

Press Release



Embassy of the United States of America
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
2013/15

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U.S. GOVERNMENT AWARDS GRANTS TO PROJECT MERCY TO BOOST HEALTH AND LIVELIHOODS

June 20, 2013, Yetebon, SNNPR – The U.S. Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), launched two activities with Project Mercy to boost health and livelihoods in communities in the SNNPR and Amhara regions. Yetebon, in the SNNP region, will benefit from training for midwives and improvements to their health facility. Chacha, in the Amhara region, will benefit from improved cow milk production and greater household income. USAID will provide technical assistance and training to the two projects valued at approximately 2 million dollars over the next four years. Project Mercy serves up to 70,000 people in the Yetebon and Chacha communities.

USAID's Human Resources for Health Project led by Jhpiego will train 400 professional midwives from the Yetebon region to reduce maternal and newborn deaths and injuries in child birth. The trained midwives will provide about 3,000 people with maternal and child health services. Additionally, USAID will make infrastructure improvements to Project Mercy's hospital and provide additional equipment and supplies. The initiative will also link the midwifery students with professional associations and clinics for practical skills training.

USAID's Livestock Market Development Project led by CNFA will train 65 households near Chacha to care for cows provided by Project Mercy, increase milk production, and improve the nutrition of their children. It is expected that this will increase their yearly dairy income to an estimated 1,200 USD, or 22,000 Ethiopian Birr, within two years by linking them to markets.

This activity will strengthen the success of Project Mercy's current efforts to cross-breed local dairy cows with American dairy cows in order to improve both the quantity and quality of milk production. At Project Mercy's 350-acre dairy farm in Chacha, Amhara Region, beneficiaries will be trained on proper livestock management techniques including production and development of forage for cows.

“Improving the health and economic status of all Ethiopians requires a collaborative endeavor among government and nongovernmental organizations, community leaders and the community members themselves. Our shared goal is to fight disease and preventable deaths of mothers and children, ensure food security and nutrition, and promote sustainable progress in the communities where Project Mercy operates,” said U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Donald E. Booth at the signing ceremony in Yetebon.

Project Mercy is a not-for-profit relief and development organization based in the United States and Ethiopia providing aid, comfort, and support to alleviate human suffering and overcome systemic poverty in Ethiopia. It was founded in 1977 by Marta Gabre-Tsadick and Demeke Tekle-Wold to promote emergency relief and has been promoting community development through social and economic activities in Ethiopia since 1993. USAID has cooperated with Project Mercy over the last decade on emergency food aid and medical assistance.

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