



SUCCESS STORY

Somalia's New Agribusiness Incubation Center Offers Practical Training to Farmers, New Opportunities for Traders

USAID's Partnership for Economic Growth



"I have benefited from the center especially from the practical knowledge I have acquired on good agriculture practices. Now I know how to increase my yield per unit area." Faduma Nuur, PEG female lead farmer, Balbaley village



"The technical packages of fodder production and preservation have opened a gate aimed at ending livestock starvation in famine and drought years," - Member of the ABA Farmers Association

For more information, please contact:

Marybeth McKeever: mckeever@usaid.gov

U.S. Agency for International Development
www.usaid.gov

It is harvest time in the Shabelle Region of Somalia and Faduma Nur is smiling. Her demonstration plot and maize harvest have been rated excellent by the agricultural extension workers that have been trained at the new Agribusiness Incubation Center in Afgoi. Previously, her harvests were very poor. Her fields are on bush fallow lands and she was not aware of good agriculture practices until her recent training.

Beginning in the 2014 growing season, USAID started investing in economic growth in South Central Somalia. Working through its local partner, the Somali Agricultural Technical Group, USAID's Partnership for Economic Growth (PEG) activity has established three demonstration plots in Afgoi, Awdheegle, and Bal'ad to showcase best practices in agronomy for local horticulture, maize, legume, and fodder varieties. During the first season (March-August 2014), Faduma Nuur along with 200 lead farmers along the Shabelle River were trained on proven agriculture practices including spacing, fertilizer and manure use, and pest control. Each lead farmer's plot now acts as a demo field for 20 contact farmers reaching up to 4,000 farm households – an estimated 24,000 beneficiaries.

A local NGO, Women in Action Against Malnutrition, is playing a co-facilitator role by encouraging lead and contact women farmers to join.

"Are we in Minnesota? I did not know we could grow maize so high in Somalia!" quoted the Somali Minister of Agriculture when he recently visited the Center during harvest time. Maize stalk is valuable to the Somali community as it is used as fodder for the animals. The lead farmers in Awdheegle are particularly happy about the maize harvest this season as they have seen some of the highest yields on record.

Yields for horticulture farmers in PEG's 2011-2013 demo activity in Somaliland increased by 100% to 500% for top-performing seed varieties. The PEG agriculture team expects similar results in the Shabelle Region. Local partners host market days that bring agro-input suppliers, neighboring farmers, traders, Ministry extension staff, and local university agronomy students together during harvest time to witness on-farm yield improvements and build market linkages.

During the recent harvest in August 2014, varieties of cabbage, eggplant, green pepper, and salad greens piqued the interest of major traders from Mogadishu since these vegetables have not been produced in tradable quantities since the civil unrest. PEG is facilitating the establishment of these market linkages.