

Press Release



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USAID LAUNCHES ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, March 18, 2015 – The U.S. Government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) today launched two activities to enhance resilience to climate change shocks and stresses reaching over 200 communities and one million people in Bale and Hararghe zones of Oromia Region. International development community experts and colleagues joined with representatives from the governments of Ethiopia and the United States at the launch ceremony.

Ethiopia is facing a greater frequency and intensity of disasters due to long-term natural and human effects exacerbated by climate change. Of the top ten disasters in Ethiopia over the last 100 years, as measured by number of people affected, five have occurred in the last decade and all were drought related. The 2011 Horn of Africa drought affected large areas of the country resulting in 60 percent losses in cattle, 40 percent in sheep, and 25-30 percent in goats.

Hundreds of millions of dollars are spent annually on food aid to compensate for such losses, yet it only covers a fraction of the depleted assets and in no way substitutes for the loss of life or long-term productive value of what was lost.

The new activities, Resilience through Enhanced Adaptation, Action-learning and Partnerships (REAAP), implemented by Catholic Relief Services, Restoring Vibrant Villages and Environment (REVIVE), implemented by Project Concern International, will both work in vulnerable *woredas* (districts) in the Oromia Region to reverse the damage and effects of poor natural resource management practices and climate change. While working with farming and pastoralist communities to diversify and strengthen livelihoods that include more adaptive and less climate sensitive economic activities.

Speaking at the launch event, USAID Mission Director Dennis Weller said, “While I hope, of course, that Ethiopia will never face any significant climatic shock or stress, we know from experience that rural communities do face climate change challenges and we must make every effort to ensure that we are more adaptable to possible climate related disasters and shocks in the future.”

These two resilience activities, valued at more than 11 million U.S. dollars, are funded by the [U.S. Global Climate Change Initiative](#), [Feed the Future Initiative](#), and USAID’s [Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance](#) through USAID’s mission in Ethiopia.

USAID has been supporting resilience, climate smart agriculture and early warning response and preparedness activities in Ethiopia for the last decade. This has led to mitigating risks of disasters and the adaptation of agriculture practices at the community level that aim to improve access to food.

For more information, please go to www.usaid.gov/ethiopia