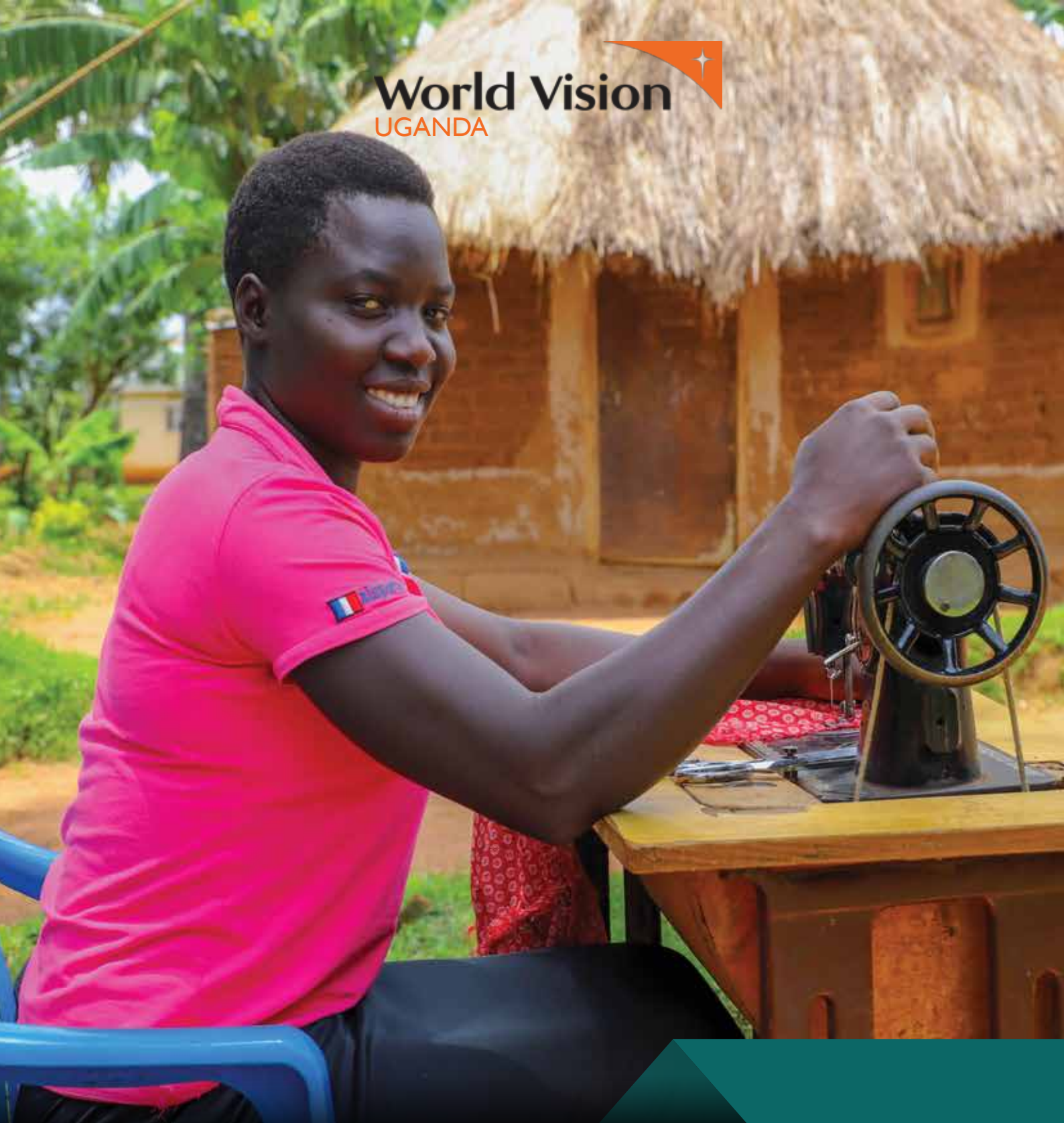




World Vision
UGANDA



Green Growth Revolution

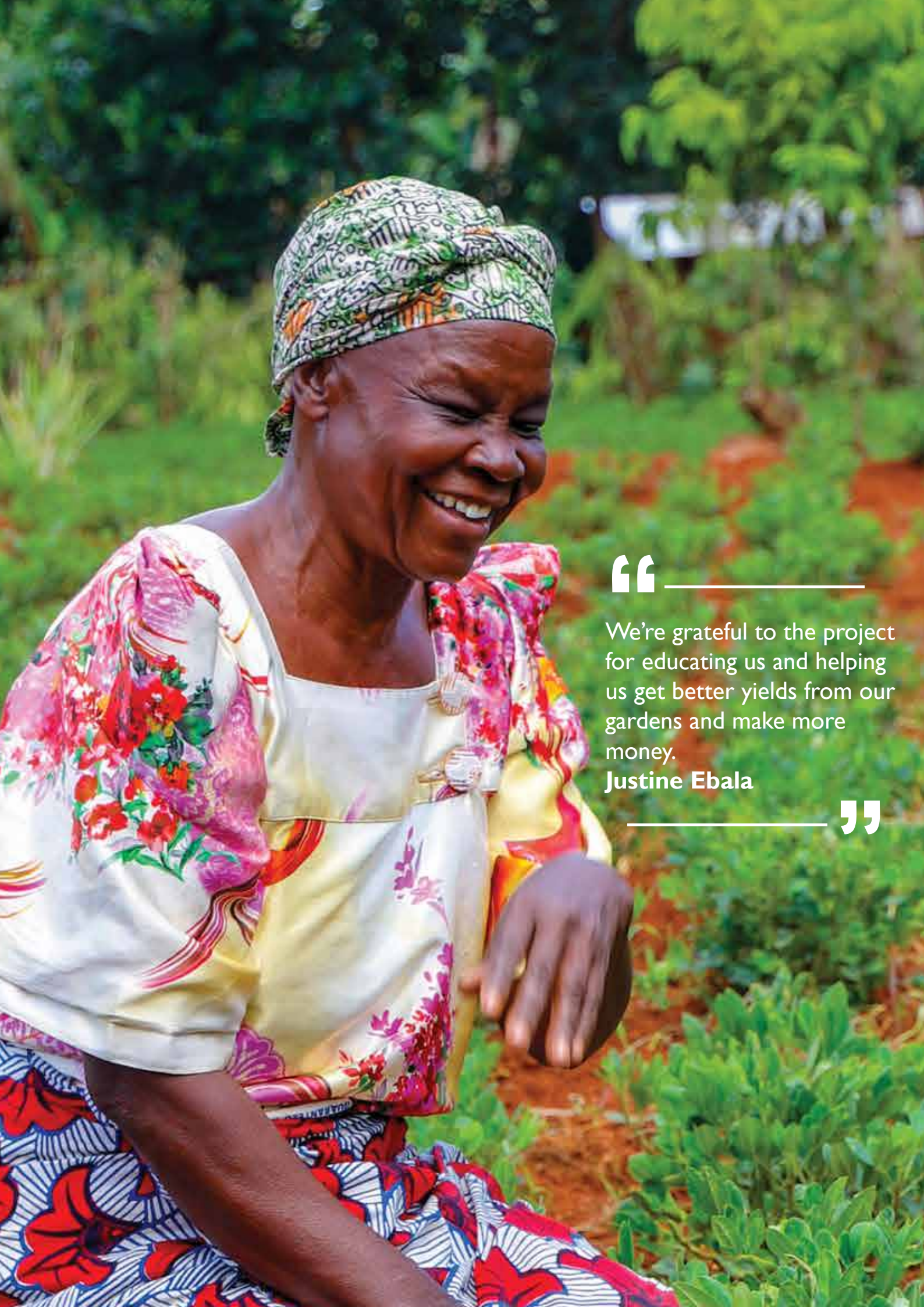
Stories of hope and promise from Tororo and Busia



World Vision Uganda



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We're grateful to the project for educating us and helping us get better yields from our gardens and make more money.

Justine Ebala

”



EUROPEAN UNION





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Foreward



Between 2018-2020, in collaboration with World Vision Finland and World Vision Ireland, World Vision Uganda and Kulika Uganda co-implemented a European Union-funded project in the districts of Tororo and Busia in Eastern Uganda.

The region whose economy is mainly subsistence farming was the second poorest region with the incidence of poverty estimated at 47.5%, according to Uganda Bureau of Statistics.

The situation was not helped by intense population pressure coupled with farming and charcoal burning which rendered the once highly productive land to generally become bare, with gullies and much of the fertile soils washed away, plunging many families in poverty in the recent years.

But the coming of the three-year (2018-2020) Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth opened many doors and restored hope for many families.

The project, first of its kind, sought to promote organic farming practices to enhance production and conserve the environment, boost value-addition and market linkages and create jobs for 6,000 women and youth in eight sub-counties located in Tororo and Busia. Targeted sub-counties were Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Sopsop, Pays in Tororo and Sikuda, Busitema, Lunyo and Busiime in Busia.

Driven by the desire to improve services that impact the daily lives of children and their families, the project adopted varied approaches, including Trainer of Trainers, Farmers' Field School and World Vision's Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) to create conducive environment for community participation. This is in alignment with the UN's Transformative Agenda on Sustainable Development 2030, Uganda's Vision 2040, and National

Development Plan as well as the National Organic Agriculture Policy to empower communities to demand for improved services from the Governments.

To address the root causes of poverty, we trained 144 community members in Citizen Voice and Action curriculum to help the communities make their needs visible to the Government. As a result, more than 3,500 community members were involved in accountability dialogues with 97.2% of women and 93.5% of youths reported to have received extension services from their local governments or non-governmental organisations.

Further, community members successfully lobbied for Environmental Ordinances which were presented, debated and passed by district councils of Tororo and Busia.

The end of project evaluation by Gi-Prime Consult showed an increase in the number of households practicing organic farming from 49% in 2018 to 90.5% in 2020. Moreover, 98% of women were involved in selected enterprises to boost their family income.

The high adoption rate of best farming practices with many families involved in different income generating activities paint an optimistic picture that the project impact will be felt long after its closure.


Thanks to the generous hearts of World Vision supporters worldwide, especially the European Union for funding this project. We were able to set in motion sustainable changes that continue to revolutionize farming in Eastern Uganda to support thousands of children and their families to overcome the root causes of poverty.

We are also grateful for the productive and collaborative relationships with the local governments of Tororo and Busia districts, as well as Kulika Uganda.

And finally, I want to thank our dedicated project teams in Tororo and Busia districts who served wholeheartedly, pressing forward to help create positive futures for Ugandan children.

May the Almighty God richly reward you all.


Jason Evans
National Director, World Vision Uganda

 **6,825** Households adopted the use of energy saving stoves

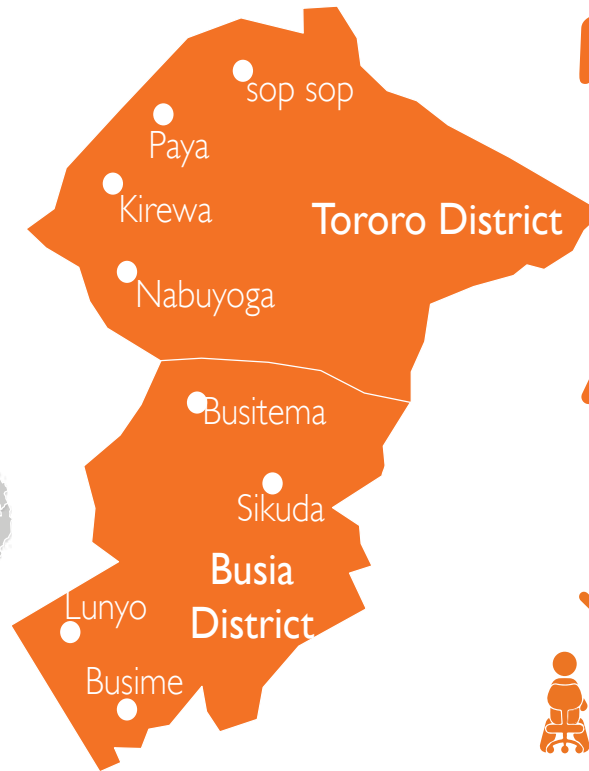
 **5,954** People reached in eight sub-counties of **Tororo and Busia districts**

 **98.1%** of women were involved in the production of selected enterprises

of the **5,954** people reached,


 **57%** Women  **43%** Youth

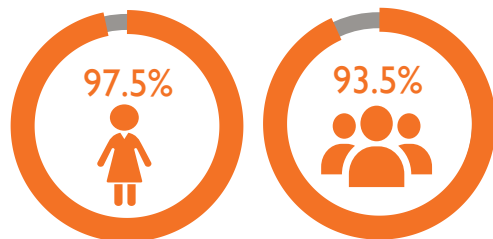
 **2,060** Farmers were certified for organic farming



 **200** Farmer groups formed and trained in organic farming

 **3,568** Community members actively participated in Citizen Voice and Action dialogues on service delivery of green economy, service delivery and natural resource


 **4,173** farmers adopted, Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) compared to the planned **4,000**



Received Extension Services from the local government, World Vision and Kulika Uganda

 **50%** increase in the price of simsim,

 **84%** increase in the price of ground nuts as a result of using organic agricultural methods and improved seed varieties.

 **90.5%** of **6,000** targeted farmers adopted organic farming



Peter Kyaligonza
District Commercial Officer,
Busia District

“As someone who has been involved in monitoring this project closely, it’s a revolution taking place in the rural communities of Tororo and Busia.

Farmers in Tororo and Busia Districts have abandoned traditional ways of farming for more sustainable and profitable organic farming. World Vision Uganda and co-implementing partner Kulilka Uganda through a European Union funded project the Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth are responsible for the shift.

The project co-funded by World Vision Ireland and World Vision Finland targeted to reach 6,000 women and youth in the eight sub-counties of Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Sopsop, and Paya in Tororo District; and Sikuda, Busitema, Lunyo and Busiime in Busia District.

The three-year (January 2018 to December 2020) project aimed to promote organic farming practices, improve production, and create market linkages as well as jobs for women and youth in the targeted districts of Tororo and Busia.

Aligned with the UN’s Transformative Agenda on Sustainable Development 2030, Uganda’s Vision 2040, and National Development Plan as well as the National Organic Agriculture Policy, the project also empowered women and youth to engage and demand for improved services from their local governments.

“As someone who has been involved in monitoring this project closely, it’s a revolution taking place in the rural communities of Tororo and Busia,” said Peter Kyaligonza, a commercial officer for Busia District. “I must say the project has achieved its goals as the impact can be felt by thousands of farmers who have more than doubled their crop yield, added value to their produce and ventured into other income generating activities like bee keeping to boost their income.”

The end of project evaluation by Gi-Prime Consult showed an increase in the number of households practicing organic farming from 49% in 2018 to 66% to-date.

With organic farming practices that involve mulching, planting in rows and using compost manure and organic pesticides adopted, Kyaligonza is optimistic that the project impact will be felt long after its span ended.

“My joy overflows when I see women and youth gainfully engaged in farming,” he said. “I just want to thank your donors for this new lease of life. We commit to continue supporting all farmers to have enough food and income.”



Organic manure
and pesticides



Farmer Managed
Natural Regeneration



Post-harvest
handling



Energy saving
Stoves



Apiary



Value Addition



I'm now planting in rows, and making my own manure and orgapesticides using plants, herbs and animal droppings around mu garden.

Merceliana Akumu

Farmers adopts natural manure for better yields

For many years the 79-year-old grandmother from Kirewa sub-county in Tororo district, Eastern Uganda tilled her land and scattered groundnuts seeds, a method she learned from her grandmother.

Over years she got frustrated by poor yields. Something was amiss but she could not tell what it was.

“From an acre I used to have eight or 10 bags of groundnuts but I was now struggling to get a sack of groundnuts,” said Maceliana Akumu. “Something was wrong.”

In 2018, through a European Union-funded project, World Vision organised field farmer school sessions for farmers in the districts of Tororo and Busia. The project co-funded by World Vision Ireland and World Vision Finland and co-implemented by Kulika Uganda targeted to reach 6,000 women and youth in eight sub-counties of Sop Sop, Paya, Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Busitema, Sikuda, Lunyo, and Busime in Uganda.

The three-year (January 2018 to December 2020) project dubbed the Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth aimed to promote organic farming practices, improve production, and create market linkages as well as jobs for women and youth in the targeted districts of Tororo and Busia.

Maceliana was among 5,611 farmers from 204 farmer groups selected for training in organic farming practices that included: crop rotation, green manures and compost, biological pest control and mechanical cultivation. “I learnt soil is like our bodies,” she told us. “It gets tired when not feed well. So I needed to apply manure to feed, and rejuvenate it.”

But that was not the only problem. Her groundnuts were always affected by pests and diseases, and now she had a solution. “I learnt that every season I needed to change crops, something I wasn't doing,” said Maceliana. “Again like our bodies, soil needs a balanced diet. Growing a single crop over and again is not a good practice as it encourages pests and diseases.”

Now able to identify the problem and provide solutions, Maceliana is all smiles exuding confidence and optimism for the future. “Working for long hours throughout the year and harvesting almost nothing is no more,” the 79-year-old said with energy. “I'm now using science to plant in rows, and to make my own compost manure and organic pesticides using local plants, herbs and animal droppings.”

After receiving the training in organic farming, Maceliana and other 29 members of her Wori Orphan and Women's Group immediately put lessons learnt into practice. The adoption of best farming practices complimented with supply of quality seeds has resulted into a significant increase in the crop yield.

During the second season of 2018, for example, Maceliana harvested eight bags of groundnuts from an acre of land, fetching her UGX800,000 from the sale of surplus. “I now have enough food for my family,” said the grandmother who takes care of five orphans. “A lot of people say there are no warm hearted people out there, but there are. Thank you World Vision, we have enough to eat and sell to meet other family basics.”

Recently Maceliana bought a cow using income from the sale of surplus. She hopes to supplement her family diet with milk. “In a few months we shall add milk on our diet. It's a miracle. I will always take time to tell people about your wonderous heart of helping vulnerable families.”

Farmers doubling their income with value addition.

Sylvia Cheberen is 61 years-old and lives in Buwich village, Busitema sub-county in Busia District. She is a mother of seven and a grandmother. When she retired as a nurse, Sylvia had her next pursuit well planned – farming.

“The farm is part of me,” she said. “I love farming because it’s a profession of hope. Without farmers, we wouldn’t have access to food and other basic necessities.”

Always keen to learn and do new things, Sylvia did not want to do farming for the sake of it. Her transition from nursing to farming meant one thing: business. “To make agriculture sustainable, the grower has got to be able to make a profit,” she said adding, “The goal of any farmer, after producing enough to feed his own family, has always been to find the best place to sell the year’s crop.”

Sylvia is the chairperson of Mwiche Hweholele (Lusamia for ‘Come and we work for ourselves’) Women’s Group. Her group was among 200 farmer groups selected for value-addition training organised by World Vision through a European Union funded project in the districts of Tororo and Busia.

The three-year Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth project was co-implemented by World Vision Uganda and Kulika Uganda. It aimed to promote organic farming practices, improve production, and create market value and linkages as well as jobs for women and youth in eight sub-counties of Sop Sop, Paya, Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Busitema, Sikuda, Lunyo, and Busime.

Talking with Sylvia you cannot fail to notice the importance she attaches to creating market value. No wonder her catchword is ‘value-addition’. “We used to sell our raw produce cheaply,” said Sylvia. “Now, we’re earning more, thanks to World Vision’s value addition training. It feels good at the end of the day to know you made a product that other people are going to enjoy.”

Different farmers groups are involved in different value addition processes, including roasting and packaging of sesame and groundnuts as snacks, powder or paste. These have longer shelf life, meaning farmers like Sylvia can keep their products until when the prices are right.

An end of project evaluation by Gi-Prime Consult showed that 96.8% of the women and 93.5% of the youth targeted were earning more than double due to improved post-harvest handling, storage, packaging and other value addition processes.

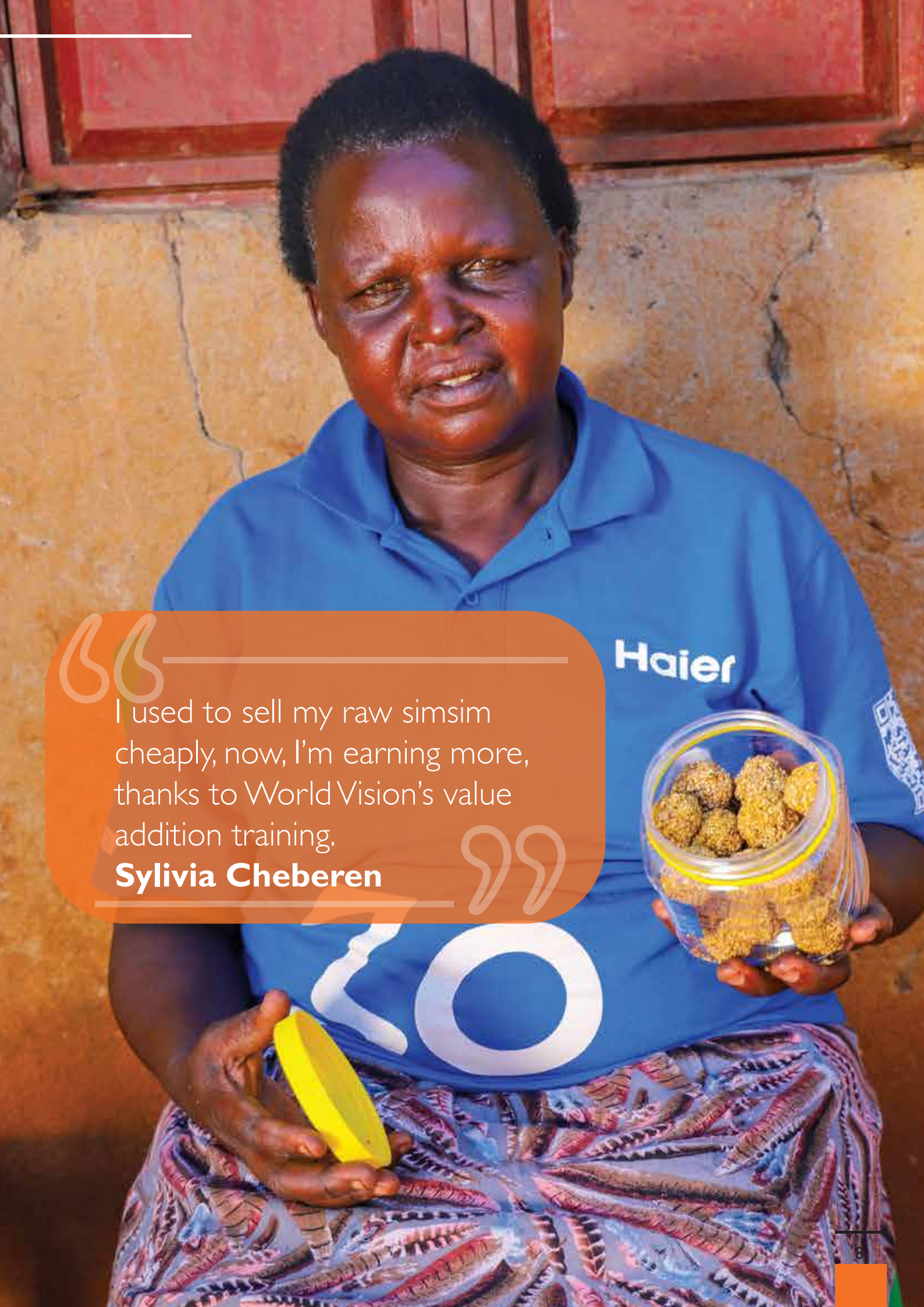
With their consumer experience enhanced through improved flavour, texture, sensory quality and colour of their final products, farmers like Sylvia could not have chosen a better option. “I love the idea of farm to table and farmer’s markets. I enjoy a meal more if I know I’m eating something that’s good quality and good for me, and that’s the experience we want to share with our customers.”

“

To make agriculture sustainable, the grower has got to be able to make a profit.

Sylvia Cheberen

”



“

I used to sell my raw simsim cheaply, now, I'm earning more, thanks to World Vision's value addition training.

Sylvia Cheberen

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Farmers adopt ways to cut down post-harvest loss

Imagine using bare fingers to crack a sack of groundnuts! It's tedious, time consuming, and as monotonous as it is boring. That was the deadening routine for members of Marok Ber Farmers' Group in Kirewa sub-county, Tororo District.

"We can't forget those dreadful days of cracking groundnut shells with our bare fingers," said 21-year old Betty Akoth, chairperson of the group. "It is a very painful experience."

While still pondering about what could be done to make their work easier, the group learned about a European Union funded project that was being co-implemented by World Vision Uganda and Kulika Uganda in their community.

The three-year Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth project aimed to promote organic farming practices, including appropriate technologies among 6,000 women and youth in the targeted districts of Tororo and Busia.

When the project staff learnt about the appalling situation Betty and her group members were facing, they supported them to construct a groundnut shell cracker using locally available wood.

"In three days, we had a shell cracker working very well," said Betty with new hope in her eyes. "It's the most amazing gift that we have ever received."

Now that Betty and her group members no longer spent a lot of time and energy manually cracking legume shells, they have enough time to attend to other family chores. "I am so excited that now I can attend to and support my family. It's a great blessing, I thank God and thank you so much," said Betty.

continued... pg 10

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We can't forget those dreadful days of cracking groundnut shells with our bare fingers, It is a very painful experience.

Betty Akoth.

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Betty Akoth uses the locally made hand tool to remove the husks of her groundnuts

Marok Ber Farmers Group is among 200 farmer groups selected for training in appropriate technologies to reduce post-harvest loss in eight sub-counties of Sop Sop, Paya, Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Busitema, Sikuda, Lunyo, and Busime. Different devices have since been developed to support in the processing of groundnuts, sesame, cassava and sweet potatoes.

Already six members of Betty's group have constructed their own groundnut shell crackers at home. The plan is to have every member of the group own a cracker to reduce on time, labour cost and post-harvest loss. "With a cracker you don't need extra support. It's user-friendly technology."

Equipped with knowledge and skills in organic farming practices, post-harvest handling and use of appropriate technologies, Betty's group has bought three sewing machines from the sales of their quality products. "We're destined for great times. With multiple sources of incomes, we're able to take good care of our families and to meet the needs of our children such as school fees."



Mary Nyacho, one of the beneficiaries using a groundnut plucking machine made from locally available materials.

Farmers adopt the use of organic pesticides, boost production

Elizabeth Akumu is all smiles as she shows how she is now an expert at getting rid of the annoying insects and bugs that used to destroy her crops. She uses a mixture of herbs and shrubs that she picked from her garden and the nearby bushes.

In 2018, through a European Union-funded project, World Vision organised field farmer school sessions for 5,611 farmers from 204 farmer groups in eight sub-counties of Sop Sop, Paya, Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Busitema, Sikuda, Lunyo, and Busime in Tororo and Busia Districts.

The Green Growth Project trained the farmers in organic farming practices that included: crop rotation, green manures and compost, biological pest control and mechanical cultivation.

Elizabeth, a 45-year-old mother of four, from Sop Sop sub-county, Tororo district, Eastern Uganda, was one of the beneficiaries. Like many farmers, the training transformed her life.



When we make these concoctions we end up with both a pesticide and organic fertilizer. It's like we're killing more than one bird with just one stone.

Elizabeth Akumu

"I picked interest in the biological pest control component because our biggest challenge, as farmers, was pests and diseases that were getting out of hand," says Elizabeth. "Yet, we learned that those chemicals we buy from shops are poisonous and cause more harm than good. And, even if they were not [harmful], we couldn't afford [them]."

The pests frequently destroyed her crops. Before the training, the groundnut yield for most varieties ranged between 130-180 KGs per acre, far below the recommended average of 400-600 KGs per acre.

Elizabeth attributes low yields to crop pests and disease coupled with declining soil fertility as well as poor farming methods, like broadcasting of seeds and the cultivation of a single crop on the same land for too long.

Besides working as a medicine against pests and diseases, Elizabeth says that the mixture is also an organic fertilizer. "When we make these concoctions, we end up with both a pesticide and organic fertilizer. It's like we're killing more than one bird with just one stone," she says, with the dexterity of an expert farmer.



Elizabeth Akumu educates other farmers on the plant species used to making organic fertilizers and biopesticides.



Equipped with knowledge and skills on how to make pesticide concoctions from locally-available plants and herbs, such as blackjack, red pepper, plant leaves, wild sunflowers and ashes, Elizabeth did not waste time. "After the training, I was among the first farmers in my community who adopted the making and use of organic pesticides. I was just tired of working for stubborn bugs and in the end, I get nothing," says Elizabeth.

And from adopting organic farming, including the use of organic manure and biopesticides, many farmers from the eight beneficiary sub-counties have registered a significant increase in the crop yield.

During the second season of 2018, for example, Elizabeth implemented what she had learned in the farmer trainings. Her harvest more than doubled. From one acre, she was able to harvest 480 KG of groundnuts.

"For the first time, I was proud of being a farmer. I had got something worth the sweat," she says with a smile.

Success replicated

Elizabeth is not the only delighted farmer: Her success is shared and replicated among other farmers practicing proper organic farming in both Busia and Tororo districts with individual harvests per acre ranging between 300-500kgs.

David Omala is another meticulous farmer who does not let anything in his garden or home go to waste.

"Before I received the training on best farming practices, I didn't know plants enjoy drinking tea, which is cheap and easy to make. I can now turn anything from animal and bird droppings to peels, grass, weeds and leafy shrubs into green manure," David says exuding the confidence of an expert.

The 36-year-old father of five from Kirewa sub-county in Tororo district is an indefatigable model farmer whose home is frequented by other farmers seeking to learn from her.

"The [Green Growth] project has been very helpful to us. It helped us to use what we already had to improve on our crop production and protect the environment at the same time for our children and their children," says David, who belongs to a 30-member African Woman Farmers Group.

David is also a model farmer and the biggest producer of yams in Kirewa sub-county. "I make a lot of money by roasting and selling the yams. I also supply restaurants and neighbours. With all these resources, I am able to provide adequate food for my family throughout the year, a thing that was not possible before I received the training," he says.

Like David, Elizabeth says she now earns enough to sustain her own family in terms of food security and basic family needs, including paying school dues for all her four children. "There was a time when it was hard to have a nutritious meal, leave alone keep a child at school. As a family, I confess we are long past that time. We are in good times after our production has been boosted through organic farming practices," says Elizabeth.

A recent World Vision evaluation shows an increase in the number of households practicing organic farming from 49% in 2018 to 66% to-date.

“ I can now turn anything from animal and bird droppings to peels, grass, weeds and leafy shrubs into green manure. Eunice ”



Josephine Sitanga spraying her groundnuts farm with dung manure made locally on her farm.



Bee farmers reap honey and money

Fifty-four-year old, Anne Rose Nyadoi is a resident of Soni village in Tororo District. Rose, who is also the chairperson of Marok Ber Farmers Group involved in beekeeping, has a lot of interesting ideas about why every farmer should consider keeping the social insects.

“Nowadays, we’re traversing the entire district talking and encouraging farmers to keep bees,” says Anne Rose.

Anne Rose and her group have taken advantage of the knowledge and skills gained as beneficiaries of a European Union-funded project co-implemented by World Vision Uganda and Kulika Uganda in the districts of Tororo and Busia to popularize what they describe “lucrative” business. “Bees aren’t only interesting to keep for honey but can also put lots of cash in your pocket,” she says.



Bees aren’t only interesting to keep for honey but can also put lots of cash in your pocket.

Anne Rose Nyadio

The three-year Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth project aimed to promote organic farming practices, bolster income generating activities and create jobs for 6,000 women and youth in the eight sub-counties of Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Sopsop, and Paya in Tororo District; and Sikuda, Busitema, Lunyo and Busiime in Busia District.

On an acre, Anne Rose says it is possible to have 1,000 bee-hives. Here in Uganda, honey is harvested three times a year and with good husbandry practices from one beehive it is possible to harvest five litres. Now if you harvest 100 litres per season and sell each litre at UGX30,000, which is the average local price now, you get UGX3m. This translates to UGX9m per year as a supplementary income to coffee or bananas. Moreover, by keeping bees on your farm, you increase your crop production since bees are among the best pollinators.

“I’m not really saying everybody should have as many bee hives on an acre. But just imagine if a coffee or banana farmer had some 15 bee hives kept on his farm?” she asks. “Bees will give you honey and money, yet you’re required to do very little as a farmer.”



Anne Rose packaging honey making it ready for sale

Lessons learnt

Before receiving World Vision's organised training in best practices, Anne Rose like most residents in her community did not know a thing about beekeeping.

The only time she tasted sweet honey was when her sons once in a while harvested the wild honey from tree trunks or anthills. "They used fire from dry banana leaves or grass to kill bees and then harvest honey. This was usually done at night. We now realise this was very destructive method. It destroyed the entire nest and killed bees, including the queen bee," she says at with regret.

Marok Ber Farmers Group is one of 16 farmers' groups trained in apiary best practices, including how to attract bees by planting flowering trees near the beehives, placing of beehives under shade of trees such as mangoes, jack-fruits or in coffee plantations, and providing water sources for the bees to drink.

Anne Rose and her group members are optimistic about the impact of the 'bee-gospel', and they are ready to render their support to anyone interested in keeping the bees. "The number of farmers interested in venturing in beekeeping is encouraging," she says. "It's growing each day as we continue to receive inquiries from near and far. We're more than excited to move with all those interested in the journey of beekeeping."

In beekeeping, Anne Rose says that a farmer only incurs little cost at the initial stage of setting up an apiary. "All you really need is money to buy beehives," she says. "Once you have these (the beehives) you can set up your apiary in a well-drained, less disturbed place far from noise or human activities."

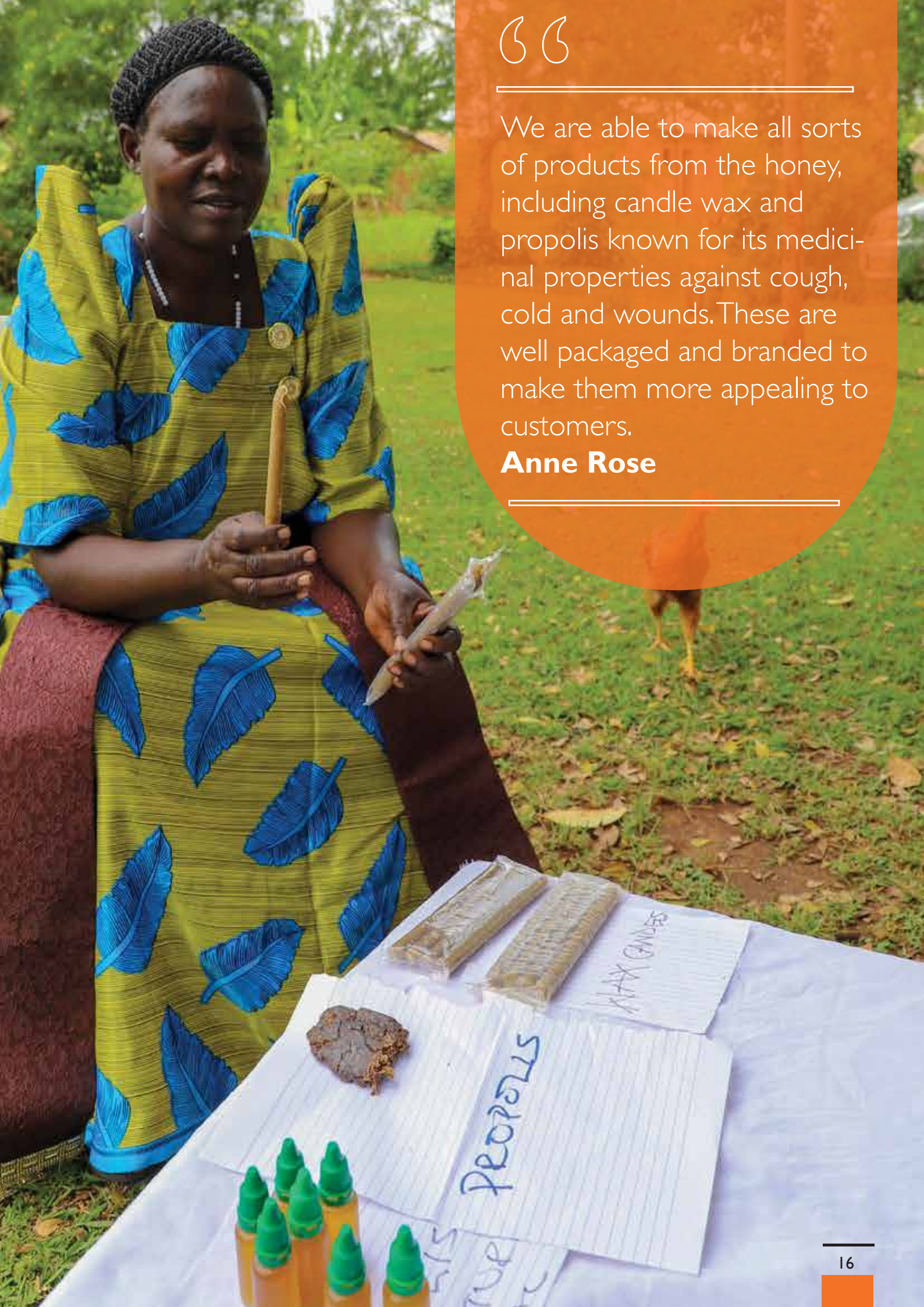
Anne Rose cautions farmers to keep off areas frequently sprayed with chemical pesticides to avoid bee poisoning and honey contamination. "These insects (bees) are very sensitive to changes in environment," she says. "When possible, places where chemicals pesticides and fertilizers are applied should be avoided completely."

The groups were also taught on how to add value to bee products. "We are able to make all sorts of products from the honey, including candle wax and propolis known for its medicinal properties against cough, cold and wounds.

These are well packaged and branded to make them more appealing to customers," says Anne Rose.

Other than depending on the nature for provide, from the training Anne Rose and her group members learnt how to make bee-hives out of vine and reeds collected from the forest. But they can also make bee-hives from hollowed tree stems such as palm trees which are common in their community.

The groups are also equipped with skills and knowledge on how to feed and take care of the bees to increase honey yield. Above all, they know how to harvest honey without destroying the bees and their nests. "We're now experts, thanks to World Vision for the training," says Anne Rose. "We're fully equipped to take care of our social friends as they too take care of our needs."



We are able to make all sorts of products from the honey, including candle wax and propolis known for its medicinal properties against cough, cold and wounds. These are well packaged and branded to make them more appealing to customers.

Anne Rose

Energy saving stoves protect health, environment



In Tororo and Busia districts, kitchens are changing. And these changes are not only impacting people's health, they're impacting the environment as well.

What's the change? The energy saving stove.

"This is my contribution to my community and environment," says Teddy Rose Awoori, a 50-year-old mother of eight and a grandmother of seven from Kisia zone, Sere parish, Paya sub-county in Tororo District, Eastern Uganda. "My family and I no longer have to cut trees for firewood."

“Firewood is very scarce in this community and using open-air cooking method, a bundle would give us two days,” says Teddy Rose. “With the energy saving stoves, the same bundle now takes 11 days.”

Teddy Rose is the chairperson of the 30-member Kisia United Farmers' Group, one of groups trained in making energy saving stoves under a European Union-funded project co-implemented by World Vision and Kulika Uganda in Tororo and Busia districts.

The stoves made out of locally available mixture of grass, water and mud have revolutionized the cooking in the villages.

After being trained as artisans in 2018, Teddy Rose and members of her group were able to make the stoves first for themselves, and then their neighbours. "I've orders from the neighbouring communities and from other districts," she says.

When all materials required are available, Teddy Rose spends about six hours to construct and complete one stove, and charges between UGX-15,000 and UGX20,000 (US\$7.5 – US\$10) for the job.

These are double rocket lorena stoves, meaning you can cook with two pots simultaneously using the same energy source. The smokeless stoves are more efficient than the traditional open-air three cooking stones.

"Firewood is very scarce in this community and using open-air cooking method, a bundle would give us two days," says Teddy Rose. "With the energy saving stoves, the same bundle now takes 11 days."

For Teddy Rose, energy saving stoves is not just a new found goldmine as she feels more secure having her 5-year old grandson, Paul, in the kitchen. She gets lyrical talking about the numerous benefits her and her family are enjoying.

“The new stove doesn’t emit smoke and eliminates direct contact with the flames, meaning the family is able to do all its cooking without worrying about accidents,” says Teddy Rose. “It uses less firewood and retain heat for a long time. We no longer walk long distances and spend many hours hunting for firewood. My grandchildren and I now have a lot of time to spare.”

Already Teddy Rose has passed on the skills of making improved stoves to her children. Together they make and sell stoves, an initiative that has significantly bolstered the family income. “Besides healthy and environmental benefits, energy saving stoves are a great source of income. From stove sales we’ve bought goats and managed to grow an acre of cassava,” she says.



Teddy Rose posing with the energy stoves that she made after the training.

But not all Teddy Rose's clients are able to pay by cash. “It’s all about understanding your customers. Some don’t have cash but can pay in kind, so, we accept anything, including chicken,” she says.

Veronica, 36, is another mother of three grateful that the Green Growth project came to her Lunyo community in Busia District.

Veronica’s family lived in a mud-and-wattle hut where years of cooking on traditional three stones gave her miserable asthma.

Early every morning, Veronica and her children gathered dry brush and sticks to prepare breakfast in their small mud hut.

Veronica says, “We spent so much time inside. We cooked and slept here. There is no ventilation and the smoke from the fire made it very difficult to breathe.”

“
At night, I would wake up suffocating, and often had to be rushed to the hospital on a motorcycle.
Veronica

”

Veronica's husband works far away while she cares for their children.

Because of their living conditions, she developed asthma, making it hard for her to do physical work.

“At night, I would wake up suffocating, and often had to be rushed to the hospital on a motorcycle,” says Veronica.

“I remember asking God what I did wrong. I thought God was angry at me.”

When the Green Growth project staff learned about their terrible living conditions and Veronica's asthma, they got one of the artisans trained by the project to build them an improved cooking stove.

Veronica says, “Thank you so much for everything you have done for us. This is a new lease of life. May God bless you for having such giving hearts.”

By the end of the three-year Green Growth project in 2020, more than 4,000 households across the eight targeted sub-counties of Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Sopsop, Paya, Sikuda, Busitema, Lunyo and Busiime were using energy saving stoves for cooking.

The benefits are overwhelming and many early adopters like Teddy Rose are prepared to continue transferring the improved technology to those who have not yet had a feel of energy saving stoves.

“Through the Green Growth project, God made a way to bless our whole family,” says Teddy Rose. “When I made this modern stove, there was fresh air for the first time and we were overjoyed. My family health and economy has improved a lot. We haven't been to the hospital since we made this stove. And for the sake of environment, I want every family in my community to own an improved stove. I commit to train, make and sell more stoves,” concludes Teddy Rose.

“My family health and economy has improved a lot. We haven't been to the hospital since we made this stove.”
Teddy Rose



Teddy Rose making energy saving stoves from locally available materials.

Promoting organic farming via radio programmes

This is Juliet Oketch. She hails from Sikuda village in Busia District. She is married with 3 children aged 13, 10 and 6.

Juliet is a farmer. She has been practicing organic farming and Farmer Managed-Natural Regeneration (FMNR) since the year 2018. Before venturing into organic farming and FMNR, she was harvesting fewer yields from her four acres of land, a problem she attributed to poor farming practices and rainwater which resulted in runoff leading to excessive soil erosion.

In a good year, she could harvest 2,000kg of maize per acre. This was despite using correct amounts of fertilizer as advised by the area's agricultural extension officers.

For years, she would remove all the shoot and sprouts that emerged in the field during land preparation and used broadcast method to plant. "I could barely get enough food for four of us, myself and my 3 children," says Juliet. "This was because of persistent dry spells in most parts of the seasons as well as poor soils caused by bad practices."

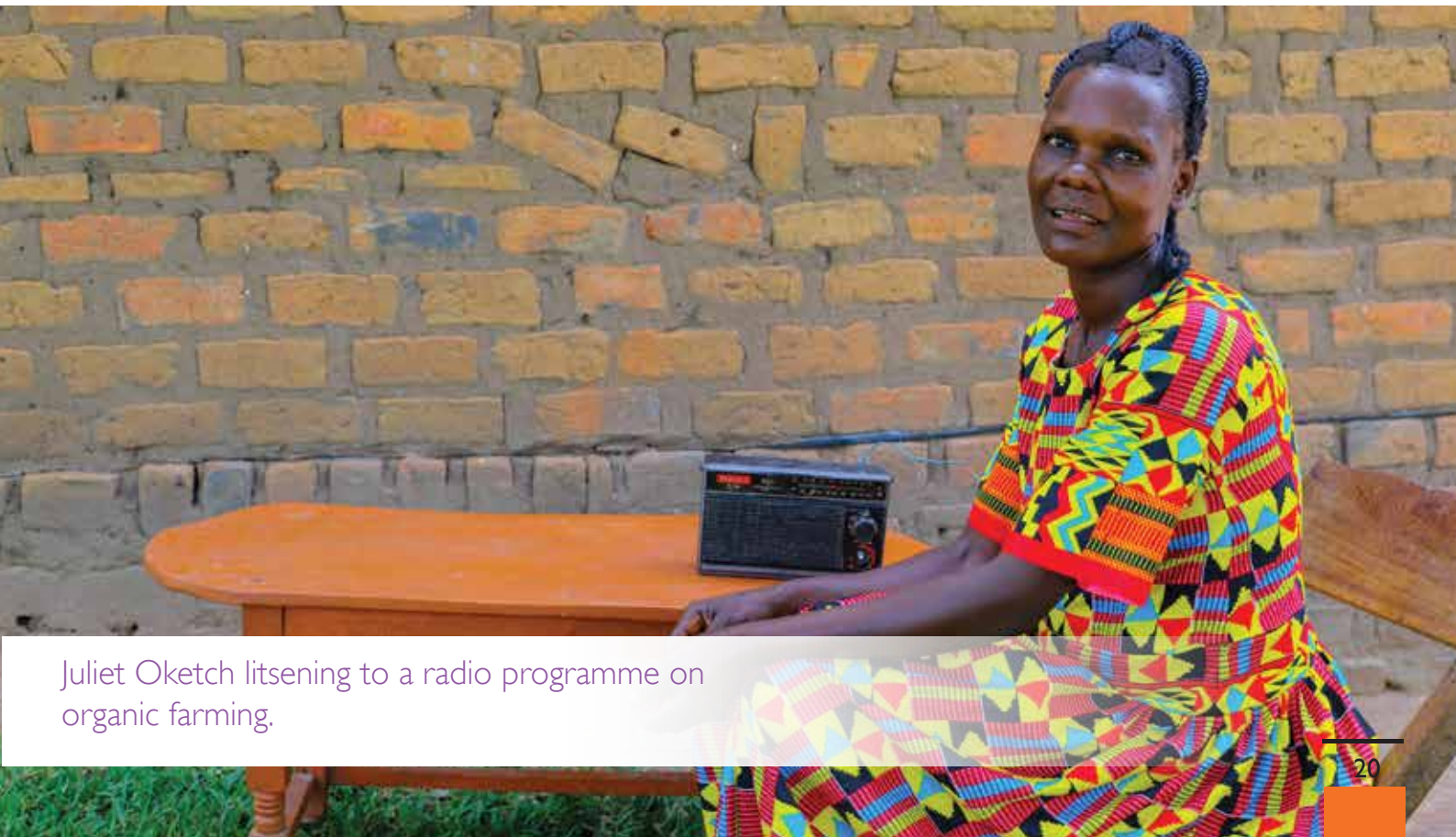
She further explains that her life changed when a European Union-funded project co-implemented by World Vision and Kulika Uganda came to her community in 2018 and introduced a radio listening programme on Rock Mambo in Tororo and Jogo FM in Busia.

The three-year Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth Project aimed to promote organic farming practices, including Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) in eight sub-counties of Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Sopsop, Paya, Sikuda, Busitema, Lunyo and Busiime in Tororo and Busia Districts.

This, Juliet says gave her an opportunity to access essential farming information. "I didn't have a radio set or any gadget in my home. I belonged to Sikuda Listening Club, where we met every Saturday at 2:00 pm to listen to a farming programme," she says.

Juliet adds, "I was very happy to be given an opportunity to listen to fellow farmers explain organic farming practices such as how to select quality seeds; planting in rows while observing recommended spaces to avoid seed wastage and to allow good growth of crops; mulching the field to retain soil moisture as well as how to make and use compost manure."

“ I was very happy to be given an opportunity to listen to fellow farmers explain organic farming practices. **Juliet Oketch** ”



Juliet Oketch listening to a radio programme on organic farming.



Pollicap Lanek, Project Coordinator educates radio listeners on organic farming.

Juliet grows groundnuts, maize, sweet potatoes, and soybean. While listening to her favourite radio programme, she also learnt about FMNR that involves caring for the self-germinating trees that sprout in the fields.

“They also advised us to keep most of the trees that would sprout in the field, and the number of trees didn't matter as much as I could prune off the branches to prevent the trees from shading the crops from the sun,” she says.

After about a year of putting into practice most of the things she had learned via radio, Juliet noticed there was a change in her maize yield. Other crops yet to be harvested too looked much healthier due to good organic farming practices and the manure decomposed from the leaves.

“I could now harvest enough food for my family, from 2,000kgs of maize to 6,000kgs or 7,000 kgs depending on rainfall pattern for that season,” says Juliet with a smile on her face.

She adds, “This is when I also decided to keep self-sown trees in my other portions of the field where I grow groundnuts, soybean and sweet potato, and I have realized increased yields for all the crops than ever before. The trees reduced the rate of soil erosion such that I am able to generate much income from the yield harvested than I used to.”

Before the trees, Juliet could not stay longer in the field doing field activities due to the scorching sun. After she reserved some trees, she was able to do the farming activities for longer periods as she had shade in her field.

That was not all. In 2020, Juliet was able to fully appreciate the benefits of FMNR on her farm. “As women, we are obliged to cook for the family. The challenge we had was where to get firewood. Before I started practicing FMNR, I would cook using maize stalks and this would take a longer time for the food to get ready. Sometimes I avoided cooking nutritious foods like beans because they take a lot of firewood before getting ready,” she says.

Juliet bought firewood at UGX2,000, a bundle of few sticks. “Now I don't have such problems at all, I am able to get firewood from my field. At the start of each rainy season, during land preparation, I harvest a lot of firewood from pruning the trees to allow for good crop growth,” says Juliet.

She adds, “Sometimes I sell bundles of firewood at UGX4,000. This money helps in providing for school fees for my child as well as household use. I also sell troughs at UGX7,000 or UGX1,000 per pole. This has helped me to economically depend on myself from the income generated from FMNR, apart from other sources. In addition to this, I also collect some natural fruits from some trees on my farm as a source of food.”

“I didn't have a radio set or any gadget in my home. I belonged to Sikuda Listening Club, where we met every Saturday at 2:00 pm to listen to a farming programme.”
Juliet Oketch.

Juliet has over 200 trees of different species that she manages on her farm. Her crops are doing well too. She is among 6,000 farmers that were targeted by the Green Growth project in Tororo and Busia districts.

With the introduction of farmer radio-listening groups, farmers like Juliet were able to follow what their fellow farmers were doing in Busia as well as Tororo districts. She also belongs to a listening club, which was featured on the radio several times since the project started.

“After each programme, we had an opportunity to discuss the lessons learned and to encourage each other to implement where we fell short. I am glad that we were provided with a feedback toll-free line that allowed us to share our comments for every programme aired. I am also glad that for the questions that were posed, responses were provided in the next aired programme.”

No wonder whenever her favourite radio started, she didn't want any interruptions. “As soon as I heard that signature tune, I would get glued to the radio because that time my life really depended on it,” says Juliet.



A delegation from the European Union and World Vision meeting with some of the farmers from Tororo and Busia Districts.

Communities embrace Citizen Voice and Action to impact child wellbeing

Thirty-five-year-old Jude Tadeo Ochieng is a father of a 3-year-old daughter from Wokolo village, Nabiyoga sub-county in Tororo District.

When a European Union-funded project started work in his community, he was not moved an inch. Why? There had been many projects before implemented in his community and there was not much change to celebrate, especially in the area of service delivery.

“I took a poor view of the new project because in the past there had been many similar projects welcomed with pomp and promises to change things but only to disappoint at the end,” says Jude Tadeo. “Nothing changed. You would shudder with horror at deplorable conditions which welcomes you. It was like more projects they received, the worse their situation got.”

But the three-year Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth Project co-implemented by World Vision Uganda and Kulika Uganda in collaboration with World Vision Finland and World Vision Ireland in the districts of Tororo and Busia was different.

Implemented in eight sub-counties, the project adopted diverse approaches, including Trainer of Trainers, Farmers’ Field School and World Vision’s Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) to promote organic farming practices to enhance production, bolster value addition and market linkages and create jobs for 6,000 women and youth. Targeted sub-counties were Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Sopsop, Paya, Sikuda, Busitema, Lunyo and Busiime.



It gives voice to children, their families and communities to make their needs visible to those who can and should meet them, and urges decision makers to take action.

Tadeo Ochieng



Originally trained in Human Resources Management, Community Development and Administrative Law, Jude Tadeo’s turning point was he was among 144 community members selected, trained and deployed to implement World Vision’s unique approach to social accountability and local advocacy. “I just fell in love with the CVA approach,” said Jude Tadeo with clarity and passion noticeable in his tone. “Of all the approaches and models I know so far; I think it is the best approach there is.”

He adds, “It gives voice to children, their families and communities to make their needs visible to those who can and should meet them, and urges decision makers to take action.”

The CVA approach is designed to improve the relationship between communities and government so that everyone in the community can work together to improve services that impact the daily lives of children and their families.

To address the underlying root causes of poverty, Jude Tadeo explains that the focus should be on gathering evidence and community feedback to press for changes to unjust systems, policies, processes and services at local and national. “I’m glad that with CVA, we just did that – empowered citizens to influence policy through civic mobilization, education, and participation at community level,” he says.

Equipped with advocacy skills, CVA practitioners like Jude Tadeo ignited their communities to advocate for improved service delivery. For instance, more than 3,500 community members were involved in accountability dialogues on agricultural extension services, exceeding the project’s planned target of over 1,000 community members.

Additionally, community members successfully lobbied for Environmental Ordinance which were presented, debated and passed in district councils of Busia and Tororo.

“This was possible because whoever was told about the new approach wanted to have a taste and a feel of it. And ours was to reach as many community members as possible and to support their specific advocacy needs. I thank everyone who was involved in this project,” says Jude Tadeo who was also trained in child protection and now a member of Child Protection Committee in his community.



World Vision

WE THE UNDERSIGNED, COMMIT / PLEDGE TO CHAT ON ISSUES AFFECTING GREEN GROWTH AND AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

OTII ~~Donie~~ YOUTH C/PERSON NARSU-105A
Joseph, D/Councillor Nabke/TOLG
~~Joseph~~ C/PERSON. Nabuyoga &c

Tadeo Ochieng holding a plague signed by the district leadership committee.

More farmers in Busia, Tororo receive organic certification

Matias Simeo Osege is a renowned model farmer from Sere village, Paya sub-county in Tororo District. In 2009, he founded Sere Agro Business and General Supplies Limited (SEABUGS), located 23km north-west of Tororo town, to promote value-addition through processing and packaging of organic agricultural products.

In 2012, he registered his company with a mission to set the record straight – communicating to both brands and consumers how organic production and processing offers the highest standards and the most reliable, trustworthy system for advocates of sustainability.

“I wanted to give control to farmers, not GM (genetically modified) companies,” says Matias. “Organic farmers don’t have their choices controlled by GM companies.”

For Matias, one thing is clear: organic farming is proven to deliver positive benefits for people and the environment. “When it comes to making sustainability claims you can trust, nothing beats organic farming,” he says. “It (organic farming) doesn’t use dangerous pesticides, protecting farmers’ lives and the environment.”

SEABUGS is the biggest bulk buyer of organic agricultural produce in Tororo and Busia districts with more than 1,500 farmers assured of ready market for their produce.

But with many consumers, producers, governments, retailers and various other international organisations becoming increasingly interested in the market for certified products, certification has become very popular and has received much media coverage, especially as regards organic and fair-trade products.

Producers like Matia who want to export were confronted not only by a plethora of import regulations, but also within those import countries by different niche markets for which additional requirements had to be fulfilled. Moreover, such niche markets offer opportunities for increased market access or even price premiums.

“Certifications have become the standard of choice for brands and retailers to efficiently manage their organic supply chains,” he says. “Certification also demonstrates a company’s commitment to sustainability through third party and independent inspectors on product labels instead of self-claims.”

In a bid to strengthen the existing market linkages, the Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth Project supported SEABUGS to apply for and be assessed for organic certification. And on April 8, 2020, the company was successfully certified by the Netherland-based Control Union Certifications under certificate No. UG-BIO-I 49.

Control Union Certifications is active in the field of the inspection and certification in organic and sustainable agricultural, forestry and textile industry. They offer a global one-stop-shop for a wide range of certification programmes including the key organic (EU, USDA NOP, JAS) ones and all major and recognised programmes. Their certificates are accepted by authorities and brands in nearly every country.

With the benefits of organic processing pointed out as the comprehensive sustainable way for food security, SEABUGS has considerably strengthened its global acceptance. “Consumers can be sure that a product carrying the SEABUGS symbol is not only produced with a minimum of organic content but is also processed to strict environmental and social criteria,” says Matia.

“When it comes to making sustainability claims you can trust, nothing beats organic farming, It doesn’t use dangerous pesticides, protecting farmers’ lives and the environment.
Matias Simeo Osege”

The three-year European Union-funded project was implemented by World Vision and Kulika Uganda in the eight sub-counties of Kirewa, Nabuyonga, Sopsop, Paya in Tororo and Sikuda, Busitema, Lunyo and Busiime in Busia. This was in close collaboration with World Vision Ireland. It sought to promote organic farming practices to enhance production and conserve the environment, boost value-addition, market linkages and create jobs for 6,000 women and youth.

Already out of more than 2,000 farmers from Busia and Tororo districts are registered for organic certification, SEABUGS has audited and certified more than 1,400 farmers in the field of groundnuts, sesame, lemon grass, eucalyptus, palmrosa and citronella for essential oils.

other crops for food and income throughout the year. "With organic farming less water is used, preserving a scarce and precious resource for the future. It also uses less energy and healthy organic soils store more Carbon Dioxide, responsible for harsh climate changes such as global warming, draughts and floods," he says.



Matias Simon displaying his organic certificate

Farmer adopts Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration, survives drought



A large horizon of land only with crops in fields lies visibly clear in Kirewa community of Tororo District in Eastern Uganda. Less than 40 years ago, it was impossible to have such a view in this area unless from an eagle's eye. The forest was once thick for and attracted animals and farmers alike to settle there and use the land.

With almost all trees now cleared because of farming and charcoal burning- climate change hit the people of this community hard. The once highly productive land has generally become bare, with gullies and much of the fertile soils washed away, plunging many families in poverty in the recent years.

"I grew up in this community, but I've never seen what we've witnessed in recent years. This land used to give us high crop yields without applying any fertilisers. Rains were plenty but not anymore," says Magdalena Adikin Ojwang, who was born and grew up in this community says.

"It has been difficult to do farming and produce enough food to eat throughout the year and to have money to buy daily needs and to support our children's education. Life has been tough for us because of the low rains and frequent droughts we've been experiencing over the years," Magdalena says.

Magdalena, 68, is a mother of 11 children – and a grandmother of more than 30. She is among many other families that have faced the horrendous impact of climate change that the community of Kirewa has witnessed because of man's poor management of the environment and its resources.

“ We didn't know why we started experiencing drought, dry spells and poor rainfall patterns. Most of the time we've been witnessing too much wind that has been blowing away our houses.

Magdalena

” “We didn't know why we started experiencing drought, dry spells and poor rainfall patterns. Most of the time we've been witnessing too much wind that has been blowing away our houses. Most of the streams we had which provided us with water have since dried up and some disappeared altogether. The wild fruits and animals we used to enjoy when I was young are nowhere to be seen, except the mangoes which we have planted in our fields,” Magdalena adds.

But the coming of a European Union-funded project in Tororo and Busia districts since 2018 has opened many doors and restored hope for many families.

The three-year Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth Project co-implemented by World Vision and Kulika Uganda aimed to promote organic farming practices, including Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), in combination with other improved soil and water conservation practices, to help reverse this trend.

Why FMNR?

FMNR adapts centuries-old methods of managing tree species that re-sprout vigorously after being cut to produce continuous harvests of trees for fuel, building materials, food and fodder – without the need for frequent, costly replanting.

The method promotes more favourable growing conditions for crops by increasing water infiltration and retention, reducing wind speed and local temperatures due to dispersed shading, and adding organic matter from leaf fall and litter, as compared to when trees are cut down altogether.

“The Green Growth project has given us so much hope that we’re now being helped to restore the natural resources we have lost over the years, causing us to suffer the consequences of climate change. As a result, most families have been forced to marry off children with the hope of surviving poverty that has now stricken us because farming is no longer working well for us,” Magdalena says as a matter-of-fact.

True to her words, barely a year after the Green Growth project started, drought hit the eastern part of Uganda, destroying families’ crops. Luckily, Magdalena was among more than 4,000 farmers in Tororo and Busia who had already been trained and adopted FMNR. They managed to harvest something that saved them from serious hunger that most families experienced that year.

“What we’re eating now is the harvest that survived the drought because of farming God’s Way. Otherwise we would not have food to eat by now [early 2020],” Magdalena says.

The untold benefits

“I harvested a bit more than I sold to have money to meet my grandchildren’s school needs. Otherwise my grandchildren would have been chased out of school and I don’t think we would have managed to live without food as most families lost everything to drought because of farming the traditional way.”

Producing enough food from a small portion of land that had survived the drought to save her family did not just motivate her to yearn to do even more during the 2019/2020 farming season, but inspired her to take FMNR seriously right away.

“I started pruning the few bushes around our farmland to enhance their growth and to protect them because I know they’ll be of high value not only to my family but the entire community as I have learnt that they would start contributing to reversing the effects of climate change and give us other benefits,” she says.

“We were used to cutting every shrub or tree that grows either home or in the fields but after learning about FMNR, I understood the importance of trees in fighting climate change,” Magdalena says as she points to her upcoming forest reserve area.

Spread from the boundaries of her household down to where her farmland demarcates in four angles, Magdalena has managed to preserve a soon-to-be forest area that almost has all small to medium-sized trees standing straight, and providing delightful fresh aired environment around her household.

“
What we’re eating now is the harvest that survived the drought because of farming God’s Way. Otherwise we would not have food to eat by now.
Magdelene

“Everything I learnt about FMNR is working so well for me. See how nice the trees are looking,” Magdalena says as her eyes gaze high to the shiny leafy trees providing the cool breeze. “The trees are already protecting our houses from fierce winds and we’re enjoying cool fresh air from the trees. This is something I have never valued before till now.”

Magdalena says, “Because of what I have done many households including my immediate neighbours have also started preserving the sprouting shrubs not just at their homes but in the fields as well with the hope that one day they’ll become big trees that will restore our environment.”

Magdalena who lives in Mifumi South village, Mifumi parish, Kirewa sub-county in Tororo District says FMNR will not only help to restore the rainfall pattern in her community but will enable them generate income and fight poverty from the trees that are being preserved.

Making tomorrow better

“Once nature has been restored, which most of our children have not lived to enjoy in Kirewa community which is largely bare, they will live to appreciate the importance of preserving tree,” she says.

“Through farming God's Way [practicing organic farming and FMNR], there is hope everything will change soon as we are already witnessing and enjoying benefits,” Magdalena says.

Magdalena says what they have achieved just in three years because of the Green Growth project has given them hope that everything is not lost yet and that they have a second chance to make good by protecting their environment to secure their future.

“The knowledge that we've attained through the Green Growth project has opened our minds and empowered us to prepare for the future, and to correct the mistakes we've made in the past such as indiscriminate cutting down of trees,” she says.

Magdalena who expects to more than double her maize, millet, beans, groundnuts, peas and vegetables harvest encourages fellow farmers in the country to start practicing organic farming and FMNR in their fields.

She says, “It doesn't matter how long it takes for one to start appreciating the benefits. Organic farming conserves soil fertility and FMNR is not labour-intensive, there is no need to water it, you are only supposed to weed around and prune.”

Magdalena says, “Once you start realizing the benefits of organic farming and FMNR, you won't go back – you'll become addicted!”



Magdalene and her children sorting beans that she inter-cropped in her FMNR site



Mangadelena Adikini showing her FMNR garden



World Vision-Kulika partnership change lives in Tororo, Busia

One of World Vision’s core values is the importance of partnership. We seek to collaborate and advocate for broader impact.

In 2018, World Vision Uganda partnered with Kulika Uganda in collaboration with World Vision Finland and World Vision Ireland to implement a European Union-funded project in Tororo and Busia districts.

Implemented in eight sub-counties across the districts of Tororo and Busia, the three-year Cross Sector Collaboration for Inclusive Green Growth Project (CCIGG) sought to promote organic farming practices to enhance production and conserve environment, boost value-addition and market linkages and create jobs for 6,000 women and youth. Targeted sub-counties were Kirewa, Nabuyoga, Sopsop and Paya in Tororo; Sikuda, Busitema, Lunyo and Busiime in Busia.

After conceptualising the project, World Vision searched for a local partner who was willing to take up the challenge of strengthening organic farming to bolster production and create jobs for vulnerable women and youth. Kulika Uganda came through.

“We were talking about using natural means to sustain farming,” said Pollicap Lanek, CCIGG Coordinator, World Vision Uganda. “Kulika Uganda was our natural partner of choice. We don’t regret working with Kulika Uganda as they had demonstrable expertise in organic farming, specialising in crop farming, livestock poultry and beekeeping.”

Once on board, Kulika Uganda’s role involved mobilising and creating awareness among communities, organising targeted farmers into groups and training them in the best organic farming practices. These involved on how to select quality seeds, make and apply organic manure and bio-pesticides, how to conserve water and soil fertility, post-harvest handling and value-addition.

“We’re proud of our partnership with Kulika Uganda,” said Pollicap. “Over the years, our experience has taught us that we’re better together. We therefore celebrate Kulika Uganda for collaborating with us to encourage hope, empower communities and change children’s lives across the two districts; bringing hope, joy, justice, and life in all its fullness for all girls and boys.”

“Over the years, our experience has taught us that we’re better together, to encourage hope, empower communities and change children’s lives across the two districts; bringing hope, joy, justice, and life in all its fullness for all girls and boys.”
Pollicap Lanek- World Vision

Whether you are a big international organisation with thousands of employees or a small local organisation with a big heart, partnership offers a better solution. Magdalene Amujal, Kulika Uganda executive director cannot disagree anymore.

“This partnership with World Vision, I wish it could go for the next ten or so years,” said Magdalene. “We trust World Vision’s ability to deliver many high-quality programmes across a range of sectors to create opportunities for better futures for vulnerable children. Together we can change lives through strategic partnerships, employee engagement, cause marketing and retail partnerships.”

Armed with a diploma in organic farming and farmer-to-farmer extension services from Kulika Uganda, Carol Mbabazi was responsible for implementing CCIGG project in Busia. Working with 144 trainers of trainers, she organised farmers into farmer groups and carried out training sessions using Farmers’ Field School approach and demonstration gardens.

She is convinced through the cooperation the project had a positive impact on the children and their families in need. “When you partner with World Vision, you partner with communities to help them create and sustain a poverty-free future, and for children to enjoy life in its fulness,” says Carol, CCIGG Project Officer. “With your cooperation, we deepened our reach and the impact of our work.”

Out of 6,000 women and youth targeted, the project supported 200 farmer groups to adopt best organic farming practices, reaching a total of 5,954 people; that is 3,409 women and 2,545 youths. Of these 2% were persons with disability.

These are not just numbers. To Carol, they represent real lives in their thousands transformed for generations. “I’m proud of our achievements together. I’ve no doubt that thousands of farmers and the youth we’ve taught will continue practicing organic farming as a sustainable source of food and income,” she says.





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