



“I HAVE NOT JUST SURVIVED THE DROUGHT-I
HAVE BUILT MY RESILIENCE ON A SOLID,
STABLE BASIS.”

Darmi Duba
Arero Woreda, East Borana Zone

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FOR YEARS,

Darmi's community faced recurring environmental hazards that devastated local livelihoods and challenged the very way of life of the community. Facing these hardships was an imperative for Darmi, who refused to let vulnerability define her future. To complement the efforts of the community, AFD, in collaboration with Welthungerhilfe (WHH), organized 60 Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), providing the community with business skills training and start-up capital for enabling savings mobilization and engagement in local businesses.

Darmi took on a leadership role as the Secretary of the Dembala Walensu VSLA. Her relentless drive for change became even more pronounced after AFD sponsored her attendance at the International Day of African Rural Women celebration at the African Union Hall.

"The inspiration and ambition this exposure created in me was immense," she recalls. Returning home with a clear vision, she took a loan from her VSLA to start a petty trade business. Guided by the training she received, her business flourished, allowing her to build a better house and comfortably cover her children's school expenses and household needs.

Her transformation extended into agriculture as well. Through the project's drought recovery initiative, Darmi received maize seeds which she sowed in her backyard, resulting in a remarkable 12-quintal harvest. This produce provided a critical safety net for her family's food security. "I have not just survived the drought—I have built my resilience on a solid, stable basis," she says proudly.

Today, Darmi's transition from vulnerability to resilience serves as a beacon of hope for her fellow villagers. By realizing her potential through skill development and financial support, she has turned a difficult living situation into a story of success. As she looks toward the future, Darmi remains grateful to AFD for making her cause its own and helping her realize a life of dignity and stability.

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