



Case Study: HAWA, 38

# Climate Smart Agriculture participant, Homestead Garden, Ethiopia: The Harvest of Hope



## Story Summary:

Hawa, a 38-year-old mother of seven, lives in Jedene Kebele in the Somali region. Before moving to her current home, she and her family lived a stable life in Oromia. Her husband worked for a government office, and Hawa raised animals to support their household.

Tragically, about eight years ago, her husband's death during intense interethnic conflict in their locality turned their lives upside down. Forced to flee with only a few possessions and her children, Hawa first sought safety in Awash.

After a brief period in Awash, and with help from relatives, she and her children were able to travel by truck to Dire Dawa. There, they were sheltered in a makeshift house at a camp for displaced people. The family survived on meagre food assistance provided by the government and humanitarian agencies.

Recently, Hawa's life changed for the better when she was identified by Community in Action Against Poverty (CAAP)—with funding support from UN-Women—and enrolled in a climate-smart agriculture initiative alongside other women in her community. Following the training, she received drought-tolerant vegetable seedlings, which she planted in her backyard, as well as a set of essential farming tools to help her prepare the land and cultivate the crops.

Thanks to this support, Hawa successfully grew enough vegetables to feed her family. She also produced a surplus, which she sold at the local market, earning a much-needed extra income to support her children.

### **Hawa's story in her own words (Quotes):**

My name is Hawa Abdulahi. I am the mother of seven children, five boys and two girls. About eight years ago, before the conflict took place and my husband was killed, we lived in Mieso, in Oromia. Back then, my husband was a government employee in a leadership role. Then a sudden interethnic conflict broke out in our locality, and my husband was killed in the violence.

With my husband's income, we were able to own our home and raise some cattle. We had never been farmers, but we were comfortable and secure. As the fighting intensified, we decided to leave the area. At the time, we didn't know where to go and we were so confused.

Escaping our village was a time of immense suffering; we had to walk for weeks under the scorching sun, carrying nothing but our children. We first escaped to Awash, and from there, relatives arranged for a truck to take us to Dire Dawa. In Dire Dawa, we stayed in a camp for displaced people. The government provided some meager food assistance, but it was not enough.

After staying there for a few years, we were relocated to Jedene kebele, where we live now. When we arrived, we received nothing but peace, which was valuable, but we still lacked the means to support ourselves. The impact of the conflict has had a long-lasting effect on my children and me. We lost everything we had to the conflict and are trying to rebuild anew with support from CAAP and others.

The first real support we ever got was from CAAP about five months ago. They didn't just give us supplies; they first gave us training. They taught us new farming techniques, including how to prepare the land seedlings before cultivating them. We received a wide range of knowledge on how to care for vegetables. We even learned how to prepare organic pesticide to prevent plant disease and how to make compost for our crops.

Following the training, CAAP provided me and other women in my community and provide us with improved vegetable seeds. With those seeds, I have cultivated my land with a variety of vegetables. I have harvested them, earned money, and I am now able to provide my family with enough nutritious food to eat.

This support has brought peace to my mind. Before, I suffered from constant distress over how to feed my family. Now, with the new knowledge and skills I obtained from the training, I am growing diverse vegetables like beetroot, tomato, pepper, salad, Swiss chard, carrot, and many others in a plot of land in my backyard.

From my first harvest, I sold 600 Ethiopian Birr worth of vegetables at the local market and saved some of the money in my own account at the cooperative. So far, I have harvested Swiss chard, pepper, and salad. My tomatoes are not yet ready for harvest.

With the water expansion system that CAAP installed for us, we now have enough water to irrigate our crops and provide our children with safe drinking water. The quality seeds we received also require minimum water to grow.

Thanks to Allah, and to CAAP, I am not the woman I was a few years ago. Now, if I need money, I can simply sell some vegetables from my garden. I am more stable now than ever before. I am making regular savings at SACCO, which in the past was something out of reach for me. I hope I will soon be provided with loans so that I can diversify and expand my vegetable garden and engage in other businesses to generate more income.

I wish for my children to grow up healthy and happy, to achieve a high level of education, and to lead a better life. My work in the vegetable garden has kept me busy, and I want to continue improving it. Next to Allah, I am very grateful to CAAP and all who supported us for their relentless help.

### **Project background:**

The Resilience and Institutional Support to Empower Women in Somali Region (RISE Project) is implemented by CAAP with funding from UN Women from August 2024 to December 2026. With an investment of ETB 47.6 million, it directly supports 1,004 women from IDP and host communities.

The project focuses on:

- Climate-smart agriculture (training, drought-tolerant seeds, irrigation support).
- Enterprise development & financial inclusion (SACCOs, revolving fund loans).



- Business Skills training & market linkages (Basic business and life skills training, business development services, business plan competitions, incubation, technical support).

The Climate-smart agriculture targets 200 vulnerable women farmers to access to climate resilient technologies including drought resistant, early maturing and multi-purpose seeds, farming tools, poultry, small ruminant livestock, improving access to safe drinking water and supplying irrigation and gender Responsive agricultural extension services, reaching 1,458 community members (846 of them are women and girls).

For more information please contact:

**Hussien Farah, CEO, CAAP**

Mobile: **+251-980317901**

Email: **Hussien.Farah@caapeth.org**

For any details on this story and to learn more about CAAP's work and impact, please visit: **<http://www.caapeth.org>**

