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ETHIOPIA

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Transforming Agriculture through Leadership

Ethiopian agribusiness consultant is fostering change



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Adamu Abiye says the leadership training he received taught him to focus on results rather than processes.

“Thanks to this training, the way I do business has been transformed.”

Adamu Abiye

For Adamu Abiye, an agribusiness consultant who lives in Bahirdar, Ethiopia, a day’s work ranges from producing agricultural investment feasibility study to linking private investors with financial institutions. Providing agribusiness trainings and building up the agriculture industry is his life’s work. Now, he has the leadership training he needs to do his work even better.

Adamu is one of 90 agents of change that USAID’s Capacity to Improve Agriculture and Food Security (CIAFS) trained last year through its “Agents for Change” leadership program. By providing management, leadership, and technical training on topics such as strategic thinking and planning, and creating a vision for change, USAID-CIAFS empowers these thought leaders to catalyze change, drive future growth, and reduce poverty.

Adamu says that the training has changed the way he does business, making his work more efficient and effective. Among other things, it taught him to focus on results rather than process. “After the training, I started to follow-up with my clients to make sure they have achieved their goals. This involves identifying barriers to achieving our goals and addressing them constantly,” he says.

During a follow-up visit to one of his clients, Adamu discovered that a huge area of land owned by the client was not being used due to shortage of cash to buy the necessary machinery and inputs. Adamu knew that additional investment to cultivate the land to its maximum capacity would pay off, and he worked together with his clients to secure the necessary finances.

“The additional investment has paid off incredibly,” says Adamu. The investment has increased the farm’s total assets from less than ETB 2 million to more than 12 million (US \$115,140 to more than \$690,837). The clients have also diversified their products from only maize to sesame, paper, and maize. “In a single harvest, they are capable of returning the loan they borrowed. I am now working closely with them to even get into agro-processing business,” Adamu explains.

The ripple effect from the training that Adamu received is evident. The leadership skills he learned has helped him not only become a more knowledgeable, efficient agribusiness consultant, but has also made a difference to the income of his clients and, ultimately, the food security of Ethiopia.

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U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
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