Interviews conducted in Zambia 2004, and Ghana 2005, illustrate the outcomes of three contrasting strands of research.

Road to Market
Markets are where we buy and sell. We take them for granted: every day - in our own communities, in our countries, and all around the world - goods and services are exchanged. But in sub-Saharan Africa, the barriers to market entry are high, and many small-holders and cultivators of kitchen gardens struggle to bring their goods to market. They find that there are simply too many obstacles along the way. Some can't find an intermediary to take their goods to market. Some can't transport their goods, or keep them fresh, so they sell them locally and more cheaply. Some lack the information and skills to grow their businesses. Some struggle to meet the quality and export standards that would allow them to sell their goods abroad. And some have immediate cash needs, such as at the start of a school year, or by the simple inability to store their produce. This research has brought together buyers, sellers and facilitators as well as academics and scientists. Most importantly, the research has brought together peoples at every stage of the food chain, from farm to fork. This publication shows what we found in two countries: Ghana and Zambia. It's a heartening tale of how research can improve lives, of how change can happen for the better. Read it to find out how.

I am taking this cassava from my farm to sell in the market. When I go to the market, I assess the prices and decide what I will sell. Some of the market women also buy my cassava. I know that the people who buy from me are going to sell the cassava at a higher price than I will. There is no industry that I can sell to, because I have no transport. If there was transport then I would sell to those places, and I would get more profit than I do at local markets. The immediate problem is getting my produce to the market. If people do not come to buy this cassava when I have reached the market, the next problem is bringing it back. Then I will take it to the road side, but the prices that I will get are very unpredictable, that is if I find someone to buy at all.

Markets are where we buy and sell. We take them for granted: every day—in our own communities, in our countries, and all around the world—goods and services are exchanged.

But in sub-Saharan Africa, the challenges of smallholder farmers and processors are fought daily. The struggle to bring their goods to market is not simply a matter of price: not only must they overcome the obstacles along the way but also find a buyer who will accept their goods.

Some cannot find an intermediary to take their goods to market. Some cannot transport their goods, or keep them fresh, so they sell them locally and more cheaply. Some lack the information and skills to grow and sell their produce abroad. And some—by immediate cash needs, or the simple inability to store their goods—must sell their produce quickly and cheaply.

Over the past ten years, research funded by the UK’s Department for International Development, through its Crop Post-Harvest Programme, has looked at some of the main barriers to some of the world’s poorest people bringing their goods to market. The research has tried to bring together buyers, sellers, and facilitators as well as academics and scientists. Most importantly, the research has tried to bring those on the ground to the research.

Only those on the ground know what is possible, and only those who have problems with buying and selling their produce abroad have the evidence and certainty about the solutions they need to succeed. The research has highlighted the need for development agencies to mobilize resources to support those who have problems buying and selling their produce, and ensure that the evidence they generate is used to change and improve the situation of those who have problems buying and selling their produce.

This publication is the result of that research. It is intended to be a toolkit for those who want to understand the problems of buying and selling in rural areas, and to know what is possible, and who can do what to help those who have problems buying and selling their produce abroad.
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aize in Zambia is farmed annually, which means that at certain times of the year, markets tend to be swamped with excess produce. Small-holder farmers typically have to sell their corn at whatever price they are offered. As one farmer explains: “It is a matter of giving you a little because you have got a problem.”

The warehouse receipt system, also known as warehouse inventory credit, was implemented to address post-harvest losses, mostly with maize. DFID funded the development programme to investigate this concept in 1992, and this was continued under the CPHP in 1996. The aim of the research has been to identify features of warehouse design, which can be applied in other countries.

The warehouses have been developed to encourage storage, which can reduce the loss of crops through weevil infestation and damp. When a crop is delivered to a warehouse, the depositor receives a warehouse receipt (CFC) from ZACA, headed by Chief Examiner Mr. Martin Hamusiya, which acts as a guarantee for the maize stored. The warehouse is ZACA guaranteed, and the borrower is able to produce a receipt, he can secure a loan using maize as collateral.

Without specifications, formal contracting is difficult. There is no stamp of quality on grains, which means that securing trust is difficult. Now, small-holders can bulk up their crop to sell it further down the chain to larger traders.

Bankers agree that the system is very beneficial to farmers, as an on-campaign farmer explains: “It is the best thing about the warehouse receipt system.” 

Standards set by ZACA also mean that consumers, as on-campaign farmers explain, can trust the maize received. The system has been sustained through consultation with stakeholders at every stage of the implementation process. Supportive legislation is required to ensure that the system operates as intended. The system has been introduced with a fanfare in 1999, and over the next three years, it is estimated that maize worth US $13 million will be stored.

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Road to Market in Zambia is farmed annually, which means that at certain times of the year, markets tend to be swamped with excess produce. Small-holder farmers typically have to sell what they are offered. As one farmer explains: “It is a matter of giving you a little because you have got a problem.”

The warehouse receipt system, also known as warehouse inventory credit, was implemented to address post-harvest losses, mostly with maize. DFID ... now part of the University of Greenwich, to carry out research and pilot work on this subject in 1992, and this was continued under the CPHP in 1996. The aim of the research has been to identify features of warehouse design, which can be applied in ... (CFC) from 2000 to 2004, a new system was developed to address storage problems that small-scale farmers were experiencing.

The warehouses have been developed to encourage storage, which can reduce the loss of crops through weevil infestation and damp. When a crop ... In April 2001, ZACA, headed by Chief Examiner Mr. Martin Hamusiya, was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee.

Standards set by ZACA also ensure that farmers can, as one community has put it, “play the market”. In the past, it has been difficult to predict prices for maize. New grading and weighing systems, and grading ... his crop from storage and sell it at a price which suits him, avoiding the low prices of the immediate post-harvest period.

The warehouse receipt system also addresses the problem of satisfying immediate needs when markets are swamped. When a depositor delivers his grain, ... in particular, this relieves the stress of having to sell a crop to pay for immediate concerns like fertilisers and school supplies. According to one farmer: “This is the best thing about the warehouse receipt system.” Bankers agree that the system is very beneficial to ... warehouse is ZACA guaranteed, and the borrower is able to produce a receipt, he can secure a loan using maize as collateral.

Without specifications, formal contracting is difficult. There is no stamp of quality on grains, which means that securing trust is difficult. Now, ... enterprise, named SHEMP. Now, small-holders can bulk up their crop to sell it further down the chain to larger traders. The system has been sustained through consultation with stakeholders at every stage of the implementation process. Supportive legislation is ... Bank and Intermarket Banking. In the first year alone of operating, certified warehouses achieved eighty percent occupancy.

There is progress, but many people do not know about the system, or think that they cannot be part of it. Some farmers are sceptical about getting loans, new ways of thinking and working, and the role of an intermediate organisation such as ZACA. This includes the creation of ... of the poverty reduction agenda. The results show that the warehouse receipt system is already having a large impact, increasing production, improving storage, enhancing incomes, ...
Interviews with stakeholders from Zambia

Small-scale farmer at Chongwe: Mr Stephen Mbafti

I have taken some skills that I learnt from commercial farms, and applied them here. After harvesting the maize, we sell it because we have no place where we can store it, so we only sell it immediately. We need to pay for fertilizers, the fuel, and the tractor, and we also need to cultivate for the next season.

I think that the problem with the warehouses is that we do not know what will happen next year, whether the price will be up or not, maybe the price will be reduced. That’s why we sell immediately, and plant again.

We have heard about the ZACA warehouse system, and we want to get some details. I think that it would help small-scale farmers especially, to have some income from their maize, so to avoid wastage they will sell straight away. With farming being a business now, farmers must be sure of where to get the resources to develop their farms. If you are not sure where to get funds, it is very difficult to operate a farm. The banking system can provide these. If you don’t have the resources, you can’t develop your farm. The organisation would give farmers strong lobbying power, which could help them to secure better prices for their produce.

Chairman of the Kanakantapa Farmers’ Association: Mr John Tembo

ZACA offers a very promising kind of arrangement. Storage problems lead us to sell our maize prematurely. We don’t have the means to store our produce. As a result, we end up planting less than we would like.

Our main crop is maize, and we are trying to add soya beans. One of our problems is that we do not have enough manpower. We have to employ one or two boys to assist. We don’t have bags, or medicine to control pests and keep the crop for longer. Prices are not good. In most cases, we sell our produce to the Food Reserve Agency, very cheaply. We need to sell our crops at a price that is good, and we need to have the resources to store it. If you don’t have bags, you can’t store it. When you start planting with no manpower, you can’t plant much. We need to explain to them exactly what the system is all about. At the moment, I think that farmers have been battered right, left and centre by the market. If farmers are not given proper information, they will be suspicious. This system is a very big problem for us as small farmers. If we cannot find a market for our crop ourselves, we know that we will not get a good price. We need to have better prices for our produce.

Because we sold off too quickly, money is spent. We need to buy the fertilizers now, but we have no more maize. We end up planting less than we would like.

Small-scale farmer at Kanakantapa: Mrs Chishala

One of our problems is that we don’t have enough manpower. We have to employ one or two boys to assist. We don’t have bags, or medicine to control pests and keep the crop for longer. Prices are not good. In most cases, we sell our produce to the Food Reserve Agency, very cheaply. We need to sell our crops at a price that is good, and we need to have the resources to store it.

When you are desperate, and you don’t have transport, money or anywhere to store, you have to sell your crop at any price.
Small-scale farmer at Chongwe: Mr Stephen Mbafti

I have taken some skills that I learnt from commercial farms, and applied them here. After harvesting the maize, we sell it immediately because we have no place where we can store it. We need to pay for fertilizers, fuel, and the tractor, and we also need to cultivate for the next season.

I think that the problem with the warehouses is that we do not know what will happen next year, whether the price will be up or not. Maybe the price will be reduced. That’s why we sell immediately, and plant again.

We have heard about the ZACA warehouse system, and we want to get some details. I think that it would help small-scale farmers, especially, to have some income during the off season, so to avoid wastage they will sell straight away. With farming being a business now, farmers must be sure of where to get the resources to develop their farms. If you are not sure where to get funds, it is very difficult to operate a farm.

ZACA offers a very promising kind of arrangement. Storage problems lead us to sell our maize prematurely. We don’t have the means to store our produce. As a result, we sell our produce at a low price.

Because we sold off too quickly, money is spent. We need to buy the fertilizers now, but we have no more maize. We end up planting less than we would like.

Small-scale farmer at Kanakantapa: Mr Stephen Mbafti

Our main crop is maize, and we are trying to add soya beans. One of our problems is that we do not have enough manpower. We have to employ one or two boys to assist. We don’t have bags, or medicine to control pests and keep the crop for longer.

Prices are not good. In most cases, we sell our produce to the Food Reserve Agency, very cheaply. We need to sell it at a more reasonable price. And when you start planting with no manpower, you can’t plant much.

Because we sold off too quickly, money is spent. We need to buy the fertilizers now, but we have no more maize. We end up planting less than we would like.
Warehouse operator at Wangwa Warehouse, Chisamba: Mr George Phiri

I think that the warehouses are good, because they are safe. It is better with ZACA, because there is now an agent between the farmer and the buyer of a product. Before, season to season there might not be anywhere to sell. At the end of the day, farmers would reduce their prices.

Small-scale farmer at Kanakantapa: Mr Musama Chilungo

I am working with my mother, who has just started farming. After I graduated, I came back here to help her. It is our first year of farming and we have not had any problems so far. We are expanding. You know, how high is the interest? How high is it? I do not yet know who I will sell to, but we are intending to sell straight to millers.

Small-scale farmer at Chongwe: Mr George Mwila Kangwa

After harvesting our maize, we sell immediately. We take it into town and sell it to the millers. We have had some difficulties with selling all of our maize. Sometimes we have been forced to sell it for a lower price. If it was free then we would go there, but as it is we fail to pay them. The problem that we have is trying to find someone to buy our maize. We peasant farmers do not grow at much, and we are not sure of the prices. Any price that someone wants to charge us, we would say no. We are not sure of our prices. The traders who come to buy our crops have their ears tied to the market in town. If they know the price at Soweto market, for example, you can’t go too high otherwise they won’t buy it. I also have to keep my family happy. We need to buy fertilizers. We have to reap before we can sell. We have to sow before we can reap. We have to sow before we can reap. If the principle is right, there is no problem.

Where there is a loan, there must be instructions that will follow. They don’t just give loans minus any argument to follow! I have seen the difficulties. We have money annually. I have got children, I need to take them to school, and I need to eat. You know, I just depend on that twenty or ten bags a year. I cannot wait, because in a season the produce might be able to wait, but we cannot. We need the money. How are we going to plough again if I do not have money and I am waiting around? I will sell just like that, because what I want is to plough again. I don’t have solutions to those problems, so I have to sell whether the price is high or low.

Chairman of the Kulya Nkona Agri-Co-operative Society at Chisamba: Amos Rubani Makweja

Kulya Nkona means eat and sleep. It is the opposite of what we expect our farmers to do, because we must act as a community and take responsibility. We were finding that without the warehouse receipt system, we could not keep our maize until it could get good prices. So, we wanted to wait until the price would be higher. By December, the prices will be higher, and then we will sell. That is the main benefit. What we are doing is that we have got to use the storage money to give a loan. Our maize is our security, and the bankers can do what they want. They know where your maize is, and that it is safe. It is a proper market. If you hear that there are people buying maize, wherever it is, then that is where you must take it.

During the time I was planning to become a maize merchant, the field would have been mine. I was still a farmer. I am still a farmer. I want to become a maize merchant. I want to have a loan so that I can do something. But it is not easy. If we don’t know the market, we have to think about it. Without belonging to a market, you cannot think about it. I think there is information in farming. I think there is something. It is not easy. But you can’t do what you want, and you can’t do what you want, and you can’t do what you want. There is very little information on market trends, trading vegetables and so on. There is literally nothing on television or radio. We need this information to keep abreast.
Warehouse operator at Wangwa Warehouse, Chisamba: Mr George Phiri

I think that the warehouses are good, because we lost a lot of our produce last year. Before, there were no warehouses. If there are any damages due to theft, then we can take responsibility for the losses. I think it is better to sell through our channels, through ZACA, because there is an agent between the farmer and the buyer of a product. If we directly sell to the buyer, then we might not get a fair price. We can only get a fair price through ZACA. We feel that we are safe. We can store our produce longer, we can get more money. It is better to have the warehouses.

Small-scale farmer at Kanakantapa: Mr Musama Chilungo

I am working with my mother, who has just started farming. After I graduated, I came back here to help her. It is our first year of farming and we have not had any problems so far. We have a lot of maize. We do not have too many problems, although I would like to sell straight to the millers. The problem is about is the interest, how high is it? I do not yet know who I will sell to, but we are intending to sell straight to millers.

Small-scale farmer at Chongwe: Mr George Mwila Kangwa

After harvesting our maize, we sell immediately. We take it into town and sell it to the millers. We have had some difficulties with selling all of our maize. Sometimes we just find people who are willing to buy, but they cannot afford the price. If it was free then we would go there, but as it is, we would fail to pay them. The problem that we have is trying to find someone to buy our maize. We peasant farmers do not grow that much, and we are not sure of the prices. Any price that someone wants to charge us, we will have to sell. If we have a loan, then we can store. If we have enough maize, then we can sell. We peasant farmers are not clear about the price. We need to be clear about the price before we harvest.

Chairman of the Kulya Nkona Agri-Co-operative Society at Chisamba: Amos Rubani Makweja

Kulya Nkona means eat and sleep. It is the opposite of what we expect our farmers to do, because we must act as a community and take responsibility. We were finding that without the warehouse receipt system, we could not keep our maize until it could get good prices. So, we wanted to wait until the price would be higher. By December, the prices will be higher, and then we will sell. That is the main reason why we wanted to have warehouses. We are safe. Nobody can cheat me, because all my maize is kept where everything is to be recorded. I now know the profit that my maize will make. I can look to anyone who will give me a good price, and then sell to him. From the beginning, transport has been a problem. But now we are safe. We have storage facilities, and there is a proper market. If you hear that there are people buying maize, wherever it is, then that is where you must take it.

Small-scale farmer at Kanakantapa: General James Leke

I grow beans, Irish potatoes and maize. I think it is a very welcome idea indeed, especially for this area, because we are so far away from the market, the roads are not that good, and transport is a problem. We need to sell it as soon as possible. Just recently, I had Irish potatoes which I couldn’t move because I didn’t have transport. During the time I was trying to secure a market for that crop, the field could have been used to grow something else. I am still unsure of my margin. If I do not know the price, it becomes very difficult. Farming is a business, and pricing is very critical.

Traders who come to buy my crops have their ears tied to the market in town. If they know the price at Soweto market, for example, you can’t go too high otherwise they won’t buy it. I also have to keep negotiating my price. I have one or two contacts, and roughly I know how to price. There is very little information on market trends, trading vegetables and so on. There is literally nothing on television or radio. We need this information to keep abreast. If there are too many co-operatives, and we are trying to scale them down! If the principle is right, there is no problem.
Board member of the Kulya Nkona Agri-Co-operative Society at Chisamba: Mr Roderick Nyendwa

The receipt system has helped us to keep our maize safe, and it is treated. There are no insects that can tamper with it, and it is safe for a long time. The bankers know we have no insects or bugs in the crop. Previously, we were using cemented houses to store our maize. But there are no bags to store it in. We only had a small crop in the last four years. But ZACA has taught us that there is a certain way of cleaning maize, and we must get rid of a certain amount of trash and weevils. We now know what we must do so that our maize is of good quality. Before, we were not able to sell our maize and we had a lot of problems. We didn’t know how to sell our maize. We were not able to sell good-quality maize in the market. We were just sending our maize to the millers, but now we are able to send good-quality maize to the market. We don’t have any problems with the maize. We are able to sell our maize and we are happy in those markets. We have a certain way of storing our maize. Before, we were selling directly to the millers. Now we wait for the market to open. If we find a market, then we sell our maize. We also have a certain way of cleaning maize. We used to store our maize in the village, but now we transfer it to the warehouse, which lasts longer. The temporary storage that we use can be disturbed by rains, so that shelling becomes difficult. We only store temporarily, so that we do not have to...
Board member of the Kulya Nkona Agri-Co-operative Society at Chisamba: Mr Roderick Nyendwa

The receipt system has helped us to keep our maize safe, and it is treated. There are no insects that can tamper with it, and it is safe for a long time. The bankers know of the trouble we have had with bugs and dirt inside the crop, and no bags to store it in. But ZACA has taught us that there is a certain way of cleaning maize, and we must get rid of a certain amount of trash and weevils. We now know what we must come up with so that our maize is good quality. Before, when we took our maize in September, no one wanted to receive us. With ZACA saying ‘this is a new thing, try it’, it is working.

Assistant manager of Wangwa Warehouse at Chisamba: Mr Mwansa Museba

We were one of the first people to try the ZACA warehouse system in Zambia. I think it has got a lot of advantages, especially for the small-scale farmers and the banks. A farmer can go and deposit his produce and then come back later to get his money. Previously, if a farmer failed to sell his produce, he would have no money to prepare and plant for the following season's crop. Once the maize is brought here, we keep it until the farmer has found someone to buy it. The farmer is paid his money through ZACA. Once that money is in the bank, the financial institution will recognise, in a form which would enable borrowing. ZACA is backed by the financial institutions.

Small-scale farmer at Kanakantapa: Mr John Joemwenga

My farm is twenty hectares. My main crop is maize. I do not use the warehouses directly, but I take my maize to the Kulya Nkona Co-op, as I am now a member. This is a big help to us to buy. Taking our crop to the market involves a lot of things: transport, for example. We were anxious, and all we wanted was money, so we would sell to anyone who wanted to buy. I do not know about the loans from banks. We give three-quarters of our produce to the co-op, and one-quarter to ZACA. If we don’t have all the maize, we can take all the maize to the warehouse, we will starve. As we are waiting for the rest of the money from the warehouse, we use money from what we sell immediately. We could get a loan through the co-op, but we do not know what advantage we would get. We produce the maize, but the banks control it. The problems we face, like the price we get, are all controlled by the banks. We still have to get that money before the rain comes, so that we plough in time. All I can say is that there is no other option.

Small-scale farmer at Chongwe: Mr Maybin Kangwa

The problem with keeping our maize in storage is the price. After harvesting, the owners of fertilizer and other input costs need their money. So I think that the idea of a loan is a good one. But I do not think the government has a good system of storage. According to the quality of maize, the price and the standard that you keep it, if it’s not proper quality, they will say that they cannot take the maize, because it has weevils in it; you have to buy chemicals for it. Now, we peasant farmers cannot manage, because we do not know what the price will be, and the people in the warehouses do not know either. We peasant farmers have fear because we have no other resources. We just depend on one thing, maize, and if I only have this maize, then I have nothing. I need to get that money before the rain comes, so that we plough in time. All I can say is that there is no other option.
Improving Food Safety of Informally Vended Foods in Zambia

By empowering people with the knowledge and technology to improve their own environments, the aim of this project has been to benefit small-scale, cooked food vendors. The co-ordination and participation at all levels has been a key component of the work, feeding practical and direct information back into the research process.

Views collected from a project funded by the DFID Crop Post-Harvest Programme, and managed by the Natural Resources Institute (NRI) of the United Kingdom, have been invaluable in understanding and addressing the issues. The project focused on improving the ability of informal small food processors to comply with food security and hygiene regulations. This was achieved by involving key stakeholders in the research, so that its findings might be included in the national agenda. Sensitising the policy environment, and raising awareness, are “going round to talk to those people who did not attend the workshop, so that those who did not attend are also learning.”

Emphasis has been placed on involving key policy makers in the research, so that its findings might be included in the national agenda. Sensitising the policy environment, and raising awareness, are “going round to talk to those people who did not attend the workshop, so that those who did not attend are also learning.”

Vendors have taken up suggestions and new information with great enthusiasm. But, as in any environment, there is only a certain amount of change that can be expected. Resistance to change, in the form of removal are major constraints that need to be addressed if the full potential benefits of the research are to be realised.
Improving Food Safety of Informally Vended Foods in Zambia

By empowering people with the knowledge and technology to improve their own environments, the aim of this project has been to benefit small-scale, cooked food producers in Zambia. The project has focused on improving food safety through training and the provision of equipment and materials. Co-ordination and participation at all levels has been a key component of the work, feeding practical and direct information back into the research process.

Views collected from a project funded by the DFID Crop Post-Harvest Programme, and managed by the Natural Resources Institute (NRI) of the United Kingdom, have highlighted the need for increased information sharing, better coordination, and improved communication between stakeholders. Despite the formal protocol that Health Inspectors must be accompanied by a police officer, their role is understood, and information that they gather is shared.

Taking information and samples from vendors, without providing them with feedback, harbours mistrust and misunderstanding at all levels. This approach has been described as “going round to talk to those people who did not attend the workshop, so that those who did not attend are also learning.” Emphasis has been placed on involving key policy makers in the research, so that its findings might be included in the national agenda. Sensitising the policy environment, and raising awareness of the consequences of poor food safety, is “going back to create a remedy for the situation.” Changing the food supply chain is not enough; it must also be accompanied by improved communication and understanding.

To improve laboratory capacity and accuracy, new technology was provided under the project, including computers and cool-boxes for storing samples. Previously, the markets were not places where samples could be taken and analysed in depth, for both social and technological reasons. New linkages between different groups of people have enabled workers to deal with problems before they arise. This approach has been described as “going back to create a remedy for the situation.” Changing the food supply chain is not enough; it must also be accompanied by improved communication and understanding.

Vendors have taken up responsibilities and information on food safety and hygiene is now communicated more effectively. Mrs Rosemary Nachepembene, Soweto Market, comments: “How do you explain ‘E.coli’ to a vendor?” By improving communication between Health Inspectors and vendors, understanding is paving progress.

Removal of barriers to improvement is “going back to create a remedy for the situation.” Changing the food supply chain is not enough; it must also be accompanied by improved communication and understanding.
Interviews with vendors from Zambia

When it came to the vendors, it was more participatory. We used lots of pictures, to show scenarios, but from their own environment so that they could identify with them. We also allowed vendors to give their own ideas, for example, they have all picked their own uniforms. It came from them, and they have decided slowly to change.

Managing Partner for Informally Vended Food Programme at the National Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research (NISIR), in Lusaka:
Dr Rodah Zulu

There have been a lot of complications in terms of livelihood, particularly with the HIV epidemic and unemployment. The project was trying to see if informally vended food could be made a sustainable source of livelihood. Although it is easy to assume that there are no improvements, I don’t think that people are investing, which is why the project was needed. The project could not have taken place if there was no infrastructure. The project, as a policy maker, is in the position to say that the vendors are not well sensitised; what is it that they need to do? There should be some guidelines which people have to follow. Before the project, there existed a relationship between members of the coalition partners. When the project began, members were brought together. People were asked to contribute, and they came up with their ideas. It came from the vendors, and they have decided slowly to change.

Interviews with vendors from Zambia

Owner of Lillian’s Restaurant, Soweto marketing Lusaka:
I own my restaurant, which I have been running for eight years. I have about six workers helping me together with my young sister. I decided to set up my business because I needed to provide for my children, after studying business at school. I will not turn my children out onto the street, so I had to provide for them.

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Interviews with vendors from Zambia

When it came to the vendors, it was more participatory. We used lots of pictures, to show scenarios, but from their own environment so that they could identify with them. We also allowed vendors to give their own ideas; for example, they have all picked their own uniforms. It came from them, and they have decided slowly to change.

Managing Partner for Informally Vended Food Programme at the National Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research (NISIR), in Lusaka: Dr Rodah Zulu

There have been a lot of complications in terms of livelihood, particularly with the HIV epidemic and unemployment. The project was trying to see if informally vended food could be a means of earning an income. The environment in which people were working their livelihoods was difficult. Although it is easy to assume so many, there are many people who are unemployed. I don't think that people are aware of what it is that they do. The vendors had a lot of information which they did not know, we were taught at the workshop. We learnt a lot of things that we did not know before, and I think that we have changed. It is not just that I am telling people that I know. I am going around to talk to those people who did not attend the workshop, so that those who did not attend are also learning.

Interviews with vendors from Zambia

Interviews with vendors from Zambia

Road to Market 2003

When it came to the vendors, it was more participatory. We used lots of pictures, to show scenarios, but from their own environment so that they could identify with them. We also allowed vendors to give their own ideas; for example, they have all picked their own uniforms. It came from them, and they have decided slowly to change.

Managing Partner for Informally Vended Food Programme at the National Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research (NISIR), in Lusaka: Dr Rodah Zulu

There have been a lot of complications in terms of livelihood, particularly with the HIV epidemic and unemployment. The project was trying to see if informally vended food could be a means of earning an income. The environment in which people were working their livelihoods was difficult. Although it is easy to assume so many, there are many people who are unemployed. I don't think that people are aware of what it is that they do. The vendors had a lot of information which they did not know, we were taught at the workshop. We learnt a lot of things that we did not know before, and I think that we have changed. It is not just that I am telling people that I know. I am going around to talk to those people who did not attend the workshop, so that those who did not attend are also learning.

Interviews with vendors from Zambia

Interviews with vendors from Zambia

Road to Market 2003
Million samples, both from the market and in the homes of the residents, are taken to check if they have been previously infected with any foodborne diseases. The samples are sent to the laboratory for analysis. The Environmental Health Officer, Mr Brighton Sinkala, says, “My main role is to collect samples from the market, providing scientific information to the vendors, with the knowledge that they have to improve the safety of their food.”

Mr Sinkala discusses the changes in the markets since the implementation of the programme. “The vendors now wash their hands before they serve food. Before the project was implemented, they did not wash their hands. They now look back at how they used to serve food. The vendors have been shown how certain diseases are spread. They have been shown the importance of washing hands and using disposable gloves.”

Mr Sinkala continues, “In the past, the vendors would use the same utensils for washing their hands and preparing food. Now, they are using separate utensils for each purpose. Before they would allow an oven to be cleaned, the vendors would not let anyone touch the oven. Now, they are more open to allowing us to clean the oven. They are also more open to cleaning the toilets and other areas of the market.”

Mr Sinkala concludes, “Since the implementation of the programme, there has been an attitude change. If I go to the market, I will be welcomed with less protocol. Before they would not allow us even to take a picture, now they pose for pictures! Even when we find that things are not alright with the results, we still go to the market. We have been providing food vendors with user-friendly and longer-lasting improvements. Policy makers have been in agreement with our proposals. We are trying to pass by-laws, because of some improvements. In countless situations we have found that vendors actually pay for and change the food they sell. This is because they know that their livelihood depends on the market.”

Mr Sinkala also explains the importance of the programme to the vendors. “The vendors have been shown the importance of washing hands and using disposable gloves. They have been shown the importance of cleaning the toilets and other areas of the market. The vendors have been shown that outbreaks of foodborne diseases are not just a problem for the health authorities, but also for the vendors themselves. They have been shown that outbreaks of foodborne diseases can affect their businesses.”

Mr Sinkala concludes, “Some markets, you will find have over four hundred food vendors, and yet they have no running water. They have one stand pipe, from which all of them have to draw. The same is true of refuse collection, and the toilets, with such an erratic supply of water. They do not have running water, and yet they have to wash their hands. The vendors have been shown the importance of washing hands and using disposable gloves.”

Mr Chabala Chanda, the Health Inspector for the Lusaka City Council, explains the challenges faced by the vendors. “A key problem that we face with vendors in the markets, is that we are not able to control their operations, as we do other restaurants, with for example, minimum storage, and storage. We have worked with the vendors on certain aspects, and they have managed to comply.”

Mr Chabala Chanda continues, “We have shown the vendors how to cover their food from flies, and some managed to get fridges. Initially, vendors would just display their products out in the open, so that customers could see them. We pointed out that vendors could use certain devices to cover their food.”

Mr Chabala Chanda concludes, “The vendors have been shown the importance of washing hands and using disposable gloves. They have been shown the importance of cleaning the toilets and other areas of the market. The vendors have been shown that outbreaks of foodborne diseases are not just a problem for the health authorities, but also for the vendors themselves. They have been shown that outbreaks of foodborne diseases can affect their businesses.”

Mr Chabala Chanda concludes, “Some markets, you will find have over four hundred food vendors, and yet they have no running water. They have one stand pipe, from which all of them have to draw. The same is true of refuse collection, and the toilets, with such an erratic supply of water. They do not have running water, and yet they have to wash their hands. The vendors have been shown the importance of washing hands and using disposable gloves.”

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Millions of samples that the market workers take to the Environmental Health Officer, Mr Brighton Sinkala, the Ministry of Health, Lusaka: my main role is to collect samples from the market, providing scientific information to the vendors, with the knowledge that they have to improve the safety of their food. I am told that vendors have to have an attitude change. If they are trying to serve by laws, because of some improvements, in scientific relations to their customers, they actually have to improve the safety of their food. They have bought many buckets that contain water, and they have a tap at the bottom, which enhances food safety. Before this project was implemented, there was no easy access for vendors to fill water. Now they have to run their hands before they can serve customers. The same is true of the toilets, with such an erratic supply of water. That is the responsibility of the authorities. People are trying to clean market areas. The same is true of refuse collection, and the vendors are trying to clean their areas. They appreciate what we are doing. Health Inspector, Lusaka City Council: a key problem that we face with vendors in the markets is that we are not able to control their operations, as we do other restaurants, with for example, minimum staff, and also storage. Since these vendors are small-scale, we promote covering food from flies, and some managed to get fridges. Initially, vendors would just display their products out in the open, so that customers could see them. We pointed out that vendors could reduce contamination from flies, and that they could improve their hygiene, as they served their customers. Food is clean and more attractive to the public. Eventually, finally, vendors changed their attitude, and they are trying to serve by laws, because of some improvements, in scientific relations to their customers, they actually have to improve the safety of their food. They have bought many buckets that contain water, and they have a tap at the bottom, which enhances food safety. Before this project was implemented, there was no easy access for vendors to fill water. Now they have to run their hands before they can serve customers. The same is true of the toilets, with such an erratic supply of water. That is the responsibility of the authorities. People are trying to clean market areas. The same is true of refuse collection, and the vendors are trying to clean their areas. They appreciate what we are doing. Health Inspector, Lusaka City Council: a key problem that we face with vendors in the markets is that we are not able to control their operations, as we do other restaurants, with for example, minimum staff, and also storage. Since these vendors are small-scale, we promote covering food from flies, and some managed to get fridges. Initially, vendors would just display their products out in the open, so that customers could see them. We pointed out that vendors could reduce contamination from flies, and that they could improve their hygiene, as they served their customers. Food is clean and more attractive to the public. Eventually, finally, vendors changed their attitude, and they are trying to serve by laws, because of some improvements, in scientific relations to their customers, they actually have to improve the safety of their food. They have bought many buckets that contain water, and they have a tap at the bottom, which enhances food safety. Before this project was implemented, there was no easy access for vendors to fill water. Now they have to run their hands before they can serve customers. The same is true of the toilets, with such an erratic supply of water. That is the responsibility of the authorities. People are trying to clean market areas. The same is true of refuse collection, and the vendors are trying to clean their areas. They appreciate what we are doing. Environmental Health Officer, Ministry of Health, Lusaka: my main role is to collect samples from the market, providing scientific information to the vendors, with the knowledge that they have to improve the safety of their food. I am told that vendors have to have an attitude change. If they are trying to serve by laws, because of some improvements, in scientific relations to their customers, they actually have to improve the safety of their food. They have bought many buckets that contain water, and they have a tap at the bottom, which enhances food safety. Before this project was implemented, there was no easy access for vendors to fill water. Now they have to run their hands before they can serve customers. The same is true of the toilets, with such an erratic supply of water. That is the responsibility of the authorities. People are trying to clean market areas. The same is true of refuse collection, and the vendors are trying to clean their areas. They appreciate what we are doing.
Restaurant owner at Mtendere market in Lusaka: Mrs Veronica Tembo

I am the owner of this restaurant. I have been here for almost six years. Over the six years, I have noticed some problems. The prices that we sell at are very low, and I find it difficult to make a profit. People in these markets do not have a lot of money to spend. But over the years there have been some positive changes. Before, when I started this place, I did not have so many customers. The secret we have now is how to look after our customers. Now we are doing fine. I was at the workshop, and I have learnt how to improve our hygiene most especially. We learnt how to use chlorine to clean water, and how to cover food, and our food is just more appetizing.

Restaurant owner at Soweto market in Lusaka: Mrs Florence Mitimingi

I started my restaurant in 1996. The extra money that I have got from my business, I use to help my family at home. I have got six children, and I do not stay with my husband, who left me after I failed my grade nine. I have been running my business for almost eight years. I failed my grade nine, and I have a child. My husband left me, and I sat down to think of my child and my parents. Instead of just using coins! Now I have four children and a husband, and the restaurant helped me to feed my child, who is now doing grade eleven at school.

I want to learn more, I know that I can change my position through learning. I have been making new uniforms, but we can't do it fast because it means money.

Restaurant owner at Mtendere market in Lusaka: Mr George Phiri

I own this restaurant, which I have been running for one year. I operate together with my wife. We attended a workshop, where we were trained in food safety for the vendors. There was a lot of support, and we were very happy. But the problem is that the vendors cannot read. The police sometimes arrest our workers, and we have to pay them. We want to be taught to know how to deal with such situations. We also want to learn more about food hygiene. We need to be taught how to use a stove. As far as we can see, there are many differences, and we have worked on not so many things. I think that I can learn more, and I will be able to improve my business.

I have learnt some changes, better. Before, when I started this place, I had to use a lot of money. Now I have to use a lot of money. Some vendors do not accept our advances, but we try to give them advance. Then, if they are hot, we have to use a lot of money. Some vendors are not punctual in paying their debts. We are used to put our food on the ground. We can see the differences, and we have worked our way up in stages. I think that I am becoming fat!

Restaurant owner at Mtendere market in Lusaka: Mrs Florence Mitimingi

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Restaurant owner at Mtendere market in Lusaka: Mrs Veronica Tembo

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Restaurant owner at Soweto market in Lusaka:
Mrs Florence Mitimingi:

I started my restaurant in 1996. The extra money that I have got from my business, I use to help my family at home. I have got six children, and I do not stay with my husband, who I left six years ago due to his constant quarrels with me. The restaurant does well, but space is a problem. I cannot serve many customers. The conditions in this market are not the same as in other markets. Our customers are not the same. I have noticed that there are less customers in this market. I want to learn more, I know that I can change my position through learning. I have been making new uniforms, but we can’t do it fast because it means money. What I want to do is to try to increase our customers. We need to increase our business. We need to try to improve our food. We need to try to improve our services. We need to try to improve our cleaning. We need to try to improve our hygiene. We need to try to improve our marketing. We need to try to improve our business. 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Health Co-ordinator, Soweto market in Lusaka: Mr Dickens Chileshe

My role is teaching health education in food hygiene and food cleanliness. Our main target has been to make sure that those cooking know the importance of the food cleanliness and hygiene. We have had a lot of problems in the past, especially with food storage. There have been issues with poor drainage systems. These issues have caused a lot of problems in the community. We have introduced uniforms in order to identify those who are cooking. We have introduced a lot of the programs in the past. Especially with running water, we are doing a lot of improvements. We have also improved the working environment. We have been able to improve the environment since the workshop. We are really trying to improve the environment. We are really trying to improve the environment since the workshop.

For the future, we are looking forward to improving waste disposal and sewage facilities, and also to extending services to others.

Cook in Lillian’s restaurant, Soweto Market in Lusaka: Miss Ruth Phiri

I did not go to the workshop, but I have been taught to change water frequently by those who did. I have also learnt to clean buckets where we leave water for customers, and to use clean uniforms. This is my first job in the food industry. I have been here for three months, and I think that there is a very big difference between here and other places. You can see because the people here are very tidy. Especially things like providing running water, preparing clean surfaces, how to clean the working environment. We inspect the premises every day. There has been a tremendous improvement since the workshop. We are really trying to improve the environment.

For the future, we are looking forward to improving waste disposal and sewage facilities, and also to extending services to others.

Restaurant owner at Aunt Rose’s Restaurant, Soweto Market in Lusaka: Mrs Rosemary Nachepembene

I have been running this restaurant for the past ten years, since I have retired. I started because I can make a better living this way; when you are busy, your mind is happy. I am looking forward to the time when everyone can be trained, because I am unhappy when not everyone can work to these standards.

For the future, we are looking forward to improving waste disposal and sewage facilities, and also to extending services to others.

Restaurant owner at Veronica Tembo, Soweto Market: Mrs Brenda Mukamba

I have been running this restaurant for one year and six months. I work for myself, but I have three helpers. I decided to set up a restaurant because it is a fast business, and people need to eat every day. I have customers from all over. I used to work in a restaurant, and so I decided to open up one of my own. I learnt a lot about running a restaurant, but I learnt a lot of things. I learnt about managing time and organizing the restaurant.

For the future, we are looking forward to improving waste disposal and sewage facilities, and also to extending services to others.

Veronica Tembo, Soweto Market  Traditional maize dish

Road to Market
Health Co-ordinator, Soweto market in Lusaka: Mr Dickens Chileshe

My role is teaching health education in food hygiene and food cleanliness. Our main target has been those who prepare cooked food. Of late, there have been a range of problems, ranging from poor storage of raw and cooked food, uncovered food, and the poor drainage systems. There was a lack of uniformity, and we had to make sure that those selling food dressed uniformly. We have been able to improve the situation, but we need to keep on working to make this programme better. Especially cooking practices, running water, and the cleanliness of the working environment.

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Restaurant owner at Aunt Rose’s Restaurant, Soweto Market in Lusaka: Mrs Rosemary Nachepembene

I have been running this restaurant for the past ten years, since I have retired. I started because I can make a better living this way; when you are busy, your mind is happy. I am very happy with the changes. As a result of the workshop, we have learnt how to look after my customers, and to keep food clean. My attitude has really changed, as I saw that we were really behind. In the future, we are looking forward to improving waste disposal and sewage facilities, and also to extending services to others.

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Restaurant owner at Restaurant owned by Aunt Rose, Soweto Market in Lusaka: Mrs Brenda Mukamba

I have been running this restaurant for one year and six months. I work for myself, but I have three helpers. I decided to setup a restaurant, because it is a fast business, and people need to eat every day. I know customers from all over. I used to work in a restaurant, and I decided to set up my own. I learnt a lot at the workshop, and we have been taught a lot of things. We have learnt how to keep our businesses clean and hygienic. The workshop was very helpful, but we need to make our places better. We need to change the water, and to wash the dishes properly. We have also learnt how to wash vegetables, and to use different storage methods. Before, when washing plates, we would not use two bowls for clean and dirty water. Now we use one bowl for drinking, and another for washing. We have learnt how to wash vegetables, and to use a separate bowl for drinking. We have also learnt how to wash our hands properly.

Veronica Tembo, Soweto Market Traditional maize dish

Road - Market
Traditionally in Ghana, cassava is grown as an intercrop to provide food security for small-scale farmers. It can survive very harsh conditions such as drought, which has allowed it to be a popular crop in the region. However, there is a surplus of this product in local markets. Cassava is viewed as a crop of low value; at times when production is low, it can only last for a couple of days, and if it cannot be sold then it goes bad or remains un-harvested as an in-ground surplus.

Kokonte is known as a poor man’s food, and literally means that you must face the wall so that no one can see what you are eating. Building upon the efforts of others, have discovered that cassava actually has a huge amount of potential. It can be converted into different products which can be sold for industrial uses. By processing cassava into High Quality Cassava Flour (HQCF), it can be used for example, in baking products. The private sector has collaborated with the research team to improve methods of cassava processing for specific end users. Three medium-scale processing companies now source their supply of cassava from over one thousand farmers in the Brong Ahafo and Greater Accra Regions. Introducing cassava products to these industries is providing small-scale farmers with markets for a crop which was once considered as an in-ground surplus.

The private sector has helped to develop different products of cassava flour for industrial uses. These products have been modified to meet the specific requirements of the end users. For example, HQCF is being used as a substitute for wheat flour is improving profit margins for bakers by as much as one hundred and seven percent. The private sector has also provided a ready market for cassava flour. The factory is now using one hundred percent cassava flour, and no longer requires wheat flour as a raw material. The factory is now using one hundred percent cassava flour, and no longer requires wheat flour as a raw material.

The Sustainable Uptake of Cassava as an Industrial Commodity in Ghana
The Sustainable Uptake of Cassava as an Industrial Commodity in Ghana

Traditionally in Ghana, cassava is grown as an intercrop to provide food security for small-scale farmers. It can survive very harsh conditions such as drought, which makes it a lucrative crop. However, with increased demand for improved food products, cassava is being explored for its potential as an industrial commodity.

Kokonte, known as a poor man’s food, literally means that you must face the wall so that no one can see what you are eating. Building upon this reputation, researchers have discovered that cassava actually has a huge amount of potential. It can be converted into different products which can be sold for industrial uses.

High Quality Cassava Flour (HQCF) can be used for example, in baking products. In order to provide a ready market for this product, the private sector has collaborated with the research team to improve methods of cassava processing for specific end users.

The private sector has collaborated with the research team to develop different methods of cassava processing. These methods are designed to ensure that supply meets demand. For instance, in the Brong Ahafo and Greater Accra Regions, three medium-scale processing companies now source their supply of cassava from over one thousand farmers.

HQCF is used in plywood production as a glue–extender, and as a base for paperboard adhesive. These markets are continuously being developed through this project.

The saying is that if you eat kokonte, you must face the wall. Through research, we have come up with a product that is acceptable to the middle-income group. No one will face the wall again. We are going to face the people!
Interviews conducted with stakeholders in Ghana

Chief of Kokofu Community: Mr George Kwojo

Now we can use extra money to pay for the children's school fees. Formerly, we were using kokonte, and it could not last. The information that we got was that we can make cassava flour. Some people came and said that they could provide us with a machine so that we could turn our cassava into flour, and improve it. No one was buying the kokonte, so we liked to change the money into cassava flour, which we are doing now. The cassava flour is more beneficial than kokonte. We can load a lot of sacks of kokonte, but no one will come for it. With cassava, even if we make a small sack, someone will come for it, and we will get our money. We do not have an idea about searching for a market. I know that by and by, this will help the village. If we do the work and get the buyers, we can send our children to school, and we can progress. This has started... Our group all have faith and trust that this work will be progressive. We will have support, and this is progressive to us.

Farmer at Kokofu: Mrs Mary Asaoua

I have about two acres of cassava farm. Cassava is an intercrop of the yam that I grow, and it gives me better income. At first, the cassava prices were very bad. Now they... in Atebubu. I have got labourers who help me to harvest; and when the land is hard, labour is a little expensive. The money that I get from the cassava flour will help to pay for this, and this does not worry me. In the past this would be a worry, because no one would buy it. We have a lot of cassava here, and someone could come and say, 'What can we do with this?' But we have seen business grow. We thought that we would be left with no cassava!'

Farmer at Kokofu: Mr Kojo Tekyi

I am a farmer. This year, my cassava farm is three acres. I also grow sweet potato. If I compare these two things, I realise that the cassava is moving faster: this year alone I have made more from my cassava. The difference that I have found is that, from the money that I have made, I have been able to make some changes. If I can get more money, then I can send my children to school.

Agricultural Extension Officer at Kokofu: Mr Peter Fiashidey

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First we doubted the ideas behind this new method of cassava production. But we have seen business grow. We thought that we would be left with no cassava!
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Farmer at Kokofu: Mr Kojo Tekyi

I am a farmer. This year, my cassava farm is three acres. I also grow sweet potato. If I compare these two things, I realise that the cassava is moving faster: this year alone I have made more from my cassava. The difference that I have found is that, from the money that I have made, I have been able to make some changes. If I can get more money, then I can send my children to school.

Agricultural Extension Officer at Kokofu: Mr Peter Fiashidey

My role is to supervise and direct the community in carrying out the correct process. The process involves some technicalities, and I am the technical person to address this issue. Some farmers wondered how they could produce glucose syrup from cassava, and they were not convinced from the start. But, later on, they have seen that the process works, and that it can be converted, and they are now eager to learn. We have a lot of cassava here, and we think that the process is going to help. The problem is that we do not have the inputs, and we improved the process. We have made progress, and we now sell to the supermarket. But we have some more problems, and we have not been able to sell this new method of cassava production. But we have seen business grow. We thought that we would be left with no cassava!
I have heard about the group, I am a farmer, and I grow cassava and yam. I do not have a food group. We introduced alternative which is a major kokonte which had an excess of cassava. Brong Ahafo is the food basket of the country. There was excess cassava in store, and ... to get a market for it. The prices were so low because people were not buying it. Production was one-sided; only producing...
Mr. James Okyere
Farmer at Kokofu:
I have grown cassava and yam as an intercrop, as I change the two.
I have benefited a lot from this project. We have improved cassava production and it has been beneficial to us. In the past, we used to farm and we did not know where we would sell it. Now, we process cassava and we have a market for it. The prices are good, and people will buy it. This can help me to achieve more income. If I do the work to make cassava flour, then I will have a lot of help to get a little profit. I have six children: two girls and four boys. Through this new scheme, we have support. I have got assurance that, by and large, we will succeed as much as you do. Now there are others who are interested in promoting the products that we have got from cassava. This is what we are looking towards in the future, and we know that it will be full of challenges!

Mr. Lawrence Kofi Krampa
Agriculture, Brong Ahafo Region:
I am an extension worker. I have been facing a lot of problems since the start of the project. When people are dedicated, as they are becoming, these problems can be overcome.

Hannah Bochy
Farmer at Kokofu:
I have six children: two girls and four boys. Through this new scheme, we have support. I have got assurance that, by and large, we will succeed as much as you do. Now there are others who are interested in promoting the products that we have got from cassava. This is what we are looking towards in the future, and we know that it will be full of challenges!
I am a farmer in Watro and I have four children. The help I get from the processing is that I have been able to send my children to school. People come and buy my product, the market is available. Cassava flour and I can say that people are getting very excited about using cassava flour. I started using it because I was intrigued by the flour, and anyone who is interested can come along to us. Some of our products are fifty percent cassava flour, and some

Mr. Stephen Kabea
Farmer at Watro:

I am a baker. We are now using cassava flour in our products, but we have to come and dictate a price to me, and I have no power to price it myself. When she gives me a price, that is final and I cannot bargain. No one comes to us and says, you have to sell this price. That is the problem we have. That is why I want to go to the Bakers’ Association at Atebubu. Now we work in other places as well. If you can make bread and cakes out of cassava, then it is a real improvement for the market place, because before no one knew about these things. Our local school has shown an interest in my baking, so now I am working with them. We have now started advertising for new farmers to join the community. When there are more of us, the work will be faster. By the time we complete one hundred percent, we can say that we have been successful.

Mr. David Pessey
Director of Feed and Flour Association:

I am a farmer, and I live near Kumasi. I process cassava from the wet state and grind it into a powder. From the powder we make grits. From there we make fufu. We also make fufu in polythene bags for use in Atebubu. Now we work in other places as well. If you can make bread and cakes out of cassava, then it is a real improvement for the market place, because before no one knew about these things. Our local school has shown an interest in my baking, so now I am working with them. We have now started advertising for new farmers to join the community. When there are more of us, the work will be faster. By the time we complete one hundred percent, we can say that we have been successful.

Mr. Joseph Allen Yawson

I am a farmer and I live in Ramo. I grow cassava and sell it fresh at the market, and we would not really get a reasonable price for it. Initially, the cost of cassava was too high, so we could only use one method of processing it the traditional way, by smoking it. After taking it to the market, we often end up in a situation where we have to sell it at a lower price. We have now started using the fufu processing technique. The farmers have been very happy with it, and we have seen an increase in the sale of our product. I can now sell it here rather than transporting it, and I can have a ready market. I have two acres of cassava field.

Mrs. Juliana Santawa
Farmer at Watro:

I am a farmer, and I live in Watro. I process cassava for the drying process we explored on another project with polythene sheets, but they only lasted a maximum of two days because of the cost. We can also involve the community, bringing them into the processing chain, creating jobs. Previously farmers would not do this, but now they are interested. We have now started advertising for new farmers to join the community. When there are more of us, the work will be faster.

Mrs. Gladys Wilson
Farmer at Watro:

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Mr Stephen Kabea
Farmer at Watro:

I am a farmer in Watro and I have four children. The help I have received from the processing unit is that I have been able to send my children to school. People come and buy my product, the market is available. Cassava flour and I can say that people are getting very excited about using cassava flour. I started using it because I was intrigued by the flour, and anyone who is interested can come along to us. Some of our products are fifty percent cassava flour, and some would need a lot of flour. I think people are becoming more aware of cassava as a staple food. In the past, we used a local method of producing yam, ground nuts and cassava. I have been farming for twenty years in Watro community. Yam is my main crop. We cannot use the yam throughout the year. When yam is short, we have cassava as a backup, which is why I plant it. At first, I would sell fresh cassava for money. We used to use the local method of cassava production. This method is much faster and more reliable. From about four years back until now, I think there has been an improvement in the prices that I am able to get. Other people often come to watch what we do, but we have to refuse, we know that no one else will come and we cannot store it. I come to Watro often, and that is how I heard about the processing unit. We have now started advertising for new farmers to join the community. When there are more of us, the work will be faster.

Mrs Juliana Santawa
Farmer at Watro:

I am a farmer and I live near Kumasi. I process cassava. I have six children, four girls and two boys. When I farm, I find it difficult to pay my labourers. In the past, we used a local method of smoking the cassava into kokonte. If we would not smoke it, the cassava would not sell well. We used to use the local method of cassava production. This method is much faster and more reliable. From about four years back until now, I think there has been an improvement in the prices that I am able to get. Other people often come to watch what we do, but we have to refuse, we know that no one else will come and we cannot store it. I come to Watro often, and that is how I heard about the processing unit. We have now started advertising for new farmers to join the community. When there are more of us, the work will be faster.

Mr David Pessey
Farmer from outside Kumasi:

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I control workers in the field. Sometimes when you go to the market, the cassava is abundant. When there is more in the market, you just sell it. When we introduced this new production method for cassava, farmers were happier. Our prices have been good, and although we have not been as regular as we have to be with payments, there are improvements. When the farmers have processed the grits, we weigh it and transport it. But to get the produce to the farm... input from the farmers themselves—which is why they need money immediately, and cannot wait around for payments.

Production Manager, Food and Flour Limited: Mr John Mensa

I grow my own cassava. I have ten children. I was previously harvesting cassava and processing into local food products. I now produce the grits, and I think that this is better. There is a trend for... to process, because the machine has broken. But we have been assured that it will be fixed, and so I see a brighter future because the markets are bigger for this new product. The mode of operation in this way of business is attractive. Prices will not be so unstable for... I have seen cakes which were bought to us, made from the flour. I am willing to stay with the business, because I think that there are more opportunities. It is important to... that those who had started growing were selling their produce. They took... that those who had started growing were selling their produce.
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Farmer at Otareso Community in Accra: Mrs Eunice

Amasa Agro-Processing Company Ltd deals with the processing of fresh cassava into various end uses. We are a member of the coalition of the Sustainable Development and Private Sector for Development. We aim to help the farmers to develop their farms, and to help them to get into the market. We are also trying to promote the factory business, to promote the consumers. If we buy cassava from the farmers, we are putting money into their pockets, and we are helping to reduce poverty. Athletes receive better food, and our sales have increased significantly. We are a very young company, but we are growing very steadily. The saying is that if you cannot sell the product, you cannot make money. We sell the product to the middle-income group because that is where we can make more money for the farmer. The factories are big, and we want the people to understand that the factories are there to make money. We are also trying to help the farmers to sell their products. We are interested in looking for local suppliers for the raw materials that we need. We want to set up processing units at locations where there is a lot of cassava, to supply to the end users. For all of these users, we have a different product. The new markets are helping farmers to develop their farms, and to help them to get into the market. They took it up because they realised that those who had started growing were selling their produce.

Managing Director of Amasa Agro-Processing Company Ltd, Accra: Mr Kwasi Oware

I initially, we were interested in using HQCF for traditional foods. The market was saturated, because too many people were already producing traditional products. In 2002, we started to identify markets that we intended to produce for. The job was to produce to meet the demands of the market. We as a private company are very happy, because now a new market has been found for us, where initially our market size was not that big. Our job is to maintain the factory business, to promote the factory business, and then to promote the consumers. If we buy cassava from the farmers, we are putting money into their pockets, and we are helping to reduce poverty. Athletes receive better food, and our sales have increased significantly. We are a very young company, but we are growing very steadily. The saying is that if you cannot sell the product, you cannot make money. We sell the product to the middle-income group because that is where we can make more money for the farmer. The factories are big, and we want the people to understand that the factories are there to make money. We are also trying to help the farmers to sell their products. We are interested in looking for local suppliers for the raw materials that we need. We want to set up processing units at locations where there is a lot of cassava, to supply to the end users. For all of these users, we have a different product. The new markets are helping farmers to develop their farms, and to help them to get into the market. They took it up because they realised that those who had started growing were selling their produce.

Managing Director of Amasa Agro-Processing Company Ltd, Kokonte: Mr Kwasi Oware

Kokonte is a staple poor man’s food made from cassava. The saying is that if you eat kokonte, you must face the wall. Through the research, we have come up with a product that is acceptable to the middle-income group. No one eats kokonte anymore, but we have come up with a new product. We would go there to collect the grits. We are grateful to the research groups for their tremendous support. We have contracts from the market. We look forward to the future support that we might be able to get from the business.
Farmer near Accra: Mr Dan Juma

I am a farmer, and I grow cassava. I have a community of about twenty people. The thing is that two or three years ago, we were encouraged to grow cassava by a new initiative in the community. We were promised that if we grow cassava, they would bring us a tractor, and we would work together. But the people promised to bring us a tractor, they would fail us and the cassava was still in the field. Now we work together, and there are big improvements. When we are disappointed, we are made to feel weak. You can never be happy if you know that your crop is grown with low skill. When you have help, you can do it more with happiness. If you have no money to pay your labourers, then they will go away. I work very hard, but we need support, and money to put inside the work. Before, we would wait, and that is a waste of time. When we have support, we can do it well.

I have divided my farm into three parts, and I can do this because I have support. You farm to gain, not to lose.

Marketing Manager at Amasa Agro-Processing Company Limited: Nathaniel Kove

We look for markets for our produce, and go and negotiate a price for it. We come to an agreement, and work out quantities. We talk to farmers about production methods, how they can get a large quantity, and the different varieties that we buy. The variety of cassava that we suggest is Afisifi, which means ‘anywhere’. Cassava flour is now an industrial commodity, so it has value. We have to educate the farmers, so that they know all about the production.

We have organised about sixty-eight farmers into the Ghana Rural Association of Cassava and Sweet Potato Enterprise, of which I am the president. We are changing. People see wheat flour as the heavy-weight champion! We have to show that the cassava can do equally well.

Farmer near Accra: William Aokai Yatey

I farm with my father and brother. Together we have a large farm of about seventy-six acres. After harvesting we bring our cassava to Amasa Agro-Processing Company to process it. We get paid for our produce. My brother is interested in this system, and he wanted to try it. He said that we could not have doubts about it before we had tried it.

Cassava Peeler at Amasa Agro-Processing Company Limited: Mrs Sarah Adi

I harvest the cassava, and get it ready to be taken by trucks to the factory. When it gets to the factory, I peel it. I also grow cassava, and I sell some varieties to the factory, and others to the market for consumption. The money that I get from this work I use to support my family.

Farmer near Accra: Mr Ademond Ajetom

I farm thirty-five acres, and I started farming about twenty years ago. Over the past years, I have noticed a dramatic change. Initially when we used to grow cassava, we did not know what to do with the product. I have seen the changes. From what we used to grow, we have made it into a new product. Now we have more knowledge, and I am comfortable with the system. We have a close relationship with Amasa, who would make it into traditional products. I am comfortable with the system of pricing now, and I have regular buyers. Before, the few buyers that we got would monopolise the market, and prices would be low.

We knew that if Amasa was getting money for what they were doing, then we also would as well for that product. So we can work together. We have a very close relationship with Amasa, and if we have any difficulty, we can go to them. They are here to help us.

Senior Production Manager at Western Veneer Plywood Production: Mr Mozu Frances

Our main concern with HQCF is plywood production. We have been using the cassava flour as an extender in the glue mix. We use the flour to improve the yield of the plywood. We used twenty percent HQCF, and eighty percent wheat flour. A major reason for opting to use HQCF was the cost, as it is much cheaper than wheat flour. In order to reduce our costs, we made the substitution when the price of wheat flour shot up. We are now able to use one hundred percent HQCF, and the results are very good.
Farmer near Accra: Mr Dan Juma
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Farmer near Accra: Mr Ademond Ajecom
I farm thirty-five acres, and I started farming about twenty years ago. Over the past years, I have noticed a dramatic change. Initially when we used to grow cassava, we did not know how to react to the buying price. We had no money to buy fertilizers, and that also contributed to the problem. We would grow cassava and sell it, and many people would go to the market and buy it. Now there is a factory, and I am happy. I have much money to work with, and I have learned a lot from the farm. I can now help other farmers, and also make much money.

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We knew that if Amasa was getting money for what they were doing, then we would also as well for this product.
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Warehouse Inventory Credit Systems

In Zambia, Zambia Agricultural Commodity Agency (ZACA) is responsible for managing the Warehouse Inventory Credit System.

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In Ghana, Food Research Institute (FRI) is responsible for managing the Warehouse Inventory Credit System.

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In Zimbabwe, the City Health Department is responsible for managing the Warehouse Inventory Credit System.

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Project partners:


The Sustainable Uptake of Cassava as an Industrial Commodity: Afrimart Global Enterprise, Ghana Amasa Agro-Processing Company, Ghana Dept of Nutrition and Food Science, University of Ghana, Ghana Food Research Institute (FRI), Ghana National Building Agency (FRI), Ghana National Development Agency (FRI), Ghana National Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research (FRI), Ghana National Board for Small-Scale Industries (FRI), Ghana National Building Agency (FRI), Ghana Natural Resources Institute (FRI), University of Greenwich, UK.

Donors:

Warehouse Inventory Credit Systems in Zambia: United Nations Common Fund for Commodities (CFC); UK Department of International Development (DFID); International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs; US Agency for International Development (USAID); US Department of Agriculture.

Food Safety of Informally Vended Foods in Zambia: UK Department of International Development (DFID).

The Sustainable Uptake of Cassava as an Industrial Commodity: UK Department of International Development (DFID).
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