

## Creating opportunities and building resilience in Ethiopia.



### **Landless farmers establish support businesses that help increase harvests and improve communities**

Farm Business Advisors are called Community Marketing Agents (CMAs) in Ethiopia. Recruited from farming families, they are often young men from large families who don't have enough land of their own to be able to make a living by farming full-time. They have farming knowledge, communication skills, and a strong connection to the local community, which make them prime candidates to become micro-entrepreneurs selling irrigation equipment and services.

Farmers in Ethiopia still tend to farm cereal crops, relying on rainfall which is inconsistent due to regular droughts that are the result of the El Nino weather pattern. Thus, there is ample opportunity to expand production in the dry season to market vegetables through the use of manual pumps (treadle and washer) and drip irrigation. By doing so, farmers diversify their crops as well as spread their income more evenly throughout the year.

CMAs receive three days of training initially, where they learn specific details about best farming practices using resource-smart water technologies. They also learn about how to market the

technologies by listening to the farmers' concerns and using a cost-benefit analysis spreadsheet to show how much profit could be made from the sale of dry-season vegetables (e.g., onion, tomato, Ethiopian kale, head cabbage, green pepper) after paying for the irrigation system.

Most of the CMAs travel as much as seven kilometers every day to reach farmers in locations far remote from existing roads and other infrastructure. Because the Ethiopian cellular coverage is still in its infancy, iDE has not yet been able to implement its innovative mobile data technology to increase orders and delivery, although the program is using Salesforce to track sales and CMA performance.

Currently, the technologies promoted in Ethiopia include drip kits and manually operated pumps. Since CMAs are trained on agronomic services they also provide agronomic and output market related information services to their service clients with an embedded service.

#### **Photo Caption**

**The woman pictured has benefited significantly from the help of a CMA, increasing her yields by utilizing resource-smart technologies.**

## The Ethiopia Context

Agriculture in Ethiopia accounts for 80 percent of the labor force and over 40 percent of the gross domestic product. Over the past half-century, Ethiopia has struggled with frequent droughts, leading to disruptions in its agriculture as well as a series of humanitarian crises. It is also home to the second-largest population in Africa. Ethiopia's agricultural productivity is extremely low, due to an underutilization of water resources, with only 6 percent of its groundwater used for irrigation. Malnutrition is widespread due to the resulting lack of sufficient food for the majority of the population and chronic diseases from poor sanitation.

## Ethiopia CMAs By the Numbers

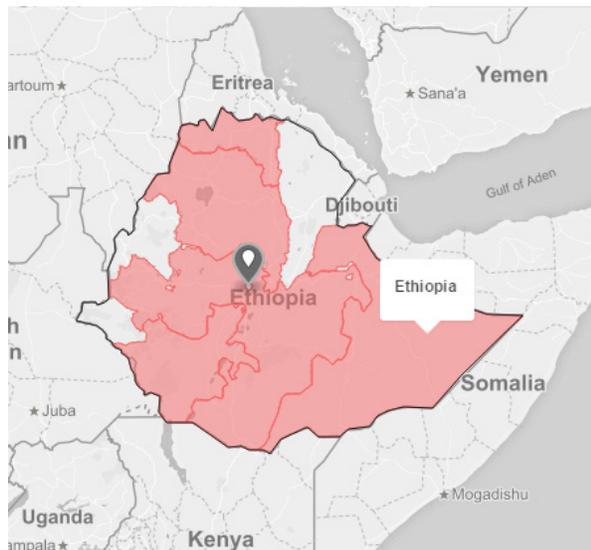
8 clients per 1 CMA

2,176 clients served to date

Average Annual Income: \$35

Each CMA travels an average of 7km per day

Rope & washer and Treadle pumps are common



## iDE

iDE creates income and livelihood opportunities for poor rural households across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. iDE builds markets in a range of sectors, including agriculture, water, sanitation, hygiene, and access to finance.

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