



# the HarvestFund

## Investing in the Future of Female Farmers

### WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO SOLVE

### Market gaps that exist between smallscale farmers, financing & technology

#### Who is a smallscale farmer?

Somebody who subsistence farms five hectares of land or less usually by hand



1. Agricultural innovations have not scaled to reach smallscale farmers.

2. Often, there are gaps in product knowledge, price, and distribution.



1. Traditional microfinance rarely reaches smallscale farmers.

2. Or there are gaps between micro-financier requirements and farmer needs, particularly for income-producing technologies.

### We link talented, smallscale farmers to proven agricultural innovations and capital markets

### HOW WE DO IT

#### 1 EMPOWER TALENTED FARMERS

We use a competitive selection process to recruit high-potential women farmer groups. We finance them with agricultural inputs. We sharpen their business skills so that they learn to save and pay for the new innovations.

#### 2 PROMOTE PROVEN TECH

We carefully evaluate existing agricultural innovations. We ensure that the farmer can succeed with their adoption of these innovations.

#### 3 LEVERAGE CAPITAL MARKETS

Our growing endowment funds a portion of our operations, helping those who need capital the most. Our endowment also helps us serve as guarantors to lower the farmers' repayment fees for the innovations.

### OUR STORY

### We combine business acumen, agricultural innovations and global experience

The Harvest Fund emerged through the ideas of a former management consultant-turned-agricultural specialist, Michelle, and, Ackson, a former Zambian Ministry of Agriculture Senior Agricultural Officer. They leverage their experiences working across agricultural value chains, donor-funded programs, and smallscale farmer technologies in the Global South.

#### Where We Work

We have launched our pilot for the 2019-2020 season in the Kafue district of Zambia. We are best poised to serve this area because of our regional expertise and networks.



## The Harvest Fund

We maintain a small endowment for a dual purpose: (1) to enable us to serve as a guarantor for our farmers' solar pump loans and (2) to fund a portion of our operating expenses.



## Selection Process

We use a competitive selection process to identify the brightest - yet disadvantaged - female farming cooperatives (groups of farmers) to recruit into our program as cohorts.



## Crop Management Bootcamp

We provide intense bi-monthly trainings on the good agricultural practices required to produce an abundant harvest. The government extension officer always participates to receive expert on-the-ground training.



## Saving for Next Season

We establish a series of incentives to encourage our farmers to save via a mobile system for next season's seed, fertilizer, and crop protection products. Saving reduces their reliance on The Harvest Fund in subsequent seasons.



## Behavioral Change for Technology

We require farmers to store their maize in hermetic PICS bags so that it is insect-free and saleable. After two months of storage, we reward the cohort with a solar-powered pump to access water from their borehole. We pay a portion of the cost and the cohort contributes with monthly mobile payments.



## Starting with Good Seed

We identify the maize varieties that are best suited to the cohort's region and provide (at no-cost) packages of seed that will produce at least 30 tons of maize. We also provide fertilizer to enrich their soils.



## Personal Development Bootcamp

We introduce modules to improve the cohort's financial planning, self-esteem, organizational development, and personal leadership skills.



## Behavioral Change for Water Access

We encourage the cohort to store their maize and sell later in order to take advantage of drastic price increases. If they store their maize for one month after harvest, they are rewarded with borehole drilling. In order to encourage ownership, the cohort shares the cost of the drilling.



## Sustainable Long-Term Support

We foster strong relationships with the local Ministry of Agriculture to empower their extension officers. In the second year, each cohort will pay into a monthly service model where the extension officer will provide (1) soil testing (2) custom fertilizer blends (3) crop assistance (4) repayment and savings oversight.



MONTH ONE

MONTH FIVE

MONTH TEN

**the HarvestFund** model enables each cohort to increase their annual income by **5X** within **1.5 years** facilitating a departure from extreme poverty. Learn more at [www.theharvestfund.org](http://www.theharvestfund.org)

