



CASE STUDIES: VALUE CHAINS

CASE STUDY 1: Vegetables in Tanzania & Kenya, FARM Africa

In 2004, FARM-Africa funded the World Vegetable Centre (AVRDC) “to increase the productivity, utilisation and marketing” of African Indigenous Vegetables (AIVs), such as amaranth, cowpeas, nightshades, spinach, kales and cabbage, in order to improve the health, nutrition and income of vulnerable groups in Kenya and Tanzania. About 500 farmers were organized into 20 groups and on average 20 beds (0.05–0.1ha each) were cultivated per farmer. The project used innovative approaches such as (1) training of trainers and support to business groups; (2) information about production and marketing; (3) changes in the production of indigenous vegetables; (4) seed dissemination, distribution and multiplication; and (5) increased market orientation through business support units. Farmers were able to obtain greater returns from sales as well as use 50% less fertiliser and 30% less pesticide than for conventionally grown vegetables, earning an annual income of \$3,000–4,500.¹



Kenyan women's group. Credit, Fintrac

The project stimulated social cohesion, especially in Kenya where farmers met frequently to exchange views on marketing and production strategies. Women particularly benefitted through training and education about the benefits of AIVs.² Following the training, women who previously considered AIVs to be weeds reported that they used them to improve household food security and income. They now perceive AIVs to be nutritious, easily available at little cost, to bridge food gaps during dry periods and offer a source of

income without interference from male family members. More than 60% of farmers groups involved in the project were able to penetrate several markets with their AIVs. One farmer, Mama Perina, invested her additional income in growing AIVs, primarily for her own consumption but also to sell to neighbours and traders. Other women farmers are known to spend their additional income on the welfare of their families, including more nutritious food, medicines and schooling.³

CASE STUDY 2: The Hub model, Heifer International

With long term support from Heifer International in Kenya (HPI-K), the viability of the ‘hub model’ has been re-established, following previous attempts to form cooperatives, which were unsuccessful due to corruption and mismanagement.⁴ A hub, in this case, is an economic centre of a farming community, insuring effective marketing of farm products into better paying urban markets, and bringing in farm supplies and



Gathering milk by bicycle. Credit, Heifer International





services needed by the community.⁵ The hub model is an approach that utilises a profitable agribusiness centre to support a network of businesses by delivering supplies and services to farmers within the network.

Farmers organise themselves into dairy farmer business associations which market the milk collectively. Any surplus milk that a farmer produces is taken to the collection centre through a network of local transporters. The centre tests, filters, and chills the milk, and then sells it on to processors. The centre can offer more favourable rates because they are processing larger volumes of milk and quality is controlled all from one source. Ultimately, individual dairy farmers find it easier to access inputs, services and facilities for bulking and cooling raw milk leading to increased incomes.⁶

CASE STUDY 3: Women's Economic Interest Groups, Senegal

Women are often constrained within production and processing areas of a value chain, because they lack access to information, capital, technical skills and the confidence needed to engage in more complex activities such as bulk marketing, export markets, or higher value-adding activities. By forming Economic Interest Groups (EIGs) women can pool resources, share knowledge and provide support to one another, allowing them better access to higher-value markets.

In response to urban demand, women in the city of Thies, Senegal created an EIG to engage in processing local raw products into ready-to-use products. The EIG Keur Tafsir Makhary helps its 15 women members develop and improve food-processing techniques to diversify the types of products they can commercialise.



Harvesting cassava in Liberia. Credit, Nico Parkinson, USAID

The EIG members transform a variety of products including maize, honey, cassava, fruits and vegetables. Following a sharp rise in rice prices between 2007 and 2008 the group took the initiative to start making couscous out of cassava, which they now market from their homes or local shops as an alternative to rice. Cassava couscous and flour are their most popular products.

Whilst the EIG has had a positive impact on the women's revenue, it remains to be seen how the EIG can better position itself in markets for processed products. Members still face several challenges: maintaining a steady supply of raw products, especially the cereals they have to buy; overcoming technical difficulties related to the lack of suitable equipment; obtaining adequate training and transport; improving labelling and packaging; and expanding points of sale.⁷





¹ Pretty, J, Toulmin, C & Williams, S 2011, 'Sustainable intensification in African agriculture' *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, vol. 9 no. 1, pp. 5-24.

² Muhanji, G, Roothaert, RL, Webo, C & Stanley, M 2011, 'African indigenous vegetable enterprises and market access for small-scale farmers in East Africa' *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability* vol. 9 no.1 pp. 194-202.

³ Muhanji, G, Roothaert, RL, Webo, C & Stanley, M 2011, 'African indigenous vegetable enterprises and market access for small-scale farmers in East Africa' *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability* vol. 9 no.1 pp. 194-202.

⁴ Kruse, G 2012, *The Chilling Hub Model and Social Capital in Dairy Value Chain Development: A Case of Heifer International in Kenya*, Heifer International, Nairobi.

⁵ Kruse, G 2012, *The Chilling Hub Model and Social Capital in Dairy Value Chain Development: A Case of Heifer International in Kenya*, Heifer International, Nairobi.

⁶ Kruse, G 2012, *The Chilling Hub Model and Social Capital in Dairy Value Chain Development: A Case of Heifer International in Kenya*, Heifer International, Nairobi.

⁷ Elbehre, A & Lee, M 2011, *The role of women producer organizations in agricultural value chains: Practical lessons from Africa and India*, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Rome.

