# Gara Godo site-specific topic: Technology, growth and risk

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## New agricultural technology adoption

### Model farmer

ZL is a well known farmer in the community. He reported the following issues as part of technology improvement in farming activities:

* Plotting systems to protect erosion, separating seedlings from fertiliser and crop variation are recent in farming approaches;
* Wereda agriculture supplies maize, teff, boloke and sweet potato improved varieties/seeds;
* Farming machines are not new, but other utensils supporting farming activities are given;
* The wereda agriculture office/DA in the kebele introduced farming improvement training at FTC in the kebele last year; the model farmers in the kebele attended a training on utilisation of improved seeds and fertiliser;
* It is good to have improved seeds/fertiliser, but in some cases the seeds and fertiliser are not compatible or have expired and remain incompatible;
* Farming by forefathers was poorer than from using improved technologies, but there was productivity due to natural land fertility.

### Average farmer

BM is one of the farmers regularly using farm interventions available to the community. He reported that farming in the community is now dependent upon compulsory use of fertiliser, improved seeds and new techniques from seeding to harvesting.

He said that everything related to farming demand improved agricultural inputs. The traditional way of farming, he said, is now weaker and productivity is also less.

Land is used with fertiliser and newly introduced seeds. He compared the difference in productivity per hectare of plot he has owned.

He discussed new agricultural technology challenges and opportunities:

* Farmers, particularly, the poorer ones, are not able to adopt new seeds, fertiliser or even the care needed during harvesting seasons;
* Land size shortage is another problem in the area, those who can produce do not even have sufficient land holdings;
* There is incompatibility of agricultural input interventions;
* There is no possibility of seasonal variation;
* Irrigation access has not been introduced in the community;
* Crop diseases are not possible to control;
* Farmers are not well informed about new technologies; though the FTC is newly established;
* On some occasions, the farmers appreciate the older seeds as disease resistant.

### Poor farmer

II is also one of the farmers in the community. He reported the status of new technology adoption in the community as follows:

* The fertiliser price is not fair for poorer farmers; he could not take part on a regular basis;
* Maize, teff, sweet potato and boloke seeds are improved varieties, but their price is still not affordable; he could not take last year’s supply;
* There is a harmful disease damaging crops; he mentioned the case of enset and coffee;
* Irrigation access is not available in the community;
* Using an ox for farming is good, but its price for meat is increasing and the poorer cannot buy one;
* Richer farmers are those who have many oxen, money to buy inputs and larger land size;
* He has also his personal experience of farming and related food security issues – “I have not been a food/shelter/clothing secured farmer” – there are many similar farmers!

## Productivity growth

### Model farmer

He, ZL, is relatively one of the most successful farmers and produces maize, coffee (10 quintals per year), banana, enset, avocado, mango, ginger and spices. Farming production will be improved much if people in the community are willing and able to use fertiliser as well as improved seeds. He reported that all his activities are highly dependent on fertiliser as well as improved seeds. He has experience to plan his farming season, besides communicating to the development agents supporting the farming activities in the area.

He wants to use irrigation, but there is no possibility as he reported. He uses farm by-products from maize, teff, and other products for his cattle.

He underlined that the market for cash crops like coffee is becoming active and attractive to motivate the further expansion of farming in cash crop areas.

1 kg of coffee is 120 birr and 100 kg of maize is 600 birr. He said that this year maize seed is not good and is incompatible with the land as well as the weather condition. Fertiliser was very costly amounting to 600 birr for 50 kg. He has knowledge of credit access from OMO microcredit service.

For specific interviews regarding productivity growth in farming activities, the respondent shared the following:

* At the present time, none of the better farmers in the community misuses the improved seeds/fertiliser;
* Crops are the same as the crops a few years ago, but there is improvement in varieties introduced: maize, teff, boloke, sweet potato;
* Introducing fertiliser and using improved seeds is now an obligatory means of farming; land will not yield without them;
* He has not used share-cropping so far, because he has better land size;
* Hard work is important, besides the available agricultural inputs; many idle men are still poor with land access; he accepted his better position among the farmers by disclosing available assets when compared to other similar model farmers.

### Average farmer

The respondent reported the status of productivity growth as follows:

* Recently, farmers are highly motivated to produce cash crops;
* Crops are not new, but the seeds are improved;
* He produced 300 kg of maize, 160 kg of teff, 400 kg of coffee in the last farming season; these are better production levels when compared to earlier times without fertiliser and seed improvement;
* He has no additional ploughing land; no share cropping;
* He categorised his wealth status as among those in the poorer sections of the community.

### Poor farmer

The interviewee reported the productivity growth of the farming activities in the community as follows:

* Model farmers produce teff, coffee, maize, boloke as well as sweet potato beyond their household consumption; they sell the remainder in the market;
* He is not a beneficiary of agricultural input interventions;
* Farm production is not sufficient for household consumption.

There is the effect of using improved farming means as one can see model farmers who use much fertiliser, improved seeds and also hold broader land size.

He believes that the use of all possible farming means doubtlessly improves productivity.

## Household risk management

### Model farmer

ZL reported that annual variation in farming outputs have been happening. This is a very challenging situation the farmers face. He personally faced livestock death in the year 2009 due to drought.

He reported that his family situation has been in good order due to crops/grain saved for bad seasons However, the shocks of the neighbours have been a common challenge. They request food support or credit for their household shocks. It is humanitarian responsibility to support them.

Usually, he said, the farm products are stored for future consumption and income earning.

### Average farmer

He reported that household risks have been occurring in many forms:

* Consumption shortages –mainly the poorer cannot smooth consumption over the year;
* Income shocks are regular problems of poorer households;
* Risk mitigation options available in the community are also various - doing daily labour work, begging if elderly and disabled, support from relatives, borrowing from private lenders at expensive interest rate with land as guarantee.

From his personal experience of risk mitigation, the respondent reported as follows:

* Curtailing early unwanted consumption for future use;
* Investing the income on important assets for future sale;
* Borrowing from OMO microfinance or private lenders.

### Poor farmer

Risk management practice in the community is mainly related to food shortage:

* We consume root crops in dry seasons when there is no grain - maize, boloke or beans;
* Enset, GODERE and cassava are available on all farmers’ plots; the poorer begin to consume enset in most cases till the next better season arrives;
* Borrowing crops - maize, boloke - is the usual means in hunger season;
* During health problems, the poorer borrow money from richer people with land as a guarantee.

From his personal experience of risk mitigation, the respondent shared the following:

“I told you the fact of poorer people in the community who are all identical to my life style”, he said.