



Bali Gubadle is a region on the Ethiopian border renowned for its agriculture. But 50 years ago it was by necessity a nomadic area as there was no way of storing the rains.

Since then a series of cement wells have been constructed which has allowed permanent settlements to develop and the area has flourished. In the 1980s, the border area was heavily mined during the Civil War to protect military bases.

Khodra and her family had left her farm at Bali Gubadle 30 years ago during the Ogaden War as their farm was between a Somali military base and the Ethiopian border. She had returned to live at her farm just 25 days before we met her as she had heard from members of her family that the HALO Trust had started to clear the mines on her land and around her well. When we got there we found that she had had stone delivered so that she could build a permanent home for her children and grandchildren. HALO had cleared the mines from around the well, and the cement lining the well was drying.



Khodra lost her husband in the civil war but, as a strong and motivated woman, she is determined to rehabilitate the farm. She pointed out to us the part of the minefield where she plans to plant a garden and grow watermelon when she has saved enough money.

HALO had been working in the area since early 2008, and has found 53 anti-personnel and anti-tank mines. Fuad, the HALO Supervisor, has four teams working and living in a remote camp over a 21 day demining cycle. They anticipate finishing the task in mid 2010.

