ISSUES

Ethiopia is the second most populated African country with an estimated 96.9 million citizens. Of the total population, 81 per cent are classified as rural. The population is also growing at a rate of around 3 per cent per year. Whilst extreme poverty is declining, it is still widespread and in 2011 was counted at 30 per cent.

Ethiopia faces major challenges to its fragile environment, which include soil degradation and loss of biodiversity. Climate change projections for the country indicate a significant rise in temperatures (up to 1.1°C by 2030, 2.1°C by 2050 and 3.4°C by 2080), rainfall variability and a possible increase in the frequency of droughts. Ethiopia has been seeing temperature increases of 0.37°C every ten years. The 2015 El Niño-related drought in East Africa was one of the strongest events on record, undermining the food security of smallholder farmers, already suffering from the effects of prolonged drought conditions. The worst drought in decades affected about 20 per cent of the population and led to a sharp decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), estimated at 4.3 per cent, with agriculture accounting for 41.9 per cent of GDP, and 90 per cent of exports. As such a huge sector, it employs 80 per cent of the population. However, with 95 per cent of agricultural production credited to the county's 12.5 million smallholder farmers there are still huge food security issues, since agriculture is mainly rain-fed, using relatively basic technologies and on tiny plots of land.

ACTIONS

Based on the success of PASIDP I, the first phase of the PASIDP programme, including changes in the living conditions of smallholder farmers, best practices will be scaled up during the implementation of the second phase, PASIDP II. In addition to irrigation infrastructure, PASIDP II will support activities related to rehabilitation of water catchment areas, revenue generating activities within watersheds and incentivising good environmental management.
The programme will also train participants to take charge of the development process and encourage women to join the decision-making bodies of water users’ associations. PASIDP II will also promote a broader use of water sources. This will include building on indigenous knowledge for water harvesting.

PASIDP II contains three major components: institutional development, small-scale irrigation development and agricultural development. The ‘institutional development’ component will promote a participatory approach to small-scale irrigation and its further roll-out. This will be achieved through strengthening the capacity of institutions to ensure they can effectively coordinate and manage the planned project activities.

The second ‘small-scale irrigation development’ component will improve catchment area planning and will support the planning, design, supervision and construction of small scale irrigation schemes.

The third ‘agricultural development’ component will strengthen the support services currently in place in the agricultural sector. It is intended to improve family farming practices by disseminating better soil and water conservation measures and the introduction of new seed varieties. Farmers will receive skills training in market-oriented irrigated farming and thus are expected to increase their profitable yields. The project will also promote the development of vegetable gardens to improve nutritious home consumption.

Overall, the project will improve the access of farmers to a secure irrigation production system and enhance water use efficiency through climate-smart agricultural intensification in the adjacent watersheds. In addition, the programme will support linkages to markets and services so that smallholder farmers can increase their productivity, competitiveness and incomes. It will also enhance smallholders’ resilience to external shocks and those induced by adverse weather and climate conditions, such as drought. PASIDP II thus aims to improve farmers’ economic prosperity, food security and nutrition.

**EXPECTED IMPACTS**

The benefits of this project will be multiple and far reaching. The programme aims to develop at least 15,000 hectares of small-scale irrigation schemes. The project will enable:

- 46,250 households to utilize fields and small-scale irrigation schemes in the watersheds they live adjacent to
- 37,500 households to utilize the watersheds that they live adjacent to
- 10,000 households to benefit from irrigation support under PASIDP I and will benefit from the agronomic and market linkages support under PASIDP II
- 15,000 employment opportunities to be created as a result of the growing labour requirements on farms and in marketing chains
- 150 irrigation water user associations operating sustainably

ASAP grant funds will specifically seek to protect US$80 million worth of infrastructure from extreme weather events. Through this project, 15,000 people will be trained in sustainable farming practices and technologies. ASAP will help 80,000 households in vulnerable areas to receive increased water availability for agriculture. A further ASAP impact will be 60,000 hectares of improved water management, and 40 per cent of land with rehabilitated and restored ecosystem services.

ASAP funding will also be used to set up and operationalize a Geographic Information System (GIS) and knowledge sharing network. With the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), PASIDP II will work closely with federal and sub-national project management units. Together they will create networks which can provide land users with relevant meteorological, GIS, and environment and climate related knowledge.

The project target seeks to achieve a 50 per cent increase in 70,000 household farm incomes, targeting an increase to 3 metric tons per hectare of maize, 2.7 metric tons per hectare of wheat, 10 metric tons per hectare of onions and 1.8 metric tons per hectare of chickpea.

The project will also see 100 cooperatives become more functional and be able to provide at least three separate services to clients. There will also be financial literacy training for 50,000 households, which will help the farmers obtain access to financial support and to manage their expanding incomes and livelihoods in a sustainable way.