



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/article/training-crop-residue-preservation-helps-families-weather-storm>

Training in Crop Residue Preservation Helps Families Weather the Storm



Mercy Corps

Because of preserved fodder, Mohammed Bade from Maragacho kebele (community) can milk his cow.

Raho Mogol, an agro-pastoralist who lives in Maragacho kebele (community) in Ethiopia's Somali Region, is the mother of six children, four under five years old. Milk plays a critical role in the diet of pastoralist children and families, and Raho's children would be healthier if they had milk throughout the year. But milk is hard to come by during the dry seasons because animal feed—necessary to keep animals healthy and producing milk—is in short supply. This exacerbates the food and nutrition security of the region's pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities. For Raho and her community, dry seasons are times of hardship when they must worry about keeping their animals alive rather than getting milk from them.

When the going gets tough, children primarily bear the brunt. Somali children are no exception.

But here's some good news: There are new ways to mitigate the shortage of animal feed during the dry season, and Feed the Future, through a USAID activity in Ethiopia, is providing training on these innovative and vital practices. The activity, Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement through Market Expansion (PRIME), held training in two districts of the Somali Region on crop residue preservation. This technique conserves crop materials that aren't harvested. It involves cutting, chopping and putting these materials in a plastic bag, and burying them in a silo for about six months. This process turns the residues into nutritious feed for milking cows and others animals, which can be stored for use in times of scarcity.

Three agriculture extension workers and 32 agro-pastoralists received the training. Those who applied the technique have already started to reap the benefits. They reported that crop residues, which otherwise have been wasted, have come to the rescue of their children and family. Families who had to live on only sugar and hot water in the previous dry seasons are able to feed their milking cows and get some milk for their children. In brief, the introduction of the feed preservation for this community is a dream come true. Mohammed Ibrahim, one of the trainers, sums it up, "The crop residue conservation technique became a solution for their sufferings during the dry season." Thanks to the preservation technique, the nutritional status of their children has improved, their cows are in better shape, and life for families is much better.

Crop residue preservation is so successful that neighbors have already started emulating the USAID trainees who practice it. Through the U.S. Government's Feed the Future initiative, USAID will continue to work with communities, government and the private sector to introduce the technique, spread it to neighboring communities, and ensure sustainability even after the USAID activity has phased out.