

ETHIOPIA

# FEED SAFETY – CHANGE THROUGH LEARNING

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“We can achieve change only by promoting innovative ways to learn, reflect and work together.”

“I see mindset shifts being promoted by CDAIS,” said Gemechu Nemie, Director of the Ethiopian Animal Feed Industry Association and a key member of the livestock feed safety and quality innovation partnership. And this is the sort of change that the CDAIS project is beginning to engender, as partners start to implement approaches that better promote innovation in agriculture, by inspiring small and simple personal revolutions. Ethiopia is one of eight CDAIS pilot countries and, within each, several ‘innovation partnerships’ have been selected. Here we see how one small step in one country is already making waves. “Milk is vital for a healthy society – and I now see a brighter future through new innovation thinking,” said Tsegay



*“I have been a dairy farmer since 2007 and now have 60 cattle. But the high cost and poor quality of animal feed, along with lack of attention or support, seriously hampers development of this sector” said Tsegay Teklemariam.*

Teklemariam, a dairy farmer in Goro on the outskirts of Addis Ababa. “And it is clear that to do so, we must develop on-farm feed production, and link with banks so we can access loans for investment.” He was recommended by the Ethiopian Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries to play a part in the new CDAIS programme because he sees the need to transform the dairy sector, is very happy to share his skills and experience, to learn from others, and to work together to achieve change. But, he adds, “we also need to set up an information-sharing mechanism, and to have continuous training and follow-up. There is much to do.”

## Livestock – an essential national resource

Ethiopia has more livestock than any other country in Africa. The sales of meat, milk and other animal products from 57 million cattle, 29 million sheep, 29 million goats, 7 million donkeys, 2 million horses, a million camels and half a million mules make up one-quarter of national gross domestic product (GDP), 45% of agricultural GDP, and provide 16% of foreign earnings from the export of live animals, hides and skins. In addition, but more difficult to measure, is the work these animals provide, for ploughing, threshing, and transporting farmers, families and farm products to market and bringing back domestic needs.

## From challenges to solutions

But the livestock sector could contribute much more to the national economy. Animal diseases, and poor-quality breeding stock and feed contribute to reduced production and sales. In response, the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries has a vision and strategy of what can and needs to be done to develop the sector. Built on solid facts, realistic targets and priority interventions, CDAIS partners are actively supporting this – in new and innovative ways.

Research findings on the contamination of feeds by aflatoxin, published by International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) scientists in 2015, prompted professionals and the feed industry to look more closely at the causes and control methods. Consequently, CDAIS partners helped to establish the 'feed safety and quality innovation partnership' under the auspices of a task force of the Veterinary Drug and Feed Administration and Control Authority (VDFACA). This partnership aims to overcome identified problems and ensure feed safety and quality along supply chains, with members including a wide range of stakeholders representing government ministries and authorities (including VDFACA), farmers, traders, the Ethiopian Animal Feed Industry Association, and the Ethiopian Poultry Producers and Processors Association, among others.

## Key sector needs

After three days of intense discussion, solutions were identified and proposed that would overcome challenges to meeting the quality, safety and adequacy of inputs in the livestock sector. The presence of aflatoxins was confirmed as a particular and increasing issue in the milk industry, for example. The partnership agreed to develop a directive on feed risk assessments, risk management and risk communication. During the process, stakeholders analysed causes and effects around poor feed safety and quality, and developed a detailed assessment of the causes and possible solutions. Thanks to the use of new tools, they also proposed a plan of action that would lead to definite impacts in the short to medium term.

## A farmer reflects...

"The CDAIS training helped me to gain new knowledge on feed safety and quality issues," dairy farmer Tsegay Teklemariam pointed out five months after attending the capacity needs assessment. He spoke from his milk parlour on how those few days had changed his way of thinking: "We all talked together about the history of the problem, the impacts of poor feed quality, aflatoxin concerns, possible solutions, and new global issues regarding feed safety. And, thanks to the training, I came to understand the concept and benefits of agricultural innovation systems by using new ideas, how to identify challenges and solutions, and how to



“I believe that we can, and will, make an impact.”

**Tsegay Teklemariam** Dairy farmer,  
Addis Ababa

reach an actual action plan through working with others.” Tsegay explained that “the visioning tool was especially educational. I tried to implement it in my own activities, and envisioned going into the milk and feed processing business in the future. It helped to give me a clear direction.” Thanks to CDAIS, change is happening.

## The bigger picture

A key stakeholder, the Ethiopian Animal Feed Industry Association (EAFIA), was established by feed-factory owners, private dairy farmers and feed-manufacturing cooperatives in 2008. It is a not-for-profit, non-political, democratic, voluntary and secular organisation legally registered with the Federal Ministry of Justice. EAFIA's vision is to improve the productivity and profitability of



## CDAIS capacity needs assessments

The ‘capacity needs assessment’ for the livestock feed safety and quality innovation partnership took place over three days, on 28–30 March 2017. It involved the active and intense input of 14 key stakeholders, including farmers and feed traders, facilitators and policy makers. It introduced new concepts and tools such as the ‘problem-and-solution tree’ and the ‘netmap’, opening participants’ eyes to different ways of seeing issues and identifying the most effective ways forward. As part of the CDAIS project, the same depth of analysis is being undertaken with every innovation partnership in every pilot country – 32 in total – yielding valuable changes around the world.



*Participants at the CDAIS training and assessment workshop learnt how to use new tools and work together to prioritise problems and clearly identify possible solutions.*

## Progress in 2017 and 2018

After the national coaching-plan workshop, a Feed Safety and Quality partnership coaching-plan workshop was held on 10 November 2017. Discussions helped to understand key bottlenecks and possible solutions leading to a refined action plan.

Then, after the first reflection and refinement workshop on 4–5 May 2018, the partnership's objective was revised to include the development of a directive on feed risk assessment, risk management and risk communication, with activities being revised accordingly.

Two partnership members and the national innovation facilitator attended the CDAIS marketplace event on 8 May 2018 in Addis Ababa, presenting two posters.

This led to expressions of interest from the World Bank's Livestock Micro Reforms in Agribusiness (L-MIRA) project and international economic development organisation ACDI/VOCA, to work with the partnership, the latter promising to offer US\$ 3000 to cover part of the cost of a consultant to develop the directive, and to enhance the knowledge and skills of partners in regulatory framework development.

members and contribute to the development of Ethiopia's livestock-feed industry. From the vantage point that EAFIA offers, its Director, Gemechu Nemie, added that the capacity need assessment workshop and the coaching-plan and monitoring evaluation learning workshop that followed had many other positive impacts.

"Above and beyond [this], I have realised the importance of the new tools we learnt, and how they stimulated thinking on how best to approach feed safety and quality issues," Gemechu continued. "I drew essential lessons from this, and feel that I have new skills. Thanks to CDAIS for enabling joint learning, new uses of knowledge and for creating an enabling environment for interaction. This has also inspired other members to develop legal frameworks and guidelines for risk assessment, risk management and risk communication to build a vibrant legal feed safety and assurance system. The intended legal framework will assist Ethiopia to meet international requirements, ensure human health, build consumer confidence in animal products, and legalise the often informal animal-feed business."

## What does the future hold?

"The CDAIS workshops had important impacts on my thinking. I recognised marked changes," said Gemechu, "and particularly in how to innovate." Using skills gained from CDAIS, Gemechu is planning to conduct a similar capacity

needs assessment survey of his own organisation to support the preparation of a five-year action plan. "I want to share knowledge and the skills gained from CDAIS." To do so, he wants the project to offer well-documented tools and best practices, along with experiences from the many different workshops, as "these could help convince others to follow the 'agricultural innovation systems' as the obvious way forward."

“I have a dream that other members of EAFIA can benefit like me.”

**Gemechu Nemie** Director of the Ethiopian Animal Feed Industry Association (EAFIA)

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Feed safety and quality is one of five innovation partnerships in Ethiopia being developed as part of the CDAIS project. For more information, visit <https://cdais.net/home/pilots-countries/ethiopia>. CDAIS is implemented in Ethiopia by Agrinatura (represented by ICRA), FAO Ethiopia and the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR), along with other partners for other partnerships.

