



World Vision®



**ECONOMIC**  
EMPOWERMENT

» **Progress Report** October 2015 through September 2016

*Prepared January 2017*

# ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

## GLOBAL SUMMARY

The United Nations has set the goal of ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture as its second most important priority. This is one of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve by the year 2030.

The first SDG priority is ending poverty in all its forms everywhere. Today, however, 75 percent of the world's poor live in rural areas where agricultural workers suffer the highest incidence of poverty.

Although food production has risen tremendously over the last three decades, an estimated 842 million people still continue to experience chronic hunger.

In developing countries, the poor spend up to 75 percent of their income on food, leaving little for education and health.

Finally, more than 70 percent of rural people depend on agriculture for their livelihood and survival; the majority of them in “environmentally damaged hotspots,” where poverty and food insecurity are enhanced by droughts and floods.

World Vision is directly contributing to reaching the United Nation's top two priorities through its economic

empowerment project THRIVE (Transforming Household Resilience in Vulnerable Environments).

Already deployed in five countries, THRIVE (and its pilot, Securing Africa's Future in Tanzania) integrates proven approaches to increasing incomes and strengthening resilience of rural families and communities.

It focuses on:

- Helping farmers move from subsistence farming to managing their farms like for-profit businesses
- Managing natural resources to safeguard farm investments for future generations
- Developing systems for managing emergencies and unexpected events, like a change in market prices
- Providing Empowered Worldview training based on biblical values that transform and strengthen the social and spiritual capital of communities, and solidifies relationships between spouses and children.

Along with the THRIVE initiative,



World Vision and VisionFund, its microfinance institution, also are providing access to financial services for rural farmers and other vulnerable people.

## GLOBAL UPDATE

**424,003** PEOPLE provided with access to economic empowerment activities during fiscal year 2016.

# ARMENIA

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Your support of the Economic Empowerment Program in Armenia has provided farmers and entrepreneurs with the training and support needed to sustain and grow their ventures. World Vision joins thousands of children and their parents in sharing our gratitude for your faithful support.

Activities since the project began in 2013 are improving production, sales, income, and quality of life. For instance: In fiscal year 2016, producer groups organized to present their products at regional festivals,

bed-and-breakfast owners started to develop a value chain for tourism, and wool producers created a Facebook page as well as a brand and logo for their products—all actions that will improve sales and income.

Several groups that have experienced business growth and success have qualified for zero- or low-interest loans and grants from the European Union and other organizations, to improve their production and marketing and increase sales and income.



6,077 people benefiting from all project activities

Life-of-program target: 4,780

127%

854 female clients assisted

Life-of-program target: 1,000

85%

2,947 household members benefiting from jobs created and sustained

Life-of-program target: 4,780

62%

*This project, originally intended to end September 30, 2016, has been extended through fiscal 2017.*

### Raspberry groups

Raspberry growers in Sisian used their leverage as members of producer groups to negotiate better prices for their crops. Training in production and marketing helped produce high-quality fruit products that sold well at festivals and markets. Attending local and regional festivals gave additional exposure to their products, and drew the attention of retail buyers as well as individuals, resulting in strong sales.



Project-to-Date Spending

\$642,000 spent

77%

# MALAWI

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

With its land, water, and people resources, Malawi has untapped potential and budding promise.

We are thankful for generous donors who come alongside Malawians, helping them improve their future through the THRIVE (Transforming Household Resilience in Vulnerable Environments) program in Chikwina-Mpamba, Chilenje, Nkhoma, and Nthondo development areas.

THRIVE equips smallholder farmers, their families, and other community members to become more resilient and less dependent, moving from handouts to empowerment.

World Vision is the largest nongovernmental organization in Malawi and works with more than half of the country's smallholder farmers. THRIVE, which started a year ago, is part of our national strategy in Malawi, with the potential to transform the country.

More than 8,500 people have directly benefited from THRIVE so far. Clients have received trainings on farming, commercial production, tree conservation, savings and microlending, and other key topics. When their knowledge and skills to earn a living improve, so does their ability to care for their families.



8,531 smallholder farmers accessed financial services.



1,218 farmers accessed new markets



8,531 jobs created and sustained



### Training and a changed mindset transforms a farmer's future

Farmers like Samson Mgomezulu often did not grow enough to feed their families. Adding an irrigation system and teaching clients to be empowered because they are created and valued by God changed everything. Samson learned about good farming practices and value chains, grew peanuts and corn, and saw farming as a business. Earning \$487, his most ever, he bought a bicycle, a goat, fertilizer, and school uniforms for his six children. "THRIVE's intervention has really changed my family life," he said.



Project-to-Date Spending



# MYANMAR VISIONFUND

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Myanmar is one of the poorest countries in Southeast Asia, with the region's least developed financial sector. The United Nations Capital Development Fund estimates the unmet demand for microcredit in the country is almost \$1 billion.

World Vision is working through its microfinance institution, VisionFund Myanmar, to offer loans, savings programs, and insurance to clients in poverty, often in rural areas.

In fiscal year 2016, VisionFund opened nine new branches and increased the number of borrowers

58 percent from the previous year. We now lend to 93,203 clients, up from 58,943. The outstanding loan portfolio rose from \$8 million to \$14.7 million, with \$38 million in loans disbursed this year.

Through microfinance services, VisionFund is empowering people in Myanmar to increase incomes, create jobs, and better provide for their families.

Improved livelihoods help families send their children to school, eat more nutritious food, and live in better housing.



## PROGRAM UPDATE

**212,069** CHILDREN impacted by microfinance during fiscal year 2016

**93,203** ACTIVE BORROWERS

**14.7** MILLION DOLLAR outstanding loan portfolio

Project-to-Date Spending

\$111,374 spent

35%

# RWANDA

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Inzosi Nziza continues to be a success story that is laying the foundation for an even more comprehensive Rwanda economic empowerment project in 2017. So far, more than 326,000 people have been impacted by at least one of the project's initiatives.

One focus during 2016 has been creating new producer groups and strengthening existing groups. During the last half of the year, 47 new producer groups of 895 farmers were created. In addition, the members of 100 existing groups were trained on modern farming techniques, including

proper post-harvest crop storage. This training has reduced vegetable loss by 8 percent. Seven hundred farmers from these groups also were trained on composting and the use of organic manure. After the training, farmers formed 90 compost piles, which they will use as fertilizer after three months.

The project already has exceeded its life-of-project targets for involving farmers in producer and savings groups, as well as informing them about financial services.



32,749 people accessing financial services, including savings groups

Life-of-program target: 18,000 **181%**

8,330 farmers accessing new markets

Life-of-program target: 6,000 **139%**

6,070 jobs created and sustained

Life-of-program target: 6,000 **101%**

*"... In June, I decided to try cabbage and carrots farming aided with the treadle pump machine they had given our producer group. It is amazing that after selling the harvest, not considering home consumption, I earned \$120 from cabbage and \$76 from carrots. It is so interesting that we can do farming throughout year. Thanks for Inzosi Nziza!"*

—Mutabazi Jean Pierre, farmer

Project-to-Date Spending

\$2,826,895 spent **100%**

# SENEGAL VISIONFUND

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

World Vision works through its microfinance institution, VisionFund, to provide financial education and access to financial services, including microloans, to vulnerable people in Senegal. During the past 12 months, VisionFund Senegal has increased the number of its active borrowers from 6,757 to 10,740 people. The outstanding loan portfolio has increased from \$1.6 million to 2 million, with more than \$3.7 million in loans disbursed to borrowers this year.

In July, VisionFund received its license from the Senegalese government,

which was a required step in helping VisionFund Senegal become fully recognized as a regulated microfinance institution.

World Vision and VisionFund have a close working relationship, helping people improve their income opportunities by providing access to financial services. VisionFund CEO, Jean Tchiapi, serves on the senior leadership team at World Vision Senegal. The headquarters for both organizations are located in Dakar, the capital.



## PROGRAM UPDATE

**46,263** CHILDREN impacted by microfinance during fiscal year 2016

**10,740** ACTIVE BORROWERS

**2** MILLION DOLLAR outstanding loan portfolio

Project-to-Date Spending



# TANZANIA

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The ultimate goal of Securing Africa's Future (SAF), a five-year economic empowerment pilot, is to move farmers and their families up the economic development ladder, increasing their incomes and improving the lives of their children.

SAF has trained 8,967 people using the Empowered Worldview curriculum, a World Vision training that is based on biblical values and addresses personal responsibility.

About 67 percent of those who have taken the training—6,069 people—are now active in 264 savings groups,

developing a tradition of saving and earning interest on their money.

Ninety-eight of the savings groups (with 2,486 members) have established themselves as producer groups in which they focus on an income-generating business such as growing bananas, sweet potatoes, or fruit trees, or raising livestock.

All of the producer groups have organized into eight legally recognized producer associations.

All of these interventions are steps up the ladder toward a better life.



6,897 female clients assisted

Life-of-program target: 6,300 **109%**

15,442 jobs created and sustained

**24%**

Life-of-program target: 64,440

### *Diversifying income using traditional craftsmanship*

The Maasai tribe is known for its intricate beadwork, which is popular with tourists. SAF organized a visit to the Maasai market in Arusha for 420 entrepreneurs, giving them insights into the opportunities and challenges of running a business for tourists. Most of the participants—386—were women. They learned about handling customers, diversifying products, and improving product quality.



Project-to-Date Spending

**\$9,727,948 spent**

**90%**

# ZAMBIA

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

September 30, 2016, marked a transition in THRIVE (Transforming Household Resilience in Vulnerable Environments) in the Buyantanshi and Mwamba development areas: the end of phase one, with expansion into three additional areas set to begin during phase two in FY17.

Thanks to your key partnership, THRIVE has helped 31,148 clients, surpassing the target of 21,000.

Learning from fellow farmers, clients have joined savings groups, borrowed money from each other and through VisionFund,

World Vision's microfinance institution, and attended farmer schools to learn new agricultural skills.

Farmers also received training in everything from profitability analyses and marketing to tree conservation and organic pest control. Some formed producer groups, gaining higher prices by selling their crops in bulk, on their journey from subsistence to commercial farming.

A total of 2,929 women have been served in the first phase of THRIVE, more than 1,000 beyond the target.



4,153 farmers accessing financial services

Life-of-program target: 3,000 **138%**

2,519 jobs created or sustained

Life-of-program target: 3,000 **84%**

### Gaining empowerment through a changed worldview

Empowerment comes from more than economics. Helping clients be more focused on development, and less on dependence, is promoted through Empowered Worldview, a program that underlies THRIVE. Farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs learn that they are created by and in the image of God, and that God has given them all they need to excel. When their identity changes, so do their relationships with family, community, and government.



Project-to-Date Spending

\$1,163,897 spent **89%**

# VISIONFUND GLOBAL

## ONEVISION GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY FUND

World Vision is committed to implementing a major technological platform to tackle the problem of providing financial services in remote, impoverished areas.

OneVision is a comprehensive, innovative banking platform, developed by World Vision's microfinance institution (MFI) network, VisionFund. It includes mobile banking and tablet technology, and core banking, general ledger, and data warehouse functions. Together, these elements will drive efficiencies in time and cost allowing us to significantly increase and improve services to more clients in rural locations.

2016 highlights include:

**Data Warehouse:** After a thorough search and evaluation, VisionFund has identified the cloud-based BankBI as the leading and most cost-effective data warehouse technology solution to meet VisionFund's performance requirements. BankBI has built-in integration to T24 and Mambu, the core banking systems for the organization and a ready-made data architecture applicable to large parts of VisionFund's work.

**Operations:** VisionFund has determined "best of breed" operational standards across its MFI network. It has contracted with MicroFinance in Motion (MiM) to provide these services. The standards are client focused and enable each MFI to serve clients efficiently. They have been tested in VisionFund Zambia and VisionFund Mexico in an effort to mitigate risks before the



*By improving technology, VisionFund is able to bring financial services to rural villages, meaning farmers do not have to make long, costly trips to branch locations.*

new core banking system goes live.

**General Ledger:** VisionFund is partnering with Infor's Sun6 system to provide general ledger solutions. Because World Vision also uses the Sun6 system, this choice will enable sharing data and reporting processes in the future. Aligning with World Vision's choice also allows VisionFund to benefit from the global pricing and support help that World Vision negotiated with Infor. This drives down the cost of implementation.

**Front Office:** Tanzania and Cambodia have pioneered Mobile Money and the use of tablets within the VisionFund network. More than 95 percent of VisionFund Tanzania's transactions now are taking place on Mobile Money, a cell phone application. VisionFund Zambia,

Uganda, and Malawi expect to implement the application in 2017.

**Core Banking System:** VisionFund supports 18 core banking systems across its network. This is unsustainable due to cost and the inability to standardize functions.

With that in mind, VisionFund has begun a move to integrate most of its network by using Temenos T24 as its main strategic system platform. T24 currently is deployed in seven MFIs globally, with implementation projects now taking place in Zambia, Malawi, and Uganda.

Though T24 will be the main platform in the future, VisionFund also is using the cloud-based Mambu, a nimbler, more cost-effective platform for smaller MFIs.

## FAMILY PUTS DOWN ROOTS

*During the Rwandan genocide, Vedaste Nyumvira and his wife, Beata Baiyanama, moved from place to place, hiding and fearful for their lives. When the war ended, they returned to their home community in Nyaruguru to literally put down roots.*

All along, Vedaste wanted to farm, but the acidic soil coupled with the steep slopes meant meager harvests. During the dry season, he couldn't get water to his crops. And during the rainy season, torrential downpours often washed away all his hard work.

As more children came along (nine in total), more mouths to feed increased their need for food.

"It's very painful to see your child crying because they don't have food," Vedaste says. It made him more determined to take on the challenge of getting more food.

Vedaste started learning new farming techniques from World Vision between 2010 and 2013. He began to see some improvements in his farming income.

Then in September 2014, through Inzosi Nziza, Vedaste was chosen to travel to Yatta, Kenya, to learn about improved agricultural techniques from Bishop Titus Masika.

In Kenya he met farmers earning the equivalent of nearly \$38,000 per year. This showed him what was possible. He also met an onion farmer who got Vedaste thinking that he should try it, too.

He was so eager that he stopped on his way home to buy the onion seedlings.

Vedaste applied his newly learned farming techniques to the onions—improved fertilizer and drip irrigation to help improve the growth.

His eldest child, Emmanuel, remembers his father also came home from the training encouraging the family to treat each other with love and respect.

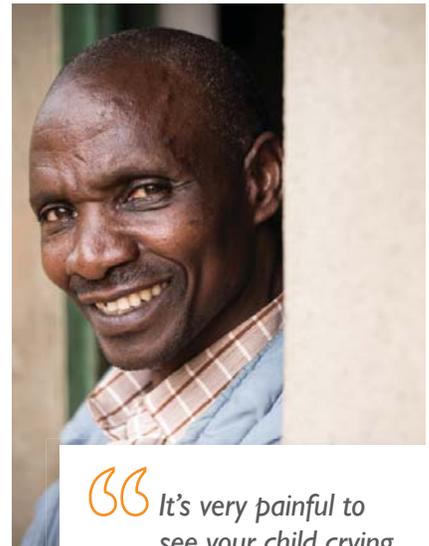
"When we were [in Kenya], we were told how people change because of prayer and applying the word of God," Vedaste says.

He earned about \$450 from that first crop. "An amount I'd never received," he says.

As part of Inzosi Nziza's end-to-end business of farming, World Vision also linked him to secondary schools in the area that bought his crop.

Inzosi Nziza stresses income diversity. Vedaste embraced that principle by planting a variety of crops including bananas, passion fruit, eggplant, onions, tree tomatoes, sugar cane, sweet potatoes, and avocados.

His wife, Beata, now runs a successful tailoring business, thanks to training and loans she received through VisionFund. She now has 10 sewing machines, consistent contracts for work, and employs four of their children.



“It’s very painful to see your child crying because they don’t have food.”

—Vedaste Nyumvira,  
farmer



World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed as a demonstration of God's unconditional love for all people. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.

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