

Scaling Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification in Ethiopia (SCASI)

SCASI Review and Planning Workshop Report



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CIMMYT

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



SCASI Review and Planning Workshop Report

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Abbreviations

AR	Action Research
BoA	Bureau of Agriculture
CASI	Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification
CFGB	Canadian Food Grains Bank
CIMMYT	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center
DAB	Development Research and Training Plc
DF	Development Fund
EFD	Ethiopia Forestry Development
EIAR	Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research
FH-Ethiopia	Food for the Hungry Ethiopia
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MSCFSO	Migbare Senay Children and Family Support Organization
OARI	Oromia Agricultural Research Institute
SCASI	Scaling Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification in Ethiopia
SHG	Self Help Group
TDA	Terepeza Development Association



Summary

The SCASI Review and Planning Workshop, held on June 24 and 25, 2025, at the ILRI Campus in Addis Ababa, served as a crucial strategic forum to critically assess the progress of the Scaling Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification in Ethiopia (SCASI) initiative since 2022. Organized by CIMMYT and CFGB, the event brought together 41 diverse stakeholders, including government bodies, implementing partners, and donor representatives, with the objective of consolidating key lessons, reviewing bottlenecks, and collaboratively developing actionable plans for the remainder of 2025. This multi-stakeholder engagement successfully validated the project's performance and renewed the shared commitment essential for sustained scaling efforts.

The project review confirmed SCASI's high success and relevance. The Endline Impact Assessment revealed that CASI practices achieved an exceptional 87.5% adoption rate and resulted in significant productivity gains, most notably a maize yield increase of up to 67.7%. While this impact validates the CASI package as a highly effective response to soil and climate challenges, the review also identified critical limitations. Results for wheat and teff were not significant, signaling the need for further package optimization. More urgently, two major sustainability threats were highlighted: high government staff turnover, which risks institutional memory, and the cost and scarcity of inputs, which makes scaling financially challenging.

The resulting action plan focuses on immediate institutional transition to secure long-term gains. The strategy prioritizes embedding CASI within formal government extension systems and utilizing local by-laws to secure ownership and mitigate staff turnover. To directly counteract high input costs, the plan promotes low-cost, local alternatives (vermicomposting, green manure, cover crops). Finally, the plan calls for a re-analysis of impact data for strategic refinement and utilizing mass media, farmer-to-farmer training, and a central CASI knowledge hub to actively integrate lessons into the national agricultural extension system.



Introduction

The agricultural sector in Ethiopia, a cornerstone of the national economy and food security, faces severe challenges posed by land degradation, climate variability, and declining soil fertility. These factors compromise the productivity of smallholder farms, threatening livelihoods and national resilience. In response, the Scaling Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification in Ethiopia (SCASI) project was established as a strategic collaboration to promote and scale climate-smart agricultural practices.

SCASI is designed to introduce and adapt Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification (CASI) packages to diverse regional contexts across the country. The initiative aims to move beyond pilot efforts by rigorously demonstrating the on-farm impact of these practices, strengthening institutional capacity, and facilitating widespread adoption through established government and civil society mechanisms.

This report documents the proceedings, findings, and strategic outcomes of the SCASI Review and Planning Workshop, held on June 24 and 25, 2025. The workshop brought together 41 diverse participants. This included representatives from various government bodies (Ministry of Agriculture, Bureaus of Agricultures), SCASI implementing partners (CIMMYT, CFGB network members: MCCE, FHE, MSCFSO, TDA), donor representatives (DF), research institutions (EIAR, OARI), and other key collaborators (DAB, EFD). The central purpose was to critically assess progress since 2022, consolidate evidence from endline impact assessments, synthesize lessons learned, and collaboratively develop an actionable plan to guide implementation and renew shared commitment among stakeholders to scaling CASI in Ethiopia.

Welcoming and Opening Remarks

The workshop commenced with a warm welcome from Dr. Adefris Teklewold (CIMMYT-Ethiopia Country Representative), who emphasized the importance of reflection, collaboration, and forward planning in sustaining the SCASI initiative's momentum. His remarks set a constructive tone, highlighting the critical role of evidence-based decision-making. This was followed by the official opening remarks from Dr. Deborah J. Smith, Country Director of the Development Fund (DF). Dr. Deborah underscored SCASI's significance in addressing Ethiopia's climate resilience challenges, praising the project for successfully integrating action research into program implementation, a rare achievement in development settings. She reaffirmed DF's commitment to supporting sustainable agriculture efforts exemplified by SCASI. Both speakers stressed that the primary challenge has shifted from proving CASI's effectiveness to designing a robust, shared mechanism for institutionalization and sustainable scaling.



Participant Introduction and Setting Expectations

Following the welcome and opening remarks, Desalegn Tadesse and Birhan Abdulkadir facilitated a brief round of self-introductions. The diverse group included representatives from various government bodies (Ministry of Agriculture, Bureaus of Agriculture), SCASI implementing partners (CIMMYT, CFGB network members: FHE, MSCFSO, TDA, MCC), donor representatives (DF), research institutions (EIAR, OARI), and other key collaborators (DAB, EFD), fostering a sense of shared purpose among attendees. Participants shared their initial expectations, expressing a collective desire to gain actionable insights and contribute to a robust future plan. The session concluded by formally establishing the shared expectations and three core expected outputs for the workshop:

- A consolidated review of SCASI outcomes, learnings, and bottlenecks from the 2022–2024 implementation years, utilizing evidence from action research, the external evaluation and endline impact assessment.
- An actionable plan for the second half of 2025 (July-December 2025),
- Strengthened partnerships and a renewed shared commitment among stakeholders to scaling CASI in Ethiopia.

Session 1: Taking Stock & Learning

Presentation 1: SCASI Overview: Progresses and Key Achievements (2022-2024)

Sahlemariam Menamo (CFGB) presented a comprehensive overview of SCASI's overall achievements, reach, and contextual factors influencing its progress from 2022-2024. The presentation highlighted significant quantitative and qualitative successes, including increased food availability and yield gains across major crops, improved soil health indicators, and substantial farmer adoption and reach. Discussions focused on the impressive scale of implementation and the external factors that shaped the initiative's trajectory.

Specifically, the CFGB presentation detailed the following key achievements:

- **Adoption & Farmer Reach:** The project successfully reached over 13,231 CASI practicing farmers, which exceeded the plan by 15% and influenced an additional 25,000 indirect beneficiaries. This led to a substantial adoption rate of CASI practices by farmers.
- **Capacity Building:** Over 10,087 farmers received training on CASI, with a strong emphasis on practical, hands-on learning through farmers field schools, demonstration plots, and exchange visits. Lead farmers played a crucial role in cascading knowledge to their communities.
- **Partnership & Coordination:** The project fostered strong collaboration with Development Fund, CIMMYT, Canadian Foodgrains Bank network (MCC, Tearfund, FH Ethiopia, TDA & MSCFSO) and government partners at national, regional, zonal, and woreda levels. This multi-level partnership was key to integrating CASI into existing extension systems and ensuring wider reach.

- Crop diversity: CASI adoption enabled farmers to diversify the crops grown on their land, reducing the risks and shocks associated with crop failure. Moreover, CASI practices have contributed to broader sustainability goals, including enhanced soil health, diversified income sources, and increased resilience among smallholder farmers.
- Spontaneous CASI adoption: 3077 farmers spontaneously adopted CASI (639 female) across the project woredas on 133.7 hectares (non-target kebeles).
- Challenges: The presentation also acknowledged overall challenges faced during the implementation, including the short supply and high price of inorganic fertilizers, and the project's three-year timeframe which was deemed insufficient for the full scaling of all CASI technologies (typically requiring five years for piloting, broader scaling-up, and institutional strengthening).
- Lessons learned: Increased spontaneous adoption of CASI resulted from farmers understanding its multiple benefits, particularly increased soil fertility and crop production. Also the lead farmer approach proved to be highly effective, and organizing women into saving and loan associations/self-help groups increased their confidence and social cohesion.


Presentation 2-4: Sharing SCASI Experiences Across Regions: Insights from Implementing Partners

Implementing partners from FH-Ethiopia (Tajebe Dibaba), MSCFSO (Yihenew Demissie), and TDA (Tilahun Tadesse) delivered brief presentations, sharing significant achievements, ground-level challenges, and unique insights from diverse agroecological zones. This session highlighted how the practical application of CASI principles, often informed by CIMMYT's action research on improved agronomy, varieties, and resource conservation, translated into tangible results at the farmer level. The partners showcased successes in areas such as yield increases, soil health improvements, and labor savings, which resonated with the evidence generated by CIMMYT. The session fostered peer learning through facilitated Q&A, exploring adoption dynamics, community engagement, and innovative local adaptations. It became clear how farmer feedback and local community dynamics, as observed by the implementing partners, actively shaped the evolution of SCASI activities and provided crucial insights back to the research component, contributing to a virtuous cycle of learning and adaptation.

The key achievements and unique successes from the three implementing partners are synthesized below.

FHE

- Regional Successes: FHE highlighted successful "cluster farming" in Benishangul Gumuz Regional State, where CASI principles were integrated into the government extension system, mandating agricultural organizations to incorporate them. In Oromia Region, they emphasized the successful integration of CASI with organic fertilizers, green cover, fodder crops, and the use of public institutions as demonstration sites.
- Innovative Adaptations: FHE's presentation showcased innovative solutions like the introduction of vermicompost and leveraging media for wider outreach. The "farmer to farmer



approach" was particularly effective, leading to increased production and income, enhanced social status for farmers, and improved environmental outcomes.


- Farmer Feedback: Farmers consistently reported CASI practices as "practical, labor and time saving and inclusive," "environmentally friendly and restore the health of soil," and leading to "increased production and income." They also valued diversification, nutrition benefits, and improved market linkages. A compelling "Story of Change" illustrated a female farmer Rouda who significantly increased maize and haricot bean yields, leading to asset creation (buying a motorbike) and supporting her family's education.

MSCFSO

- Key Achievements: MSCFSO reported substantial yield increases in Maize, Wheat, and Teff crops, directly improving household food security. They also noted improved animal fodder production, which reduced competition for mulch materials. Small-scale mechanization, particularly maize shellers, reduced post-harvest losses and labor, creating job opportunities for youth. Women and youth participation and benefits increased through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) and direct engagement in CASI practices.
- Best Practices & Innovations: MSCFSO highlighted the successful use of Lupine as a Green Manure/Cover Crop (GM/CC) for wheat and teff, and the promotion of vermicomposting to reduce reliance on chemical fertilizers. Their collaboration with CIMMYT on action research provided valuable agronomic recommendations.
- Lessons Learned: MSCFSO emphasized that effective crop residue management is crucial and that "Women stewardship in the implementation of standard CASI practices is much better than men." They also found that "Engaging youth in CASI demonstrates value to government, as it seeks to create employment." Strong coordination and integration among actors and departments were identified as key to scaling CASI.

TDA

- Key Achievements: TDA reported increased crop productivity on a sustainable basis, with significant yield increases attributed to soil fertility improvements from CASI. They successfully identified, introduced, and promoted fodder and cover crops, and supplied various inputs to expand CASI technology packages. Intensification and diversification were well-promoted.
- Proven Technologies: TDA's presentation listed 16 proven CASI technologies, including Minimum Tillage, Mulching, Crop Intensification (intercropping/relay cropping, crop rotation), application of organic and inorganic fertilizers, agroforestry solutions, improved seeds, fodder/forage production, CASI mechanization, and crop protection.
- Challenges & Solutions: TDA faced challenges such as shortages of agricultural inputs (seeds and fertilizer), lack of mulching materials due to livestock competition, and rainfall variability. Suggested solutions included integrating CASI with Self-Help Groups (SHGs), developing local seed systems, promoting vermicompost, creating seed multiplication farmers, and implementing community bylaws on free grazing.
- Lessons Learned: TDA underscored that "Working on farmers' mind set is key, creating positive influence by fellow farmers than experts." They also found that "CASI-SHG



integration for adoption of technologies" was highly effective. Other lessons included the cost-effectiveness of private nursery operations, the success of local seed systems, and the need to incorporate crop-livestock integration, water harvesting, and advocacy on agricultural extension systems into future plans.

Presentation 5: SCASI's Action Research & Evidence Generation: Insights & Way Forwards

Birhan Abdulkadir (CIMMYT) highlighted detailed CIMMYT's contributions in advancing CASI through action research, evidence generation, and knowledge sharing. The session summarized key action research initiatives that combined agronomic and socio-economic analyses, outlining their findings and implications. Particular focus was placed on how the evidence generated can inform scaling strategies and policy advocacy, ensuring that research outcomes contribute to broader adoption and impact. The discussion also reflected on challenges faced in research implementation and data generation and explored potential solutions and improvements to strengthen future phases of the program. The key points of the presentation are summarized in the following bullets.


CIMMYT's approach to action research within SCASI was described as "a dynamic, farmer-centric, participatory, iterative, and adaptive process designed for local problem-solving and innovation." This involved three key phases:

- **Participatory Problem Identification & Planning:** Engaging communities, prioritizing constraints (e.g., rainfall variability, degraded soils, high fertilizer cost), and selecting/packaging appropriate CASI options. This phase utilizes methods such as FGDs and KIs.
- **On-Farm Experimentation & Implementation:** Implementing farmer-managed mega-demonstrations and mother & baby trials to facilitate hands-on learning.
- **Joint Reflection & Adaptation:** Regular feedback meetings and farmer field days for collective analysis and refinement of practices.

Evidence was collected through various methods including rapid, baseline, mid-season, and end-season surveys, direct field observations, and lab analysis of soil samples. The collected data included agronomic data (e.g., crop yields), soil health indicators (e.g., pH, organic carbon), economic data (e.g., labor savings, income), and social/perception data. This evidence was documented in various formats, including reports, presentations, posters, briefs, pictures, and videos.

Key findings from CIMMYT's action research and continuous learning surveys included:

- **CASI Practice Adoption:** End-of-season monitoring surveys revealed that 82% of beneficiaries implemented between 6 to 14 CASI practices, demonstrating a high intensity of adoption. For example, in Bibugn, minimum tillage, mulching, organic fertilizer, inorganic fertilizer, and improved varieties, was the most common combination, applied on over 30% of SCASI plots.
- **Yield Improvements:** Combinations of CASI practices consistently provided higher maize yields compared to conventional practices across different regions. For instance, in Ura (BG



region), CASI plots yielded an average of 9457.8 kg/ha compared to 5533.9 kg/ha in conventional plots, a significant difference. Similarly, 2-year CASI practitioners showed higher maize and wheat yields than 1-year practitioners, indicating the cumulative benefits of sustained CASI adoption.

- **Soil Health:** Early improvements in soil pH and near-stable soil organic carbon levels were observed, signaling gradual soil health recovery. The synergistic combination of CASI interventions contributed to improved soil buffering capacity. The action research also specifically highlighted the benefits of combining organic and mineral fertilizers to optimize soil health and crop productivity, reducing reliance solely on expensive inorganic inputs.
- **Bottlenecks & Opportunities:** Action research helped identify seasonal and institutional CASI scaling bottlenecks, such as limitations in awareness and skills, resource scarcity, financial constraints, and labor shortages. Proposed solutions included targeted training, demonstration plots, empowering local champions (lead farmers), collaborative supply chains, and utilizing savings schemes.


The presentation underscored that scaling requires enabling environments, not one-size-fits-all bundles. This means focusing on local facilitation capacity, embedded learning structures (review meetings, innovation platforms), strong research-extension-community bridges, and flexible funding for adaptive scaling. CIMMYT also emphasized the development of the CASI Knowledge Hub (<http://casi-moa.gov.et/>) as a central repository for organizing and storing CASI knowledge, including scientific literature, presentations, videos, photos, and raw datasets, to ensure users can easily access information and foster continuous learning.

Presentation 6: External Evaluation Findings on SCASI's Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Quality, Impact, and Sustainability

Dr Reta Hailu (DAB Consult) presented key findings and methodologies from the independent endline evaluation of SCASI, which adopted OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) and utilized both qualitative (FGDs, KIIs, IDIs, field observations) and quantitative (project reports, monitoring data) approaches. The session provided an external perspective on SCASI's performance, discussing how these insights complement or challenge internal understandings of SCASI's impact. Analysis focused on primary drivers of strong performance and factors that constrained progress, with a view to integrating these lessons into future program design and adaptive management strategies. Overall, the DAB Consult evaluation concluded that the SCASI project demonstrated significant potential but requires longer timelines, broader reach, and stronger institutional partnerships to ensure lasting, equitable, and impactful interventions.

Key findings from the DAB Consult presentation include:

- **Relevance (4.64/5):** The project demonstrated high relevance by promoting 16 CASI practices (e.g., minimum tillage, mulching, intercropping, agroforestry, vermicompost, improved seeds) that directly address local challenges like land degradation, soil erosion, nutrient depletion, and labor inefficiencies. It aligned strongly with national priorities such as Ethiopia's Climate-Resilient Green Economy (ECRGE), Sustainable Land Management (SLM),



and the Rural Livelihoods and Landscape Program (RLLP), and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP). Beneficiary selection was transparent, focusing on willingness, need, and inclusivity, with 30% women participation. Farmers with disabilities confirmed higher yields with CASI, and youth and women highlighted labor savings and diversified income streams. Government partners and agricultural experts rated the project's relevance as "very high," citing its alignment with local needs and proven success.

- Coherence (4.56/5): SCASI effectively synergized with government strategies and initiatives, seamlessly integrating with the Rural Development Policy and Strategy (RDPS) and the Ten-Year Perspective Development Plan (2021-2030), which prioritizes climate-resilient agriculture. The project avoided duplication and enhanced existing Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) efforts, as confirmed by FGDs. Effective stakeholder collaboration from regional to local levels fostered synergies with other government interventions. The average perception score from stakeholders and IPs was 4.56/5, reflecting strong alignment.
- Effectiveness (4.58/5): The evaluation found that CASI practices reduced labor costs by 50% and increased crop yields by 30–50%. A high adoption rate of 87.5% of promoted CASI practices was observed, with 12,455 farmers implementing CASI on 2,929 hectares. Significant improvements were noted in soil organic matter and moisture retention. While farmers initially showed skepticism towards practices like reduced tillage, visible yield improvements through demonstrations and training led to widespread adoption. Most households reported adopting mulching.
- Quality (4.44/5): The project demonstrated strong quality through robust partner selection (CIMMYT, CFGB, local government, NGOs) and adaptive management strategies to address challenges like inflation and security risks. Action research and policy briefs were instrumental in enhancing knowledge sharing among stakeholders.
- Efficiency (4.50/5.0): SCASI delivered timely and practical trainings, supported by demonstrations and manuals, ensuring effective knowledge transfer. The adoption of cost-effective practices, such as vermicomposting, significantly reduced input expenses, with chemical fertilizer costs reportedly reduced by 50%.
- Impact (4.22/5): Farmers reported a substantial increase in income, ranging from 25–100%. Food security improved, with Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning (MAHFP) rising from 7.8 to 9.5. The project fostered significant behavioral change, shifting farmers from monoculture to diversified, climate-resilient practices like crop rotation and intercropping, and from multiple to minimum tillage. Higher productivity was achieved even on small plots, coupled with cost reductions (less labor/draught power) and diversified crops (vegetables, forage, livestock), enhancing overall food security and income. Vulnerable groups, including resource-poor farmers, women, youth, and persons with disabilities, reported improved self-reliance through low-input techniques. The project also contributed to reduced deforestation, improved biodiversity, and strengthened climate resilience against droughts and pests.
- Sustainability (4.16/5.0): Local ownership was significantly strengthened through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and savings initiatives. Strong institutional partnerships (e.g., local government and community) were fostered, ensuring continuity of efforts. While sustainability was rated high, challenges remain in building sufficient capacity for Development Agents (DAs) and community committee members.
- The evaluation also highlighted several challenges:

- Logistical: High inflation tripled input costs, and security issues occasionally delayed field activities.
- Technical: While vermicomposting was effective, monitoring pests (e.g., ants, termites) and disease outbreaks (e.g., maize/teff rust in Oromia) remained essential.
- Climate Variability: Droughts and excessive rainfall impacted early-maturing crops.
- Limited Scope: The project's restriction to two woredas per region and a short three-year timeframe were deemed insufficient for full scaling and outcome maturity.
- Resource Gaps: Shortages of inputs (lime, resilient seeds), inflationary impacts, and weak local government involvement in monitoring were noted in some areas.
- SCASI demonstrated significant added value through:
 - Replicability: Most FGDs and IDIs endorsed scaling up CASI to new areas.
 - Innovation: Integration of action research and effective radio outreach programs.
 - Gender & Inclusion: Women-led plots sometimes outperformed men, and PWDs were actively engaged through community support.
 - Environment: Positive impacts included reduced deforestation, improved biodiversity, and enhanced climate resilience.

Presentation 7: Key Findings from SCASI Endline Impact Assessment and their Implications for Scaling

Dr. Moti Jaleta (CIMMYT) presented preliminary results and key takeaways from the internal SCASI endline impact assessment conducted in February-March 2025. This data-driven presentation led to an interactive discussion on how these findings resonate with on-the-ground observations and their critical implications for the future of CASI scaling and sustainability. Participants explored unexpected insights and how they could refine strategic priorities for the next phase.

The internal assessment from CIMMYT, complemented by the insights from implementing partners (FHE, MSCFSO, and TDA), provided a comprehensive picture of SCASI's impact. Key findings from CIMMYT's action research and continuous learning surveys, such as the high intensity of CASI practice adoption (82% of beneficiaries implementing 6-14 practices) and consistent yield improvements (e.g., higher maize yields in CASI plots compared to conventional ones), were strongly corroborated by the field experiences of FHE, MSCFSO, and TDA.

Key findings from the detailed impact assessment survey presentation include:

- Intensity of CASI Practices Used: The assessment revealed a significant shift towards the implementation of a higher number of CASI practices by farmers. The average number of plot-level CASI practices increased from 2.4 in 2022 to 5.4 in 2024. This increase was observed across all four regions: Amhara (2.9 to 5.9), Benishangul Gumuz (2.2 to 5.3), Oromia (2.4 to 5), and SNNP (1.9 to 5). This indicates a strong uptake of integrated CASI packages rather than single practices.
- Yield Increment due to CASI:
 - Maize: SCASI demonstrated a strong positive impact on maize yield, with a net increase of 67.7% for the treatment group, significantly exceeding the target of 43%. Regional impacts varied, with exceptional results in Benishangul Gumuz (99.1% net

- increase) and Oromia (92.2% net increase), while Amhara showed a modest impact (10.7%) and SNNP a relatively small one.
- Wheat & Teff: While overall yield increments were observed, SCASI intervention did not bring a significant positive change attributable to the project for wheat and teff. For wheat, the target was met, but the control group also performed well. For teff, the net impact was only 1.5%, achieving just 6.5% of the target, warranting a review of CASI practices tailored for teff cultivation.
 - Sorghum: A highly significant and positive impact was observed on sorghum yield, with a net increase of 99.8%, more than double the target of 40%.
 - Haricot Bean: SCASI interventions led to a strong improvement in haricot bean yield, with a net increase of 144.3%, significantly higher than the target of 34%.
 - Taro: Taro yield also showed a strong positive impact, with a net increase of 45.5%.
 - Correlation between Maize Yield and number of CASI practices used: A clear positive correlation was identified: as the number of CASI practices implemented increased, maize yield generally increased. Farmers implementing 5 CASI practices achieved the highest mean maize yield (5.31 ton/ha). This relationship was observed across all regions, though the optimal number of practices and average yield levels varied due to regional factors.
 - Yield Variability: SCASI interventions significantly reduced yield variability for several key crops, indicating more stable and predictable harvests.
 - Maize: Variability in the treated group reduced from 60.3% to 33.9%, a 43.8% decline overall.
 - Wheat: Variability declined from 38.3% to 19%, a 50.4% reduction, well below the target.
 - Haricot Bean: Variability dramatically decreased from 73.2% to 11.5% (an 84.3% reduction), significantly exceeding the target.
 - Taro: Variability decreased from 82.7% to 15.5% (an 81.3% reduction), also exceeding the target.
 - Teff & Sorghum: While some reduction was observed, it did not meet the targeted levels for teff and sorghum.
 - Food Security: The average months with adequate household food supply (MAHFP) increased from 7.4 to 8.3 months (a 12.2% increase), achieving 56% of the overall target. Modest improvements were seen across all regions except Amhara.
 - Spillover Effect: The project demonstrated a strong spillover effect. While only 8.8% of the control group had information about CASI at baseline (2022), this increased to 53.4% by endline (2025). Of these, 16% specifically cited SCASI demonstration plot visits as their source of information.
 - Crop Residue Retention: Approximately 52% of farmers in the treatment group retained above 30% crop residue on their farms, compared to only 16.1% in the control group, indicating successful adoption of this critical CASI practice.
 - Farmer's Behavioral Change: Farmers in the treated group showed a positive shift in behavior, demonstrating a tendency to "drop/reject the old thinking of frequent tillage." They also had a stronger understanding of the benefits of organic fertilizer compared to the control group, indicating a shift towards more sustainable farming mindsets.

- Challenges Encountered (from the survey): The assessment identified several challenges hindering optimal CASI implementation, including lack of mulching materials, shortage of cover crop seeds, lack/shortage of inorganic fertilizers, and lack/shortage of improved seeds.

In conclusion, the impact assessment results clearly demonstrate that CASI, as an intervention package, is a practical, effective, and scalable solution for enhancing agricultural productivity, improving food security, and building climate resilience among smallholder farmers. The significant increases in CASI practice implementation, substantial yield gains and variability reduction for key crops, positive spillover effects, and observed behavioral changes validate CASI's potential. However, the varied regional and crop-specific responses underscore the need for context-specific CASI packages and adaptive management, emphasizing that a "one-size-fits-all" approach is insufficient. Addressing input constraints (mulching materials, seeds, fertilizers) is paramount for accelerating and sustaining CASI implementation at scale, requiring collaborative efforts from government, private sector, and development partners to strengthen input supply chains. Further research is needed for areas where SCASI had less impact, such as wheat and teff yields.

Session 2: Strategic Planning & Way Forward


Presentation 8: SCASI Communication & Knowledge Management: Approach & Achievements

Desalegn Tadesse (CIMMYT) presented on SCASI's communication and knowledge management approach and achievements. The session included examples of successful knowledge products and dissemination campaigns. Interactive discussions focused on strategies for effectively packaging SCASI knowledge (e.g., policy briefs, farmer guides) and identifying optimal channels and audiences to influence policy and adoption. Brainstorming explored mechanisms for two-way knowledge flow and measuring effectiveness.

Presentation 9: Institutional Transition and Sustainability: Ensuring Lasting Impact

Edries Mohammed (DF) presentation emphasized embedding CASI practices into institutional systems to ensure long-term sustainability. Institutionalization was defined as the process of establishing CASI as a norm within organizations and communities. Institutionalization requires strong collaboration among partners (CIMMYT, CFGB, NGOs), government support, and evidence-based achievements. Effective approaches include cluster farming, farmer field schools, lead farmers, and women's saving groups, supported by training and local media outreach.

Sustainability was framed as maintaining project gains through inclusive community participation, local institutional support (e.g., FTCs, nurseries, schools), and the establishment of legal community organizations and steering platforms. Watershed management and bylaw enforcement were highlighted as priorities.



Scaling was presented as a process of documenting documenting and sharing best practices, impact stories, and research results. It also includes developing guidelines, training materials, and visual archives, and linking CASI efforts to national and regional strategies for replication.

The presentation concluded with breakout session prompts that encouraged participants to reflect on enabling conditions and challenges for institutionalization and scaling, identify key institutions and platforms, and propose cost-effective strategies and priority activities between July-December 2025 for wider adoption of CASI practices.

The guiding questions were:


- What are the enabling Conditions and Challenges for institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice?
 - What enabling conditions facilitate the institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice?
 - What challenges do we face in the process of institutionalizing and scaling of CASI practices and the way outs?
- What are the key institutions and platforms s for institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice?
 - Which key institutions and platforms are available for supporting the institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice?
 - How can these intuitions collaborate to enhance the effectiveness of CASI practice?
- What are the strategies for scaling and priority activities for wider scaling and adoption of the CASI practices Considering minimum cost options
 - What strategies can be implemented to effectively scale CASI practices?
 - What priority activities should we focus on to promote the wider adoption of CASI practice particularly considering minimum cost option?

Presentation 10-13: Strategic Action Planning for Sustainable Scaling (Breakout Session)

During the breakout sessions, participants from Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Oromia and Southern Ethiopia explored practical pathways for institutionalizing and sustaining CASI practices. Discussions were structured around enabling conditions, challenges, key institutions, and strategies for scaling. Detailed issues raised by regional reflection presentations are annexed at the end of this report (Anne 3).

In summary, the regional breakout sessions highlighted three core, interdependent challenges that must be addressed for sustainable scaling:

- **Institutionalizing Ownership:** The top priority is to embed CASI into permanent government structures to counter high staff turnover. This requires establishing formal implementation platforms and adopting community by-laws to shift ownership from external projects to local administrations and farming communities.
- **Securing Affordable Inputs:** Scaling is limited by the cost and scarcity of resilient seeds and fertilizers. The strategy must focus on promoting low-cost, local alternatives such as



vermicomposting and green manure and cover crops (GM/CC), while simultaneously strengthening market linkages for essential inputs, making CASI economically viable for all farmers.

- Expanding Knowledge Transfer: The sessions stressed the need to move beyond project areas by utilizing mass media (e.g., radio) and formalizing proven methods such as farmer-to-farmer training and field days. This must be backed by rigorous documentation and capacity building for government extension staff to ensure accurate, widespread adoption.

Presentation 14: Lessons from CARD-I Project Implementation in Western Ethiopia

Dr. Moti Jaleta (CIMMYT) presented key lessons and insights from the Climate Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD-I) project, highlighting its relevance to SCASI's scaling efforts. The session included a discussion comparing the challenges and successes of CARD-I with SCASI's experiences and exploring specific practices or approaches from CARD-I that could be adapted or integrated into the SCASI roadmap.

Plenary Session: Strengthening Partnerships and Shared Commitment

Edries Mohammed and Birhan Abdulkadir moderated the plenary session, where partners came together to tackle pressing issues. This pivotal plenary session served to explicitly solidify the commitment among all partners for continued collaboration and scaling efforts. Discussions delved into practical mechanisms for fostering ongoing communication, enhancing coordination, and ensuring mutual accountability. Participants were actively invited to articulate their individual and organizational commitments, proposing concrete strategies and outlining specific actions or resources each partner is prepared to contribute to strengthen the shared vision for SCASI moving forward. The session aimed to translate collective enthusiasm into tangible pledges, reinforcing the collaborative foundation for future initiatives and ensuring sustained momentum in scaling CASI practices.

The session concluded with a comprehensive synthesis of the key decisions made and actions agreed upon throughout the two-day event. This final session served as a critical juncture to consolidate the progress achieved, ensuring all participants had a clear understanding of the collective outcomes. A forward-looking perspective was emphasized, outlining the immediate next steps and timelines for the implementation of the developed action plan. Furthermore, strategies to ensure sustained momentum and foster continued collaboration among all partners beyond the workshop were discussed, aiming to translate the shared commitment into effective, long-term impact for SCASI.

Action Points (July-December 2025)

The action points below represent the collaboratively developed, strategic roadmap for the SCASI initiative's final six months of implementation. Derived directly from the synthesis of endline impact data, partner experiences, and regional breakout feedback, these six core actions are designed to secure long-term sustainability by focusing on three critical areas: institutional integration, cost-effective input solutions, and evidence-based knowledge transfer. Each point details the specific task, assigned leads, and the immediate timeline for accountability during the July-December 2025 period.

#	Action points	Lead responsibility	Timeline
1	Reanalyze the endline impact assessment results to better understand the impact of CASI practices on major indicators (i.e. food availability and crop diversity) and crop-specific results (Teff/Wheat)	Moti, Abdu Birhan	Q3 (Jul-Sep)
2	Organize a high-level discussion forum with MoA policy makers constitutes from various departments to formally integrate CASI into the national extension system and promote intra-departmental integration.	Birhan, Sahle, SCASI IPs	Q3 (Jul-Sep)
3	Continue working on the institutionalization and strategies for scaling based on the given template and synthesize the aggregated version for common reference	Sahle & SCASI IPs	Q3 (Jul-Sep)
4	Promote trainings on low-cost, local alternatives to expensive inputs (i.e., vermicomposting, green manure, cover/forage crops) to reduce farmer dependency on expensive external inputs.	SCASI IPs	Ongoing
5	Document SCASI knowledge and experiences (including model farmer testimonies, case studies, and policy briefs) in various accessible formats and populate in a central CASI knowledge hub. Utilize mass media (FM radio) to scale out information	Sahle, SCASI IPs, Desalegn, Birhan	Ongoing
6	Fostering collaboration among government, NGOs, research institutions, and local communities to strengthen joint planning and monitoring mechanism.	SCASI IPs	Ongoing



Closing Remarks

The workshop concluded with closing remarks that celebrated the culmination of a significant effort and the spirit of collaboration. Birhan Abdulkadir extended deep gratitude to the CIMMYT and CFGB team for their exemplary planning and execution of the workshop. He particularly recognized the long and successful journey taken to reach this strategic level, highlighting the sustained effort invested across the project's life cycle, from initial planning and execution to crucial field visits, rigorous data analysis, and numerous collaborative forums. He thanked all SCASI implementing partners, including TDA, FH Ethiopia, MSCFSO, EIAR, OARI, MCC, and CFGB, for their invaluable, on-the-ground contributions and acknowledged the crucial financial and technical support provided by the Development Fund (DF).

Sahlemariam Menamo commended the spirit of unity and shared purpose achieved, stressing the importance of the team continuing to function as a cohesive and harmonious unit as they transition to the final phase. The connections forged during the workshop are anticipated to lead to meaningful outcomes in scaling CASI. The final message was one of optimism, confidence in the newly formulated Action Plan, and wishes for a safe journey home to all participants, with the shared commitment to actively integrating the strategic decisions into implementation.

Annexes

Annex 1: Workshop program

Day 1: Tuesday, June 24, 2025

Time	Activities	Responsibility
08:30-09:00	Arrival and Registration	Dereje/ Zemedkun
09:00-09:05	Welcoming Remarks	Dr Adefris, CIMMYT Country Rep
09:05-09:20	Workshop Agenda & Participants Introduction	Desalegn/ Birhan, CIMMYT
09:20-09:30	Opening Remarks	Dr Deborah J. Smith, DF Country Director
09:30-10:00	SCASI Overview: Progress and Key Achievements (2022-2024)	Sahle, CFGB
10:00-10:45	Sharing SCASI Experiences Across Regions: Insights from Implementing Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FHE• MSCFSO• TDA	Tajebe, FHE Yihenew, MSCFSO Tilahun, TDA
10:45-11:15	Coffee Break and Networking	
11:15-11:45	SCASI Action Research & Evidence Generation	Birhan, CIMMYT
11:45-12:30	External Evaluation Findings on SCASI's Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Quality, Impact, and Sustainability	DAB Consult
12:30-13:30	Lunch Break	
13:30-14:45	Key Findings from SCASI Endline Impact Assessment and their implications for scaling	Abdu/ Dr Moti, CIMMYT
14:45-15:30	Panel Discussion: Building Sustainable Local Systems for CASI Scaling	Panelists from MoA, regional BoAs, DF, and SCASI IPs
15:30-15:45	Coffee Break and Networking	
15:45-16:30	Thematic Breakout Sessions: Peer Learning and Challenge Identification	
16:30-16:45	Wrap-up Day 1	Desalegn/ Birhan

Day 2: Wednesday, 25 June 2025

Time	Activities	Responsibility
08:30-09:00	Arrival and Networking	
09:00-09:30	Recap of Day 1 and Plenary Feedback from Breakouts	Desalegn/ facilitators Group
09:30-10:00	SCASI Communication & Knowledge Management: Approach & Achievements	Desalegn, CIMMYT
10:00-10:45	Institutional Transition and Sustainability: Ensuring Lasting Impact	Edries, DF
10:45-11:15	Coffee Break & Networking	
11:15-12:30	Regional Breakout Session for Strategic Action Planning: July-December 2025	Group facilitators
12:30-13:30	Lunch Break	
13:30-14:30	Reflection Session for Strategic Action Planning	Group facilitators
14:30-15:15	Lessons from Climate Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD-I) project implementation in Western Ethiopia.	Dr Moti, CIMMYT
15:15-15:30	Coffee Break and Networking	
15:30-16:15	Plenary Session: Strengthening Partnerships and Shared Commitment	Edries/ Birhan/ Sahle
16:15-16:30	Workshop Wrap-up and Way Forwards	TBD

Annex 2: Lists of workshop participants

#	Name	Organization	E-mail	Mobile	Town/ City
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Annex 3: Breakout session Action Planning Template and Group Feedbacks

Guiding questions and a structured template to draft specific actions for the July-December 2025 roadmap.

- What are the enabling Conditions and Challenges for institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice?
 - What enabling conditions facilitate the institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice?
 - What challenges do we face in the process of institutionalizing and scaling of CASI practices and the way outs?
- What key institutions and platforms s for institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice?
 - Which key institutions and platforms are available for supporting the institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice?
 - How can these intuitions collaborate to enhance the effectiveness of CASI practice?
- What are the strategies for scaling and priority activities for wider scaling and adoption of the CASI practices Considering minimum cost options
 - What strategies can be implemented to effectively scale CASI practices?
 - What priority activities should we focus on to promote the wider adoption of CASI practice particularly considering minimum cost option?

Amhara (MSCFSO)	Benishangul Gumuz (FHE)	Oromia (FHE)	Southern Ethiopia (TDA)
Enabling conditions and challenges for institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice			
<i>Enabling conditions for institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing extension systems approach - Lead farmers /model farmer approach - Water shade approach - Existence of Social structures (ider, SHG, etc) - Existence CASI practiced woreda and Kebeles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enough farmland - Enough mulching materials (Savana grass) - Existing government extension system - Farmers interested to take and apply technology practice - The integration system b/n government and project - The assigned focal person in the woreda and regional level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organized cooperatives, SHG, Volunteer associations, model farmers for sustainability. - Public institutions; school, religious institutes, FTC and media - Government focals who are certified by Packard create soil fertility department in Agriculture, Research center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CA incorporated in national extension policy framework. - Existing government extension system - Existing positive evidence from research institutions on CASI. - Presence of potential institutions that can support in promoting CASI technologies (Universities, Soil laboratory, research

Amhara (MSCFSO)	Benishangul Gumuz (FHE)	Oromia (FHE)	Southern Ethiopia (TDA)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bureau of Agricultural Teams are well known about the benefits of CASI practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government startups for disseminating to other non-target areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> center and agriculture college). - Presence of trained DAs, agriculture experts, researchers and government officials.
Challenges for institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trained GOVs staff turnover - Provide additional training - Lack of knowledge and awareness among GOV leaders and experts - Organize CASI platforms and exposure visits - Limited resources (inputs) - Promote Green Manure/Cover Crops (GM/CC), organize VSLA groups, and strengthen market linkages <p>Lack of practice based on CASI guidelines - Conduct advocacy activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turnover the trained manpower and government leadership exchange time to time and no activity and data handover - Security impact on the accessibility of fuel and market inflation on different agricultural inputs - Low attention and ownership from some agricultural agents and experts - Not well equipped and furnished the farmers training centers (FTCs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government staff turnover; lack of task handover for new staffs - Agri sector lack committing resources for making CASI their routine. - Less intra department integration Within Agri sector for CASI effectiveness e.g. livestock can aggressively act on free grazing and fodder production and enable CA efficiency. - Lack of responsible CASI focal at all levels and with accountability system. - Lack of effective linkage of input providers with farmers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less sense of ownership from government. - Turnover of trained DAs, agriculture experts and government officials. - Lack of integrating CASI practices in implementation plan at regional, zonal and woreda level. - Shortage of agricultural inputs from government (seeds and fertilizers). - Continuous expectation of mobilization and other benefits by government stakeholders from the project (organization).
Key institutions and platforms for institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice			
Which key institutions and platforms are available for supporting the institutionalization and scaling of CASI practice?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agriculture offices - Cooperatives - Research institutions /universities, colleges - Social institutions ider, Different saving groups - Media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bureau of agriculture, Zonal and woreda agriculture office - Woreda administration office and women affairs office - Community leadership and agricultural agents - Lead farmers with followers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FTC, SHG, Cooperatives and volunteer associations - Existing wereda, Zonal and Regional platforms - ATI is effective in policy formation on CASI-pave way to institutionalize in the system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agriculture office (livestock, natural resource, crop production main departments) - Cooperative office - Research center - Agriculture college - Universities

Amhara (MSCFSO)	Benishangul Gumuz (FHE)	Oromia (FHE)	Southern Ethiopia (TDA)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assosa agriculture research, Assosa University, Assosa Collage of Agriculture - Self-help groups (SHG), aggregate groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Join any active CA mainstreamed projects - Fana FM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Input suppliers - SHGs/FFSs - CVM (commercial villages)
<i>How can these institutions collaborate to enhance the effectiveness of CASI practice?</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resources Access, - Action research's - Knowledge transfer - Experience sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through establishing market linkage - Promoting cluster farming in all kebeles with crop diversification - Promoting demo site at kebele and village level - Strengthen network b/n government and partners - Develop plan together - Jointly monitor and review the accomplished activities - Link the CASI practice with government extension package - Share best practices through experience sharing for communities, stakeholders and partners - By using media, disseminate different messages about CASI importance - By strengthen the extreme committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Running CASI stakeholder's forum for joint planning and action by defining their roles (technical committee and steering committee). - Building capacity of stakeholders. - Undertaking joint monitoring and evaluation. - Conducting review meetings with stakeholders.
Strategies for scaling and priority activities for wider scaling and adoption of the CASI practices			
<i>What strategies can be implemented to effectively scale CASI practices?</i>			



Amhara (MSCFSO)	Benishangul Gumuz (FHE)	Oromia (FHE)	Southern Ethiopia (TDA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closely work with relevant government bodies - Establish regional and zonal CASI forms - Strengthens local institutions - Engaging community leaders, influential farmers, model farmers participation in different CASI practices - Use different communication medias 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning -by-doing on-farm and demos on FTCs - By using media expand the CASI practice for neighbor woredas and kebeles - By using farmers to farmers experience share and CASI field day - By using Lead farmers with his/her followers - By empowering and engaging the lead female household on the implementation of the CASI practices - Through linked with research center - By encouraging communities to teach from neighbor farmer - Empowering government bodies to lead the SCASI agendas on different meetings and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen CASI in existing platforms - Inculcate CASI in Agri extension system as major initiative. - Strengthen system of CA inputs with potential sources. - Distribute CASI resources; training manuals and CASI message delivering objects. - Work with government communication sector to disseminate CASI - Influence administrative or higher officials for extending CASI assignments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using model farmers or lead farmers to share best practices to wider community. - Demonstration of CASI technologies in FTC, and other conducive premises (churches, schools) - Closely working with government stakeholders - Conducting CASI field days and experience exchange visits at all levels. - Building capacity of farmers on production plan (market-oriented production) – helps to create more farmers to increase their production by putting market concept in their mind and applying CASI practices
<p><i>What priority activities should we focus on to promote the wider adoption of CASI practice particularly considering minimum cost option?</i></p>			



Amhara (MSCFSO)	Benishangul Gumuz (FHE)	Oromia (FHE)	Southern Ethiopia (TDA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct TOT Training for stack holders - Conduct inclusive training for small-holder farmers - Provide exchange visit and experience sharing to experts and farmers - Farmers field day - Organized stack holder plat forums - Promote ISFM practices (GM/CC, vermin and Conventional composts) - Promote Animal fodder - Documentation - Scale up and scale out with institutionalized - More linkage with ATA, SLMP and GOVs as institutionalized purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share best practice on different meetings and training - Facilitate testimony of model farmers on different forum - We should focus on CASI field day and farmers to farmers training - Strengthen the existing SHG and lead farmers with followers - Promote media to disseminate about CASI with in the catchment kebeles, woredas and for neighbor community and woredas - Documentation data - Facilitate capacity building training for DAs and government experts - Introduce CASI technologies through experience share 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group based extension approach to ease of knowledge transfer and wider adoption of CASI practices. - Planning and implementing together with government key stakeholders to reach wider community by CASI practices. - Target screening (HHs, Youths, women, and PWDs). - Capacity building to farmers, DAs, agriculture experts and government stakeholders. - Organizing CASI field days at different levels. - Train farmers within project target areas and beyond by using DAs, agriculture experts and lead farmers.

Annex 4. Pictures taken during the workshop

