The leather and leather products industry has multiple linkages to the wider rural economy. It is also highly labour-intensive in its raw material sourcing, transportation, processing and marketing phases. The industry thus possesses enormous potential to create much needed non-agricultural employment and looks set to play an important role in poverty reduction.

Sesame is the second most important agricultural commodity in foreign exchange earnings for Ethiopia, after coffee. However, sesame production in most areas is carried out under traditional production systems associated with low production and productivity levels.

**PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS**

1. Build stakeholders’ capacity with regard to technical knowledge, value addition and use of modern technology
2. Strengthen marketing systems for both the leather and sesame sectors
3. Improve access to finance
4. Develop the provision of reliable and timely market information to value chain actors
5. Improved supply chain coordination
6. Improve infrastructure including electricity supply and transportation
7. Improve service delivery (create a one-stop shop window for government services to producers)