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| **Info-Tech** | **1) Agro-ecological zones and Definition** |
| **Community Nursery** | Agro-ecological zones: all agro-ecological zones.  Establishment and management of a nursery to produce and sell nursery products as a commercial venture. |
| **2) Objective** | |
| Opportunity to generate additional income for female and/or young community members, and to supply appropriate planting material to local soil and water conservation measures. | |
| **3) Suitability and Adaptability based upon Local Knowledge and Resources** | |
| Location must have access to sufficient water supply (irrigation or well, pond, etc.) to allow for year-round operations.  There is generally some knowledge about growing plants and trees in local communities. There is normally very little knowledge concerning commercial operations run by a collective (nursery association or cooperative). | |
| **4) Target Beneficiaries** | |
| User groups and cooperatives engaged in agro-forestry or rehabilitating lands. Can also be run as a commercial operation by an individual. | |
| **5) Yield and Market Demand** | |
| Indigenous and introduced fodder grasses & multipurpose trees are in demand by regional and woreda level government initiatives, as well as from projects and NGOs. The private market is not yet developed even though (agro-)pastoralists are often interested in highly productive fodder grasses.  With the expansion of water and soil conservation schemes such as Dry Valley Rehabilitation and Productive Use (DVRPU) and other measures requiring planting material, the market is bound to expand, creating interesting income sources for nursery groups. | |
| **6) Planning and Implementation Arrangements** | |
| Implementation phase for initial constructions: 2 - 3 months.   * Introduce the topic to potential nursery community-based organizations (CBO), done together by woreda experts and DAs, possibly including regional level, interesting for women and youth CBO; * Once a CBO is interested (free consent as primary requirement), discuss the basics of working together, including basics on benefit sharing and work allocation; * Assist in selection of site and assessment of feasibility (2 days): Secured access to water, road accessibility for transport of nursery products, flat land without signs of degradation; * Official designation as nursery site and handing over of user rights to the CBO by Woreda; * Community agreement on CBO or nursery association establishment. The CBO might be a part of a larger cooperative for the rehabilitation and management of land. Assist in any administrative requirements; * Assist in negotiating with supporting organisation access to tools and of the CBO contribution in kind and labour; * Assist in establishing CBO’s internal rules and regulations on work, management and financial modalities. It is crucial to achieve a clear understanding of rules & responsibilities by all members. (See separate Info-Techs on CBO and association establishment and management); * Assist in making plans for the nursery compound (design of plots and buildings, fences); * Training of CBO members on various tasks of nursery management, initial training for all members, once responsibilities are sorted out, more intensive training for each task. Never train less than 2 persons for any specific task. Includes technical, administrative (internal decision making processes, roles of chairperson and secretary) as well as commercial (treasurer, accounting, marketing) aspects. | |
| **7) Work Steps and Input Requirements** | |
| * Assist in contracting for nursery construction and building materials, as far as local skills, capacities and available materials are insufficient; * Assist in identifying potential buyers and their demand, specific species, varieties and nursery products; * Assist in acquiring suitable multiplication material (species, varieties, seeds, cuttings, etc.) as well as materials (plastic bags, tools, etc.); * Assist in creating a simple nursery: * Land clearing and fencing, layout of plots; * Construction of storehouse and, if necessary, office building, guard house; * Installation of water tanks or construction of water reservoir; * Pit excavation for compost production; * Assist in start-up of operations: * Refresher training on nursery management, tree seedling propagation, grass seed and cutting multiplication, and business skills. * CBO work plan, including nursery calendar (see separate Info-Techs for requirements of different species); * Seed collection/preparation; * Viability test for seeds (submerge seeds in water, good seeds sink, discard floating seeds) * Seed bed preparation; * Pot filling; * Seed sowing; * Mulching and shade preparation; * Continuous on-the-job training and coaching: technical, administrative, commercial; * Assist in developing a business plan before starting activity and revise once operations have stabilized (with expert input); * Cost for store and guardhouse, fence, installation of water tanks, tools (pickaxe, hoe, shovel, spade, wheelbarrow, knife, pruning shears, sickle, watering hose, watering can, measuring tape, soil sieve, etc.) and other nursery materials (soil, sand, animal manure, polytube, mulching grass, seeds, planting material, local material for shade, compost, etc.: 100,000 – 150,000 ETB first investment costs. | |
| **8) Risks, Constraints and Limitations** | |
| * Relatively high establishment costs (external donors and repayment modalities need to be fixed). * Initial motivation might wane when the work becomes tedious and results are not easily visible yet. * Insecure supply of operational inputs (electricity, fuel) may cause delays and damage. * First markets and timelines need to be known before starting. | |