

ATI NEWSLETTER

Q4

APRIL – JUNE
2026

A quarterly newsletter published by the
Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Institute

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ATI QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER April - June 2026

CEO'S NOTE



Dear Colleagues and Partners,

Welcome to the April–June 2026 edition of the ATI's Quarterly Newsletter.

This quarter marks a defining moment in Ethiopia's agricultural transformation journey. The unanimous ratification of the Farmers' Agribusiness Company (ABC) Proclamation by the House of Peoples' Representatives represents a historic policy milestone that fundamentally redefines the role of smallholder farmers and pastoralists in our economy. This achievement is particularly significant as it is the culmination of years of evidence generation, policy design, technical consultations, and close collaboration with government institutions and development partners. More importantly, it provides the legal foundation for the next phase of Ethiopia's agricultural transformation. Building on the success of Agricultural Commercialization Clusters, our focus now extends beyond increasing productivity to empowering farmers to become entrepreneurs, investors, and owners of competitive agribusinesses.

This quarter also reflects ATI's unwavering commitment to generating evidence that informs policy and drives innovation. Together with the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Agriculture, we launched the Agriculture Science Seminar Series, creating a national platform for evidence-based dialogue on strategic issues.

Strengthening institutions remained another key priority. We officially handed over four successful agricultural projects to the Ministry of Agriculture, ensuring that proven innovations become institutionalized within

government systems for long-term sustainability. We also launched the National Rangeland Health Monitoring System for Afar and Dire Dawa, expanded regional capacity-building initiatives, advanced digital coffee traceability to enhance Ethiopia's global competitiveness, and continued creating dignified employment opportunities for youth through the ADEY Program.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the dedication of our staff and the steadfast partnership of government institutions, development partners, research organizations, the private sector, and farming communities. It was therefore a privilege to recognize and celebrate the invaluable contributions of our development partners during Partner's Recognition Dinner. Their trust, collaboration, and shared vision have been instrumental in advancing Ethiopia's agricultural transformation over the past 15 years.

Thank you all for your continued partnership and commitment to this shared journey.

Mandefro Nigussie
Chief Executive Officer

Innovations to help our country grow

HOUSE RATIFIES FARMERS' AGRIBUSINESS COMPANY (ABC) PROCLAMATION



The House of Peoples' Representatives has unanimously ratified the Farmers' Agribusiness Company (ABC) Proclamation during its special session held on June 26, 2026, marking a significant milestone in Ethiopia's efforts to transform smallholder agriculture through farmer-led agribusiness.

The proclamation was approved following the presentation of a report by the Agriculture Affairs Standing Committee. The legislation was developed by the ATI in close collaboration with relevant government institutions and other key stakeholders.

The new legal framework is designed to enable smallholder farmers and pastoralists to participate more effectively in commercial agriculture by allowing them to convert productive assets, including land, livestock, labor, and other resources, into equity in agribusiness companies. This innovative approach creates opportunities for producers to pool resources, invest collectively, and benefit from larger-scale, commercially viable agricultural enterprises.

Beyond expanding access to commercial opportunities, the proclamation introduces a new model of rural economic participation. Instead of remaining solely primary producers, farmers will be able to establish and own agribusiness companies engaged in aggregation, processing, value addition, and marketing of agricultural products. This is expected to strengthen their bargaining power, improve market access, and enable them to capture greater value across the agricultural value chain.



Agribusiness companies established under the proclamation will operate across the full spectrum of agricultural activities, including the supply of agricultural inputs, production support services, aggregation and purchase of agricultural commodities, processing and value addition, as well as the distribution and marketing of products in both domestic and international markets.

The proclamation is expected to create sustainable income opportunities for farmers and pastoralists while contributing to increased agricultural productivity, greater private sector participation, and a more competitive rural economy. It also lays a strong legal foundation for inclusive agricultural transformation and is anticipated to play a pivotal role in advancing Ethiopia's long-term agricultural and economic development.



HIGHLIGHT

- ✦ Parliament unanimously ratified the ABC Proclamation.
- ✦ The proclamation was ratified on **June 26, 2026**.
- ✦ Enables farmers and pastoralists to **own and invest in agribusinesses**.
- ✦ Allows producers to pool assets as **equity in agribusiness companies**.
- ✦ Expands opportunities in aggregation, processing, value addition, and marketing.
- ✦ Establishes a legal foundation for **inclusive agricultural transformation**.





ATI HANDS OVER FOUR MAJOR PROJECTS TO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE



The ATI has officially handed over four flagship projects to the Ministry of Agriculture after six years of successful implementation, marking a significant milestone in the institutionalization of transformative agricultural initiatives.

The handover ceremony, held in Addis Ababa on June 30, 2026, brought together senior government officials, farmers, development partners, and stakeholders from across the agricultural value chain to celebrate the transition and reaffirm a shared commitment to sustaining the projects' impact.

Speaking at the ceremony, H.E. Dr. Sofia Kassa, State Minister of Agriculture, emphasized the importance of embedding successful development initiatives within government systems to ensure their long-term sustainability. She noted that many development projects lose momentum without a well-planned transition strategy and stressed that institutionalizing proven interventions is critical to preserving and expanding their impact. Dr. Sofia reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to scaling successful models and strengthening approaches that have delivered measurable results.

Dr. Mandefro Nigussie, CEO of ATI, described the handover as an important milestone in the Institute's transformation journey. He noted that the true success of development projects extends beyond achieving immediate objectives to creating lasting institutional ownership, scaling proven innovations, and generating sustainable benefits for Ethiopia's agricultural sector.

Over the past six years, these initiatives have made significant contributions to improving agricultural productivity, strengthening seed systems, expanding farmers' access to mechanization services, enhancing service delivery, and promoting climate-resilient irrigation practices.



THE FOUR PROJECTS OFFICIALLY TRANSFERRED TO THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ARE:

- ★ AGRICULTURAL ONE-STOP SHOP
- ★ COOPERATIVE-BASED SEED PRODUCTION
- ★ MECHANIZATION SERVICE CENTERS
- ★ INTEGRATED SHALLOW GROUND WATER IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT

In his closing remarks, Dr. Firew Tegegne, Deputy CEO of ATI, highlighted the importance of collaboration and a renewed commitment to accelerating agricultural and rural transformation. He underscored the need to build on past achievements, institutionalize successful approaches, and continue scaling innovations that deliver lasting impact.

Since its establishment, ATI has implemented more than 70 projects across Ethiopia's agricultural value chain. The Institute currently manages 28 active projects that continue to advance agricultural modernization, improve farmers' livelihoods, and support the country's broader agricultural transformation agenda.



The successful transition of these four projects reflects ATI's commitment to ensuring that effective innovations become embedded within Ethiopia's public agricultural systems, enabling their continued expansion and long-term contribution to the country's agricultural development.

- ✧ ATI handed over **four flagship projects** to the Ministry of Agriculture.
- ✧ The projects followed **six years of successful implementation.**
- ✧ Projects include AOSS, CBSP, MSC, and ISGWID.
- ✧ The transition strengthens **government ownership and sustainability.**
- ✧ The initiatives improved productivity and agricultural service delivery.
- ✧ The handover supports the **scaling of proven innovations.**





ATI HONORS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS FOR 15 YEARS OF DRIVING ETHIOPIA'S AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION



In recognition of 15 years of impactful collaboration, the ATI honored its development partners at a Recognition Dinner held on May 8, 2026, at the Ethiopian Skylight Hotel. The event celebrated the partnerships that have been instrumental in advancing Ethiopia's agricultural transformation and improving the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers.

Over the past decade and a half, ATI has spearheaded evidence-based interventions, promoted agricultural innovation, strengthened value chains, enhanced climate resilience, and supported policies and programs that have transformed Ethiopia's agricultural sector. These achievements have been made possible through the steadfast commitment and collaboration of development partners.

The celebration brought together development partners, senior government officials, farmers, and ATI leadership to reflect on a shared journey of partnership, innovation, and impact. A mini-exhibition featured compelling stories of farmers whose lives have been transformed through ATI-led initiatives, alongside displays highlighting the contributions of ATI's development partners to the country's agricultural transformation.



In his opening remarks, Dr. Mandefro Nigussie, CEO of ATI, expressed his sincere appreciation to the Institute's longstanding partners for their trust, commitment, and strategic collaboration. He emphasized that ATI's success in accelerating agricultural transformation and strengthening Ethiopia's food systems has been built on strong and enduring partnerships.



As part of the ceremony, ATI recognized 14 development partners with certificates of appreciation and commemorative crystal awards in acknowledgment of their invaluable contributions to the Institute's mission. Several partners also received special recognition for their exceptional commitment, strategic engagement, and sustained support over the years.

One of the evening's highlights was a series of inspiring testimonials from farmers, who shared firsthand accounts of how ATI-led interventions, implemented with the support of development partners, have transformed their livelihoods, increased their productivity, and created new economic opportunities for their communities.

Looking ahead, Dr. Firew Tegegne, Deputy CEO of ATI, presented the Institute's vision for catalyzing rural transformation as the next phase of Ethiopia's agricultural development journey. He underscored the importance of sustaining strong partnerships to advance inclusive, resilient, and prosperous rural communities.

The recognition event reaffirmed ATI's deep appreciation for its development partners and its commitment to strengthening collaboration in pursuit of a more productive, resilient, and sustainable agricultural sector.



- ✧ ATI recognized **14 development partners** for 15 years of collaboration
- ✧ Farmers' stories highlighted the **impact of joint initiatives.**
- ✧ Farmers' testimonials showcased the **impact of ATI-led initiatives.**
- ✧ Reaffirmed the importance of **strong, lasting partnerships.**





ATI CO-HOSTS HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SYSTEMS



The ATI, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS), convened a National Dialogue on Agricultural Research Systems in Ethiopia on April 14, 2026, in Addis Ababa. The event also marked the launch of the Agriculture Science Seminar Series—a new platform for fostering evidence-based dialogue on critical issues shaping Ethiopia's agricultural transformation.

The high-level dialogue brought together senior government officials, researchers, academics, development partners, and representatives of research institutions and universities to examine how Ethiopia's agricultural research system can be strengthened through greater institutional integration, strategic coordination, and stronger links between research, policy, and practice.

While recognizing Ethiopia's significant progress in expanding agricultural research capacity, participants acknowledged persistent challenges, including fragmented research efforts, limited institutional coordination, and the slow translation of scientific findings into practical solutions that benefit farmers. The dialogue provided a platform to identify strategies for addressing these challenges and enhancing the impact of agricultural research on national development.

Through technical presentations and an interactive panel discussion, participants explored opportunities to improve research quality and relevance, accelerate the adoption of agricultural technologies, strengthen collaboration among research institutions, and mobilize sustainable financing for innovation. The discussions underscored the importance of creating a continuous, evidence-based platform that promotes knowledge exchange and generates actionable recommendations to strengthen Ethiopia's agricultural research and innovation ecosystem.





As part of the event, ATI signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences and the Forum for Higher Education Institutions in the Amhara Region. The agreements establish a framework for enhanced collaboration in research, policy development, capacity building, and knowledge sharing, reinforcing a shared commitment to advancing evidence-based decision-making and sustainable agricultural development.

The dialogue marked an important step toward building a more coordinated, responsive, and impact-oriented agricultural research system capable of driving innovation, informing policy, and accelerating Ethiopia's agricultural transformation.



- ✧ ATI co-hosted a national dialogue on **agricultural research systems**.
- ✧ The Agriculture Science Seminar Series was officially launched.
- ✧ Stakeholders discussed research coordination and innovation.
- ✧ Greater links between research, policy, and practice were emphasized.
- ✧ ATI signed MoUs to strengthen research collaboration.
- ✧ The initiative promotes **evidence-based agricultural transformation**.



HIGHLIGHT



YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISE BU'URA BORU SHOWCASES AGRIBUSINESS INNOVATION TO ATI AND MASTERCARD FOUNDATION DELEGATION



A high-level delegation from the Mastercard Foundation visited Bu'ura Boru, a youth-led agribusiness enterprise in Bishoftu, on May 20, 2026, as part of a partner field visit organized by ATI through the Agriculture-focused Dignified Employment for Youth in Ethiopia (ADEY) Program.

The visit highlighted how strategic public-private partnerships are creating dignified employment opportunities for young people through agribusiness while demonstrating the transformative impact of the ADEY Program in supporting youth-led enterprises to become competitive, market-oriented businesses.

Bu'ura Boru is one of the promising youth enterprises that has successfully entered export-oriented horticulture production through a collaborative partnership model. Working closely with Ethio VegFru, the enterprise has gained access to modern production technologies, technical expertise, and international markets, enabling it to export horticultural products to Europe and East Africa.

Welcoming the delegation, Dr. Mandefro Nigussie, CEO of ATI, underscored the importance of investing in youth-driven agribusiness initiatives that generate

sustainable and dignified employment. He highlighted ATI's broader role in accelerating Ethiopia's agricultural transformation by fostering innovation, strengthening partnerships, and promoting inclusive market systems.



During the visit, the ADEY team presented the program's achievements, lessons learned, and scalable approaches that are expanding youth participation in agribusiness. Discussions focused on the critical role of public-private partnerships in creating employment opportunities and strengthening youth engagement across agricultural value chains.

Members of the Bu'ura Boru enterprise shared their entrepreneurial journey, describing how mindset

transformation, business development training, teamwork, and sustained institutional support enabled them to establish and grow a successful enterprise. They also acknowledged the support provided through the ADEY Program, local government institutions, and their partnership with Ethio VegFru.

The delegation toured the enterprise's production facilities and received briefings on its safeguarding and compliance measures, including childcare services, worker welfare initiatives, occupational health and safety standards, and environmental management practices that promote a safe and inclusive workplace.



The visit concluded with discussions on Bu'ura Boru's future growth plans and its potential to expand as an independent agribusiness that creates sustainable employment opportunities for young people, particularly young women, while contributing to local economic development.



The ADEY Program, which is implemented in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, aims to create 611,343 dignified and fulfilling employment opportunities for young people across Ethiopia. The program places a strong emphasis on inclusion, with 80 percent of opportunities targeted to young women, alongside dedicated support for youth with disabilities (4 percent) and internally displaced youth (6 percent).

- ✦ Bu'ura Boru showcased successful **youth-led agribusiness**.
- ✦ The enterprise has entered **export-oriented horticulture markets**.
- ✦ Partnerships provided access to technology and technical expertise.
- ✦ The enterprise demonstrated the potential of youth entrepreneurship.
- ✦ ADEY supports scalable approaches to **youth employment**.
- ✦ The initiative promotes inclusive and market-oriented agribusiness.



HIGHLIGHT



WORKSHOP ON NATIONAL RANGELAND HEALTH MONITORING SYSTEM (NRMS): VALIDATION AND LAUNCHING OF AFAR AND DIRE DAWA RANGELAND MONITORING SYSTEM



The ATI, in partnership with federal ministries, regional governments, and international development partners, validated and launched the National Rangeland Health Monitoring System (NRMS) for the Afar Region and Dire Dawa Administration during a high-level workshop held on May 9, 2026, in Semera, Afar Regional State.

The NRMS is a digital, satellite-based platform integrated with ground-truth data to monitor the health and condition of Ethiopia's rangelands. Designed to generate timely information and advisory services, the system will support sustainable rangeland management, climate-resilient livestock production, and evidence-based disaster preparedness and response across pastoral and agro-pastoral areas.

Speaking at the workshop, Dr. Yoseph Mekasha, Director of ATI's Livestock Commercialization Program, explained that the platform provides reliable data on rangeland conditions, enabling decision-makers to respond more effectively to emerging environmental challenges and strengthen the resilience of pastoral communities.

The workshop brought together senior officials and technical experts from federal ministries, ATI, regional governments, development partners, and representatives from the Somali, Oromia, and South Ethiopia regions, as well as the Dire Dawa Administration.



In his opening remarks, H.E. Umer Nur, Vice President of the Afar Regional State, emphasized the significance of the initiative in improving the management, utilization, and governance of Ethiopia's rangeland resources. He noted that strengthening rangeland management is essential to enhancing livestock productivity and maximizing the sector's contribution to the regional and national economy. He also reaffirmed the regional government's commitment to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the system.



Pastoral and agro-pastoral systems cover nearly 61 percent of Ethiopia's landmass and support the livelihoods of approximately 15 million people. The livestock sector also generates more than 90 percent of the country's formal live-animal export earnings. However, recurring droughts, land degradation, invasive species such as *Prosopis juliflora*, and the impacts of climate change continue to threaten these vital ecosystems.



Mr. Ibrahim Mohammed, Head of the Afar Regional Livestock and Fisheries Resource Development Bureau, noted that the new platform will provide evidence-based information to improve rangeland management and strengthen resilience in Ethiopia's lowland areas. The system will monitor land-use changes, vegetation conditions, and the spread of *Prosopis juliflora*, one of the major drivers of rangeland degradation.

ATI has already operationalized the system in Borana Zone of Oromia Region, while the Afar and Dire Dawa platforms are now ready for implementation. The Institute plans to expand the system to other pastoral regions as part of a nationwide rollout.

Feedback gathered during the validation workshop will help refine the system and inform its national scale-up.

The NRMS will be accessible to pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners through ATI's 8028 digital platform and other information channels.

The launch of the National Rangeland Health Monitoring System marks an important step toward strengthening data-driven rangeland management, improving livestock productivity, protecting pastoral livelihoods, and advancing Ethiopia's broader food security and sustainable development objectives.

- ✧ **ATI launched the NRMS for Afar and Dire Dawa.**
- ✧ **The system combines satellite and ground-truth data.**
- ✧ **It provides timely information on **rangeland conditions**.**
- ✧ **The platform supports climate-resilient livestock production.**
- ✧ **It strengthens disaster preparedness and evidence-based decision-making.**
- ✧ **ATI plans to **expand the system nationwide**.**





THE ATI CEO DELIVERS PUBLIC LECTURE ON ETHIOPIA'S RURAL TRANSFORMATION PATHWAYS



Dr. Mandefro Nigussie, CEO of ATI, delivered a public lecture on Ethiopia's rural transformation pathways on May 7, 2026, at Addis Ababa University. Organized by the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS), the event brought together policymakers, researchers, academics, students, and development practitioners, both in person and virtually, to explore the role of rural transformation in Ethiopia's long-term economic development.

Opening the session, Prof. Belay Kassa, President of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, emphasized that rural transformation is central to achieving inclusive and sustainable national development. He noted that the Academy selected the topic for its monthly public lecture series to stimulate evidence-based dialogue on one of the country's most pressing development priorities.

In his lecture, Dr. Mandefro presented rural transformation as Ethiopia's most viable pathway toward broader structural and economic transformation.

He outlined a vision centered on expanding integrated rural infrastructure and services, strengthening linkages between agriculture and other sectors of the economy, and promoting non-farm enterprises that create employment, add value, and deepen rural-urban integration.



He underscored that agricultural transformation is the cornerstone of rural transformation, explaining that meaningful progress occurs when farmers transition from subsistence production to market-oriented agriculture capable of generating sustainable surpluses. Such transformation, he noted, creates the foundation for expanded rural infrastructure, including irrigation systems, electricity, roads, digital connectivity, storage facilities, agro-processing industries, quality housing, and improved social services.

Dr. Mandefro highlighted several interconnected pillars that are essential for successful rural transformation, including market-oriented agriculture, accessible rural finance, infrastructure development, social services, strong institutions, and peaceful coexistence. He also emphasized the need to diversify rural economies by promoting manufacturing and other productive industries that build on agricultural growth and value addition.

Calling for stronger collaboration between policymakers and the scientific community, Dr. Mandefro stressed the importance of evidence-based policymaking in addressing Ethiopia's development challenges. He encouraged researchers and academic institutions to play a more active role in generating practical solutions that can accelerate rural transformation, reduce dependence on external assistance, and foster a resilient and self-reliant economy.



The lecture concluded with an interactive discussion, during which participants exchanged ideas and recommendations on advancing rural transformation through science, innovation, research, and coordinated national action. The event reaffirmed the importance of evidence-based dialogue in shaping policies that support Ethiopia's agricultural transformation and sustainable rural development.



- ✧ ATI CEO Dr. Mandefro Nigussie delivered a public lecture.
- ✧ The lecture focused on **Ethiopia's rural transformation pathways**.
- ✧ Agriculture was highlighted as a cornerstone of transformation.
- ✧ Key priorities included markets, finance, infrastructure, and services.
- ✧ Economic diversification and rural industries were emphasized.
- ✧ The CEO called for stronger **evidence-based policymaking**.





ETHIOPIA EXPLORES OPPORTUNITIES AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORKS FOR CARBON MARKETS TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT



The ATI and the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS) Agriculture Working Group, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, convened the Second Agriculture Science Seminar Series on June 30, 2026, in Addis Ababa to examine the opportunities, governance frameworks, and policy implications of carbon markets for Ethiopia's sustainable agricultural development.

Held under the theme, "Carbon Markets in Ethiopia: Opportunities, Governance, and Implications for Sustainable Agricultural Development," the high-level scientific and policy dialogue brought together senior government officials, researchers, academics, development partners, private sector representatives, and practitioners. Participants explored how Ethiopia can strategically engage in emerging carbon finance mechanisms while safeguarding national interests, ensuring community benefits, and promoting sustainable natural resource management.

Opening the seminar, H.E. Seyoum Mekonnen, State Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Demography at the Ministry of Planning and

Development, highlighted climate change as one of the most pressing challenges facing Ethiopia's agricultural productivity, natural resources, and rural livelihoods. He stressed the importance of integrating climate action into national development planning and noted that Ethiopia's diverse landscapes and agricultural systems provide significant opportunities to advance climate mitigation and adaptation through sustainable land management, ecosystem restoration, agroforestry, and climate-smart agriculture.

Delivering the keynote address, H.E. Prof. Eyasu Elias, State Minister for the Natural Resources Development Sector at the Ministry of Agriculture, emphasized the strategic role of carbon markets in supporting Ethiopia's agricultural transformation agenda. He noted that carbon finance can serve as an innovative funding mechanism to promote sustainable agricultural practices, restore degraded landscapes, improve soil health, strengthen climate resilience, and create new livelihood opportunities for farmers and rural communities.

Prof. Eyasu also highlighted the Green Legacy Initiative as one of Ethiopia's flagship efforts in landscape restoration, ecosystem rehabilitation, decarbonization, and climate resilience. He underscored its potential to strengthen nature-based solutions and position the country to participate responsibly in global carbon markets.

The seminar featured expert presentations on key aspects of carbon markets. Dr. Motuma Tolera of the Ethiopian Forestry Development presented lessons from Ethiopia's forestry sector, while representatives from the Ministry of Planning and Development outlined the country's evolving policy, legal, and institutional frameworks for carbon markets.

A high-level plenary discussion, moderated by Dr. Habtemariam Kassa, Fellow of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, provided a platform for participants to exchange views on carbon accounting, market readiness, governance challenges, research priorities, and opportunities to leverage carbon finance for sustainable development.

Speaking during the event, Dr. Mandefro Nigussie, CEO of ATI, emphasized the importance of evidence-based dialogue and stronger collaboration among government institutions, research organizations, development partners, and the private sector to advance Ethiopia's climate and agricultural transformation goals.



In his closing remarks, Prof. Belay Kassa, President of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, reaffirmed the critical role of science, research, and innovation in informing Ethiopia's engagement with emerging climate finance mechanisms and ensuring that carbon markets deliver meaningful environmental and socio-economic benefits.



The seminar concluded with a shared commitment to strengthen research, knowledge generation, policy coordination, and institutional readiness to ensure that carbon markets contribute to Ethiopia's sustainable agricultural development, climate resilience, and inclusive rural transformation.

The Agriculture Science Seminar Series is a quarterly platform jointly organized by the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI), the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences Agriculture Working Group, and the Ministry of Agriculture to foster evidence-based dialogue on critical issues shaping Ethiopia's agricultural and rural development.

HIGHLIGHT



- ✦ Stakeholders explored Ethiopia's **carbon market opportunities**.
- ✦ Discussions focused on governance, policy, and carbon finance.
- ✦ Emphasis placed on **climate resilience and sustainable agriculture**.



ATI CONDUCTS STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATIONS WORKSHOP ON COFFEE TRACEABILITY



The ATI convened a stakeholder consultation workshop on June 11, 2026, in Addis Ababa to discuss coffee traceability, the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), and the role of digital transformation in strengthening Ethiopia's coffee sector.

Coffee is one of the priority value chains under the Agricultural Commercialization Cluster through Climate-smart and Inclusive Innovations (ACCII) Program. As Ethiopia's leading agricultural export commodity, it provides income and livelihoods for millions of smallholder farmers and plays a vital role in the country's economy.

The consultation aimed to review ongoing coffee traceability initiatives, identify opportunities to enhance interoperability among existing systems, assess ecosystem gaps, and explore institutional arrangements that can support a sustainable and nationally coordinated traceability framework. Participants also examined options for developing a national coffee traceability system that meets EUDR requirements while supporting Ethiopia's agricultural commercialization agenda.

Opening the workshop, Mr. Dawit Philipos, Senior Director of ATI's Chief Operations Office, highlighted the transformative potential of digital technologies in strengthening coffee traceability. He noted that digital solutions can improve data management, enhance coordination among stakeholders, and promote greater transparency, efficiency, and accountability across the coffee value chain.



The forum brought together representatives from government institutions, development partners, research organizations, universities, private sector companies, and other key stakeholders. Through technical presentations, panel discussions, and interactive dialogue, participants exchanged experiences on existing traceability systems, explored digital innovations, and identified opportunities and challenges related to implementation.



The workshop concluded with a shared commitment to strengthen collaboration and establish a coordinated, sustainable, and nationally aligned approach to coffee traceability. Participants emphasized that greater interoperability among existing initiatives will be essential to enhancing Ethiopia's competitiveness in global coffee markets and ensuring compliance with evolving international market requirements, including the European Union Deforestation Regulation.



- ✧ ATI convened stakeholders on **coffee traceability**.
- ✧ Discussions focused on digital transformation and EUDR requirements.
- ✧ Stakeholders explored a nationally coordinated traceability framework.
- ✧ Digital systems can improve transparency and data management.
- ✧ Greater interoperability will strengthen the coffee value chain.
- ✧ The initiative aims to improve Ethiopia's **global coffee competitiveness**.



HIGHLIGHT



IMPACT STORY

Where the Blue Nile Nurtures More Than a Farm

AYSHESHUM AND HIS FAMILY

On the shores of Ethiopia's legendary Abay River, one young family is proving that when nature works in harmony, agriculture becomes more than a livelihood—it becomes a cycle of opportunity.

The first thing visitors notice is not the farm. It is the landscape.

The mighty Abay River—known to the world as the Blue Nile—winds gracefully through the lush countryside, carrying waters that begin their remarkable journey from nearby Lake Tana before flowing thousands of kilometers across Africa. Along its banks, fishermen cast their nets into the calm waters while birds glide over fertile fields that have sustained generations of farming families.

As you cross the bridge overlooking the river, another sight captures your attention.

Spread across nearly 7,000 square meters of fertile riverside land is a vibrant patchwork of fruit trees, vegetable gardens, fishponds, livestock shelters, and a welcoming café buzzing with customers. It is an unexpected oasis where every corner seems alive with purpose.

This is the home of Aysheshum and his family.

At just thirty years old, Aysheshum is already leading a family enterprise that is quietly redefining what modern farming can look like in rural Ethiopia.

"We have always been farmers," he says with a smile as he welcomes visitors into the compound.

His journey began much like that of countless young people raised in farming communities. Growing up, he learned agriculture from his parents, spending his childhood working alongside them in the fields.

Although he completed high school, he never imagined abandoning the land that had shaped his life.

Instead, he dreamed of transforming it.

That dream, however, was born from disappointment.

For years, the family depended largely on khat cultivation. While it provided income for a time, fluctuating markets and the disruptions brought by the COVID-19 pandemic made the business increasingly unreliable.

“There came a point when we realized we couldn’t continue doing the same thing and expect different results,” Aysheshum recalls.

So the family made a bold decision.

Together with his wife and cousins, they abandoned the old approach and began building something entirely different—an integrated farming enterprise where every activity would support another and nothing would go to waste.

Walking through the farm feels less like touring separate businesses and more like discovering pieces of a carefully designed ecosystem.

The journey begins at the family café.

Inside, customers enjoy traditional Ethiopian dishes prepared using ingredients harvested only a few steps away. Fresh vegetables, eggs, fish, coffee, and seasonal fruits all come directly from the family’s own fields.

“The café is our showroom,” Aysheshum says. “People don’t just eat here—they experience what our farm produces.”

Behind the café, the story unfolds one step at a time.

Two shimmering fish ponds reflect the morning sky while thousands of fish glide beneath the surface. Nearby, chickens cluck inside neatly arranged poultry houses

producing around 800 eggs every day. Beyond them, rows of banana, mango, papaya, avocado, cabbage, carrots, beetroot, lettuce and coffee stretch across the riverside landscape, their leaves swaying gently in the breeze from the Blue Nile.

A few beehives stand quietly beneath the trees, while sheep, goats and cattle graze peacefully nearby.



At first glance, these appear to be independent farming activities.

They are not.

“This farm is like one living system,” Aysheshum explains.

He points toward the fishponds.

“The nutrient-rich water from the ponds irrigates our crops.”



He gestures toward the poultry houses.

“The poultry manure feeds the fish.”



A few steps farther, livestock waste is transformed into compost that nourishes the horticulture fields. Banana stalks become livestock feed. Vegetable residues return to the animals and fish. Even leftovers from the café are carefully reused instead of being discarded.



“There is almost no waste here,” he says proudly. “Everything becomes a resource for something else.”

It is this circular system that has become the foundation of the family’s success.

The results are visible everywhere.

The first mango harvest produced eight quintals, while avocado yielded twelve quintals. Bananas are sold directly to travelers passing along the nearby roadside as well as through the café. Fruit production alone has already generated nearly half a million birr.



Fish farming has become another thriving enterprise.

Beginning with only 6,500 fingerlings supplied by the Bahir Dar Agricultural Research Institute, the family has already sold more than 4,000 market-ready fish through their café while supplying approximately 6,000 newly bred fingerlings back to the institute. Today, their ponds contain nearly 40,000 fish, creating one of the area’s most promising small-scale aquaculture businesses.



Meanwhile, what started with just three sheep and two goats has steadily grown into a larger livestock operation that continues to support both household consumption and additional income.

Yet, as Aysheshum walks across the farm, he speaks less about profits than about possibilities.

“This is not only about earning income,” he says. “It is about creating something that can continue growing.”

Already, six young people have found employment through the enterprise.

The family is now planning to expand the café into a larger restaurant capable of employing at least fifty additional young people while creating stronger market opportunities for local fish producers around Lake Tana.

Every member of the family contributes to the business.



Aysheshum oversees the enterprise as General Manager, while his wife manages the finances. Together with their relatives, they have built a business rooted not only in agriculture, but in shared responsibility and shared ambition.

“The biggest change was not only what we received,” he reflects.

“It was how we learned to think.”

Their journey took another important step forward when they joined the ADEY Program.

“We had already planned to start poultry farming before meeting the ADEY team,” Aysheshum remembers. “When they visited our farm, they encouraged our vision.”

Through the program, the family received 200 chicks, fisheries equipment, and practical technical and mindset training that strengthened the enterprise far beyond the material support itself.



Today, every activity on the farm is planned. Daily production records are carefully maintained. Decisions are guided by data rather than assumptions.

“We now plan our work, monitor our progress, and make improvements based on what we record every day. Those trainings completely changed how we manage the farm.”

As the afternoon sun settles over the Blue Nile, the farm begins another quiet cycle.

Customers gather at the café. Workers harvest vegetables for tomorrow's market. Fish ripple beneath the water's surface. Livestock return to their shelters.

Everything continues moving in harmony.

Just like the waters flowing from Lake Tana into the Abay River, every part of this enterprise feeds another, creating a cycle that sustains both the land and the people who depend on it.

For Aysheshum and his family, integrated farming has become more than a business model.

It has become a way of thinking—one that is creating jobs, restoring the value of every resource, and proving that with innovation, determination, and the right support, agriculture can become a lasting engine of opportunity for Ethiopia's young people.

Where the Blue Nile Nurtures More Than a Farm

- ✧ A young family is transforming nearly **7,000 m² of riverside** land into an integrated farming enterprise.
- ✧ The farm combines **fruit, vegetables, fish, poultry, livestock, beekeeping, and a cafe.**
- ✧ The family uses a **circular farming model where one activity supports another and minimizes waste.**
- ✧ Fruit production has generated **nearly half a million birr**, while fish farming continues to expand.
- ✧ The enterprise has already created **six jobs**, with plans to employ at least **50 more young people.**
- ✧ Through ADEY support, the family received **training, 200 chicks, and fisheries equipment.**
- ✧ The program strengthened not only the farm's resources but also its **business planning, record keeping, and data-driven decision-making.**
- ✧ The story demonstrates how **integrated agriculture can create income, jobs, and sustainable opportunities for young people.**



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