WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE
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ACRONYMS

AAPI Accelerating Agriculture Productivity Improvement
AFAP African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership
AIRCA Association of International Research and Development Centers for Agriculture
C4CP C-4 Cotton Partnership
EAD Asia Division
ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States
ESAFD East and Southern Africa Division
FDI Fertilizer Distribution Improvement
FDP fertilizer deep placement
GAPs good agricultural practices
NWAFD North and West Africa Division
ONDR Office Nationale du Développement Rural
USAID U.S. Agency for International Development
WFA Walmart Foundation Activity
THE PRESIDENT’S PERSPECTIVE

Inclusive development plays a vital role in our work around the world. If we are to feed 10 billion people by 2050, our efforts cannot be myopic. Meaningful development happens when we focus on enabling entire communities to thrive.

As such, we must enable women to farm profitably. Just as everyone deserves access to quality, nutritious food, all who wish to make a living at farming deserve access to the tools, training, and other resources to do so.

In this issue of Perspectives, you will read the stories of women farmers whose lives have been changed by gaining access to the resources they need to succeed. As you will see, the benefits do not stop with these entrepreneurs. Increased incomes better the livelihoods of their families, communities, and nations. Their children are eating nutritious meals and getting better education. Their communities are prospering together. Their nations are experiencing increased food security.

IFDC is committed to empowering women because they hold the future of food security in their able hands. It is our responsibility to ensure that their efforts make a sustainable difference, not only for themselves and their families, but for the entire world.
WOMEN FARMERS WILL FEED THE FUTURE

| BREAKING THE GENDER PARITY GAP |

Assétou Kafando established her farm in 2009.
The challenge

The gender parity gap in the agriculture sector remains a challenge for women – especially those in developing nations.

While sub-Saharan African women contribute between 60 and 80 percent of the labor for food production, they tend to have lower productivity due to their lack of access to key resources such as credit and farm inputs.

In Asia, the case is similar, though the cultural landscape can considerably differ between countries and regions. In both continents, improving women’s access to agricultural knowledge, technology, and resources is of utmost importance for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2: Zero Hunger.

IFDC works to create and strengthen market linkages for female farmers.

With those in place, technology transfer, coupled with training in good agricultural practices (GAPs) and business management, enables them to be increasingly productive.

The following stories from our projects show that empowering women and increasing their engagement in agriculture boost family incomes, nutrition, and well-being.

Assétou KAFANDO

Burkinabé producer Assétou Kafando established her farm in 2009. Like many other female farmers in sub-Saharan Africa, she lacked access to basic farming resources. From that time, though, she worked hard to create an integrated farm that now includes cultivated plots, cattle and sheep raising, artificial insemination of livestock, a biogas and organic manure production system, and food and feed storage facilities.

During one planting season last year, she more than doubled her production of maize through learning and applying GAPs. To make the most of her money, she followed project training to treat and store her production for a time when prices were higher.

Her joy and knowledge spread quickly through the Benkadi Lomé Women’s Group, as other women learned from and applied her knowledge. With an expected sales revenue of about U.S. $1,100, Assétou made plans to further develop her farming operation through mechanization.
Selina Begum never gave up. Unable to pay for her final exams in school, she focused her passion for entrepreneurship into helping her husband Anisur run his family business in Bangladesh.

Financial hardship, sickness, and disaster loomed around every corner. Each time she seemed to finally be getting on her feet, she was knocked down.

But her perseverance paid off when she was presented the opportunity to produce urea briquettes. She immediately bought a machine and got to work.

For the next two years, Selina established demonstration plots to show farmers the benefits of urea deep placement (UDP) and convince them to buy her product.

Each passing year, business picked up steadily, undaunted by increasing competition. Even as others began producing briquettes, new training kept her ahead of the curve.

Now Selina’s loans are paid off. While she enjoys all the comforts the extra money affords, she is grateful that her sons can get what she couldn’t – the gift of education.

Comfort Angbing

When Ghanaian farmer and entrepreneur Comfort Angbing received a multi-crop planter from IFDC, she didn’t just see an easier and cheaper way to get her work done – she saw opportunity.

By renting out the planter to farmers in the Balanang Women’s Group (of which she is the lead farmer), she earned about $50 extra during the planting season – in addition to the $74 she saved by planting her own fields with the machine.

Now, Comfort can affordably pay for her son’s books, uniform, and meals for high school. Next season, she plans on buying more multi-crop planters for her rental service and living out her business dreams.

Empowering women farmers is a key to a well-fed future – and not just that, their increased access to technology, knowledge, and other agricultural resources will drive future development. As such, our projects are committed to increasing gender parity and helping entire families and their communities work together toward the common goal of zero hunger.
EMPOWERING WOMEN FARMERS

Comfort Angbing can affordably pay for her son’s books, uniform, and meals for high school.
BRIEFS

GLOBAL BRIEFS

The following briefs showcase news from around the organization. For the full interactive experience of this and other pieces in Perspectives, subscribe to our online magazine at bit.ly/IFDCPerspectives.

ASIA DIVISION (EAD)

SEARCHING FOR CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURAL SOLUTIONS

IFDC partners continue an initiative in Bangladesh to research alternative fertilizer and water management technologies that increase crop productivity and mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

DRY ZONE PROJECT GETS ROLLING IN MYANMAR

The Dry Zone Agro-Input and Farm Services project connects smallholder farmers with input dealers and service providers, allowing for easier access to vital farm necessities like fertilizer, seed, and technologies for better post-harvest processing.

IFDC President and CEO J. Scott Angle visited Bangladesh to meet with EAD project staff and Bangladesh’s Honorable Minister of Agriculture, Matia Chowdhury.

IFDC REPRESENTED AT AIRCA THEORY OF CHANGE WORKSHOP

In March, Ishrat Jahan, chief of party of the Accelerating Agriculture Productivity Improvement (AAPI) project and IFDC resident representative in Bangladesh, attended a workshop in Taiwan hosted by the World Vegetable Center (AVRDC). Five member organizations of the Association of International Research and Development Centers for Agriculture (AIRCA) took part in the workshop, where new “theories of change” for program planning and implementation were discussed.

EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA DIVISION (ESAFD)

BETTER BLENDS FOR KENYA

IFDC and the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP) are serving as technical advisors to Toyota Tsusho Fertilizer Africa (TTFA) on the development and demonstration of crop- and soil-specific fertilizer blends.

INCREASING POTATO PROFITABILITY

The 2SCALE project in Kenya is introducing low-cost storage facilities and empowering value chain actors to reduce post-harvest losses.

MAKING THE BET IN KENYA

One farmer learns best practices for production of mini-tubers and how to effectively market his product. Read the full story in the online edition of Perspectives.
PROFESSIONALIZING SEED PRODUCTION

“Today, even when I’m more concerned with my field work, I know about every expense to the nearest franc.” Read the full story in the online edition of Perspectives.

CATALIST-UGANDA HOSTS POTATO WEEK

Hosted in southwestern Uganda, the event attracted over 5,000 participants, who shared and exchanged knowledge and skills. Read the full story in the online edition of Perspectives.

CATALIST-UGANDA VIDEO SERIES

IFDC’s CATALIST-Uganda project released 26 new videos featuring success stories from Ugandan farmers. View them all at bit.ly/CatUVid.

NORTH AND WEST AFRICA DIVISION (NWAFD)

STRENGTHENING QUALITY SEED INPUTS

A commercial seed producer increases his production by 200 percent. Read the full story in the online edition of Perspectives.

MECHANIZATION REVITALIZES FARMING

More than 280 farmers in Ghana are benefiting from powered, labor-saving agricultural equipment introduced by the Feed the Future Ghana Agriculture Technology Transfer Project.

ESTABLISHMENT OF WEST AFRICA FERTILIZER ASSOCIATION

The United States Agency for International Development West Africa Fertilizer Program (USAID WAFP), AFAP, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) met to discuss the establishment of the West Africa Fertilizer Association (WAFA), a traders’ organization.

LESS IS MORE

Repackaging fertilizer into smaller quantities is saving farmers money.

IFDC is mapping dairy clusters in Kano and Kaduna states, Nigeria, to facilitate the establishment of milk collection centers and increase profits for small-scale dairy farmers.

2015 IFDC ANNUAL REPORT

IFDC has released its 2015 Annual Report. Read about our projects, initiatives, and success stories in the interactive online edition at joom.ag/uhdQ.
IN MEMORIAM
Md. Mofizul Islam (1944-2016)
began working for IFDC in 1987 as the dealer development and training advisor for the Fertilizer Distribution Improvement (FDI) II project in Bangladesh. Always devoted to the farmer, Islam managed hundreds of training programs through FDI-II and pioneered the introduction of hybrid maize cultivation practices in Bangladesh.

He played an instrumental role in the formation and development of the Bangladesh Fertilizer Association (BFA) in the early 1990s as its first executive secretary. An expert in agro-dealer development, he aided IFDC projects in many countries, including Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, Nepal, Rwanda, and Vietnam.

Islam was a preeminent promoter of fertilizer deep placement (FDP). As the field and fertilizer program coordinator for the Agro-Based Industries and Technology Development Project (ATDP), Islam was one of the first to take the climate-smart technology to farmers in the late 1990s. Later, with the Adapting Nutrient Management Technologies (ANMAT) project, Islam worked to conduct demonstrations and on-farm trials of FDP. Using television and media, he worked tirelessly to spread the benefits of the technology. Under the AAPI project, his early work in scaling out FDP paved the way for its success in Bangladesh and its spread to Africa.

Mofiz will be dearly remembered for being a people person, working closely with farmers in the field through practical, hands-on demonstrations. IFDC staff – and farmers around the world – are indebted to his legacy, a firm dedication to the mission of food security.
LEARNING
CHANGES
LIVES
[RINKU RANI’S STORY]

A few years ago, Rinku Rani wanted more.

Rinku was a full-time homemaker and devoted mother of two. Her husband, Taposh Kumar Dey, was a hardworking farmer.

But Rinku wasn’t satisfied. She wanted to contribute more to her family’s financial and nutritional well-being.

In 2013, Rinku participated in a training program organized by IFDC’s AAPI Walmart Foundation Activity (WFA) project. She learned best farming practices such as using good quality seed, maintaining spacing between plants and crop rows, using proper amounts of fertilizer and, most importantly, employing FDP instead of broadcasting urea.

After convincing Taposh to use her newly learned techniques, they had an excellent harvest and started to spread the word.
Over the past five years, AAPI has helped farmers generate **$802 MILLION** just from extra rice.

**OVER 40,000 WOMEN FARMERS**

were involved in training through AAPI-WFA. More than 80,000 adopted new technology and revolutionized their families’ incomes, nutrition, and lives because of the project.

About AAPI-WFA training and FDP. Because of their constant advocacy, the local WFA staff approached Rinku with an opportunity to invest in a fertilizer briquetting machine. They decided to start a new family business producing fertilizer briquettes.

AAPI-WFA supplied a portion of the machine’s cost and even arranged for the machine to be delivered to Rinku and Taposh’s home. More than that, AAPI provided technical and business training – from actually making fertilizer briquettes to business management and marketing skills – while Rinku and Taposh got their new venture off the ground. AAPI also linked them with local fertilizer dealers and retailers.

At first, not everything went smoothly. They struggled the first few months while learning to operate the machine and manage a business. But AAPI-WFA continued supporting them, and the program helped the couple through more training sessions. After they made connections with retailers, production and sales took off. From June 2014 to May 2015, Rinku produced 250 metric tons of urea briquettes, securing a profit of approximately $3,184.

Now, Rinku and her husband are running a successful briquette production operation, and their income is stable and secure. They are financially able to send their children to school and make sure they have adequate nutrition.

Despite her newfound stability, Rinku is never satisfied – she still wants more.

Rinku and Taposh continue to farm vegetables and now use their land as demonstration plots so farmers from the community can observe the benefits of FDP and best farming practices. Rinku also fulfilled her longtime dream of owning a cow. The family’s next project is to rebuild their house using bricks.

None of her success, Rinku realizes, would have been possible without FDP or the indispensable training she received from AAPI-WFA. Because of the couple’s perseverance and openness to learning, they have secured their futures and become a cornerstone of support for an entire community.
Last July, Ethiopian firm GUTS Agro, in partnership with the 2SCALE project, launched Supermoms, a highly nutritious baby food made from a corn-soya blend aimed at helping low-income families and nursing mothers feed their children and prevent child malnutrition. After Supermoms’ successful rollout in southern Ethiopia, GUTS Agro and 2SCALE devised a marketing plan – called the Likie model – with the goal of promoting Supermoms in the country’s northern regions, beginning in the town of Dessie in February.

Skilled women micro-franchisees, affectionately called “Likie Ladies,” drive the work of the Likie model on the ground, helping engage potential customers and distribute products. In Dessie, the Likie Ladies initiated a five-day guerilla marketing campaign that featured well-known musicians promoting Supermoms in schools, marketplaces, and low-income neighborhoods. Every morning for a week, accompanied by the Likie Ladies, the musicians visited schools and provided infotainment centered around the product.
Students and faculty then competed in a quiz contest on nutrition, with GUTS products as prizes. Similar campaigns targeted low-income neighborhoods in Dessie.

Likie is not only about nutrition, but is also about empowering women. Likie Ladies are provided with uniforms, branded bags, and a modified bicycle to transport their goods door-to-door. They receive training, business support, and stocks on credit. Fifty Likie Ladies are currently active countrywide, and nearly all report that business is booming. One of them is Elsa Kebede, who has a degree in nursing and runs the Likie business on the side. Her sales have totaled more than $1,000 in less than two months.

For GUTS Agro, Likie is more than a distribution network. It’s also a way to help improve health and nutrition among the poor while empowering budding women entrepreneurs to create new businesses with very low startup costs.

One of the Likie Ladies, Zeiba, sums up her experience: “I am making more money than ever before. I can provide better for my children. I’m also feeding Supermoms to my sons who would not take porridge before.”
USAID C4CP EMPOWERS WOMEN FARMERS
The USAID C-4 Cotton Partnership (C4CP) project targets men and women farmers in cotton-producing areas of the C-4 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali) to improve household production, income, and food security of smallholder farmers, particularly cotton producers and processors.

Training is an essential component to reaching the project’s goal. Through the production and dissemination of training modules, and in cooperation with local partners, C4CP teaches GAPs to extension workers. While learning these methods in a classroom-style setting is helpful, like many IFDC projects, the results of GAPs are best seen firsthand. Demonstration plots established by lead farmers make the “theoretical” learning a reality.

In Chad, for example, the project established demonstration plots in women-owned fields to better reach women’s groups. Two project partners, the Office Nationale du Développement Rural (ONDR) and the Société Cotonnière du Tchad, participated in the establishment of and training in these demonstration plots. The on-farm sessions directly trained around 200 women farmers.

To maximize these efforts, the project trained groups of agricultural extension agents from project partners. With each agent working with an average of 70-75 farmers, project efforts reached nearly 6,000 farmers – more than 1,500 of whom were women. These participants were glad to learn more, and according to them, “We grew cotton for the first time thanks to USAID C4CP and with ONDR support.”

The approach and results are similar in Burkina Faso, where women represent 52 percent of the population and are relegated to farm marginal lands. Training these women is key to tapping into their potential – improving productivity, income, and food security.

The Coobsa Agricultural Service Provider Cooperative (COPSA-C), a project partner with 2,500 members, participated in training one of its agricultural producer associations. The Vlassor Group, comprised of 75 percent women, were trained in the application of GAPs to the rotational crops grown in association with cotton.

One of the group members, with project assistance, established a demonstration field. Hien Kouniké provided a site to showcase techniques for improved maize and cowpea production. From soil preparation, plowing, and seeding to fertilizer application and field maintenance, Kouniké explained what she had learned during IFDC training sessions.

Kouniké’s success impressed all of the visitors – with many commenting on the demonstration field being an excellent place to learn. According to one attendee, “At the beginning of the practical training...when we learned about the recommendation to space out the seed holes every 30 centimeters, we said between ourselves that we thought this effort would be a lost cause. However, seeing the results, this is something to be shared with others.”

Funded by USAID, the project will continue to disseminate innovative training modules on GAPs, promoting the use of improved varieties and recommended techniques to sustainably improve agricultural productivity in West and Central Africa.
“Roots to Empowerment” is a documentary about the public-private partnership established between IFDC’s 2SCALE project, Nigerian Breweries/Heineken, and Psaltry, a company that produces starch from cassava roots. The film describes how the public and private sector can come together to empower and inspire farmers and local businesses by building relationships, developing strong networks, establishing organizational and management techniques, and utilizing best farming and business practices. View the full video at bit.ly/RTEvideo.

Ahead of World Soil Day on December 5, 2015, IFDC hosted a Twitter chat to promote soil health and emphasize its importance in the global fight for food security. Agronomists and soil experts participated in the chat, along with leading non-governmental organizations and media outlets focused on agricultural development. IFDC president and CEO, J. Scott Angle, joined the expert panel to discuss the role of fertilizers in boosting soil health, how nutritious soil leads to nutritious crops, farmer constraints to soil health, and extension strategies to combat poor soil fertility. You can read a full recap of the chat at bit.ly/soilrecap.

IFDC produced a series of infographics to feature the progress of its projects. Nine project-based infographics are currently available on IFDC.org/categories/infographics.
Margaret Catley-Carlson, IFDC board member since 2006 and patron of the Global Water Partnership, chose the laureate for both the Stockholm Water Prize in Stockholm and the Tyler Prize in Washington, D.C. She was also the keynote speaker at the “exSTREAMS: The Okanagan water story and you” forum held in Kelowna, British Columbia, in March.

Douglas Horswill, an IFDC board member since 2015, chaired an independent task force commissioned by the Mining Association of Canada (MAC) to find ways to strengthen the tailings management requirements and guidance under MAC’s Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) initiative.

Agnes Kalibata, IFDC board member since 2008 and current president of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), recently led AGRA in a partnership with the African Green Revolution Forum to create the Africa Food Prize – a $100,000 prize for efforts in agriculture. Kalibata also led AGRA in a partnership with the World Bank Agriculture Global Practice to strengthen farming in sub-Saharan Africa. She also published an article in Foreign Affairs magazine concerning smallholder farmers’ economic prosperity.

Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, African Union (AU) Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, was awarded the Presidential Award for Outstanding Women in Uganda during International Women’s Day celebrations. Tumusiime was also a keynote speaker at a joint high-level roundtable discussion attended by various African policymakers and organized by the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition and the AU Commission’s Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA).

Steven Leath, president of Iowa State University (ISU) and IFDC board member since 2012, gave the keynote address at the Iowa State Leadership Experience Conference, where he spoke to students about his career path from a degree in plant science to the president of ISU.
2016 IFDC Training Calendar

Technology Advances in Agricultural Production, Water and Nutrient Management
USA (Alabama, Arkansas, Iowa, Missouri, Tennessee, and Washington, D.C.)
August 22 - September 2

Linking Farmers to Markets in Africa (French Edition)
Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire
September 5-9

Advanced Application of DSSAT – Assessing Crop Production, Nutrient Management, Climatic Risk and Environmental Sustainability with Simulation Models
Arusha, Tanzania
October 5-12

Bringing Balanced Fertilizers to the Market: Opportunities and Constraints
Johannesburg, South Africa
October 24-28

Granular Fertilizers Production
Bangkok, Thailand
November 7-11

Promoting Agriculture Technology to Improve Productivity and Net Returns for Smallholder Farmers
Accra, Ghana
December 5-9