



PHOTO & CAPTION

Farmers Collect the Rain



Photo: USAID/Dianne Zemichael

Standing beside his new concrete water collection basin, Shumi, left, a father of three in Ethiopia's Oromia region, says, "The most important thing is that I no longer worry about what to eat or drink or how to pay school fees for my children. Thanks to USAID, I am a self-sufficient person. Riches are on my doorstep, no more rags!"

Food and economic insecurity are all too common in Ethiopia's large Oromia region, home to 25 million people. Subject to the vagaries of Ethiopia's rain — often inadequate or, many years, failing altogether — families have trouble producing enough food with sufficient nutritional quality. At best, many get only one harvest a year.

That is dramatically changing with USAID's help. To help stabilize water supply for the crops, farmers are given cement and shown how to build concrete water structures that collect the rain. They also learn how to construct simple drip irrigation systems to take the collected water to their crops during the drier growing season.