



CRS Ethiopia

Agriculture and Livelihoods

Overview

The majority of Ethiopians are subsistence farmers trying to support an average family of five people on less than two acres. Even in good years, the most vulnerable families can only produce enough food to cover their needs for six months or less. To survive the rest of the year and during poor rains, they are forced to sell precious assets, including tools, livestock and even wood from their house frames. Seed shortages compound the problem, as do high rates of malnutrition and disease that reduce farmers' productivity.



To help families grow more food and avoid destitution, CRS Ethiopia supports projects that increase agricultural productivity, enable poor farmers to better access markets and foster alternative income sources. CRS also supports savings and lending projects to help poor families increase their financial assets and expand business opportunities, aiming to eventually lead communities out of poverty.

Improved crop varieties, agricultural training and better market access help farmers increase earnings.

Fiscal Year 2007 Sector Details

Total Budget: \$4,740,246

Number of Supported Projects: 9

Number of Direct Participants: 59,389

Number of Indirect Participants: 292,215

Primary Funding Sources:



United States Agency for International Development/Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance



United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Activities



Foods Resource Bank



Nike Foundation



CRS private funds

“Our livelihoods depend on crop production. This project advised us on when to plant, the amount of seed to use, the type to use, weeding and even how to save the income. Now productivity has increased, in some cases to 20 quintals. It is not only the direct financial support but also the technical advice that is changing our lives.”

**Ato Demise Tsegaye, Chairperson
Gemechu Seed Grower Group
Alem Tena, Meki**

Giving Hope to a World of Need

CRS Ethiopia Agriculture & Livelihoods Projects

INTEGRATED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

CRS Ethiopia is implementing five privately-funded projects that provide integrated services within a watershed area. Activities include soil and water conservation, improved livestock management, water source construction, sanitation, health education, income generation support, and agriculture and home garden support. By providing seeds, seedlings, livestock, irrigation schemes, grazing management support and technical training, CRS is helping these communities to improve their food production and increase incomes. CRS is also introducing agro-enterprise activities to enable farmers to access markets and sell high-value crops by improving crop selection, yields and selling decisions.

OFDA AGRICULTURAL AND RECOVERY PROJECT

To mitigate the impact of recurrent drought on people who chronically fail to have enough food, OFDA is funding a project aimed at increasing household assets and resiliency. In fiscal year 2008, this project will target 22,600 families in the Oromia region. Activities will include irrigation schemes; agro-enterprise initiatives; and seed, tool and livestock fairs. The innovative one-day fairs enable those most in need to select new assets of their choice using free coupons that the selected vendors redeem from CRS partners, further boosting the local economy.

NIKE FOUNDATION GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

The Nike Foundation is funding a project aimed at empowering girls in two targeted rural areas. Activities include encouragement of school attendance, vocational training, water schemes and agricultural activities to help young women gain the skills and opportunities they need for a positive future. Agricultural components include small-scale irrigation to support crop production, home gardening support and provision of small ruminants such as goats to help participants increase food availability and incomes.

NAVY BEAN SEED SUPPORT PROJECT

With funding from the Foods Resource Bank, CRS, in partnership with the Alem Tena Catholic Church, has organized four seed-growing groups that are producing improved navy bean seeds, for which there is a shortage in Ethiopia. These groups sell the seeds to an Ethiopian seed company that then sells the product to producers of exported grains. The farmers also use the seeds to produce higher quality beans they can sell at higher prices. In addition, the project helps organize farmers into cooperatives or groups to let them obtain small loans to support crop production, store crops to sell when prices are high and join forces for collective bargaining.



Photo by Debbie Dell'ore/CRS

Increased incomes from better crops let farmers afford cell phones for improved market linkages.

SUPPORT TO PRODUCTIVE SAFETY NET PROGRAM

The Government of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program provides food to almost 7.2 million people through food-for-work public works activities. The aim is to help people exit the cycle of chronic food insecurity by increasing assets. With USAID funds, CRS Ethiopia is delivering food to 168,696 people in six districts and is providing related support services to 87,260 people. Support services include seed and livestock fairs, agro-enterprise outreach, home garden support, livelihood diversification and more.

About CRS

Catholic Relief Services is the official international relief and development agency of the U.S. Catholic community. Founded in 1943, CRS' mission is to help the poor and vulnerable overseas without regard to race, religion or nationality. CRS works in nearly 100 countries and territories around the world, touching the lives of 80 million people.



Catholic Relief Services, Ethiopia Country Program

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