

Seed and Business Skills Go a Long Way

Ato Tadesse Regassa, 40, father of six children (three daughters and three sons) with ages 6-23, of Boru Chilalo (PA) in Hetosa woreda, started seed production for the first time in 2005. He used to produce seed on 0.5 out of 3.5 hectares of land in 2005 and 2006, using the rest for grain production. He started seed production with FAO in 2007 after being selected as member of the Boru Chilalo seed producer groups. He received training on seed production principles and doing business plans, and enough seed to produce on 0.5 ha of land. Since 2008, he has increased the area under seed production to 1.5 hectares.

The changes after FAO intervention in 2007 included:

- Improved knowledge and skills in seed production
- Adoption of improved production technologies
- Increased land allocation to seed production and increased yields
- Improved income and livelihoods

Besides increase in yield, his income is continuously increasing and his sources diversifying. Before 2007 when he participated in the project, the income he obtained from crop production and other activities covered only his household consumption. According to his calculation (he started computing all his costs and benefits after he received training on business planning through the project in 2008), the revenue he is getting from seed is about 40 percent of his total income (potato, sale of other crops, livestock fattening, and eucalyptus trees). After he started keeping records, his actual income rose from 40 000 birr in 2008 to 56 000 birr in 2009; and is estimated to increase to 70 000 birr in 2010/11 crop season.

With the income from seed sale, he built a house in his PA and bought two oxen, a milking cow and 40 pieces of corrugated iron sheet to build a new house in the town of Boru Chilalo. From 2010 season income, he is hoping to finish the construction works of the new house.

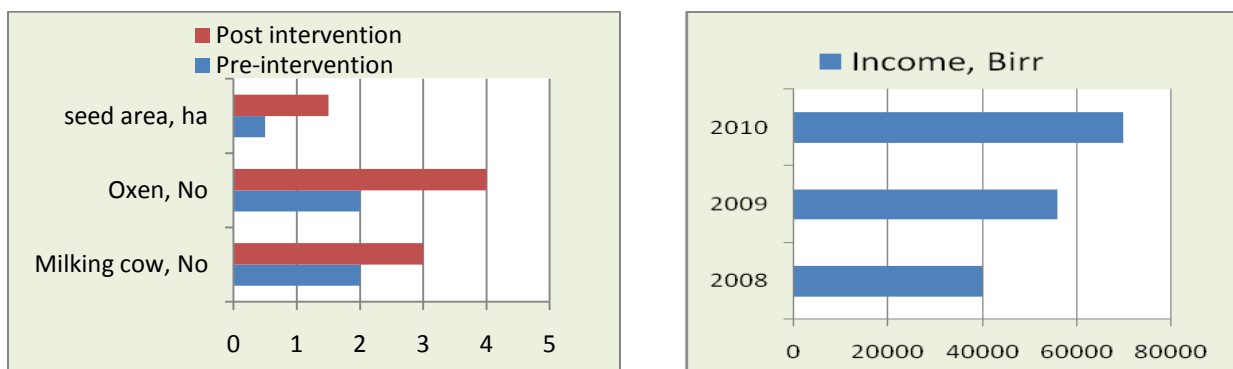


Figure showing the impacts of intervention in seed production on the income of a farmer since 2007. Data covers the years the farmer started recording his revenue.

The seed producer farmer threshing his wheat seed using the wheat and barley threshing machines provided by the FAO- project in Hetosa woreda ,Ethiopia , December 2009.



Row planted and well isolated fields