



BRIEF UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT ENTITLED: INTRODUCING CARROT CULTIVATION TO FARMERS IN ETHIOPIA

Background

With the aim of addressing vitamin-A deficiency, in December 2014 Carrot Aid and Dan Church Aid (DCA) signed terms of reference (TOR) for a one-year project to introduce and implement carrot cultivation to 200 selected farmers in Woreilu, Ambasel and Dehana districts in northern Ethiopia. The project includes the supply of seeds, distribution of necessary farm tools, training as well as the construction of thirty shallow wells to enable the carrots to be irrigated during times of water stress.

This brief update provides information on the progress from the start of the project in January 2015 to August 2015.

Strategy

The project set out to educate 200 farmers, with at least 50% of them to be female, on the optimal techniques of growing carrots and to provide the necessary tools, materials and infrastructure.

Selection of Farmers

As of the 20th of August, 2015, the project has reached a total of 239 farmers in the three districts of whom 147 or 62% are female. Details for the number of farmers by district are presented below:

	Woreilu	Ambasel	Dehana	Total	Percentage
Male	63	5	24	92	38%
Female	44	61	42	147	62%
Total	107	66	66	239	100%

The number of the selected farmers is nearly 20% higher than the 200 planned. Additional 39 farmers were included as the total land size of the 200 farmers initially considered was small. Even with the 39 additional farmers, the total area covered in the three districts is only 7.2 ha.

Supply of carrot seeds:

It was planned that the project would provide 300g of seeds of commercial Nantes carrot to each of the 200 selected farmers, with the total quantity of Nantes seeds required to be 60 kg accordingly. However, actually 30 kg was provided for in the budget for the project.

As in the TOR, 30 kg of seeds of commercial Nantes carrot was purchased. A total of 15 kg of the AUA-108 type was also obtained from the Debre Zeit Research Centre – intended to be used in the second phase of the project with 60 model farmers to be selected from among the originally planned 200 participating in the first phase. From the quantity made available, all the 30 kg of Nantes and 6 kg of AUA-108 has been distributed to the farmers. The Nantes seeds were distributed to 199 farmers whereas the AUA-108 type was distributed to 40 farmers. The farmers to whom the AUA-108 has been distributed are supposedly considered to be model farmers in the future but this was not in line with the project TOR. One kg of the AUA-108 seeds was also given for planting on a cooperative’s demonstration plot in a non-target district of Meket. Let alone distributing them to a non-target district, the AUA-108 seeds were not supposed to be distributed during this phase even in the three target districts and DCA regrets that this has happened without the express consent of Carrot Aid and the authorisation of DCA Ethiopia management. DCA will take appropriate corrective actions in this regard.

With regards the quantity of seeds distributed to each farmer, as mentioned earlier, the original plan was to distribute 300g of Nantes to each selected farmer. In fact, it would require 60 kg seeds to reach 200 farmers if the 300 g per farmer standard were to be used. The quantity distributed to individual farmers was not the same. There were variations from farmer to farmer depending on the size of land made available by each farmer. Instead of the 300g per farmer, the standard used was 5 kg per hectare and seeds were distributed to farmers in accordance with this standard proportionate to the size of land made available by each farmer.

Distribution of the seeds to the farmers took place in the last week of July when the rains were about to start.

Farm tools

Farm tools have been purchased and distributed to the farmers. The details of the purchased and distributed tools are given below.

Tool	Woreilu	Dehana	Ambasel	Total
Spade	58	66	58	182
Pick axe	50	63	50	163
Rake	50	75	50	175
Watering can	66	40	43	149

As can be seen from the table, not the planned 200 units of each tool were purchased. The number of the units purchased was dictated by the actual market price of the items. The market price for all of them was

higher than the budget and less than 200 units were purchased of each item. With this scenario, some criteria were used to identify farmers to whom the tools had to be distributed as the items were not sufficient for all. Farmers who already had some of the items (also through previous other support interventions in the areas) were identified and the items were distributed to those who did not have the tools. As most of the comparatively highly resource poor farmers are those selected in Dehana district, the number of the items allocated to Dehana was higher for three of the tool types. All tools, except the watering cans, have been distributed.

Construction of shallow wells

A total of 30 shallow wells have been planned (with 10 wells in each district) and so far seven of them have been constructed/dug: 2 in Wereilu, 4 in dehana, and 1 in Ambassel.

Training farmers about vegetable production

All the 239 selected farmers have been trained on the agronomic practices of carrot cultivation (compost preparation, determining the amount of seeds to use, weeding, spacing, and on post-harvest handling). The training was provided by agronomists and development agents in the districts using the Carrot Production Manual obtained from Carrot Aid (through Olaf).

Progress with desired outcomes/outputs

a. Cultivation of > 12 ha of land with carrots by 200 farmers with a harvest > 1200 quintal.

Area under cultivation is 7.2 ha by 239 farmers. The size of the area under cultivation is limited by the landholding size of the farmers and the quantity of seeds provided.

As the planting/sowing has been delayed because of the significant delay in the start of the seasonal rain, no carrots have been cultivated yet. They were all planted in the first week of August due to the rain problem.

b. Transfer of know-how about vegetable crop production and management improved

Transfer of knowledge has begun with the training provided using the Carrot Aid manual and follow-up support will be provided during the cultivation.

c. Improved the culture and preparation of eating vegetables such as carrot among the target beneficiaries

As some of the selected farmers have experience in cultivating and eating carrot, this will be made possible with focused support also on the preparation of vegetables for food. Trust has been built through previous DCA supported interventions and the farmers in the area are open to new ideas and technologies.

Major external challenge

The major external challenge has been the delay of the seasonal rain which has significantly affected mainly the north eastern and south eastern part of the country. Carrots have not been cultivated yet due to the delay in planting related to the rain situation.

The way forward

As indicated in the above details of this brief update, there have been some significant deviations from the TOR agreed between Carrot Aid and DCA. DCA will take appropriate corrective actions where possible and

will do all that is necessary to make the project a success. As an immediate step to ensure closer support and follow-up, as from now DCA has moved the responsibility for the supervision of the project to the Crop Research Manager, Lidet.