

Ethiopia

Project title

Using local durum wheat and barley diversity to support the adaptation of small-scale farmer systems to the changing climate in Ethiopia

Overall objective: Contribute to the food security of poor farmers in Ethiopia by providing farmers with access to seeds of locally adapted varieties that suit their climatic conditions and help them to cope with adverse effects of climate change on crop production.

Crops addressed: Barley (*Hordeum vulgare L.*) and durum wheat (*Triticum durum Desf*)

Main activities

- Improve documentation systems for barley and durum wheat
- Identify and evaluate promising local varieties of barley and durum wheat
- Establish market based seed distribution systems
- Training and capacity building of national scientists in documentation systems and GIS techniques.

Implementing institution

Bioversity International and Institute for Bioversity Conservation

Related website

www.ibc.gov.et, www.bioversityinternational.org





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ETHIOPIA HOUSES AFRICA'S LARGEST genebank, with a total holding of 60,000 accessions. This national genebank is maintained by the Ethiopian Institute of Biodiversity Conservation (IBC).

The country, which is rich in agricultural biodiversity and considered a major center of crop domestication in Africa, is characterized by a high percentage of rural poor, high rates of subsistence agriculture and food insecurity, which affects more than 44% of the Ethiopian population.

Diversification of crop varieties is one of the main adaptation strategies available to Ethiopian farmers; however, the majority of them are unable to use different varieties, principally due to the lack of access to seeds and appropriate information.

This BSF project, a partnership between the Ethiopian Institute of Biodiversity Conservation (IBC) and Bioversity International, aims to develop a mechanism to allow Ethiopian farmers access to locally adapted varieties of durum wheat and barley in order to ensure food security, reduce the risk of crop failures, build resilience in the face of unpredictable climatic changes, strengthen national self-sustainability and improve the seed industry through the development of market-based seed distribution systems. This will be achieved by using innovative Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and participatory evaluation practices.

Our partners will make available and distribute seed material of locally adapted durum wheat and barley varieties to farmers in six regions through local seed distribution systems. As a result, Ethiopian farmers will have access to new, tested, locally adapted varieties to better cope with climate change and ensure sustained crop production.

Furthermore in developing a climate profile of the genebank materials from Ethiopian and other collections, the project will add value to the genebank collection and provide options for farmers cultivating within similar climatic conditions.

This BSF project aims to benefit at least 1000 Ethiopian farmers by helping facilitate access to germplasm and information necessary for them to adapt to changing climatic conditions. In addition, the model developed by this project is expected to be replicated in other regions of the country and abroad.