

Climate Smart Initiative Story of Change: Jamal

Goro woreda, Oromiya, Ethiopia

Jamal looking at his boset teff
Photograph by Shimeles Damene

The Climate Smart Initiative (CSI) was launched in July 2013, as an adjunct to the existing Government of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) and Household Asset Building Programme (HABP); two of the key mechanisms of the Government to tackle food security issues and related rural livelihoods strengthening.

CSI was designed to pilot approaches that consider climate change within this larger, established context, working within existing Government approaches and cycles. This Story of Change provides an example of how CSI has affected an individual or a household.

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Who is Jamal?

He is a 30-year-old living in Kaku kebele of Goro woreda, with his wife, Sa'ada, and three children aged eight, five and one. He is both a HABP and PSNP beneficiary. He is now a CSI model farmer.

What are the climate and environmental problems that Jamal is facing in his woreda?

This semi-arid area is facing shortage of rainfall, erratic rainfall, water shortages, crop failure, crop yield loss, crop diseases and pests, livestock diseases and death, livestock feed shortage and the clearing of bushes and trees, leading to soil erosion, community food insecurity and livelihood deterioration.

Summary:

Jamal has led the way, inspiring other farmers and community members to proactively respond to climate-related risks. As a CSI-nominated model farmer he took up the new early-maturing teff crop – boset – promoted by CSI. The training and expert support provided, plus the seed and fertiliser he received, enabled a doubling of his teff yield. Jamal has shared his experience with many other beneficiaries and officials, who now want to take up this new early-maturing seed. He is now selling seeds to PSNP beneficiaries, creating an additional income, while keeping some seed in reserve in case of crop disease.

CSI has been implemented by a consortium of organisations, led by CARE Ethiopia, and including Cornell University, Dadimos, FARM Africa, IDS, IICD, Itad Ltd, Jimma University, MMA Consulting, Mercy Corps, ORDA, REST, and SNV. In late 2015, CSI is closing down; leaving a legacy of learning and insights about “climate smart” and what it means, from the household reality to the highest level of policy making.



Taking up the opportunity of becoming a model farmer

Jamal's name comes to the lips of many officials when discussing exciting changes as a result of CSI coming to the woreda. Jamal was nominated by CSI, from PSNP beneficiaries, as a model farmer for an early-maturing teff variety called boset. They expected him to be a good adopter of technology, and they were not disappointed. CSI provided him with the boset teff cultivar and trained him.

Putting the training into action with new early-maturing seed

According to Jamal: 'The training covered land preparation, planting (row planting), fertiliser application (rate and how to apply), weeding and pest management.' He adds that 'after the training, I took 7.5 kg boset teff seed and 25 kg DAP [diammonium phosphate] fertiliser from CSI and sowed it on 0.25 ha land using the skill and knowledge obtained from the training and extension support of the Development Agent [DA] and Woreda Agriculture Office experts coming to my field at every stage, from the land preparation up to the harvesting stage.'

Doubling the crop yield using the new boset variety

Jamal proudly reports that the yield from the new variety was more than double: 'I obtained 625 kg teff from the boset variety. I was getting a

maximum of 300 kg from the same land using the local old teff variety.' He is clear that the variety has unique, climate-smart, characteristics, such as: 'matures quickly; resistant to a disease called rust; short in height, thus less vulnerable to logging and has more tillers [bunches]; high yielding.'

Sharing this new found knowledge with the community

Jamal explains that: 'The Woreda Agriculture Offices and DAs organised two successful field days [visits] and PSNP/HABP beneficiaries, kebele administration and other interested farmers visited my farm.' These resulted in farmers requesting the new boset variety from the Agriculture Office. To meet this demand, Jamal has agreed to sell the majority of his seed to PSNP/HABP beneficiaries selected by the Agriculture Office. He will benefit from the 20 percent higher price that this new seed commands.

Planning ahead, including contingency planning

But Jamal has his eye on the future and wants to plan for potential risks: after sales to PSNP/HABP beneficiaries, he will sow 125 kg for himself and save the remaining balance. This is wise, given the area suffers severe grasshopper, army worm and rust infestations. Jamal says: 'If such a problem occurs, I will be able to replace the damaged crop, which enables us to assure continuity of the variety in our area.'

Jamal is confident: 'Fifteen farmers are now registered to buy the seed and we expect that the number will be more than 50.' With the money obtained from the sale of the seed, he plans to buy fertiliser for the next harvest and buy food. Jamal and Sa'ada are optimistic about their future: 'Our family is expecting improved livelihood due to increased yield and better prices.'



Jamal and Sa'ada looking at their boset teff
Photograph by Shimeles Damene

