

Facilitator for Change

Building a Better Future for Children

FC's Environmental Protection Experiences

www.fce-eth.org

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Background

Facilitator for Change (FC) is a civil society organization that has been operating in Ethiopia since 1998. For more than 27 years, the organization has made significant contributions to community development across Ethiopia

VISION, MISSION & GOAL

VISION

To see prosperous and resilient community



MISSION

Empowering vulnerable communities for self-reliance and sustainable development

GOAL

By 2030, FC will ensure child safe guarding and access to quality education for 73,000 children, empower 9,000 women and youth through capacity building and income-generating, improve livelihoods of 5,500 farmers with innovative and sustainable agricultural practices, and rehabilitate 300 hectares of degraded land, save life and reconstruct livelihood of over 40,000 people to ensure community resilience.

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FC's Experiences with Environmental Protection Activities



Since its early interventions, FC has worked to ensure food security by promoting the use of improved seed varieties, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides to enhance the production and productivity of farmland. These efforts initially helped communities increase yields and stabilize food supply. However, over time, FC observed that such approaches often prioritized short-term gains while neglecting the deeper connection between soil fertility, environmental protection, and long-term agricultural sustainability. The organization came to realize that focusing solely on production and productivity cannot secure resilient food systems or sustainable agriculture.

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Through the implementation of Sustainable Land Management initiatives since 2019, FC identified critical gaps in conventional practices, particularly the emphasis on yield maximization at the expense of ecological balance. This recognition prompted a strategic shift toward interventions that restore and protect natural resources. FC now places strong emphasis on forest conservation, rehabilitation of degraded farmland and grazing areas, and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices through promotion of agroecology-based farming. This renewed approach highlights the importance of ecological balance, soil health, and community resilience. By integrating practices such as agroforestry, crop diversification, and soil conservation, FC aims to ensure that food security is achieved not only through higher yields but also through methods that safeguard the environment, strengthen biodiversity, and build climate resilience. Ultimately, this transformation reflects FC's commitment to empowering communities with sustainable solutions that protect livelihoods today while securing the bases for generations to come.

Major Achievements of FC in Environmental Protection

Forest conservation Activities

FC has successfully implemented activities that contribute for forest conservation over th the last five-year period and directly reached 3,030 people (1,347 women) and indirectly benefiting 6,888 community members. Through participatory forest management, FC facilitated the conservation of 9,272 hectares of forest while diversifying the livelihoods of households living nearby the forest. Five Forest User Associations (FUAs) with 1,096 members were strengthened, more than 12,000 community members were aware on forest management, and over 598,000 seedlings were produced to restore degraded landscapes. The afforestation efforts recovered 181 hectares of land, while the introduction of firewood-saving stoves to 553 households reduced wood consumption and contributed to forest protection.

Beyond conservation, FC facilitated the promotion of forest-friendly livelihood systems that enable communities to make livelihood while safeguarding natural resources. These initiatives included agroforestry, apiculture, spice cultivation, and the application of agroecological practices on existing farmland to reduce expanding farm land by deforestation.

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As a result, 1,934 households (927 women) engaged in forest-friendly livelihood activities, collectively generating ETB 925,743 from petty trade, ETB 5.9 million from honey production, while agroforestry activities such as banana and avocado cultivation yielded ETB 165,500 in sales. These outcomes demonstrate how integrating conservation with livelihood diversification protects forests and strengthens household resilience, enhances food security, and empowers the community economically.









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Rehabilitation of Degraded Grazing and Farm land

During the past seven years, more than 35 community-managed nursery sites were established, and physical soil and water conservation measures were implemented on 864 hectares of land through gully treatment and area closure and terrace making. As a biological treatment to the degraded land over 107,000 multipurpose tree seedlings were planted on degraded communal and individual degraded land. These multipurpose trees are mainly used for human feed like fruits, animal feed, and soil and water conservation benefits.





Promoting Agroecology-based Agriculture

01. Treatment of acidic soil:

FC has facilitated the treatment of over 365 hectares of farmland affected by soil acidity with lime and organic fertilizer sucessfully. This intervention transformed previously unproductive land into fertile plots, enabling farmers to cultivate crops more effectively and restore long-term productivity. The activities of acidic soil treatment have improved soil pH in which the acidity level of targeted land improved significantly, with average soil pH rising from 4.33 to 5.67. This change represents a critical step toward restoring soil health, as balanced pH levels enhance nutrient availability, reduce toxicity, and create favorable conditions for sustainable crop growth. FC is continuing the facilitation of acidic farm land treatment until the optimum PH level which 6 to 7 reached.





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02. Organic fertilizer production:

Through vermicomposting and conventional composting, FC facilitated the production of organic fertilizer in which farmers produced more than 1,100 tons of organic fertilizer in last three years. This achievement reduced dependence on costly chemical fertilizer and promoted environmentally friendly practices that recycle organic waste into valuable soil nutrients and produce health food for farmers. In addition, FC has capacitated farmers to produce liquid fertilizer known as vermiwash. So far over 5000 litters of vermiwash produced. As a result, over 240 hectares of farmland were treated with organic fertilizer, improving soil fertility, boosting crop productivity, and contributing to sustainable agriculture. Farmers witnessed healthier soils and stronger yields, demonstrating the long-term benefits of organic inputs.







03. Nitrogen-fixing legumes:

On 205 hectares, nitrogen-fixing legume crops were introduced as rotational crops. Using inoculant rhizobium to enhance nitrogen fixation, these legumes enriched soil fertility and diversified household nutrition by providing protein-rich food sources.





04. Coffee-based agroforestry:

Recently, Jimma Agricultural Research Center introduced coffee-based agroforestry to integrate fruits as shade for coffee and produce legumes in ground of the agroforestry. FC has adopted this innovation and more than 60 hectares of land were covered with coffee-based agroforestry systems, integrating coffee with banana, papaya, vegetables, soybean, and grevilia for shade. This diversified system improved soil health, provided multiple income streams, food security and strengthened ecological resilience.

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05. Agroforestry expansion:

In conventional agroforestry activities, coffee, banana, and avocado were cultivated across 636 hectares of land, creating productive agroforestry systems. These practices generated income and enhanced biodiversity and improved soil structure.





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06. Conservation agriculture:

On 203 hectares, conservation agriculture practices were adopted, including soil mulching, crop residue application, green manure application (such as chopped lupin), intercropping, crop rotation, and reduced tillage. These methods increased fertility, reduced erosion, conserved moisture, and built long-term soil fertility.

07. Promotion of indigenous crops:

Over 24 hectares were cultivated with indigenous crops such as maize and yam, which are disease-resistant, nutritious, and require minimal chemical fertilizer. This initiative strengthened food security, preserved local biodiversity, and promoted healthier diets.





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