GOLD IN LEGUMES

Unsampled Success Stories











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The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) is a non-governmental organization whose main mandate is to promote the role of businesses in building resilient communities and sustainable businesses through partnerships. AICC supports and work with the Public Sector to see the Private Sector as a hub of economic growth through investment. AICC has successfully pioneered the implementation of the

Public Private Partnership (PPP) approach in the cotton, rice and legume subsectors with considerable success through the PPP approach. For the organization to facilitate this well it formulated among others, legume Platform which was formed with the aim of facilitating coordination among players in the legume value chain in Malawi.

Under MSIDP II, AICC receives funding from Irish Aid to promote different interventions that are bearing notable fruits in the legumes value chain. Among other notable successes, AICC has promoted group cohesion, access to improved legume seeds, promoted value addition, improved productivity as well as marketing of legumes in Malawi. This booklet is a selection of some of the successes that AICC has registered with funding from Irish Aid under Legumes Development Trust (LDT).

INTRODUCTION

African

Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) is very thankful to Irish Aid and all its partners in the legumes value chain. We hope that the contents of this booklet will be desirable to read and that there will be a continued working relationship with our partners in the legumes value chain.





Lis affected by poor agricultural practices. While legume yields are low, the methods for attaining high vields are identified: utilization of improved inputs (better-certified

In many cases, legume production MENIASI MKOSI BECOMES A ROLE MODEL THROUGH LEGUMES **PRODUCTION**

seed varieties) and good agricultural practices (spacing, weeding, etc.). Improved seed varieties that are resistant to pests and diseases can also be a first-line to close the yield gap, as well as the use of double row and inoculant. she added. Before she joined the cooperative, she saw something from Engucwini cooperative members and that was the success of their farming practices. Legumes field officers from AICC have been to providing all the resources and information she needed to take off.



"After participating in the AICC series of training, I can confidently say that my agricultural life changed for the better and I can't compare with previous years before knowing these life-changing interventions. Lead farmers have been supportive in complementing AICC Officers and have contributed very much to my agricultural success," narrated Meniasi.

The lead farmers have not been having more access

"In 2016 my yields were miraculously high. The groundnut and soybean yields of the 2016 growing season were different from the previous

complete training given extension to officers, but changed this **AICC** through

agricultural After participating in the AICC series of training, I can confidently say that my agricultural life changed for the better //

years by far," contended Meniasi. She harvested yields that fetched her MK 900,000. Meniasi has been in close contact with AICC lead farmers as well as field officers in her farming endeavours and this has changed her farming life for the better. In 2017, Meniasi realized MK 1.2 million. In 2018, she reakized MK 1.4 million. Meniasi's returns on her produce have been increasing to the extent that she

Field officers who train them on some of the key improvements that farmers can make to their legume farming systems. The lead farmer (LF) approach has been applied and comprehensively promoted nationwide in Malawi since 2009 to support extension workers and accelerate technology adoption. Earlier reports have shown that donor-funded projects in Malawi widely adopted the LF approach, indicating positive roles and contributions of lead farmers to the projects. African Institute of Corporate Citizenship(AICC) is one of the organizations that uses the lead farmer approach through its various interventions including Legumes.

realized MK 1.8 in 2020 growing season. Meniasi is one of the few farmers in Mzimba that are making tremendous strides in Mzimba. She is a role model to young mothers as well as young girls in her community.

Meniasi Mkonsi is a direct beneficiary of the LF approach. Meniasi is 35 years of age, married with 4 children, 3 girls, and 1 boy. "I joined the Engucwini cooperative in 2016 after being tired of unproductive subsistence farming of which there were little profits," Meniasi recounted. "Engucwini cooperative has everything any farmer would ask for in this community,"

From her returns, Meniasi managed to buy a car (Nissan March), build a grocery shop, buy a piece of land, paying school fees for her secondary school kids

and she built an executive house for her family. Meniasi looks forward to more collaborative efforts from AICC and its partners to continue growth in legume



lthough Malawi's population of people living in poverty remains among the highest in

the world, the coming of different interventions that are grouping individuals with common purpose are proving that it is possible to get Malawi's predominantly rural and poor population out of poverty. Farmers clubs, business cooperatives and other groupings

are being founded with the aim of helping interested Malawians to earn a decent living and develop their communities. The poverty levels in the rural areas are higher with a headcount ratio of 58% compared to

20% in the urban areas. In Malawi's central district of Lilongwe, a group of smallholder farmers decided to set up a cooperative which is empowering women to help them earn a money to support their families.

Dora Kanyemba is one of the women that are being empowered throught this initiative. Aged 47, Dora hails from Kachomo village, Traditional Authority Chadza. Married with three sons and two daughters, Dora is one of many women who have made positive changes in their lives through legume farming. Telling her story to AICC Communications Team, Dora recalls how bad things used to be before she joined Thanganjati Cooperative "We have shown the community that women can succeed in activities beyond those of a mere housewife."

In the beginning, women had fallen victim from many activities due to their exclusion in decisionmaking processes of the community, and little or no participation in trainings or other developmental activities "The cooperative has changed mindset of many through women inclusion," revealed Dora.

The women of Thanganjati Cooperative have an increased level of participation, increased decisionmaking powers and a stronger voice in community activities. Dora herself is now confident of the active role she plays as the Secretary for Thanganjati cooperative, where she coordinates all group activities supporting all group members. She has been trained in

LEGUME FARMER CLUBS ENHANCE **WOMEN INCLUSION**

topics that have enabled her to increase and enhance her production and income, diversify her family's

> nutrition and improve their health and well-being. Dora is particularly proud of her leadership role and role modelling the group has set for women's empowerment.

We have shown the community that women can succeed in activities beyond those of a mere housewife

> "Now I know what rights we have, including the right to participate in the different committees established in our community. We must strive to lead of our cooperative, contended Dora"



At home, the women have begun to apply the skills and techniques they have learnt from the farmers club training sessions, focusing on improved agricultural technologies and farming methods. With the training and support they receive, the women have not only been able to increase their agricultural yields, but also to market their surpluses and expand their activities. For example, Dora now knows how to better manage any surplus production and is able to sell her produce profitably.

Dora has managed to generate enough profit to start a goat production business and she is building a house which she is about to roof it with iron sheets she already bought through money realized from legume farming.

Registered as a Cooperative on 26th January, 2013, Thanganjati cooperative has been encountering a multitude of challenges in its operations

AICC TRANSFORMS THANGANJATI COOPERATIVE THROUGH LEGUMES INTERVENTIONS

including low crop production. Having a membership of 161 (65 males and 96 females of which 46 of the total are youths), the cooperative has been over recycling and planting uncertified seeds for a number of years. On top of that, the cooperative has been having problems with group cohesion, leadership and thus successes in its endeavours has always been somewhat insignificant.

Looking at the potential that the cooperative has, AICC introduced its legumes interventions to the cooperative. Before intensifying its interventions, AICC subjected the grouping to leadership trainings

Members of the cooperative in one of their soybean farms

in order to strengthen the cooperative's governance structure. Thereafter, AICC helped the cooperative in building group cohesion. It later trained its members in business management and group dynamics among other important trainings.

In addition to the above mentioned trainings, AICC linked the cooperative to companies that sell improved legume seeds (especially soybean). For the first time, the cooperative stopped recycling seeds and started using certified seeds. AICC through its project officers has been assisting the cooperative in practicing Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) which are aimed at conserving the environment and at the same time increasing production. AICC has also been training the grouping in post-harvest and storage management practices that aid in the reduction of post-harvest losses.

In 2019/20 growing season, Thanganjati cooperative produced thirty eight (38) metric tonnes of soybeans for the first time since its establishment. AICC linked the cooperative to Tradeline Corporation Limited through

11

For the first time, the cooperative made an aggregate sale of eleven million five hundred and fifty four thousand kwacha (MK11,554,000.00) from soybean

> its Farmers Commodity Market which Platform bought cooperative's produce at a prescribed government price of MK 300/Kg. For the first time, the cooperative made an aggregate sale of eleven million five hundred and fifty four thousand kwacha (MK 11, 554, 000.00) from soybean. From this money, the cooperative has finalized its warehouse construction, has made savings with banks and has diversified into opening a shop which sales groceries to the community. Apart from farming, the cooperative is equally sourcing

funds through the groceries shop. At the moment, the cooperative envisions to procure a processing machine to venture into value addition.



smallholder farmers shifted to cultivation of legume crops in the last 10 years in a bid to complement the dwindling importance of country. Groundnuts, soya cultivated legume crops

in the country.

of

Institute

(AICC) Citizenship encouraging legume growers to work together in cooperatives and promote value addition of their products in the country. From one of the studies conducted by AICC, it was noted that most cooperatives are not making profits from their products due to little or no vale addition and failure to explore profitable markets.

African

As part of solving the problem, AICC with its partners engaged some cooperatives and built their capacity on how they can be adding value to their produce. One of the cooperative that benefitted from the intervention is Chimango cooperative, a farmers group found in Makuni village, T/A Chikulamayembe in Rumphi District.

Chimango cooperative was established in 2016 and

In Malawi, the majority of CHIMANGO II FARMERS FIND GOLD IN LEGUMES PRODUCTION

With an increase in groundnuts Tobacco in most parts of the production, we are now able to produce beans and pegionpeas are good quantity of peanut butter that some of the most important is enabling us to meet demand coming however, has taught the grouping from the community and across the Corporate district

is in Bolero EPA. The group has been gaining little from what they produce as middlemen have been exploiting then of their produce and have entirely benefited little from their enterprises. . that no cooperative can prosper without adding value to its produce. The advice made the group to



start producing peanut butter using traditional ways. After two years of producing peanut butter through traditional methods, Chimango cooperative got an

> electric machine that increased their production from CADECOM.

"With increase in groundnuts production, we are now able to produce a good quantity of peanut butter that is enabling us to meet the demand of the community but we are however failing to meet the demand beyond the community. We wish we can have big machines to make it to a large scale business in the near future," disclosed the cooperative treasurer. Using money realized from peanut butter production, the grouping has diversified into livestock production with intention to share the goats to all members of the cooperative as part of diversifying into goat production through pass on initiative.

Ethel Kamulisi hails from Chisa village, T/A Kaphuka, Dedza district. She is a subsistence farmer who used to

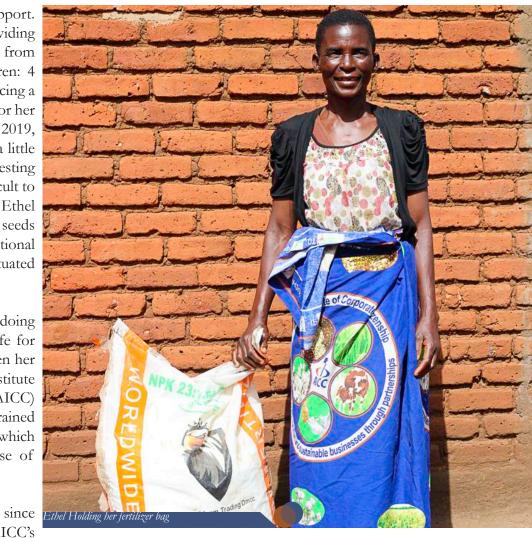
only grow maize for household support. However, maize has not been providing her with significant money apart from only food. Married with 6 children: 4 girls, and 2 boys, Ethel has been facing a number of challenges to provide for her family. From the year 1983 up to 2019, she was only growing maize and a little bit of beans. "I was always harvesting very little and it was even too difficult to feed my family throughout a year" Ethel narrated. "I have been recycling seeds and I have been practicing traditional methods of farming. This perpetuated low yields," added Ethel.

Ethel has been dreaming of doing farming that would change her life for the better. The year 2019 was when her prayers were answered. African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) through its legume interventions trained her in new ways of farming which included double row planting, use of inoculants, and market acces.

Ethel's produce has increased since 2019 and she has described AICC's

The extension services I gained from AICC through their legumes project, is Gold and Pillar for my farming

LEGUME FARMING TRANSFORMS LIFE OF ETHEL KAMULISI



interventions as a gateway to her better life. After harvesting her soybeans, AICC assited Ethel though Gwengwere cooperative to sale her produce at a better price. The money she realized was used to support her family, paying school fees for her 2 boys and diversified into pig farming. While the money that was realized after she sold groundnuts and soybeans in 2020, she bought bags of fertilizer for the 2021 growing season,

paying school fees for her sons as well as feeding her family of which she stated as paramount to her.

as paramount to her.

"The extension services I gained from AICC through their legumes project, is Gold and Pillar for my farming," she said at her last remarks.



individual smallholder farmer, sourcing markets produce can be a tiresome

GWENGWERE COOPERATIVE MAKES for STRIDES IN COMMODITY MARKETING

and costly activity. Even after the efforts, one is never guaranteed that they will get the best possible deal. Such challenges are likely to lead smallholder farmers to turn away from farming activities and look for other less involving and profitable economic activities or perpetuate subsistence farming. To smallholder farmers who are members of Gwengwere cooperative, these challenges have been remitted to the archives of history. African Institute of Cooperative Citizenship (AICC) organized farmers into collective marketing groups and trained smallholders farmers under Gwengwere

With what the group has adopted, we are expecting farmers to access finance from financial institutions as they are assured that they can pay back loans

cooperative to be engaged in commodity aggregation and collective marketing. The intervention made the cooperative to establish an outlet that is bridging the gap between the Cooperative and potential markets thereby allowing them guaranteed access to markets.

from the traditional approaches where farmers depended on middle men who rarely cared about the production process and were always looking for a cheaper bargain. "We are now concentrating our energies on production while being sure about the market.. This has increased the quality and quantity of our yields and we have also seed improved farmers' wellbeing," says the chairman of the cooperative.

The intervention has also led to major improvement in post-harvest handling aspects of produce such as drying and storage. "With what the group has adopted, we are expecting farmers to access finance from financial institutions as they are assured that they can pay back loans," disclosed Davlin Juma, AICC Projects Officer. The group was also trained in community seed banking, whereby smallholder farmers receive 10 kg of improved groundnut seed and give back twice as much, after harvesting. The returned seed is stored in the cooperative warehouse for use by another group of farmers in the subsequent season. AICC connected the cooperative to Global Seed Company that provides the cooperative with improved legumes seed varieties along with training on improved technologies and agronomic practices, which in turn are improving farmers productivity, incomes, food security and reducing poverty in the communities.



Tot so long ago, it was hard for farmers like one Happison Paulo to access inputs such as certified seed and inoculant on time and at affordable

ACCESS TO IMPROVED GROUNDNUTS SEED TRANSFORMS THE LIFE OF HAPPISON PAULO

of CG 7 groundnut variety, as a startup seed loan, as well as training on agri-business and good agronomic practices.

"After giving back the 10 kg seed loan, I sold the rest

of my produce and

money to feed my

family. Two years

later I built my

house with an iron

Paulo. "As a family

we are very grateful

sheet roof,"

enough

made

prices. This situation often resulted into poor yields and low household incomes. It was until African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC), introduced its legumes interventions in Mchinji when things took a twist.

AICC started building capacity of farmers and helped them with access to improved inputs like Groundnuts seeds, Soya bean seeds and

As a family we are very grateful to AICC as we are now able to cultivate groundnuts using improved agricultural methods and this is important because it is improving our legume production as well as our income

Paulo, 54, and a father seven children

Inoculant.

Secretary for Mthiramsembe Cooperative. He comes from Kanthungo village, Traditional Authority Simphasi. As a smallholder farmer, Happison used to struggle to produce enough on his one-hectare piece of land to sustain his family for the whole year. After many unsuccessful years of tobacco farming in 2008

to AICC as we are now able to cultivate groundnuts using improved agricultural methods and this is important because it is improving our legume production as well as our income," Concluded Happison. Happison is but one of the farmers that have made a fortune through AICC's interventions under Mthiransembe cooperative.

decided cultivating start groundnuts. used local, recycled seeds, followed and traditional the growing practices which varieties were susceptible to diseases. The harvests were barely enough to feed his family. In 2013, he joined Mthiramsembe cooperative where he was introduced different improved agricultural practices by the African Institute Corporate Citizenship (AICC). received 10 kg



Nkhanzi when she was asked if she will cultivate tobacco again.

Aliyena Nkhanzi is a groundnut and soybean farmer



in her early 40s and she hails from Chapata village, T/A Chanza, Lilongwe district. Married with four girls and one boy, Aliyena believes tobacco had given her a debauched experience that she will never forget.

In 1987, Aliyana had been cultivating tobacco until 2017 when she met her fate. Throughout this entire period, her tobacco never fetched good prices on market and she was perpertually in livelihood crisis. Aliyana thought of the way to get out of this situation and found the cultivation of legumes (soybean and groundnuts) as some of the important remedies "I was using local, recycled groundnut, soybean, and maize seeds, and I practicedto follow conventional methods of farming which I had learnt from my parents," said Aliyana. Aliyana was not happy committing much of her time and resources and being continuously at the mercy of low productivity.

In 2018, Aliyana decided to join Thanganjati Cooperative, which is one of the Cooperatives in Lilongwe working with the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) under the Platform . It was through the interaction with the Legume Officers that she learnt modern methods of legume farming. She found access to improved varieties with higher yields and resistance to pest and disease, and she also



These were the words of Aliyena I WILL NEVER LOOK BACK!!

I will never look back. The time of being a slave from unproductive crop production is over

embraced the use of inoculants as well as herbicides that would enable her farm be more productive.

The double row planting technology and Mandela cock was one of the skills AICC imparted to Aliyana. Double row planting practices, helped her to harvest high yields on a small plot of land. On the other hand, Mandela Cock made her harvest quality, disease free groundnuts to, achieve better grain weight and to lessen Aflatoxin infestation. The same year 2018, she harvested 17 bags of soybean and 20 bags of groundnuts on the same plot of land where she was producing littleover the years. She aggregated her produce and sold it through Thanganiati cooperative.

Eliyana made enough money to start building a house in whichshe now resides, supporting her family's well being and paying school fees for her kids. Her groundnut



and soybean business registered commendable success! "The money I realized in the 2019 growing season, I finalized constructing my house. In 2020, I used the money I made to buy a minibus," indicated Aliyana. The minibus is being used for transport business, as one way of diversifying their home income.

Her advise to farmers that are still resisting adoption of new farming technologies is that they are accommodating a spirit of backwardness and stagnation and that they should think of adopting these modern ways of farming passed on by AICC field extension workers as well as government field personnel. With a grinning smile on her face she said, "I will never look back. The time of being a slave from unproductive crop production is over".

In a country where land is limited and scarce for both

a country TRANSFORMING LIVELIHOODS THROUGH ere land mited and IMPROVED PIGEON PEAS FARMING

urban and rural people, the 65 year old father of four children is one of the farmers who has been cultivating on a small piece of land which could hardly sustain under the banner of Nkhonde Farmers Club, started working with AICC to help farmers in Nkhonde realize maximum from their lands using modern technologies.



Production Nandolo quickly Meanwhile, rose. Nandolo Mr. cooperative attended chairman Nandolo Association Malawi organized conference where they with legume buyers and learned about quality requirements. Purchasers from the World Food Programme and several millers from

the Malawi capital of Lilongwe are promising to offer tentative contracts to the Nkhonde cooperative that were contingent on the Pigeon peas meeting strict standards for quality and quantity.

With money realized from pigeon peas, Mr. Nandolo

I realized that maize alone would not help, thus when I started legumes production

has built a house which he has managed to electrify. He has also ventured into goat production and he is able to pay school fees for his nephews

their livelihood especially that they were using local farming methods. "Our farming has always been tailored to just feed ourselves and that has not enough because the harvest was never sufficient to feed myself and the kids" Says Nandolo who comes from the area of Chibwana Village, Traditional Authority Amidu in the district of Balaka. After years of struggling with poor yields, profits have poured in for Jimmy Nandolo, a chairman of Nkhonde Cooperative. The difference started when AICC offered the cooperative members training on how to use improved basic farming practices, like improved ways of preparing their land, applying herbicides and planting their legume crops.

The low yields and other farming challenges did discourage not farmer from the working hard get himself out of poverty. "I realized maize alone help, would not thus when I started legumes production.

In 2014, Nandolo and his friends,



that contribute to improving household food security, nutrition, and soil fertility. The

egumes are essential crops PIGEON PEAS CHANGED MY LIFE: THE STORY OF MARIA CHARLES

major leguminous crops grown in Malawi include Groundnuts, Soybeans, pigeon peas, and cowpeas. African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) through the Legumes project made it easy for farmers to adopt and apply the legume technologies. Members from Mkhonde Cooperative were some of the first to adopt and benefit from these new technologies. Over the years, legume crops have been playing a major role in reducing poverty, food security, and repairing soil fertility. Maria Charles 43 years of age, married with 10 children, Nine boys, and one girl hails from Suman

My family's wellbeing is paramount and right now I can forsee the better life in front of us because of AICC legume interventions

the cooperative, Maria has been able to access improved seeds, improved herbicides and her productivity increased.

> The improved seeds she has been accessing, have proved to be drought-resistant and have improved her production thus solving her production challenges. Maria has been growing groundnuts and pigeon peas. She learnt usage of inoculant in her legume production, a method she never knew nefore.

> Since the time she started applying all that she learned from AICC, she has been managing to harvest more from her fields and her productivity has increased. The money she realized from her 2019/20 sales, Maria purchased iron sheets, electricity pipes, electricity cables, and other materials needed to roof and electrify her house. Maria is also able to pay school fees for her three boys at

secondary school. "My family's wellbeing is paramount and right now I can forsee the better life in front of us because of AICC legume interventions" Maria concluded.



village, T/A Amidu, Balaka district. Maria, like many other farmers, her dream was to succeed and do well in agriculture more especially legume value chains. The only stumbling block was growing legume crops that were susceptible to disease and crop failure. The products provided little to feed her family, let alone sell for financial sustainability.

She used to grow locally recycled legume seeds which in return she was harvesting little as expected. On the other hand, following traditional farming practices that she learnt from her parents, contributed to low productivity.

under AICC, Legume Platform, changed her through Nkhonde story Cooperative. After she joined



village, **C**hapata Chanza, in Mitundu, Lilongwe. Married with six kids, Yohane

ged 52, Yohane hails from YOHANE DOKOTALA PROSPERS THROUGH LEGUMES FARMING

has been cultivating tobacco ever since he was young. However, faltering market of tobacco left him in despair with no substitute as he only knew tobacco as a source of cash.

Yohane has been looking for another crop that would change his life and would

take him out of the desperate situation that tobacco left him in. Learning from the

successes that members of Thanganjati cooperative made independently, Yohane made a decision to be part of this cooperative. He has been a member of the cooperative and he made it to the chairmanship currently.

Yohane has been one of the beneficiaries of improved

groundnuts and soybean seeds that AICC helped the cooperative to access. Yohane has also been implementing good agricultural practices that he has been learning from the cooperative. In 2019/20 growing season, Yohane harvested 2, 922 kgs of soybean and

> 1, 354 kgs of ground nuts. From this harvest, Yohane realized MK 876, 600.00 from soybean and MK 880, 000.00 from groundnuts respectively at the same land that he could realize less than MK 400,000.00 from tobacco

sales.

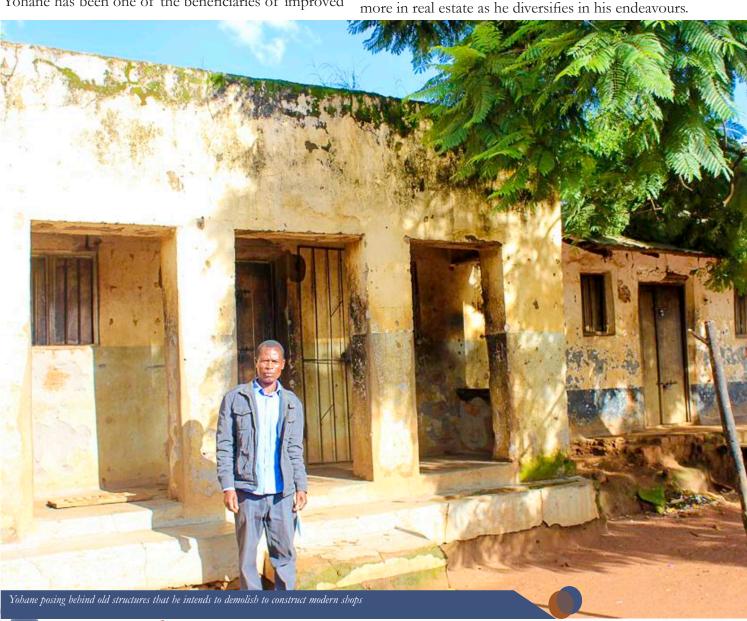
Faltering market of tobacco

left him in despair with no

substitute as he only knew tobacco

as a source of cash.

Yohane has managed to purchase a house from this money, pay school fees for his children and buy more land for farming. Yohane has also bought an old building at mitundu market which he intends to demolish and build modern shops. Yohane looks forward to invest



▲Citizenship through the Legume platform is promoting sustainable legume

frican Institute of corporate WEZZIE MFUNE DEFIES THE ODDS THROUGH LEGUME PRODUCTION

production, processing, value addition and marketing.

groundnuts and soya beans seed before planting and she planted using double rows to increase yields. Wezzie observed that the application of inoculant on improved

Just like every visionary farmer, one Wezzie Mfune is able to send her children to high school and college from the farming of Groundnuts and soya bean

It is against this background that AICC is encouraging legume farmers to start adopting different technologies to increase their productivity. New agricultural technologies help to innovate and modernize agricultural production in the light of climate change and soil degradation. One of the new technologies

that is increasing farmers' productivity is the use of inoculant. Research has confirmed that the use of inoculant in legumes boost yields. Another benefit of inoculation is that it stimulates a high grain protein content (up to 40%). This is a great story for Malawi with much of its economy depending on agriculture. The positive impact of inoculants on legume yields is the magical story that every legume farmer would like to hear.

Wezzie Mfune is a legume lead farmer in her community. She learnt application of inoculant to her



groundnuts and soya bean varieties led to greener leaves, longer stems and a high number of pods compared to soya beans without inoculant. The inoculated roots had a lot of nodules, meaning that they were highly able to return nitrogen to the soil. She also compared her harvest of maize in the following year and observed that maize yields had increased with less application of inorganic fertilizer on the field where there had been inoculated soya bean.

Just like every visionary farmer, one Wezzie Mfune is

able to send her children to high school and college from the farming of Groundnuts and soya bean. Wezzie has diversified into pig and fish production. She said that a lot of farmers visits her field during planting season to appreciate her farming practices. Some of them have already started planting inoculated groundnuts and soya bean and are under supervision. **AICC** is continuing supporting information with about legume farming and marketing strategies.



of the components in agricultural value chains

Talue addition is one MTHIRASEMBE COOPERATIVE MAKES that is done at a low scale STRIDES IN LEGUMES VALUE ADDITION

in Malawi. Low levels of expertise, little access to processing machinery as well as financial capital are and has linked it with different stakeholders to advance in value addition.



some of the factors that make value addition a challenge.

Irish Aid through MSIDP II, has financially assisted AICC's Legumes platform to be advocating for more investments in value addition as well as building capacity of cooperatives to add value agricultural products. Mthirasembe cooperative, located in Mchinji, is one of the cooperatives that AICC has been helping in value under **MSIDP** addition II. AICC has facilitated trainings in value addition

Despite the high prevailing demand for Mthiransembe's cooking oil from schools and local traders, the

The overall objective of intervention is to Promote processing (value addition) of legume commodities in Malawi by providing a necessary infrastructure for storage, and Specific centered on Improve production of value added products through availability of year round raw materials for Mthiransembe cooperative

cooperative is only able to serve the local (community) market owing to uncertified nature of their products by the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS). Mthiransembe cooperative has not been able to fulfil this standard requirement since it is operating from a rented structure designed to be a shop which cannot be modified since it is rented apart from being small and not conducive to accommodate all the sections required of a factory from



receiving and storage of raw materials, processing, and then storage of processed products ready for sales / dispatch. The above limitations retard the attainment of the cooperative's mission of ensuring that all members improve their access to better income and nutrition security through production, marketing and utilization of high quality and affordable cooking oil.

Looking at the potential that the cooperative has, Irish Aid has set aside funds to assist in construction of a modern factory for Mthirasembe cooperative. The overall objective of this intervention is to Promote the processing (value addition) of legume commodities in Malawi by providing a necessary infrastructure for storage, and Specific centered on Improve production of value added products through availability of year round raw materials for Mthiransembe cooperative, Enhance quality of Mthiransembe products through compliance to Malawi Bureau of standards and Increase market access of cooperative products through quality value added products.



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