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Mokony Feed Facility Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Remarks by USAID Representative John Edgar

November 19, 2015

Southern Tigray Region, Ethiopia

It is a great pleasure for me to be in Mokony with Ethio-Feed PLC to officially inaugurate this livestock feed manufacturing facility.

At USAID, we believe that addressing critical limitations in the livestock sector, like the lack of year-round quality feed, is essential for the successful achievement of the Ethiopian Government's Growth and Transformation Plan.

Without reliable access to high-quality animal feed, it is impossible to raise healthy animals or to produce high quality, competitive meat and dairy products. This becomes even more obvious when livestock are affected by drought, as is currently the case in some regions of Ethiopia, including Tigray.

USAID's Livestock Market Development activity has recognized and acted upon the importance of feed producers as suppliers, and has actively sought opportunities to partner with feed processors in order to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of Ethiopia's livestock.

The enterprise we are inaugurating today is one of the outcomes of USAID's support through the Livestock Market Development activity. USAID is proud to have supported this endeavor with an innovation grant because we believe Ethio-Feed's innovative franchise business model involving itself as the parent company, and Lemlem Raya Union PLC as the Tigray-based subsidiary is a smart model for developing Ethiopia's agribusiness sector.

Through our Livestock Market Development activity, USAID provides innovation grants to agribusinesses as part of Feed the Future, the U.S. Government's global food security and hunger initiative. Our goal with these grants is to encourage and support innovative investments in agricultural by facilitating credit and equity investment.

The Livestock Market Development activity focuses on suppliers, processors, cooperatives, exporters, financial and other service providers, to stimulate transformation and competitiveness of the livestock sector.

Support to increase availability of year-round quality feed is one of the areas that the innovation grants have targeted, because we all know that quality livestock depends on an adequate supply of quality feed.

This investment with Ethio-Feed was especially attractive because of its innovative use of locally available but previously untapped animal feed sources, such as the region's abundant supply of cactus. The feed processing facility has high potential for assuring greater access to better quality animal feed at affordable prices for Tigrinian smallholder farmers. Accordingly, this feed facility will enable 8,000 farmers in three districts of the Tigray Region to access affordable and nutritious livestock feed.

In total, USAID's Livestock Market Development activity has awarded more than 40 innovation grants to different livestock cooperatives, women entrepreneurs and businesses, such as Ethio-Feed, who are introducing innovations that will benefit smallholder farmers—many of whom are women—in the meat, live animal and dairy sectors.

Today, as we witness the official opening of this new facility, we look forward to many similar investments being made by private sector investors to support the seeking country's growing livestock sector.

On behalf of the USAID team, I would like to affirm our continued collaboration with the Government of Ethiopia and other partners in supporting private sector initiatives such as Ethio-Feed, to strengthen and transform the livestock sector of Ethiopia into a globally competitive player.

Thank you.