

Sisay’s Story

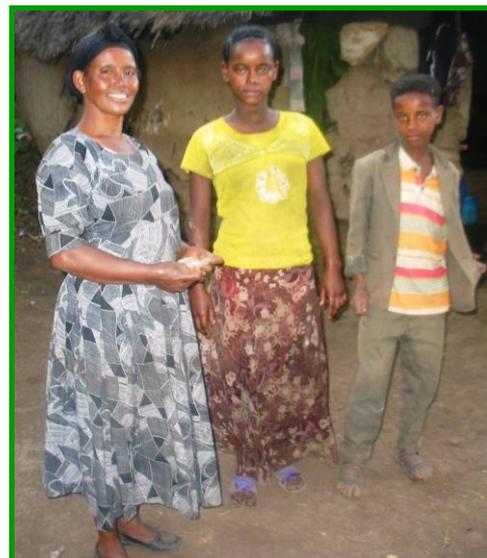
Sisay is a mother of five. She lives in a village called Wajitu, in southern Ethiopia. Her husband died several years ago so she now looks after the family farm, along with her children. They grow crops like teff (which is used to make *injera*) wheat, maize, sorghum, beans and peas. They also have some cows, oxen and a donkey. Every Thursday, she travels to the market at the town of Dukem, where she sells the family’s produce.

Sisay says the weather is changing.

“Last year, there was not enough rain. This year, the rain came early, in March, which is unusual. It is very bad for our crops – we did not have time to plant the seeds before the rain came. Now it has started raining again but too much is falling! I am worried about our crops.”

Sisay’s family usually get their water from a seasonal lake. The lake used to dry up for a few weeks in the summer but it is starting to dry up for longer and longer each year.

“We used to get our water from the lake nearby. But lately it has become dry very early. When the lake is dry, we have to walk for an hour to collect water and we can’t carry enough for all our needs. The animals are often thirsty and we don’t have enough to wash ourselves properly. This is the worst part because it is affecting our health and the children don’t like to go to school when their clothes are dirty.”



The local government has been trying to help the community of Wajitu. “They advised us to dig a well nearby and to plant trees.”

If the problems continue, Sisay is worried about the future.

“I remember a drought like this in 1985. It was very difficult for us. If things don’t change, this time it is going to be worse. Without water, we can’t do anything. We are unable to work our fields. I don’t want to be lazy but I have no choice!”