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Food for the Hungry Helping Fathers around the World Provide for their Families



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Ethiopian father Alemiye Yihun grows fruits and vegetables to provide for his family, thanks to Food for the Hungry farming program.

PHOENIX (June 17, 2015) – Modern fatherhood means being involved with childrearing duties, and supporting the family emotionally, spiritually and physically. In many cases, it also means making sure the family has safe shelter, food on the table and the income to pay for children’s education. Each and every day, hundreds of fathers around the world are able to provide for their families thanks to programs established by Food for the Hungry.

One such program is a farming project implemented by Food for the Hungry in Bugna, a drought-prone district of the Amhara Region in Ethiopia. Historically, the amount of food produced in this region has been able to feed the residents for only six months of each year, due to challenging conditions such as erratic rainfall, hailstorms, agricultural pests and infertile topsoil.

Since most areas are dependent on rainfall and lack modern irrigation systems, a shortage of cultivable farmland has become a critical issue for rural youth and young families, in addition to the fact that many don't own the land on which they live.

Seven years ago, Food for the Hungry identified 78 youth and young adults in Bugna to be beneficiaries of a USAID-funded irrigation project, intended to turn approximately 28.8 acres of wasteland along the Wareb River into cultivable farmland. The program teaches participants how to develop small-scale irrigation systems that deliver water to previously uncultivable land. The program also shows the residents of Bugna how to implement tree planting and soil conservation activities.

Alemiye Yihun, a local Ethiopian Orthodox priest, is a 28-year-old father of two young children and a participant in this program. Until recently, Alemiye had no farmland of his own.

“FH gave us training on how to grow vegetables and fruit by using small-scale irrigation,” said Alemiye. “We were given different kinds of vegetable seeds and fruit seedlings like orange, papaya, apple mango, guava and avocado. I can say that we are the first fruits and vegetables producers in our district because of this irrigation. There was not any fruit or vegetables in the local market prior to our supply.”

He said that from his irrigated farm, his family now has enough food year-round. “From the produce I sell, I cover all of our needs. FH also helped us set up a savings group, which allows us to borrow money with minimum interest. Using my personal savings and the loan from the savings group, I was able to buy land in Ayina town [the capital of Bugna district] and constructed a house for my family and myself. This helped me to send my daughter to the nearby school.”

Alemiye and his friends, who are using the irrigation system, are eager to improve their living standard, and have plans to buy a truck to distribute their farm produce to larger markets.

About Food for the Hungry

Founded in 1971, [Food for the Hungry](#) provides emergency relief and long-term development programs with operations in more than 20 countries to help the world's most vulnerable people. Learn more by visiting [fh.org](#). Social connections include [facebook.com/foodforthehungry](#) and [twitter.com/food4thehungry](#).

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