of progress. Documents are stored on SharePoint specifically dedicated for storing photos and footages and stored on external hard drive.

Summary of progress on MEL

What went well

- All targets will be met with some overachievement against several indicators, largely due to the transition of multiple interventions into the scaling phase.
- In 2025 ten RAISE-FS publications have been produced and shared with a wider audience. There are more on the pipeline to be published in 2026.
- Four quarterly RAISE-FS Newsletter were published and shared with more than 1,200 readers and more than 6,500 followers on LinkedIn.
- The RAISE-FS website, LinkedIn page and other social media accounts engaged actively and received increasing attention from followers.

Lessons learned

- Harmonized data collection is a good tool to align learning questions across regions.
- RAISE-FS knowledge products play a key role in institutionalizing innovation and system changes.
- Presenting the RAISE-FS experiences and evidence in visually appealing way is more impactful.

Things to improve:

- Make effective use of qualitative data including the most significant change stories.
- The dissemination of the project outcomes through publications is important for effective lobbying and advocacy efforts. However, for better impact it is important to carefully consider and implement a targeted campaign strategy by engaging our partners. As the project is in its final stage, effort should be made to make sure our knowledge products reached the desired audience and stir change.

Challenges and risks:

- The sporadic security issues occurring here and there affected the movements of the team of experts, collecting data, evidence, pictures and videos.

b. Unintended positive and negative effects of the intervention

Unintended Positive Effects

- ATI and MoA have organized food systems training for other stakeholders, using the RAISE-FS modules and EFS training materials, and invited RAISE-FS to facilitate the sessions. They are now cascading the training to other regions.
- Gender-transformative tools and approaches initially piloted under RAISE-FS are increasingly being used beyond pilot sites, particularly for gender sensitization.
- *Woreda* officials have been giving direction to for scaling project interventions (e.g., home gardening) in all areas with similar agro-ecology in the *woreda*s after field visit to the project activities. An example is the contribution of the Tigray BoA of ETB 13 million for expansion of potato innovation scaling efforts in Tsaeda Emba.



Photo credit: Kiflom Hadgu

- Understanding the demand created for vegetable seeds, some *woreda* experts started vegetable seed trading as a sidework with better trust from farmers in relation to quality and cost of seeds.

- Home gardening combined with SAA and SBCC attracted Child Health and Mortality Prevention Survillance (CHAMPS) project in Kersa and Maya (Haramaya) *woreda*s for promotion.
- Some farmers who involved in vermi-compost preparation through the RAISE-FS project have been frequently visited as a site for practical training by other initiatives.
- Interventions on crop diversification particularly home gardening and intercroping of maize-common bean has been taken up by Power for Food Partnership (P4FP) of SNV for further scaling in addressing regenerative agriculture.
- EIAR has been asked to incorporate the GTA approach in a large international proposal. Acknowledging the approach as well as the expertise EIAR has built though participating in RAISE-FS.

Unintended Negative Effects

- Black soldier fly rearing as a potential protein source for egg laying chicken has poorly performed across all piloted sites (Hawassa, Bishoftu, Addis Ababa) due to their intolerance to the cold weather and unknown disease infection.
- Some innovation fund competitors won the competition based on proposal evaluation but lacked commitments to accomplish the planned intervention and turned to be unachievable within project life span.

c. Programme visibility

Key measures that enhanced project visibility included several strategic interventions. First, the proactive dissemination of project results through various forums significantly increased outreach. This included the production of diverse knowledge products such as policy briefs, working papers, and issue papers, as well as continuous communication through multiple media channels.

Second, collaboration with implementing and scaling partners, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), was strengthened, thereby expanding the project's reach and influence.

Third, the organization of high-level field days, with the participation of senior government officials, provided important platforms for showcasing project achievements and innovations.

Fourth, a series of targeted workshops were conducted to present and formally hand over validated innovations. These workshops particularly focused on outputs such as *woreda* profiles, food safety manuals, and commodity specific guidelines.

Finally, active participation in key stakeholder platforms including the National Seed Technical Committee, the Food System Roadmap Clusters and RED&FS Technical Committees, further contributed to enhancing the project's visibility and engagement within relevant policy and technical networks.

3 What have we learned

- As it is for the testing and validation of evidence of innovations, mainstreaming for scaling and sustainability also requires different approaches specific to each of the innovations, which have enhanced the mainstreaming process, including (i) interlinking the different food system outcomes for enhanced understanding and application of food system approaches, (ii) joint implementation of SAA and social and behavior change communication approaches has contributed to reduced workloads for women, with men increasingly participating in food preparation and household decision-making; (iii) institutionalizing the scaling readiness approach, (iv) facilitate *woreda* planning by incorporating diverse aspects, including IRM and bottom up planning, (v) couples approach for enhacing gender senstive extension system;
- Proactive engagement in national and regional events and platforms facilitates the effective mainstreaming of project demonstrated evidence of innovations, like for example in the national seed steering and technical committees, the different TCs and TFs of RED&FS, Ethiopian Civil Society Coalition for Scaling Up Nutrition (ECSC-SUN), Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations (NEWA), National Food Safety Taskforce, and the Coalition of the Willing (CoW), a multi-institutional platform established to address the fragmentation and inaccessibility of soil and agronomy data in Ethiopia.
- Use the diverse means of communication enhanced to reach more stakeholders and beneficiaries, including field days, stakeholder meetings, timely documentation of evidence of innovations and use of diverse mechanisms, like websites, social media platforms;
- Balanced engagement along the different administrative layers (Federal, regional, zonal, *woreda* and *kebele* levels) along with different stakeholders (public, private, and non-governmental organisations) provided a better opportunity for testing, validating and scaling of the demonstrated evidence of innovations;
- Although multiple knowledge products such as working papers, policy briefs, and reports are produced, their messages often require structured follow-up actions to effectively influence policy and practice. Dissemination activities such as stakeholder meetings, workshops, and policy dialogues continue to be essential to ensure that the evidence generated is translated into actionable recommendations and informed decision-making, rather than remaining unused as shelf documents.

4 Sustainability

a. Measures to enhance programme sustainability

Ensuring sustainability considered diverse measures, which include (i) proper engagement of relevant stakeholders in the design, implementation, testing, validation and scaling activities, (ii) proper and timely documentation of demonstrated evidence of innovations for enhanced communication considering local languages, (iii) application of diverse mainstreaming and scaling approaches specific to each of the demonstrated evidence, (iv) mainstreaming of business incubations through Innovation Fund and Youth Challenge Fund approaches and (iv) capacitating implementing partners, which are the different agricultural research centres of EIAR, ARARI, CEARI, SEARI, and TARI, and universities, namely Bahir Dar, Hawassa, Haramaya, and Mekelle Universities. Some of the examples considering the listed key measures are:

- Working closely with implementing and scaling partners throughout the project cycle along with providing capacity development for stakeholders, joint implementation of scaling activities and handing over documents of demonstrated evidence.
- Sharing food system-based manuals, working papers, guides (GTA, EFBDG, etc) and other supportive documents to enhance institutionalization.
- Strengthening community ownership through elected SAA champion leadership and saving groups that incentivize continued engagement.
- Promoting institutional uptake through multi-level dialogues and events and integration of GTA tools into organizational mandates.
- Documenting and packaging GESI and SBCC tools and lessons into different knowledge products helps continued use and adaptation.
- Sharing IRM and *woreda* profile integrated as part of the *Woreda* LIMAT guide that will facilitate evidence-based integrated *woreda* planning.
- Developed supportive documents for IRM including user guide and documentation, and simplification and automation.
- Participatory evaluation of technologies contributes for social aspects of sustainability.
- The experience and evidence in resilience assessment would contribute to sustainability.

b. Description of exit strategy

In 2025 we have substantially invested in working, apart from our implementing partners, with a whole range of different actors. Using the scaling readiness approach has made them co-owner of the various innovation bundles and approaches. In addition, we engaged actively in policy engagement, both putting pertinent issues on the agenda as well as contributing to a whole range of directives and proclamations such as the pluralistic extension proclamation and if approved design of directives and regulations; finalization of food system-based manuals, and other guidelines and publications and organizing hand over events, in form of a workshop, policy dialogue and meetings. Our implementing partners, the ARCs and Universities are already embedding the food system approach, which in essence is an interdisciplinary approach and planning modality into their systems.

5 Institutional/Organizational development and human resources

The project continued to be implemented through the organizational structure that covers the national team, regional liaison offices and implementing partners (universities and agricultural research institutes and their centres) teams. The engagement with implementing partners continues to be as per the signed collaboration agreements among SWR Ethiopia, the relevant ARI and the University in each region as implementing partners.

The national team continued to be composed of the project manager and deputy manager, and five outcome advisors, as well as a MEL and a communication advisor and the regional liaison office teams in each region also continued to be composed of a regional liaison office team leader, an assistant team leader and a finance officer. The regions covered were Tigray, Amhara, Oromia and South (covering Sidama, CER, SER).

The implementing partner teams in each region continued to be two in each region, a team with a university and another team with a regional research institute. In each partner organization, the team is composed of a focal person and a number of team members, depending on the required expertise.

6 Finance

Presented in a separate document.

Annex 1 Adaptive management

Adaptive management used in implementing the 2025 work plan

As in previous years, SWR Ethiopia has made a close monitoring of the situation on the ground, gathering information from the regions and those in the specific localities where the RAISE-FS project operates. This assisted in taking measures to safely implement the plan. In 2025, the project planned to undertake various interventions with implementing and scaling partners in 24 *woredas*. The implementation was, however, undertaken in the 23 *woredas,* dropping only Mecha *woreda* in Amhara region because of the continued instability in the area.

In the remaining seven *woreda*s of Amhara region and Shirka *woreda* in Oromia where the instability continued to be a problem, the planned activities were fully undertaken through the support of experts of scaling partners who reside in the implementation villages/ *kebeles* with frequent communication and support by the experts of the implementing partners. Besides, experts of the implementing partners and liaison office team were travelling to the implementation sites using public transportation during critical stages of the implementation like data collection and documentation of stories change.

Region	*Woreda*	Measures taken
Amhara	Mecha, Quarit	Both *woredas* were dropped because the security situation remained volatile.
	Yilmana Densa	Planned activities were undertaken through the support of experts of scaling partners who reside in the implementation villages/ *kebeles*, with frequent communication and support by the experts of the implementing partner (Adet ARC of ARARI) and project liaison office.
	Angot, Gazo	The project team of experts from Sirinka ARC were travelling to the implementation sites using public transportation and also by capacitating development agents residing in the village on the procedure of implementation and data collection.
	Mierab Armachiho, Metema	The project team of experts from Gondar ARC were travelling to the implementation sites using public transportation and also by capacitating development agents and private farm owners on the procedure of implementation and data collection.
	Ziquala, Abergele	There was no security problem, and the activities were undertaken as planned without problem.
Oromia	Dodota	Dropped because of a security problem
	Adama	Dropped because validated innovation ready for scaling was limited.
	Shirka	The security problem was unpredictable. However, the planned activities were fully undertaken through the support of experts of scaling partners who reside in the implementation villages/ *kebeles* with frequent communication and support by the experts of the implementing partner (Kulumsa ARC of EIAR) and project liaison office of the region.
	Babile, Haramaya Zuria, Kersa, Sire, Wolmera and Ada'a	There was no security problem, and the activities were undertaken as planned.
Central Ethiopia	Kachabira	As a result of region restructuring, the research centre, responsible for the implementation of interventions, is far away from the *woreda*.
	Gumer, Silti	There was no security problem, and the activities were undertaken as planned.
South Ethiopia	Bule	As a result of region restructuring, the research centre, responsible for the implementation of interventions, is far away from the *woreda*.
	Boloso Bombe	There was no security problem, and the activities were undertaken as planned.
Sidama	Hawassa Zuria	There was no security problem, and the activities were undertaken as planned.
Tigray	Enderta, Atsbi, Tsaeda Emba and Raya Azabo	There was no security problem, and the activities were undertaken as planned.

Annex 2 Indicators and targets

#	Indicator description	Reach 2022	Reach 2023	Reach 2024	Reach 2025	Cumulative Reach 2022-2025	Updated Target -LOP 2025
	FNS indicators						
1	# of small-scale food producers directly reached with activities to increase productivity/income	1162	7,189	24,461	31180	63,992	60,000
	of which women	338	2,487	10,287	13794	26,906	18,000
	of which youth (<35 years of age)	422	3,521	9,610	14045	27,598	24,000
2	# of small-scale food producers that adopted new knowledge and/or technologies	872	5,695	18,925	23,780	49,273	45,000
	of which women	254	1,927	7,900	10254	20,335	13,500
	of which youth (<35 years of age)	317	2,700	7,457	10,670	21,144	18,000
3	# of FNS- relevant knowledge institutions that perform better	6	14	16	16	16	16
Social and economic empowerment of women and youth in food systems							
4	# and type of learning and action platforms aimed at increasing women's and youth's decision making established	1	2	28	28	59	28
5	# of female and youth (<36) small scale food entrepreneurs directly reached with activities to increase income	477	4,543	15,029	11326	31,375	15,000
	of which women	281	2,389	9,646	7319	19,635	9,000
	of which youth (<35 years of age)	287	3,412	10,379	4007	18,085	10,800
Efficient and environmentally sustainable production							
6	Types of sustainable agricultural practices/ innovations validated	1	7	7	7	7	7
6a	# of sustainable agricultural practices/ innovations validated		28	25	28	28	29
7	# of input supply systems strengthened	2	11	13	13	13	13
8	# MoUs between research, extension and knowledge institutes (national, regional, zonal level)	6	2	5	6	19	8
9	# of *woreda*'s which are supported in scenario planning through recommendation mapping		5	24	24	29	29
Sector performance and value chains							
10	# of platform meeting dialogues	3	1	3	5	12	3 per sector/year
11	# key issues sector identified and discussed, acted on	2	4	5	5	16	2 per sector
12	# of market linkages materialized		6	10	15	31	40
13	# market opportunity report updates developed;	2	2	2	2	8	8

14	# of innovations for improved productivity & quality supported by innovation fund		1	3	4	8	3 per sector
15	# innovation proposals approved and implemented;		1	5	8	14	15
16	# of mechanisms improving access to finance		1	3	4	4	8
17	# of direct beneficiaries with improved access to finance		48	209	447	704	500
	of which women		32	116	226	374	250
	of which youth (<35 years of age)		34	152	235	421	250
25	# of people trained on business development		50	116	137	303	175
	of which women		12	56	60	128	52
	of which youth (<35 years of age)		23	96	81	200	70
	Availability of safe and nutritious foods						
18	# of mechanisms adapted for increased availability of nutrient dense foods	2	7	8	8	25	7
19	# of trainings for food handlers piloted		6	20	20	26	29
20	# of government officers, university staff and researchers trained in food safety and nutrition	20	11	185	35	251	150
20A	# farmers/food handlers trained on food safety and nutrition		612	1678	3706	5,996	2500
	of which women		318	783	2014	3,115	750
	of which youth (<35 years of age)		247	617	1383	2,247	1000
21	# of food safety mechanisms developed and/or strengthened		2	7	7	9	5
Enabling environment for systems change							
22	# of policy and policy implementation bottlenecks addressed in relation to women's and youth empowerment, sustainable production, sector and value chain performance and safe and nutritious food	2	10	4	4	20	13
23	# of sustainable mechanism for collaboration and alignment among stakeholders established	1	6	8	8	8	8
24	# of mechanisms adapted for increased collaboration in food systems	1	4	2	4	4	4
26	# scaling partners			33	25	33	35
27	# Publication (policy brief, issue brief, working paper, *Woreda* profile, Experience brief)		26	10	20	56	50

* The target is cumulative for the project period

** The targets for the FNS indicators are based on the reach that is expected through the scaling activities in 2024 and 25. This is however highly dependent on collaboration of the stakeholders and scaling partners, and the stability in the regions we work.

Annex 3 Risk & Mitigation Strategies

Assumption	Risk	Probability	Impact	Motivation	Mitigation (*)	Adjustment 2026
Security						
A stable political climate will prevail	Political disturbances will affect the programme to be able to execute the activities according to plan	Medium	high	The political climate in Ethiopia has been relatively unstable over the last decade. It is expected to remain so for the foreseeable future	Outside the scope of the project	The situation in the country is still quite volatile, especially Amhara but also Tigray and parts of Oromia are not stable. See Annex 1 for the adaptive management that is in place. The upcoming elections (June 2026) means that high level officials have not been available due to extensive party meetings. The frequents change of ministers and lower-level leaders continues.
The security situation in the country will be stable	Unrest and violence will affect the programme to be able to execute the activities according to plan	High	high	Multiple regions are experiencing active conflict	Established information sharing system and adaptive measures	New 2025, previously merged with political instability. Amhara is extremely insecure, but also Tigray and parts of Oromia are not safe. See Annex 1 for the adaptive management that is in place.
RAISE-FS will be able to operate in a stable environment	Emerging shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupts execution of the programme	Medium	medium	COVID-19 has made us all realise that as a global community we are not prepared for major shocks. Currently it is not possible to foresee what the next shock will be, but experience shows that it can be a major disruptor	Agile planning and establishing strong partnerships so e.g. when travel is restricted local activities can still proceed (EKN to provide timely and up to date information in case of emerging shocks)	The war in Ukraine still affects prices and availability of staples. The recent war between the US, Israel and Iran has severely destabilised the country. Lack of fuel, lack of fertilizer and inflation affect operations.
The activities will be able to involve both women and youth in a sustainable way	Women and youth do not benefit from the programme	Low	high	Truly involving women and youth is beyond counting their attendance. It will need concerted effort to engage them	Go beyond counting numbers; setting of concrete outcome targets for women and youth; involve women and youth in design of activities, target systemic issues and mainstreaming	The issue of youth employment is at such a scale that it is beyond the scope of RAISE-FS. A youth challenge fund approach has been put in place. A gender transformative approach has been promoted in the interventions
Both the public and private sector are willing to invest in safe food and	Unsafe food enters the market, and the environment is negatively	Medium	high	Food security receives more attention than food safety as most governments deem this to be a top-priority, and	Provide support to project partners; awareness on the issues of sustainable production; Support GAP	The formation of the food safety technical working group facilitated by RAISE-FS is a step in the right

Assumption	Risk	Probability	Impact	Motivation	Mitigation (*)	Adjustment 2026
environmentally sound production systems	affected by the (intensified) production methods			without a functional food safety control system the private sector will find it difficult to comply	programmes; strengthen both public and private institutes	direction. This however needs to be echoed by high-level policy makers. Attempt to establish a national platform is still ongoing.
A stable economic climate will prevail	Economic disturbances will affect the programme to be able to execute the activities according to plan	High	medium	The devaluation of the ETB and inflation trends	Opening of a Euro account and exchange into ETB on needs based only	Inflation, especially due to the war in the Middle East, is high. This will affect uptake of innovation bundles as scalimng partners will lack resources.
The agriculture sector is not affected by fraud and corruption	Corruption and fraud will reduce the willingness of stakeholders to collaborate	Low	medium	Even though fraud and corruption is present in Ethiopia, it is not rampant. When it does occur, it will affect the effectiveness of the programme	Strict procedures and checks on financial reports. (EKN to alert the programme on any suspicion and vice versa)	Close monitoring of financial reports by SWR Ethiopia controllers as well as annual audit procedures are in place.
Increase production, marketing and income will lead to an improved and diversified diet	The project activities do not lead to a diversified diet	Low	medium	There is ample evidence that diversification at farm level does not result in a more diverse diet. This needs to be accompanied by nutrition education and campaigns	Awareness raising amongst the programme partners on the importance of nutrition. Engagement with the appropriate stakeholders in the field of nutrition sensitive agriculture, focus on systemic issues and mainstreaming	There is a close collaboration with the nutrition departments of both the MoA as well as the MoH. The Ethiopian Food Based Dietary Guideline has been mainstreamed in collaboration with the nutrition department of MoA
Partnership						
Information & data will be made available by all project partners for monitoring evaluation and reporting	Incomplete overview of programme achievement and outputs	Low	medium	Experience from the BENEFIT programme has shown that collection of information for MEL purposes can be arduous at times. While it occurs rarely, lack of relevant information ill affect the programme outcomes	Increase collaboration and contact moments with partners. Awareness creation about the importance of data collection, provide easy to use tools and templates (in case required EKN to provide official letter)	Data sharing system has been put in place
Stakeholders are willing to collaborate and share information	The innovation system will not function optimally	Low	medium	Experience from the BENEFIT programme has shown that it is of utmost importance to have a good data management system. While most partners are willing to share data at times scientist keep back data to be able to publish – a requirement for promotions especially at universities	Joint planning and sharing sessions with relevant stakeholders both at federal as well as regional level (attendance of EKN at events)	This continues to be outstanding especially in the regions stakeholders have been very active in engaging with the project
Staff are protected from sexual exploitation and abuse	An unsafe working environment affects staff both at a personal level as well as professionally	Low	high	EKN has highlighted the need for procedures to protect staff from sexual exploitation and abuse, as such SWR Ethiopia has taken measures.	New	A one pager (in various languages) on one pager on the PSEA (Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Core Principles has been developed and incorporated in the HR

Assumption	Risk	Probability	Impact	Motivation	Mitigation (*)	Adjustment 2026
						manual. In addition, staff have been sensitized, and a whistleblower procedure is in place. The topic is regularly discussed in team meeting.
Strong team at implementing organizations and stability of officials at respective public organization ensure effective implementation of planned activities and their mainstreaming	Frequent turnover of staff and officials/policy makers reduce the efficient implementation and mainstreaming of evidence	Medium	high	This has been a continuous issue during BENEFIT, staff get promoted or functions in other areas or organisations this requires new staff to become familiar with the programme	Build on our experiences in team building not only at partner level but also at region and national levels; diversifying engaged policy makers and officials at regional and national level	The team is a good combination of experienced and younger staff. All are extremely dedicated. In the regions the teams are supported by a good mix of expertise to reflect the food system outcomes and activities.
Access to the innovation fund will enhance and expand investments in the sector	Business opportunity funds will be underutilized	Medium	medium	The current uncertain climate (political stability, the pandemic etc.) might be a hurdle for companies to invest in businesses related to agro-food systems	Awareness creation about the fund; coaching of potential grantees during the development of a proposal; development of a scaling strategy	As the quality of the proposal, especially the economic viability is poor, additional support has been provided on developing viable business plans. Close collaboration with micro-finance institutions has been initiated
Institutionalization						
The reputation and trust generated by BENEFIT and its predecessors as a neutral facilitator are maintained and will reinforce the role of RAISE-FS	Rebuilding the network will slow down project results	Low	low	With the no-cost extension of BENEFIT bridging the period between end of one programme and the start of the next we are able to maintain good relations with the major partner at federal, however not at regional level	Continuous engagement with relevant stakeholders engaging them in workshops, learning and planning sessions (EKN as an ambassador of the4programme)	RAISE-FS has built its own reputation and continues to have good working relationships with partners and the various government institutions
The relevant ministries and ministerial departments engage with the programme and incorporate outcomes in their policies	Relevant departments and/or individuals do not engage with the programme and its outcomes	Low	high	The experience in BENEFIT has shown that the ministries have trust in what BENEFIT has generated. However, a political change of personnel can potentially change this. If the various ministries do not take up the programme outcomes scaling will not be done	Regular engagement with high level public stakeholders. Engagement of the Steering cie. and regional advisors (EKN to support the efforts of the programme in its engagements with high level stakeholders)	Regular engagement has been improved, most departments are looking favourably at the RAISE-FS interventions. When deemed appropriate EKN will be asked to moderate. The appointment of a new minister of the MoA is a positive development.
Information is available that can drive transformation	Transformation in the food systems will not take place	Low	high	In Ethiopia, there is plenty information available, however the step from 'knowledge on the shelf' to 'knowledge in action' requires effort by all involved stakeholders	Promote innovative research as well as investments; make knowledge about innovations available to the stakeholders, use effective communication methods	By the end of 2025, RAISE-FS has published 56 papers and 14 newsletters which have been widely shared in the network and follow-up discussions made. *Woreda* profiles

Assumption	Risk	Probability	Impact	Motivation	Mitigation (*)	Adjustment 2026
						have been shared with the respective *woreda* officials
A demand driven R4FST agenda will result in a competitive and innovative sector	Generated evidence are not taken up by the sector	Low	high	In Ethiopia there is plenty knowledge available, however the step from 'knowledge on the shelf' to 'knowledge in action' requires effort by all involved stakeholders	Design a process for joint agenda setting, implementing agile and flexible approach, organisation of learning events, seconded staff to MoA for timely capturing of emerging opportunities	Staff of RAISE-FS participate in the technical working group of the Ethiopian Food System Roadmap as well as different relevant platforms such as the gender and nutrition fora

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The mission of Wageningen University & Research is "To explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life". Under the banner Wageningen University & Research, Wageningen University and the specialised research institutes of the Wageningen Research Foundation have joined forces in contributing to finding solutions to important questions in the domain of healthy food and living environment. With its roughly 30 branches, 7,700 employees (7,000 fte), 2,500 PhD and EngD candidates, 13,100 students and over 150,000 participants to WUR's Life Long Learning, Wageningen University & Research is one of the leading organisations in its domain. The unique Wageningen approach lies in its integrated approach to issues and the collaboration between different disciplines.

Wageningen Research Ethiopia is an international NGO and part of Wageningen University & Research. The focus of research is on Research for Food System Transformation (R4FST), working closely with local universities and agricultural research institutes as implementing partners and the Ministry of Agriculture, regional Bureaus of Agriculture, NGOs and the private sector as scaling partners.