“Learning from the Root”
Creating a Better Environment for Life

“Learning from the Root” Programme in Kembatta Tembaro Woreda

The Cultural Biodiversity Project is one of several which ISD has been implementing since its establishment. One of the organization’s objectives is to combine modern learning and knowledge with traditional/cultural knowledge so that students are familiarized with both, thus ensuring that the latter is not forgotten. It is also important to ensure that traditional/cultural knowledge is passed on from father to son through programmes aimed at promoting continuity. The Cultural Biodiversity Project is contributing to ensuring this. Over the years the project has been undertaken in coordination with environmental protection clubs in 25 schools in all regions.

In this regard one major activity warranting special attention encourages students, in addition to their academic studies, to obtain traditional/cultural knowledge from various local communities. This would help ensure that long held traditional/cultural beliefs are passed on from generation to generation.

The project involves placing students from various areas of the countries in selected families who know to possess valuable traditional/cultural knowledge. The students would spend several days living with and acting as members of the families while learning about the culture and traditions of the respective communities. In April 2022, under the “Learning from the Root” Programme, teachers and students from environmental protection clubs in 6 schools around the country traveled to Azedebo kebele in Kembatta and Tembaro Woreda in the Southern Regions. They arrived in Durame, the main town and were received by members of the school community and environmental clubs in 25 schools in all regions. In the evenings, the general discussion took place in which the teachers and students undertook all tasks performed by the farmers. In the evenings students were also familiarized with the names of various types of traditional herbs and medicines used by the community.

At the conclusion of the programme the host families handed over the students to Durame Secondary School during a final ceremony held in the school. A general discussion took place in which the teachers and students commented on their experiences living with the families and the knowledge they had gained. The host families also commented and shared their thoughts and ideas on the whole exercise.