

# PURCHASE FOR PROGRESS

## PROFILES of PROGRESS



Left: Odetta Mukanyiko stands outside the headquarters of COACMU (Cooperative des Agriculteurs des Cereales de Musaza), her local farmers' cooperative. Working with Purchase for Progress, Odetta, a smallholder farmer, and other cooperative members are beginning to help supply the World Food Program with maize and beans. Right: Odetta's daughters stand in a room full with maize from a recent harvest. (Rwanda, March 2011).

**Odetta Mukanyiko is a single mother with two children. She lives on the eastern side of Rwanda, farming a half hectare of land, feeding her family with what she grows, and selling the rest to local traders. She's been working the same tiny plot of land for 20 years, making less than a dollar a day.**

There are hundreds of millions of people whose lives are like Odetta's. Three-quarters of the world's poorest people get their food and income from farming small plots of land. These farming families don't have quality tools, good seeds, reliable markets, or money to get the most from their farms. So they work hard, but they get no traction, and they usually stay hungry and poor.

### **A visit from the World Food Program changed Odetta's life.**

The United Nations' World Food Program (WFP), which supports its humanitarian food programs by purchasing most of its food from large-scale operations, came to her village with an offer. If the farmers produced quality maize and beans, WFP would buy it for a premium price and help the farmers find other buyers.

Little has been the same for Odetta and her neighbors since.

Odetta's local farming cooperative accepted the challenge, and thanks to WFP training, they were able to sell their surplus maize and beans to the WFP and other buyers. For the first time in anyone's memory, these farmers earned a handsome profit for their harvests.

Started in 2008, Purchase for Progress has contracted to buy **190,000 metric tons of food** directly from farmers' organizations and small and medium traders, or through innovative marketing platforms.

Odetta's income more than quadrupled, earning her enough money to replace her two-room thatch roof hut with a four-room, metal-roofed home. With help of a loan, she was able to buy a larger piece of land allowing her to grow more maize and beans.

She has adopted the two children of a desperately poor relative, so now she's supporting four children and paying for their school fees and medical insurance. What's more, she's provided part-time employment to eight of her neighbors who help with planting and harvesting.

Odetta and village benefitted from a WFP effort called Purchase for Progress (P4P), which aims to help small farmers in the developing world gain access to reliable markets—so if they produce more, they can sell the surplus, and become self-sufficient.



Left: Odetta (l) and her employees fill sacks of freshly harvested maize. Center: Odetta's maize harvest. Right: Odetta (center) sits outside her home with her family. Purchase for Progress is working with small farmers like Odetta to help them become suppliers for the World Food Program's large-scale food programs, with the long-term goal of helping connect them to new markets. (Rwanda, March 2011).

### Purchase for Progress

**Goal:** To transform the way the WFP purchases food in developing countries, giving small-scale farmers access to reliable markets and the opportunity to sell their surplus at competitive prices

**Geographies covered:** **Africa:** Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; **Asia:** Afghanistan and Laos; **Latin America:** El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua

**Progress:** Since 2008, Purchase for Progress has:

- contracted more than 190,000 metric tons of food valued at \$68.5 million directly from farmers' organizations,

and small and medium traders and processors, and innovative marketing platforms.

- realized cost savings of over \$20 million by purchasing locally instead of importing food from abroad.
- trained more than 100,000 farmers, warehouse operators, and small and medium traders in agricultural production, post-harvest handling, quality assurance, marketing, and finance.

**Partners:** World Food Program, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Howard G. Buffett Foundation, European Commission, Governments of Belgium, Canada, Ireland, Luxembourg, United States of America and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

<http://www.wfp.org/purchase-progress>

Started in 2008, P4P has contracted to buy 190,000 metric tons of food directly from farmers' organizations and small and medium traders, or through innovative marketing platforms. It has also reduced the cost of importing food from other countries and helps improve long-term food security by strengthening local agricultural systems.

## "People here used to grow maize in despair. Now we see the value in what we're doing."

—Christent Biziaremyi, president of the local farming cooperative

P4P also gives farmers the skills and training they need to improve the quality of their production and connects them with other buyers so they can become competitive players in the marketplace.

Nearly everyone in Odetta's village has a story of changed fortunes, a fact made clear by the dozens of new houses under construction. More than money, however, P4P has brought something to this community that money cannot buy: an identity.

"People here used to grow maize in despair," says Christent Biziaremyi, president of the local farming cooperative. "Now we see the value in what we're doing."

Odetta is looking forward to this year's harvest, which she says will be much larger than last's. And for the first time in her life she doesn't view her small farm as a barrier to a better life. Far from it. It's her ticket to a more prosperous future. Come back in a few years, she says, and you'll find her living in a new, larger home with a chicken coop and maybe a cow in the backyard. "Farming is wealth," she says.

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Jeff Raikes and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.

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