



Increasing Climate Resilience in Energy and Agricultural Systems and Entrepreneurship.

A selection of stories focused on
gender equality and social inclusion



Sweden
Sverige

SNV



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INCREASING
CLIMATE
RESILIENCE
IN ENERGY AND
AGRICULTURAL
SYSTEMS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

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We would like to thank the multi-stakeholders that work with SNV Zambia in this project.

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Foreword



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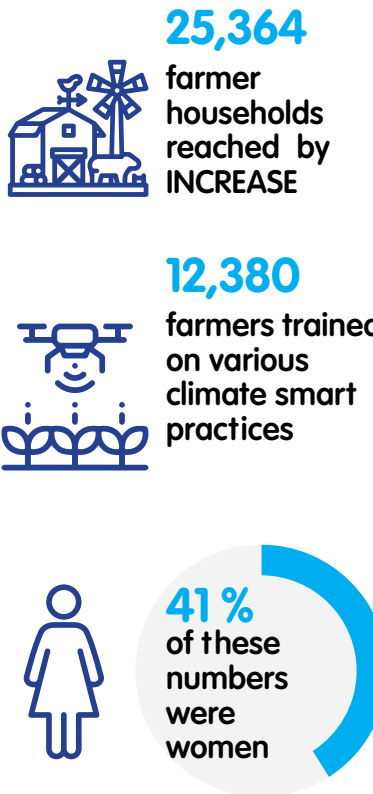
In the face of climate change, addressing food insecurity and malnutrition is a major challenge that calls for sustainable increase in agricultural production. Rain is becoming more erratic, mean temperatures are increasingly varying, and extreme weather occurrence are becoming more pronounced.

SNV Zambia is implementing the INCREASE Project which is fully funded by the Swedish Embassy in Zambia. The project has supported establishment of gender-responsive climate smart agriculture interventions and strengthen resilience through an integrated approach that addresses the structural barriers women face within the context of changing climate. The project aims to ensure that gender and inclusion is fully integrated into agricultural productivity, adaptation, and reduction of degradation through agroforestry and integrate soil

fertility management. Since a wide range of interventions are required to achieve tangible improvement in women's lives through climate smart agriculture. SNV has over the years established wide-ranging partnerships with the Government Republic of Zambia academic and research institutions like the Zambia Agricultural Research Institute, and other public and private organizations working in this area.

Between 2020 and 2023, INCREASE reached 25,364 farmer households and trained 12,380 farmers on various climate smart practices and 41.7% of these numbers were women. Since its inception, the household dietary diversity score increased from 6.71 to 7.88 with maize and soya production increasing from 1603kg per hectare to 4694k per hectare and 1224kg per hectare to 1468kg per hectare respectively. Therefore, climate smart practices have been proved to address aspects of life that are pertinent to women like food and nutrition security, clean cooking, affordable energy, and enhanced incomes.

Building climate resilience is at the heart of SNV'S work. SNV have committed to embedding resilience- building in all our programming by integrating gender equality and social inclusion in all our work.



SNV's GESI approach



Bernard Munkombwe
GESI Officer

Globally there is recognition that gender inequality holds back social and economic progress. A central tenet of SNV's development approach is to promote and support opportunities for women with solutions tailor-made to address the socio-cultural and economic challenges that this group faces. SNV integrates support for women into all our programming, which is well reflected in the INCREASE Project.

What is key to INCREASE GESI approaches are that men are included. No change on gender will happen if men are not supported to recognise, challenge and change some of the social norms that hinder women and those marginalizes equal access to economic and social capital.

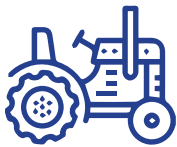
The INCREASE project promotes a transformative gender approach, based on SNV's GESI approach which aims to address the inequitable gender norms and unequal access to productive resources, skills and market opportunities. What is key to INCREASE GESI approaches are that men are included. No change on gender will happen if men are not supported to recognise, challenge and change some of the social norms that hinder women and those marginalizes equal access to economic and social capital. The benefits of more equal gender relations and access to opportunities are clear for both men, women and those excluded.

SNV has moved beyond Gender Equality programming being a box-ticking exercise. The policy provides an overall framework that strengthens SNV's organisational systems and accountability towards gender equality. SNV staff, together with leaders across the world, pledge to take decisive, visible, and measurable action as champions of gender parity.



**SNV Zambia promoting GESI
transformative approaches
through the INCREASE
project**

1. Empowering communities for sustainable development.



Climate change negatively impacts crop yields, decrease income and food security especially for the most marginalised groups (women, youths and the differently abled) and their families. SNV Zambia has been rolling out the INCREASE Project to empower families including vulnerable groups from food, income and nutrition insecurity following the ravaging impacts of climate change.



One such group that has benefited from the INCREASE Project is Tuswayane Farmers Group situated in Mapanza area of Choma District, Southern Province in Zambia. The group consists of 20 members (14 women and 6 men). For many years, most families in the area used to rely solely on rain fed agriculture for food security and income generation. However, rain fed agriculture is vulnerable to the impact of climate change thereby negatively affecting smallholder farmers’ livelihoods.

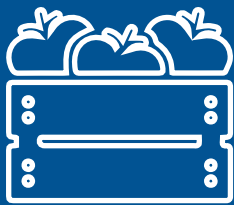
In 2021, Tushwayane group was amongst the 8,475 smallholder farmers that that received training on climate smart agriculture and renewable energy technologies. Motivated by the trainings and eagerness to provide food for their families, the group applied the knowledge they received from the project. 'The INCREASE Project taught us about saving our finances, record keeping and facilitated access to markets for our farm produce. Last year, we harvested 150 crates of tomatoes, 55 sacks of winter maize and 1050 heads of cabbages which was sufficient for our home use, as well as for selling to make profit,' says Brillian, the group coordinator.

The chairlady of the group said, 'We are getting huge profits from selling the vegetables, tomatoes and winter maize and we have managed to drill a borehole and buy an ox cart from our profits.' The borehole and oxcart have reduced the domestic workload for women in the group, freeing up time to perform productive tasks and to enjoy leisure time. Community members and husbands to women in the group have witnessed a difference the enterprise has brought in the families as women are now able to buy basic needs, lessening the financial burden on men to solely provide for the family.

SNV uses the GESI Approach where emphasis is on increasing women’s access to critical assets of production while reducing time and labour burden especially in the agricultural value chains.



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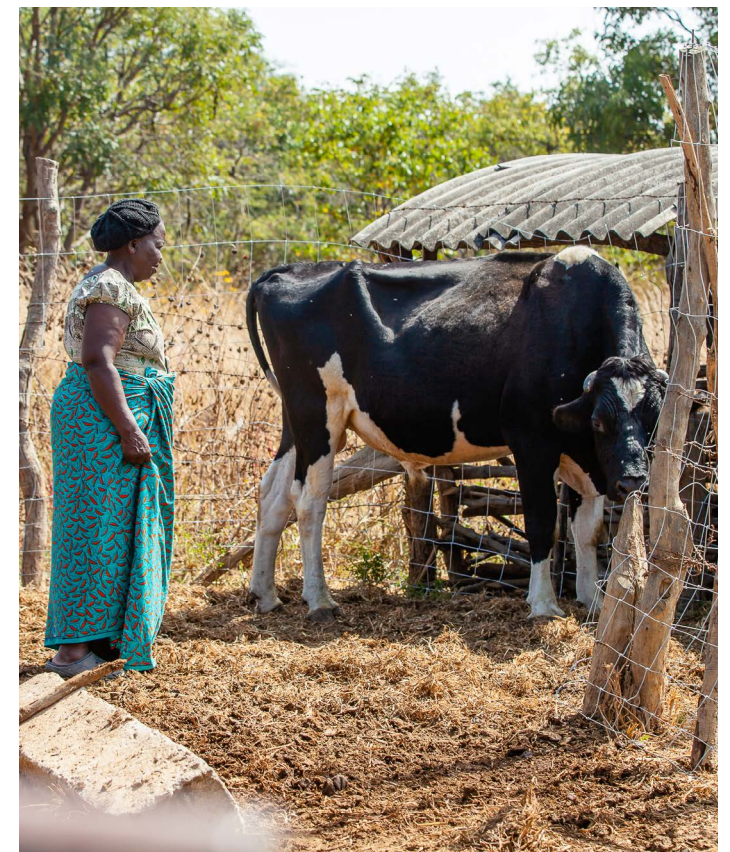
2. Teamwork makes the dream work



Agriculture remains the priority sector in the growth and poverty reduction agenda for Zambia. Over 60 percent of the population derives its livelihood from agriculture. Despite Zambia experiencing strong economic growth in the recent years, agriculture has not performed well, and the government is working with several partners to promote agricultural growth. In this context, the INCREASE project aims to increase resilience for smallholder farmers, farmer organisations, and SMEs by promoting climate smart technologies in agriculture and renewable energy.

For Mr and Mrs Namakobo, farming had become tiresome as year in and year out, challenges kept hindering their efforts for a bumper harvest. With increased input costs, pests, diseases, and erratic rainfall leading to low productivity in both crops and livestock, this low productivity resulted into very low income which created food and income insecurity in the family. At the age of 67 one would expect life to get easier, but it was not so for this couple who have been married for 43 years.

It was in 2022 that Mr. and Mrs. Namakobo's troubles were about to come to an end, when they became part of the INCREASE project being implemented by SNV Zambia through funding from the Swedish embassy in Zambia. The couple received various climate smart practices trainings such as agroforestry, minimum tillage, crop rotation, crop diversification, efficient water usage and dairy farming. As part of the project technical support, they received 70% support for the biogas digester construction to ease the burden of looking for firewood and providing a clean source of energy. Rosemary and her husband through the project support were able to put their knowledge to use and underwent trainings organised by SNV's agriculture and veterinary experts. Working together as a couple has brought in tremendous results for the family. For a project to be successful, both husband and wife need to view themselves as partners and have a vision for their family. The INCREASE project has taught communities the importance of working together as couples.





3. One's background does not determine one's destiny

Oscar Mwale, is a talented, self- motivated and hardworking young man, born and raised in Katete district of Eastern province of Zambia. He is the first born in a family of eight children. He grew up in a family that struggled financially and the only source of income they had was farming. Once the farming seasons came to an end his family struggled to have a decent meal every day.

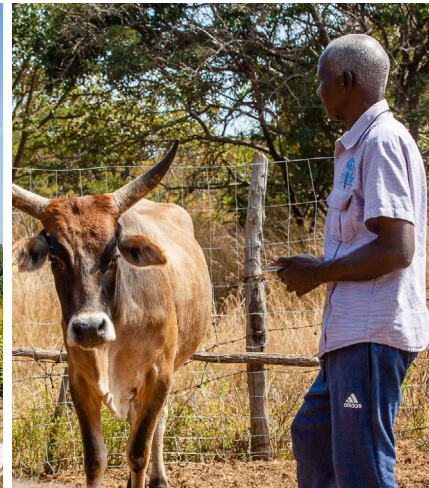
Oscar explains the struggle his mother went through to put food on the table, he said 'Mum would wake up at 05:00am and spend the whole day trying to source for food. She would come back later in the night very tired'. Under such financial constraints Oscar failed to complete his primary education hence his dream of going to school and becoming a doctor was crushed. In 2012, the worst nightmare of any child happened to Oscar, his mother passed on. This shattered Oscar and he knew that the responsibility of taking care of his old father and seven siblings was on his shoulders. Oscar had to come up with a way to provide for his family.

Chance would have it that Oscar always had an interest in brick laying. He got this inspiration from his uncle who built houses and toilets for people within the community. From that time on Oscar started to make some money but it was not enough to take care of his family especially after he got married, the burden only increased. He could not even get enrolled to study a course in bricklaying, thus he resorted to selling cooking oil to provide for his family.



The results were astounding for Rosemary and her husband. Through the trainings, they have been able to increase their maize productivity from 2.5 tonnes to 4.5 tonnes per hectare resulting in their income increasing from ZMW 14,000.00 to ZMW 25,200.00. Excited and grateful, Rosemary mentioned that 'Our lives have changed with increased yields and income. We are so grateful to the INCREASE project for the support.'

Families are eating better, living standards and financial security improving comparatively. The couple's success is also kindling the spirit of entrepreneurship among their community members and inspiring others to pursue new paths to earning and supporting their families, leaving the days of unproductive tasks behind — and leading dignified lives.





4. Empowering women to uplift each other

Horticulture aggregators play an important role in linking smallholder farmers with markets. They buy fruits and vegetables from smallholder farmers and sell to buyers in the formal and informal markets. Barbra Nyirenda, based in Solwezi District, has realised this opportunity and has reached over two hundred smallholder farmers through her aggregation model.

A golden opportunity presented itself and Oscar was not going to miss it. In 2021, SNV through the INCREASE project came to his area to capacitate men and women on various life skills to increase income, food and energy security for men, women and youth farmers. Oscar immediately received training in climate smart agriculture practices and renewable energy technologies. It turned out to be one of the wisest decisions he ever made. After the trainings, he started constructing biogas digesters on a small scale but through his hard work and determination, his clientele base increased. He then went ahead and registered a company named Malaole General Dealers which he runs together with his wife who is also involved in key decision making. Their company is one of the best performing biodigester construction enterprise in the Eastern Province.

'SNV through the INCREASE Project has made my life way better than it used to be. Our income has increased significantly, and we are able to employ other eight youths in my community.' said Oscar.

Looking into the future, Oscar is working on growing their company and capacitating and creating opportunities for young people in his community. 'Every time I meet a young person, I see it as an opportunity to tell them my story to motivate them. This story I proudly wear on the sleeve of my hands.' He encourages other youths to work very hard. One's background does not determine one's destiny. The skills trainings offered by the INCREASE Project reduces poverty by availing the potential to earn a better living, enjoy greater resilience and provide practical skills to youths in Zambia.





Through the INCREASE Project, she was trained on how to organise farmers into supply chain groups, how to use scales to determine the buying prices, how to plan and organise logistics such as transport, and how to conduct negotiations and finalise sales agreements with the buyers.

The 52-year-old mother of five buys bananas and vegetables from smallholder farmers around Solwezi and Kalumbila districts. She has also formalized her company called Skydates Enterprises. Traditionally, the women are the managers of these crops, thus most female suppliers can decide on their own about production and marketing. They then spend their income from sales for family wellbeing. These however are important indicators of economic empowerment: women can make decisions and have access to the market.

Since Barbra's company started buying the vegetables and bananas, thus providing a reliable market, the women's husbands have gained interest, and the company has noticed an increase in the number of male suppliers. 'We previously sold our vegetables and fruits by the road. We are happy to be working with Skydates company as we now have a readily available market and guaranteed income,' reiterated a smallholder farmer.

Barbra has managed to make a lasting impact in the lives of the women and men in Solwezi and Kalumbila. She has managed to put in place a 5,000 Mt cold storage fully operational for the fruits and vegetable. The facility runs on both national hydro grid (ZESCO), and solar power and has slowly been driven towards green energy (solar power generation) because of the trainings she received from the INCREASE Project.

Currently the facility uses solar power during the day and ZESCO at night. Barbra has managed to create employment opportunities for six youth to assist her with running the company. After purchasing from the smallholder farmers, she then supplies to the bigger markets where the smallholder farmers may fail to access due to lack of paperwork and distance. She supplies restaurants, lodges, supermarkets, and various mining companies' canteens.

Barbra has been able to purchase her own premise for the company and she is hoping to acquire refrigerated trucks for collection of fresh produce from smallholder farmers to increase the quality of vegetables deliveries to the various markets. 'Our greatest step has been our ability to invest and shift from a rented premise to our own – it pays to be a reliable aggregator,' she said.

There are many barriers that affect women entrepreneurs in agricultural value chains as well as other sectors. These factors include male dominance, lack of access to a stable market, capital and capacity and capital-making it hard for women to fully participate in the profitable value chains. Some barriers stem from their homes

while others are prevalent in the community. To overcome some of these barriers, the INCREASE Project is promoting gender responsive activities (IGAs) that consider their needs and expertise.

'We previously sold our vegetables and fruits by the road. We are happy to be working with Skydates company as we now have a readily available market and guaranteed income,' reiterated a smallholder farmer.

5. Defying the odds



Life as we know it, comes with all sorts of challenges but tough times do not last, only tough people do. This resonates deeply with Lemmy Kazeli, whose resilience in the face of adversity is nothing short of remarkable. Despite being physically impaired with paralysed legs and having three fingers missing, Lemmy navigates the complexities of supporting a large family of ten children, the youngest of whom is only two years old. One can only imagine how he handles it all. At 54, married to Mbaita Manzheli, Lemmy is a farmer and carpenter by profession.



Lemmy could barely feed his family despite his job as a carpenter and the 7-hectare farm where he produced vegetables. Production was very low to a level where he could only sell very little. It was enough to support his family.

Doing what he knew best, despite the climate working against his hard work, Lemmy continued to work hard for his family up until he got his hands on some new knowledge that would change the trajectory of his farming life forever. Lemmy received training conducted by SNV Zambia through Impuls Africa, a technical implementing partner in the horticulture value chain. In 2020 because of his commitment and hard work, Lemmy was elected Chairperson for Chelisha Matangwa Cooperative which has a membership of 32 men and women and 22 of those are differently abled.

After the training Lemmy has increased the production in his farm from quarter a lima to 3 limos of vegetable production (leafy vegetables, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, eggplants, okra, pumpkin leaves, lumanda etc).



Lemmy and his family are now happy with their diversified diets from the variety of vegetables produced from his garden. He owes this to his participation in the horticulture training facilitated by the INCREASE Project. The farmer was also quick to indicate that his income generation capacity has increased from ZMW300.00 to ZMW1,500.00 monthly through vegetable sales thus translating into more purchasing power for their household daily needs. This change has improved his image in the community. Previously they looked down upon him but now through increased income he is now able to provide for his family. He said, 'The INCREASE Project has really restored my dignity and I feel respected by my community members.'

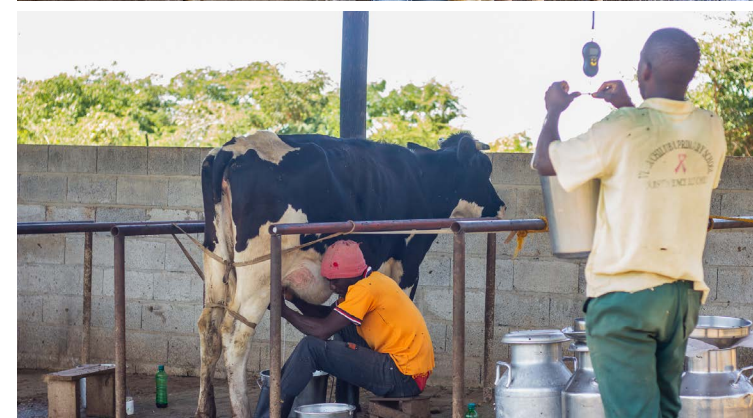
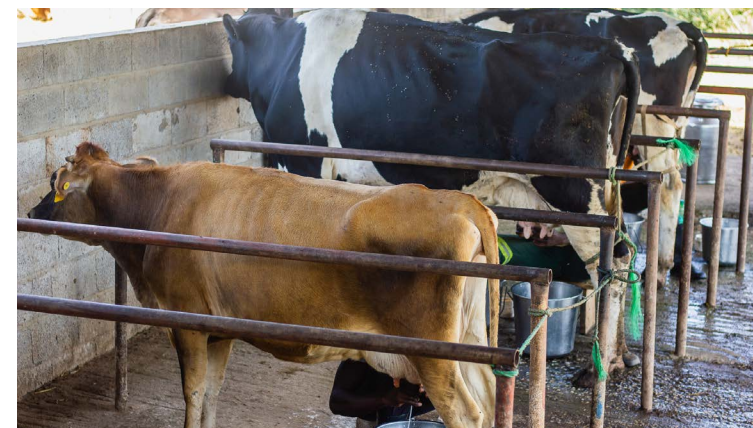
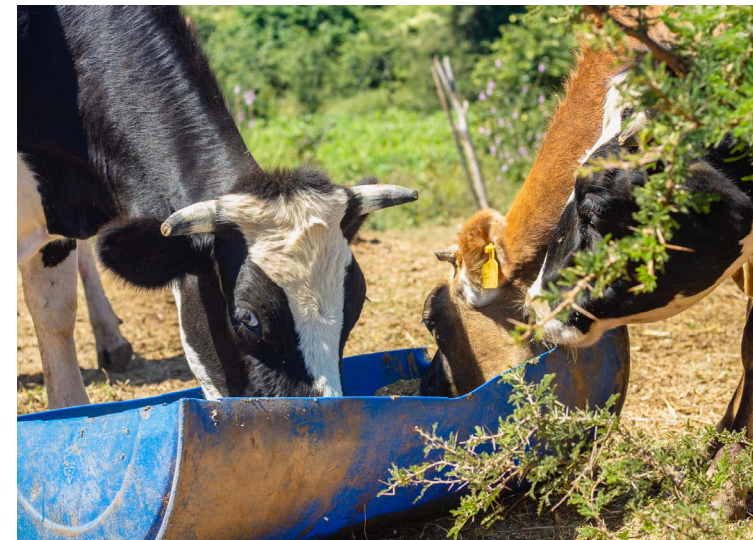
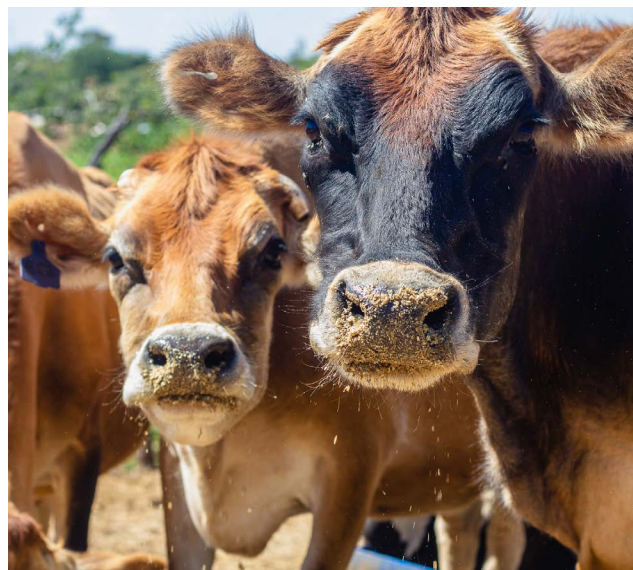
As the chairperson for the group, he conducts mentorship programs to the community on climate smart agronomics practices he acquired from the trainings by the project. Now, he has intensively reached 29 additional farmers from those he supports in his cooperative. Through his mentorship programs, the surrounding communities have joined vegetable production leading to the expansion and growth of the horticulture value chain.

Lemmy's future plan is to increase his production efficiency through mechanisation of his farm with agriculture machinery such as a tractor and solar irrigation equipment.

6. It takes two to tango: lead farmers transforming gender norms through cooperatives in Zambia



Ernest Cheepa, 54 years, is a smallholder farmer from Chongwe District in Lusaka and a member of Chalala Dairy Cooperative. He is also a lead farmer who has not only embraced the need for women to participate in the cooperation affairs but is also working with his wife in their dairy value chain project. 'We all understand the saying that two heads are better than one, this is why joint decision making with your spouse is critical at family level,' emphasised Mr. Cheepa.



In 2021, Chalala Dairy Cooperative received technical training on milk hygiene, feed formulation and many others through the INCREASE Project, in partnership with Mulungushi University and Zambia Institute of Animal Health. This training resulted in the construction of a milk collection centre as well as formalising the cooperative to access reputable markets like Parmalat and Zambeef. A Memorandum of Agreement with assistance from SNV Zambia was signed. The cooperative produces 87,000 litres of milk and their monthly sales amounts to KW 1,017,900.00. Before joining the cooperative, most members livelihoods were based on small investments from their savings but now it has expanded because of their dairy enterprises.

The cooperative has also been able to start up a savings club which they are upscaling to a SACCO allowing other community members to access the funds. Many have talked about women empowerment without practice, but Chalala Dairy Cooperative is a living example. To achieve this, the project uses a lead farmer approach in promoting gender equality and social inclusion during the implementation of the project.

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7. Intervention story



Chikhulupiliro women's group was initially registered as a group to empower women and support their livelihood with their traditional village banking in 2014. Wise as it was, it did not improve much of their inventiveness as the money was used for consumption and no investments were being made.

In 2022, the group received training from SNV through the INCREASE project, gaining knowledge on entrepreneurship skills. The three-day training changed the whole trajectory of their lives as they came up with a goat rearing proposal, presented it to the Milanzi Constituency Development Fund (CDF) which afforded them a grant of ZMW40,000.



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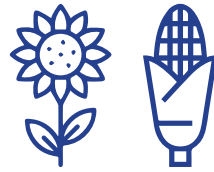
With the money the group managed to build an improved goat house with burnt bricks and iron (tined) roof, which they constructed with the help of their husbands. They have also procured 20 improved goat breeds, two males (bucks), and 18 females.

'This is a significant shift towards our objectives for the formation of our group almost 10 years ago. Thank you to SNV for resuscitating our vision' said the group Chairlady Mrs. Mariana Zulu.

Chikhulupiliro is among the hundreds of women groups that have been empowered by SNV through the tailor-made entrepreneurship training, coaching and mentorship program that supports Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) approach.



8. Changing lives



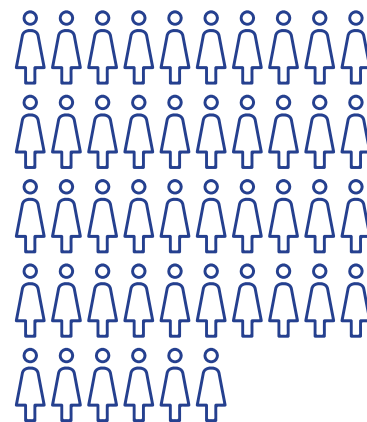
'When we started the Zebra Group in 2010, we were not exactly sure how the venture would turn out. A few years later we are now able to rent a diesel Hammer Mill, sell mealie meal and sunflower cakes to the community. It is a dream we never thought possible to achieve,' said Ms. Anick Lubinda, a cooperative coordinator in Zambia.

A group of 46 women and 12 men, the 'Zebra' group as they call themselves, are running a thriving enterprise in Zimba District. This is following trainings in business and management skills the group received from SNV's INCREASE Project in 2021. According to Ms. Lubinda, before the trainings, they did not have a record keeping system and they were not able to track their cash flows to identify profits and losses. For a long time, prior to joining the INCREASE Project, the group had been grappling with food insecurity. The chairperson also highlighted that after the GESI sensitisation in the community by SNV, the men and local leadership started giving them support. 'Now our husbands allow us to attend meetings. Moreso, we are happy that we make decisions as families on what to plant unlike before.'

Zebra group received business development capacity building from SNV and a diesel hammer mill from the government, which they use to grind maize meal and sell to surrounding communities. They also produce animal feeds for dairy farmers, creating job opportunities for women and youth in the area. The training received helped the group keep track of transactions and avoid financial losses. The group is recording a monthly income of ZMW 17,000.00 through this enterprise and has seen the benefits of value addition in their activities.

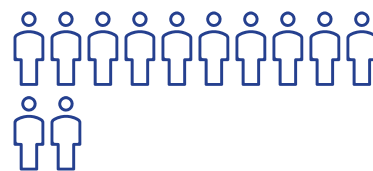
The group has already started witnessing a significant change in their households. They no longer quarrel with their husbands as there is now enough nutritious food in their homes through the incomes from their enterprises. They have also managed to drill a borehole for all year-round production.

SNV Zambia is working with communities to build coping capabilities to promote sustainability in different districts through the INCREASE Project. The project uses a community-led gender empowerment method to address gender dynamics and ensure equitable access to resources within the households.



46 WOMEN

'Now our husbands allow us to attend meetings. Moreso, we are happy that we make decisions as families on what to plant unlike before.'



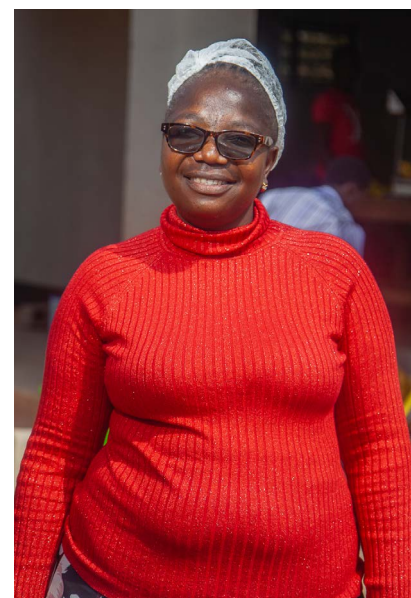
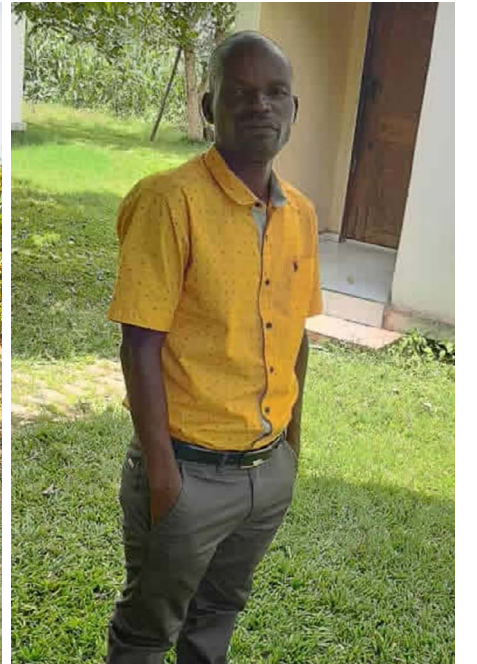
12 MEN



SNV is a mission-driven global development partner working in more than 20 countries across Africa and Asia. Building on 60 years of experience and grounded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we work on the core themes of gender equality and social inclusion, climate adaptation and mitigation, and strong institutions and effective governance.

Together with our team of over 1,600 people, our mission is to strengthen capacities and catalyse partnerships that transform the agri-food, energy, and water systems, which enable sustainable and more equitable lives for all.

SNV



To read SNV's 2030 Strategy and related documents, visit:
www.snv.org/2030-strategy



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