

USAID/ UGANDA CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING ACTIVITY



IMPROVING POST-
HARVEST HANDLING
AND STORAGE
AMONG WOMEN
SMALLHOLDER
FARMERS IN
MBARARA AND
RUBIRIZI DISTRICTS

Summary

Smallholder farmers in Uganda play a vital role in the production, processing, and marketing of agricultural commodities but are ultimately challenged by the recurring reality of post-harvest losses and limited access to agricultural extension services and farming technologies. This disparity stems from the fact that extension services mainly target commercial production entities that are predominantly managed and controlled by the wealthy who are often men.

What we do?

To transform production and productivity of women smallholder farmers, USAID/Uganda Civil Society Strengthening Activity is supporting the National Association for Women's Action Development (NAWAD) to advocate for the implementation of the Agro-Industrialization Implementation Action Plan under the NDPIII in Mbarara and Rubirizi districts (AINAPI project). This is with the objective of improving post-harvest handling and storage among 1,500 women smallholder farmers in Mbarara and Rubirizi.

How we do it?

NAWAD supports advocacy interventions to:

- i) To enhance women smallholder farmers' access to agricultural extension services for post-harvest handling technologies and storage facilities; and
- ii) To improve engagement of women smallholder farmers in the Parish Development Model (PDM).

Key Achievements

01

NAWAD's internal systems and structures have been improved; for example, NAWAD's Strategic Plan 2023-2025, Finance policy, Procurement policy, Advocacy Strategy, Board Governance Charter, and Communication Strategy were developed. Additionally, the staff's capacity has been enhanced in M&E, communications, advocacy, leadership and governance, finance, and resource mobilization.

02

The advocacy capacity of 160 women has been strengthened through advocacy training.

03

1500 female smallholder farmers now have improved knowledge of local government planning and budgeting processes and increased access to extension services.

04

A total of 56 women have accessed PDM funds as a result of advocacy capacity strengthening.

Key Achievements

05

Inter-linkages between women smallholder farmers, their leaders, and other stakeholders have been created and strengthened through various advocacy activities like community dialogues, strategic district officials' meetings, and conferences, among others, which led to the starting up of plant clinics in Mbarara district at sub-county level.

06

A business enterprise has been established to provide flexible loans for women smallholder farmers to support their small businesses and adoption of post-harvest handling technologies. Women can access loans at individual and group levels at a lower interest rate of 2% as opposed to other credit institutions and the government's Parish Development Model (PDM) at 6%. A total of twelve women smallholder farmers have got loans from the business enterprise.

04

Smallholder women farmers were provided with smartphones and ICT training, enabling them to access extension services easily.