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ZIMBABWE

SNAPSHOT

Small Growers Gain from the “Business of Farming”

USAID and partners provide agricultural training and help create market linkages



Photo: CLUSA

Edmond Munengiwa signs a loan in the presence of a USAID-supported field technician for an electric groundnut sheller he purchased for \$1,200.

With USAID training, farmers discover that shelling groundnuts adds greatly to their value.

Edmond Munengiwa was always a successful farmer, but he jumped at the chance to get USAID-sponsored “farming-as-a-business” training and to gain access to buyers through USAID’s partner on the initiative, the Cooperative League of the United States of America (CLUSA).

Mr. Munengiwa lives in Gokwe South (Midlands Province), where communal farmers are often obliged to sell their produce at very low prices to “runners” who serve as their link to the local market. These markets are often flooded with low-cost produce.

In Zimbabwe, an estimated 60-70 percent of the population makes a living through agriculture.

Through the efforts of USAID and CLUSA, Mr. Munengiwa has gained a more in-depth knowledge of what it takes to sell his products.

Recently, when Gokwe’s communal farmers were faced with tons of ground nuts piled high with no buyer, Mr. Munengiwa was able to go to Zimbabwe’s capital city, Harare, with the support of the program, to meet potential buyers.

“I now realize that the farmers in our group can attract a market if we bulk our produce, since buyers are concerned about volumes of available crops,” he confessed. He also realized that group members could get a better price if they negotiated transport themselves and delivered to buyers, rather than selling to a third party.

In addition, Mr. Munengiwa discovered that ground nuts become much more valuable when they are shelled, selling for nearly double the price of raw nuts. He made a \$300 down payment to the program on an annual loan for an electronic groundnut sheller that cost \$1,200. He is now paying off the remainder of the loan.

As for sales, Mr. Munengiwa managed to strike a deal with Rotvic Food and Drinks company selling three metric tons of shelled nuts for \$1,650, with the company collecting the produce from the farmers. In a subsequent transaction, he was the key driver of a lucrative deal for five tons of shelled groundnuts.

Gokwe South farmers are grateful for the linkages that USAID has helped them achieve, and they now want to maintain good relations with their buyers for future deals even after the program ends.

Telling Our Story
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