Our Impact
ETHIOPIA
Foreword
Dr Wolde Tadesse,
Visiting scholar, African Studies Centre, University of Oxford

Send a Cow’s Developing Farmers towards Food and Income Security programme (DeFar) is a remarkable example of the kind of returns that can be obtained as a result of intensive tending of landscape and household plots, combined with the nurturing of people’s skills, family relations, and community bonds.

As our recent evaluation of the programme found, in a short space of time, the health and wellbeing of households can be improved through the introduction of basic training in nutrition and personal hygiene. Poverty levels can be reduced and stabilised through the implementation of saving and loan systems, appropriate income generating activities, and introduction of cash crops.

The programme also addresses the attitudes, traditions, division of labour, and entrenched systems that have at times fostered the lower status of women and led to unequal access to resources. Peer to peer support, household level dialogue and analysis, and demonstrations of success are effective here.

Through intensification of resource management, Send a Cow’s DeFar programme is improving smallholder agro-ecological farming systems. Families become able to maintain the balance between ensuring enough food for their families, and creating a surplus for market sales and cash.

As a model for the implementation of intensive smallholder agro-ecological systems, the DeFar programme could do much to contribute to the development of a coherent and coordinated approach to achieve scale up in environments such as southern Ethiopia. We encourage the Ethiopian Government, the UK’s Department for International Development, and the NGO sector to learn from these findings, and create opportunities for sharing of further lessons and research.

Our Vision:
A confident and thriving rural Africa

Our Mission:
To give communities and families the hope and the means to secure their own futures from the land
Executive summary

Aklilu Dogisso, Country Director, Send a Cow Ethiopia

Rural Ethiopia is a place of hope and potential. It is full of untapped resources: people, land, and livestock. And Send a Cow’s work is helping bring those together to revitalise families, communities and the environment.

This report is based largely around data from our three-year programme in the southern highlands of Ethiopia, funded by UK Aid and donations from the British public. It also includes commentary from a highly positive evaluation of this programme by the African Studies Centre at Oxford University.

The report demonstrates that:

1. **Farmers are breaking free from a culture of dependency and despair** brought about by poverty, lack of education, and a culture of handouts from aid agencies that stems from the famines of the 1980s. They are changing their attitudes and increasing their self-esteem. **Within just one year of a three-year project, their confidence that they can provide for their families from their farms rises from 1% to 76%**.

2. **Our programmes are low input but high achieving.** Our greatest investment is time. Seeds, tools and small livestock are the only purchased inputs, meaning our work is highly cost-effective at around £30 per person per year and generates more additional income for farmers than the cost of the project (see p18). Rather, our focus is on helping families recognise the resources they already have: land, livestock, and their own capacities. They discover they can increase their family income and nutrition through vegetable gardening alone. **Within just one year of a three-year project, the percentage of people rated as severely food insecure drops from 70% to 9%. Within three years, their incomes rise four-fold**.

3. **Our approach is simple, innovative, and relevant.** Smallholders can implement the techniques we teach however small their plot sizes. Average landholdings are less than 0.5 hectares – yet farmers are able to intensify production while protecting, rather than damaging, the environment. **Nobody is practising soil conservation techniques before our project. After one year, 93% are doing so**.

4. **Our work is easy to replicate.** As neighbours witness the success of farmers supported by Send a Cow, they ask for skills and advice. Our work can be copied throughout the community – strengthening bonds, and increasing resilience. It can be adapted for use in other areas, and by other agencies. **Farmers pass on their skills to at least five other families**.

These excellent findings validate our approach – and highlight areas for further improvement – just as Send a Cow embarks upon a major programme of expansion and change. Our new five-year strategy, Enterprising Africa, is to treble our core programme size and be working with one million people in the year 2020. In Ethiopia, we want to be in the top five charities in the country. And I am delighted to say that Send a Cow Ethiopia has just been awarded another major UK Aid grant (see p18).

For we want rural Ethiopia to be a place where all people, no matter what their background, can live and thrive. We want communities to adapt to the effects of climate change. We want to end the desperate migration to urban areas and beyond that tears so many families apart.

My most heartfelt thanks go to my excellent team (some of whom are introduced in this report), to our funders, partners, colleagues, and of course to the many volunteers and farmers who are striving to realise our vision of a confident and thriving rural Africa. Blessings to you all.
Hope and skills

Hope is the first building block of Send a Cow’s work. Without belief in a better future, farmers cannot invest the time and energy needed to make our work a success.

Yet, as this data shows, at first almost nobody believes they can provide for their families from their farms. They have been existing hand-to-mouth for too long. They think their land too small, the soil too poor quality, their livestock too low yielding. They believe they lack education and capacity, and that any change in their situations can only come from outside.

Our first job is to show people that they already have what they will need: land, livestock, learning capacity, family and friends. Then we show them, through training in social development and practical agricultural skills, how to optimise those resources. Where necessary, we provide a few extras: seeds, tools, and small livestock.

Farmers put many of these skills into practice straight away, transforming how they manage their farms. They shelter, feed and care for their animals correctly, boosting their productivity. They compost the manure and use it to boost soil fertility.

As this one-year data shows, the rate of change is rapid in some areas. In fact, farmers far exceed some of our targets: 82% of farmers are growing vegetables for their families in their first year, against our expectation of 25%.

As a result, confidence levels completely turn around. Within just one year, three-quarters of people now believe they can provide for their families from their farms. That puts them on a firm footing for the remaining two years of the programme – and well beyond.

“It was clear that both the system of delivery (intense participatory and practical based) and the skills imparted were relevant, appropriate to the context and ability levels of the farmers, and well received.”

Oxford evaluation
Hope and skills

Sustainable farming techniques after one year

See also three year data on pages 5-6

“Look at these vegetables, they are just starting to grow above the ground – but they are giving me hope to live more, and to plan the future. I am busy as well and have no time to worry as I used to.”

Gezete Gebo, farmer, Gamo Gofa

Improved animal management techniques after one year

Most farmers already own livestock, share livestock with their neighbours, or at the very least can collect manure from common grazing grounds. We show them how to improve the welfare and productivity of their animals, regardless of source, and integrate livestock and crops into a sustainable farming system. See also pages 5-6

People who are confident that they can provide enough food and income from their farm after one year

Source: SAMIL
Natural resource management

As people grow in confidence in their power to change their lives, they can start to plan their farms. They build on the skills they have already learned (see previous page), and broaden their range.

We help them identify all their natural resources, and envision how their thriving family farm will look. We also explain the importance of thinking wider than their own farm or the next harvest, and taking into account their environment and the need to protect their resources for their children’s future.

Farmers learn the principles and techniques they need to boost their soil fertility; limit soil erosion; conserve and harvest water; and integrate trees into the farm. These techniques can be adapted to their differing environments: much of the land in the region is steeply sloping.

Above all, we show families how to farm crops and animals to mutual benefit. Manure is especially important, and most people can access it – either from their own local cows, or from other people’s that they tend. Those farmers who lack animals may be given small livestock. Their intensive training in animal management not only increases livestock and crop production, but also the wellbeing of the animals.

The Oxford evaluation and recent research published in our Building Resilience report gave a positive assessment to our work on environmental issues, but cautioned against a too narrow focus on the homestead. They recommend further planning and sharing of lessons with partner agencies and authorities on wider water and environmental issues.

Sanitation after one year

Improved animal management techniques after three years

Sustainable farming techniques after three years
Farm resource mapping

Firehiwot Tesfaye,
Natural Resource Management Trainer

To deepen farmers’ understanding of their natural resources, we invite them to draw maps of their farms. Then together, we analyse what they have, and how they can use it better.

Husbands and wives may draw very different maps of the same farm; combining them gives the bigger picture. We also consider neighbours’ maps, as some resources such as water boreholes are shared.

The maps help them analyse the following:

Farm efficiency: Farmers draw links to show how one resource benefits or depends on another. Could there be more links – could water be better used, perhaps?

Gaps: Is there any farm activity that needs more input – or are there any inputs currently coming in from outside which could instead be found on the farm? For example, fertiliser could be replaced by manure.

Farm in and out flows: What is coming into the farm from outside – and what is leaving? And at what times of year? This helps farmers then work out the profit or loss they are making for different products.

Activities: Who does the labour on the farm? How is this divided between men and women, girls and boys?

Farmers may also draw maps of how they would like their farms to look. By drawing farm resource maps at the beginning, midway and end points of our projects, people can monitor their progress towards their ideal family farm.
Women

To build a successful farm, a poor family needs to recognise and draw on all the resources it has. Perhaps the most undervalued and overlooked of these are the women of the household.

Women and girls in Ethiopia lack education, status, and autonomy. They have higher workloads and poorer diets, leading to health problems. The country ranks 129 out of 136 on the UN’s gender index.

Yet historically, women in the highlands used to hold positions of leadership. Nowadays, their role is changing again, with some even migrating to urban areas to seek work. And Ethiopia is introducing laws to address inequalities.

Our work places a special focus on women, helping them recognise their potential, as well as the barriers and opportunities that they face. Many staff are female, providing strong role models. As women farmers’ confidence and skills increase, so too does their capacity to feed their family and earn an income. That boosts their status.

And it also leads to a happier home life for everyone. “During the conversations with family members it was interesting to see the apparent intimacy and closeness between married couples,” noted evaluators from Oxford University. “During requests for photographs they spontaneously stood together, often the husband gently pulling his wife or mother towards him and handling small children with ease and intimacy.”

With a comforting and supportive family life, women, men, girls and boys gain the courage and impetus to reach out, play a part in community affairs, and strive further.

“Before this process I did not really know what a ‘wife’ was beyond working and rearing children, after this love grew between us, and now we share and discuss everything about our lives and our children.” Farmer, quoted in Oxford Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of women participating in decision-making over livestock</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision to sell livestock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEFAR

7

78% 76% 86% 96% 76% 85%

Baseline 2012 2013 2014 Impact 2015

85% 94% 98% 92% 76%

© DEFAR

86% 67% 94% 98% 96%
Both household members and community volunteers expressed appreciation of the Transformative Household Methodologies that were being used by project staff to initiate household discussions and analysis on divisions of labour and power differentiation. All attributed their changed attitudes to these discussions and ‘eye opening’ methodology. In many of the homesteads children, youth, men and women were seen doing a variety of tasks in and around the household. In one instance two women were seen working with a man ploughing a field.”

Oxford Evaluation

It’s vital that families can identify for themselves how men, women, girls and boys can work together to build a thriving family. That’s where our Transformative Household Methodology (THM) tool has proven so effective.

Send a Cow developed THM from the Harvard Gender Analytical Tool and various Participatory Rural Appraisal tools. But whereas these work for groups and communities, THM places the focus firmly on the family – the heart of our work.

It’s simple: facilitators invite all members of a family to place stones in a grid of sticks to illustrate who currently does which household tasks; who has control over which resources; and who makes decisions.

The results can be a revelation. Many men had never considered how hard their wives worked; and many women had never presumed to choose how to spend money, or how to educate their children. But as they discuss these issues, they realise it would be to the whole family’s benefit to share everything more equally. They draw up an action plan for change.

It’s not easy. Men report ridicule from neighbours who see them fetching firewood or caring for children – doing ‘women’s work’. But with women freed up to contribute to farming enterprises, families prosper – and become role models in the community.

We are keen to share the lessons wider. THM is cost-effective, illiterate friendly, easy to understand – and therefore scaleable. With support from the International Fund for Agricultural Development, we’ve trained staff from Government and other NGOs, as well as our own peer farmers, to become facilitators.

www.sendacow.org/thm
Food

Ethiopia has long been a byword for famine. The Wolayita region was affected by crises in 2003 and 2008. Farmers’ poverty renders them vulnerable. Many start our projects by regarding hunger as an inescapable fact of life.

Yet, as the Oxford evaluation team states, the southern region where most our work is situated has the potential to be the ‘Market Garden of the Horn of Africa’.

Change in our projects is rapid: within less than one year, people’s food security is rising significantly. By the end of the project, the number of ‘hungry months’ between harvests is reducing, and fewer people are affected by them at all.

People are also eating better: within two years, their diets are diverse even in the hungry months. Our training covers nutrition, and the importance of a good diet for growing children and pregnant women. As people eat better, their health is boosted.

With food for the family secured, families can sell the surplus. Indeed, the Oxford evaluation states there is a distinct possibility that farms in this region could soon be exporting produce; a far cry from the days when they were reliant on international food aid.
"When the project started, we children laughed when dad said that we could get a harvest from our empty backyard. But after we consumed the first harvest, we started to believe he was serious." Admas Hogoga, 14
Income

Ethiopia remains one of the world’s very poorest countries, despite recent rapid economic growth. And the farmers we support are among the very poorest people in Ethiopia. Many people are forced to migrate to towns or further afield to seek work.

Yet within three years, farmers in our highlands projects have increased their incomes on average four-fold. They can not only meet their families’ basic needs, such as healthcare and education, but also invest in their farms and put savings by.

Furthermore, farmers have now diversified their incomes, earning money from on-farm and off-farm sources. The money they earn will go further, as they receive training in how to manage it better. They can access government microcredit schemes. They are increasing their resilience to shocks such as drought, illness, or market volatility.

As the Ethiopian economy grows, we want smallholder farmers to be better placed to adapt and benefit. For example, the Oxford evaluation team noted that road building schemes are opening up new markets to farmers in the area. They recommended further study into how farmers can increase their market literacy – an area of work that will be strengthened in our new strategy.

The Oxford team also highlighted that market places in the region are important not only economically, but also socially, spiritually, and culturally. “Entering the market” is considered a blessing. It is one that farmers in our projects can now more fully enjoy.

“We had a little spring in our backyard that we used for washing. We had never thought of using the water to grow vegetables. Now our eyes are opened. Currently there is no rain but look at our garden – it is amazing! We produced different vegetables for consumption but we have also sold some for 1,500 Birr [£46] which was big money for us. I couldn’t get that much money even if I sold my whole backyard.”

Ketele Kata, farmer, Gamo Gola

“We are happy to be together”

“Before Send a Cow our life was not a good life. It has changed so much. Before the project, I was in eastern Ethiopia working. I left my family here at home. We are now happy to be together.

“We got training from Send a Cow on different vegetables we could grow and on how best to arrange our farm. Before, we used to harvest once a year. Now we harvest three times a year – during the dry season, we fetch water to help the vegetables grow. We consume our own vegetables, and our four children are healthier.

“We were living in a poor house, but now we have money from the sale of vegetables and eggs, we have been able to build a new one.

“Before, we had no money for clothes, coffee ceremonies, no ox to plough our land. From the sale of vegetables we buy clothes, educate our children, and use money for social purposes and celebrations.

“I received 13 chickens and three apple trees. We were able to buy an ox for 1,400 Birr (£44). Now I can sell that ox for 4,000 Birr (£125) – it has been a good investment.”

Dureto Toga and Aberash Haile, 20s, Wolayita
Vegetable growing shows the biggest percentage increase. High value cash crops – spices etc – also rise significantly.

The income earned from selling labour has risen slightly – yet further data (not depicted here) shows that far fewer people are doing this. This suggests a) that more people are choosing to invest their time on their own farms rather than other people’s; and b) that those who are selling their labour are now doing skilled, better paid, work.
Assets, homes and savings

Once farmers have food for their families, they can sell the surplus. Then they can decide how to spend their money.

Shelter is a top priority. Within just one year, there is a huge rise in the number of homes in good condition: 60% of those in the SAMIL project describe their floors as in good condition, against 3% before.

Also within that first year, people increase their household assets. Some new acquisitions, such as fuel saving stoves and household wells, are integral parts of our programme. Others represent choices that farming families are now able to make to improve their quality of life, their health, and their earning power: such as mobile phones, bicycles, and mosquito nets.

Many also invest in new livestock: both their own, and shared with neighbours.

More gradually, people start to save money more wisely, shifting their funds away from traditional community systems such as Edir (burial societies) and Ekub (financial cooperatives), and towards more formal systems. They do choose one community system: the new schemes run by their own self-help groups. This indicates a great deal of trust in fellow members.

As well as improving daily life, this increase in assets and savings boosts farmers’ economic resilience. In times of shock, they will have an asset base they can sell, or savings they can draw upon. That helps protect them against the famines for which Ethiopia became renowned in the 1980s, as well as the stresses of climate change that are likely to increase in frequency in coming years.

“As a poor widow I was nothing; even my son rejected me... Now people come to me for advice and even money. I have many suitors who are suddenly interested in me and see me as a strong woman. I am strong, but I am stronger by myself, I want to live in my own home and take care of my own children.”

Farmer, quoted in Oxford evaluation.
"It can be said in terms of evidence of individual members being able to rapidly raise their income levels and being able to pay for other inputs such as education services, building/improving their homes, investing in additional livestock etc, that the programme has achieved its aims and as long as it continues, more and more of the programme participants will be benefiting from the mechanisms and inputs already put in place."

Oxford evaluation

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Source: SAMIL

**Savings & Credit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: DEFAR</th>
<th>Baseline 2012</th>
<th>IMPACT 2015</th>
<th>Share from formal sources</th>
<th>Share from informal sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEFAR Self-help group</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government microcredit institute</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bank</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edir</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekub</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>-35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbours/family</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-49%</td>
<td>-45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO/private microcredit institute</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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</table>

Amounts in Ethiopian Birr
Community and innovation

For all of us, and especially poor, vulnerable and marginalised people, our communities are one of our most vital potential resources. Our work is delivered by local staff, peer farmer trainers, and community facilitators; people who really understand the relationships in a given area.

We work with people in self-help groups comprising about 20 households. We strengthen their capacities to support one another practically and emotionally. In times of crisis, they provide a safety net. Recent research across all the countries where we work showed that 41% of groups bounced back from crises, and 55% actually emerge stronger (Building Resilience, © Send a Cow 2015).

We encourage women in particular to take on leadership roles in their groups, where they learn how to speak up and make decisions.

As people’s confidence rises, so does their social status. Farmers who were once poor and marginalised start to enjoy life in their wider community. They can afford to socialise and receive guests, and they have the self-belief necessary to speak up.

Importantly, they also share their skills with neighbours. This ‘pass-on principle’ is an integral part of our ethos. The Oxford evaluation suggested that the simplicity of our techniques, plus the obvious returns they bring, mean that community members will continue to share and adopt them, albeit at a slower pace, after the end of our programmes.

The Oxford evaluation also recommended we strengthen the community element of our work. This will happen in the next phase of the project (see p18) and is a key element of Send a Cow’s five-year strategy (see p2). We want to create communities which are cohesive, dynamic, and empowered to sustain and progress our work after each project ends. We want to build communities where everyone is working together in happier, healthier and more productive environments.

Farmers sharing skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boreda</th>
<th>East Shewa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11% of the kebele [community] are farmers supported by Send a Cow</td>
<td>37% of the kebele [community] are farmers supported by Send a Cow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each family trained at least five people

46% were copy farmers

92% were copy farmers

This small survey, conducted in May 2015, suggests that in some areas it will be possible to reach the majority of community members through our work. They gain knowledge especially in the areas of health and hygiene; nutrition and food security; and income generation. Full details are at www.sendacow.org/ethiopia.

“I believe all the Kebele residents will eventually copy these sustainable agricultural practices introduced by Send a Cow. We will extend all the necessary support, to our capacity, to spread such wonderful work to the rest of our community.”

Alaho Andarge, Kebele manager, Gamo Gofa zone
Gemma Porter, Programme Coordinator for Ethiopia

We are always looking for ways to enhance our programmes, reach new communities, and adapt to changing situations. Farmers too, once their confidence has been boosted and they know the principles of sustainable agriculture, may try out something new. Here are just a few innovations from across our Ethiopia programme:

**Keyhole and Kotoba gardens.** Keyhole gardens – raised, circular vegetable gardens around a central composting basket – are a highly visible feature of our programmes across all the countries where we work. See photo on p7. Farmers in the Kotoba region adapted the method, making rows of these gardens and filling in the space between. They became known as Kotoba gardens.

**Taro flour marketing.** This root crop, abundant in the highlands and also known as the coco yam, has a short shelf life and a low price at market. We have helped set up four cooperatives of 220 farmers to add value by turning their taro harvests into flour. This has an 18 month shelf life, so can be stored and sold when the price is higher. We are currently evaluating this pilot, and will publish the results at [www.sendacow.org/our-impact](http://www.sendacow.org/our-impact). See photo below.

**Schools clubs.** As Ethiopia has a young population, we want to expand our work with children and youth. The Defar project includes schools clubs, where entire classes learn about social development issues and sustainable agriculture, and set up their own schools gardens. They then take these lessons home, encouraging their families to try out the methods.

“[Send a Cow’s] focus on appropriate technologies, good land and animal husbandry at the household level, and group solidarity, have resulted in high levels of adoption and use of a range of technologies that have a positive impact on climate resilience by Send a Cow group members, as well as some wider adoption through copy farmers and passing on the gift.”

Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich, quoted in Building Resilience © Send a Cow 2015
Cost-effectiveness and return on investment

Our low-input (but training and support intensive) approach means that our DeFar programme costs just £30 per person per year.

Assuming an average of six people per family, that means it costs just £540 to help a family get out of poverty in the long term sustainably.

We also calculate that the additional income earned by farmers in this project (ie the amount above what they would have earned without our support), set against our costs, means that the project pays for itself twice over by its final year.

Our calculations are conservative. They assume that without our work, these farmers’ incomes would have increased by 10% year on year; a generous estimate.

They also do not take into account the benefits to copy farmers; nor the savings and benefits for farmers, the government and wider society in areas such as: healthcare due to improved nutrition; greater equality of men and women and equal opportunities for girls and boys; and the environmental benefits of agroforestry and soil conservation, amongst others.

Learning from Ethiopia

David Bragg, founding farmer and former Programme Coordinator

Ethiopia has been a great place to learn some tough lessons. As I retire as programme coordinator, and hand over the reins to Gemma Porter, here are just a few:

1. **Cow are not always the answer.** Send a Cow, as its name suggests, began when a group of UK dairy farmers – myself included – sent cows to Uganda in 1988. Shortly afterwards, we funded a small cattle breeding scheme in the highlands of Ethiopia. Then, in the late 1990s, we worked with the Kale Hiwot Church in setting up Fruit and Livestock centres. But the few dairy cows we placed were unproductive, and even crossbreeds need more land than many farmers in Ethiopia have. Plus, most farmers already own local livestock or can get manure from communal grazing land. So while dairy cow programmes work in much of Uganda, we have adapted our approach in Ethiopia. We’re moving towards programmes where we place only smaller livestock or even none at all. Instead, our focus is on training in integrated animal management, and on sustainable agriculture.

2. **We have to bring our work to people’s fields.** Our Fruit and Livestock centres trained many people. But not enough women – their menfolk would not allow them to attend. So now we have moved training away from centres and onto farmers’ fields, through FOMDALS – Farmer Owned and Managed Demonstration And Learning Sites. Now women are involved, and the lessons feel more practical and relevant to all farmers.

3. **It’s good to talk with partners.** We bring together all our stakeholders – government, farmers, NGO partners and staff – on Annual Review Meetings to discuss different elements of our work. It’s been vital for everyone’s learning process, for example to overcome any resistance to the idea of a programme without cows.

4. **Great teams are essential.** Our programmes in Ethiopia were launched with Tamene Hailegiorgis at the helm – he now heads our valued partner in Kotoba, the Alliance of Knowledge and Action for Sustainable Livelihood Management Association (AKAM). At the same time, Tizita Abate brought us essential gender and social development knowledge. In 2006, when we formally established Send a Cow Ethiopia, Aklilu Dogisso became country director, and heads a great team with a learning outlook.

I have loved being Ethiopia programme coordinator. The excitement generated in communities by simple yet replicable things is incredible. They’ve lit the community up. The challenges we have faced have changed my way of thinking in so many ways. I know our staff will always to be ready to support farmers in answering the difficult questions.

May God bless you all.
Afterword

Kinde Tesfome,
Ethiopia Programme Manager

Our work in the southern highlands does not stop here.

Firstly, the people and communities we have already supported now have the self-belief, skills, experience and support to develop further. Their children will get the formal education their parents were denied, and can build their own futures.

And secondly, I am delighted to say that we will be expanding and enhancing this programme to reach more than 200,000 people thanks to a further generous grant from UK Aid and the British people.

Our major three-year Planting Hope project will operate in the same area. We will continue to work with families in self-help groups, providing them with new skills. There will be little livestock placement. Some 5,870 poor and marginalised families will be given new hope in this way.

But we have learned from our many years of experience, and taken on board lessons from evaluations of our work. So our new programme will strengthen these key elements:

Community. We will build on our existing pass-on principle and peer farmer system, to teach people throughout the community new skills. Our target is to reach a further 29,350 families.

Youth. We will work with youth groups to help them set up small businesses and reach new markets. In this way, we hope to stem migration to urban areas or other countries, and inject new hope and vigour into rural communities.

Water. We will bring together local government and community members to cap two springs to ensure safe access to clean water. We will help farmers dig wells on their own land.

Planting Hope is being funded by the UK Aid Match scheme. This means that all donations from the UK public between 1 October and 31 December 2015 will be matched by the British Government. As such, we are planning to publicise the programme widely.

Just as farmers in our projects change their mindsets, I hope people in the UK will too. Aid can make a difference in Ethiopia. Your donations can kickstart rapid, lasting change, helping people build their resilience to challenges such as droughts. Thank you.

“...The evaluators were cognisant of the low cost low funded nature of this project and were impressed with its ability to achieve such high returns for group members in a relatively short space of time.” Oxford evaluation, 2015
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