



## Project „Hagereslam“ Phase II 2013 - 2016

### *Building on what has been achieved*

As outlined above, the first phase of our project in Hagereslam has produced several promising results. Nevertheless, it is essential that the work which has started should continue. It is too early to leave the farmers to their own devices, and we are pleased that Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation is continuing with the Beles SUNRise Project. We are looking forward to supporting the people of Hagereslam through that project for a further four years. The second phase will build logically and consistently on the achievements of the first project phase from 2010-2012.

In the first three years, the project succeeded in largely stopping erosion in the area by stabilising the ecological system. The hillsides are again green and from now on can be used productively. Although the repair of the erosion gully has not yet been completed, the gully is no longer eating into valuable pasture land. On top of this, the people of Hagereslam have discovered the value of the prickly pear, and appreciate its many benefits. If the farmers are again faced by a lengthy drought, this versatile plant will prove life-saving. All in all, we have reached our umbrella objective for this project, namely to ensure food security in the area.

### *Survival is not enough*

While we are happy that the achievements in Hagereslam offer the 5'300 inhabitants survival in the face of famine, this is by no means enough for us. There must be more than just survival. The farmers and their families must be able to lead secure and self-reliant lives along the lines of 'Farmer by choice, not by fate'. The community lives in a drought-prone zone with an average rainfall of just 500 mm pro year. The farmers have to fight hard for their daily bread and they have very little. 92% of the households are poor or 'medium poor'. The definition of medium poor is cash income of \$1.5 per day. The poorest – 37% of all the households – have to live on about 90 cents per day. The majority of these poor households are led by women, i.e. there is no male family head to carry out the hard work on the land and thus earn a living for the family.

### ***System of objectives and project development components remains unaltered***

In order to fulfil our vision of a decent life for the farmers of Hageresalam, it is imperative that we continue the work which was started in Phase I. Our overall objectives remain unchanged, and the project components of Phase II will mirror those of Phase 1. However, the focus will shift somewhat, with more emphasis and attention to be given to components I, III and IV.

Summarized, our targets for 2016 are the following:

1. Wir wollen die Gemeinde weiter stärken, indem wir Wissen und Kapazität auf kommunaler Stufe aufbauen und fördern. Zu diesem Zweck werden rechtliche Körperschaften gegründet. Die Bauern erhalten mehr Autonomie und Kompetenzen für die Verwaltung ihrer Ressourcen. Das bedeutet konkret:
  - 2 Watershed Users Associations will be legally established
  - 2 Community Development Funds will be established and empowered
  - 331 households will receive so-called Stage 1 certificates for the hillside-land that was allocated to them in Phase 1
2. Re-cultivation and re-naturalization of the hillsides, erosion gully and also the communal pasture land will continue. This is necessary to increase productivity and to make these areas more adaptable to climate change. The work will follow the same participatory principle successfully applied in Phase 1, i.e. both men and women will participate in the prerequisite hard physical work.
  - 320 households practice intensive hillside farming on 40ha
  - 200 households practice low input hillside rehabilitation
  - Erosion gully treatment on a length of 1km
  - Pasture development on 30ha by 317 beneficiary households
3. Further improvements will be made towards food security, and additional sources of cash income will be created. The promotion and mandatory planting of prickly-pear cactus (Beles) will remain at the forefront:
  - 51% of all households, i.e. 536, will have a Beles orchard
  - 161 households consume Beles at least 2x per week
4. We want to support the development of productive assets through intensifying and diversifying farming practices. The farms and households will be developed further, and productive assets will be promoted. Medium-poor and poor households will be the main beneficiaries of the following initiatives:
  - Contour cultivation on farmland of a length of 1.5 km
  - Establishment of 4 Rural Future Farms (see picture on next page)
  - Dissemination of drought-resistant crops and plants to 850 households for cultivation on 106ha



- Construction of 15 water harvesting ponds with 85 m<sup>3</sup> storage capacity, sufficient to irrigate 15 homestead orchards of 250 m<sup>2</sup>
- Construction of 40 roof-water harvesting systems with 7.3 m<sup>3</sup> storage capacity
- Dissemination of 240 improved beehives with specific cost recovery mechanism to 120 households
- Dissemination of 900 improved chickens to 150 households

Our field team has taken on a great deal for the next four years. If we succeed in reaching our goals during this period, the 5'000 and more inhabitants of Hagereslam will be able to face the future with a great deal more trust and confidence. After that, a two-year period of consolidation, closure and withdrawal will follow.

The board of Ethiopian Enterprises is convinced that the Beles SUN*Rise* Project represents a valuable contribution to the sustained end of poverty in Tigray. Despite the success we have had so far, we need to remember the following: while Ethiopia is one of the oldest civilizations in the world, it is also one of the poorest countries. Its situation with regard to food remains fragile. At the same time, the Ethiopians – and certainly the folk of Hagereslam – have the strength and the determination to change this situation. What they need is know-how and initial financing. While the project organisation in Ethiopia is responsible for transferring the know-how, we are responsible for the up-front financing.

### ***Financing cost of CHF 439'000 for the next 4 years***

Our budget for the next 4 years is CHF 439'000. While this figure may initially seem high, it represents a per-head cost of just over CHF 80 per inhabitant of Hagereslam. As in Phase I, both the government and the farmers are obliged to contribute an additional CHF 35'000 (total CHF 70'000) to the project in the form of unpaid working hours and field work.

***Vision of a Rural Future Farm***



**Rural Future Farm (RFF):** 3-D vision of a rural future family farm. Through the diversification and intensification of the farming system, and through the cumulative impact of effective utilization of land, water, plants, animals, solar energy and human capacities, the RFF is to achieve an annual net return of ~ CHF 2'500. The RFF concept aims at creating household assets and income, as well as developing skills and local employment. Through effective water resource management, the resilience of households to the impact of climate change will be significantly increased. The resources and technologies applied are selected for their potential for local replication and regional up-scaling. (Image und text: Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, Ethiopia).