



Sustainable Markets for Smallholder Farmers

With Purchase for Progress (P4P), the World Food Programme (WFP) purchases crops from smallholder farmers' organizations and supports them to become effective businesses. With help from WFP, other buyers bought more than US\$60 million-worth of food from these farmers' organizations, giving smallholders access to sustainable markets.

Smallholder farmers generally have limited marketing options, often selling small quantities to traders at the farm gate for unfavourable prices. To help smallholders profit more from agriculture, WFP and partners support them to work together in farmers' organizations. These organizations receive training to aggregate crops, add value and engage with formal markets for quality produce, gaining crucial experience by selling to WFP.

Farmers' organizations demonstrate abilities

Generally, large-scale buyers do not purchase food from smallholder farmers' organizations because they are seen as unreliable and lacking the necessary business skills. However, by marketing their crops to WFP, farmers' organizations demonstrate that they are reliable and professional suppliers. Having seen this, both institutional and private sector buyers are showing increased interest in procuring crops from these emerging businesses, with farmers' organizations making sales to millers, processors



World Food Programme

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This month marks the adoption of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These goals present us with a historic opportunity to change the world for the better by ending poverty, achieving gender equality and reaching Zero Hunger.

We know that the world has the tools and knowledge needed to achieve the goal of Zero Hunger, and that efforts to support smallholder farmers and agricultural markets have a critical role to play in this. Through the experience and partnerships gained during the P4P pilot, WFP will continue working to increase smallholder farmers' access to markets and strengthen their livelihoods. The process of developing strategies and guidance for the post-pilot is ongoing.

This newsletter highlights some of the work being done to contribute to the global goals and sustainable agriculture. At country-level, smallholders are making progress despite challenging environments. We have also released two new learning documents on how we can [help smallholder farmers reach sustainable markets](#).

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and look forward to receiving your feedback and thoughts at wfp.p4p@wfp.org.

George Heymell

P4P Director and Global Coordinator

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Tanzanian smallholders pose in front of their farmers' organization.

and supermarket chains.

P4P has shown that despite gains in capacity, farmers' organizations still require patient buyers who take the challenges they face into account and continue strengthening their capacities. Therefore, WFP supports buyers to make purchases in ways inclusive of smallholder farmers. For example, national governments are now leveraging lessons learned under P4P, using [pro-smallholder procurement modalities](#) to source food for national grain reserves, [home grown school feeding programmes](#), hospitals and prisons.

Smallholder-friendly procurement

In countries such as [Guatemala](#), WFP [helps the Government to institutionalize and integrate the P4P approach](#) on a national level, using a trust fund to support pro-smallholder procurement and the capacity development of Government institutions. In many other countries – including [Burkina Faso](#), [Rwanda](#) and [Tanzania](#) – WFP supports governments to make their procurement practices more inclusive. Smallholder-friendly procurement practices may involve softening some contracting requirements, such as by waiving competition and transportation based on the capacity of the farmers' organization. WFP holds training in its areas of expertise, such as quality assessment and control, warehousing, logistics and market information systems. [Exchange visits](#) organized by WFP have proven to be powerful tools for encouraging innovative approaches.

[Management Systems International \(MSI\)](#) and WFP carried out a desk review entitled [Supporting Public Procurement from](#)

[Smallholder Farmers](#) to provide an overview of government buying from smallholder farmers, and recommendations for WFP's continued support of these efforts. The paper concludes that continued capacity development is needed for smallholder farmers and government institutions.

Supporting Rwandan scale up

The Government of Rwanda was the first to fully embrace and expand the P4P concept under a project called Common P4P (CP4P). Under CP4P, legislation commits the National Strategic Grain Reserve and other public institutions to purchase up to 40 percent of their staple grain requirements from smallholder farmers' cooperatives.

WFP supports CP4P by training Government officials on various aspects of engaging with smallholder farmers and providing guidance on direct contracting with farmers' organizations. A WFP consultant was placed with the Ministry of Agriculture to develop a procurement strategy.

Read the full reports:



[Supporting Public Procurement from Smallholder Farmers](#)



[Markets for Quality beyond the World Food Programme](#)

5 Things You Didn't Know about Post-Harvest Losses

One-third of all food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted. By preventing smallholder farmers from losing large portions of their crops after harvest, WFP helps increase the availability of food worldwide. This is a vital step toward meeting the world's growing food needs, and one of the pillars of the Zero Hunger Challenge. Check out these five facts to learn more about post-harvest losses.

1.3 billion tons of food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted globally each year

In sub-Saharan Africa, farmers can lose up to 30 percent of their crops to post-harvest losses. Food commodities can become damaged, spoiled, or lost while being harvested, handled, processed, stored and transported.

Farmers often use traditional storage made from straw and wood, leaving their crops vulnerable to rain and infestation by insects and rodents. While harvesting and cleaning their crop, they may use antiquated techniques and tools which damage the grain. For rural families, lost food means lost land, labour, water, fertilizer and income. Lost food also deprives farmers of the opportunity to grow and strengthen their businesses.



Solutions to post-harvest losses can be simple and affordable

Thanks to WFP's deep field experience and supply chain expertise, the organization has learned that simple and affordable steps like improving storage infrastructure and implementing good harvest and storage practices can drastically reduce food losses. In turn, this increases the amount of food available for household consumption and local markets, which means improved food security and greater resilience for smallholder farmers.



Efforts to improve post-harvest handling can have a big impact on the safety of food consumed

Because smallholder farmers can get a higher price for quality grain, they often retain damaged or dirty food for household consumption. Efforts to improve post-harvest handling can also raise awareness about the dangers of eating damaged food. Training on post-harvest handling and quality control, such sessions on using the Blue Box field testing kit, have proven effective at alerting farmers to negative impact this practice can have on their health.



With better post-harvest handling practices, farmers can earn more from their produce

When farmers are able to retain more of their crop at a higher quality, they have more to sell and can earn better prices. With access to improved storage, which maintains the quality of their crops for longer periods of time, they can wait for more profitable market prices. Take it from Esther, a smallholder farmer from Eastern Uganda, who used to sell her crops immediately after harvest to avoid losing her crops. Today, she can store her commodities in order to sell at a later time when prices are more favourable. By improving her storage, Esther also adds value to her crops – meaning they can fetch a higher price!



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Reducing post-harvest losses can increase the amount of food available worldwide

Post-harvest crop loss is a leading cause of food insecurity for millions of farming families across the world. More efficient production is one of the key ways in which we can meet the world's growing food needs. However, reducing post-harvest losses would increase the amount of food available worldwide without requiring additional resources or placing additional burdens on the environment. If we ensure that this food enters markets, this can play a major role in creating a world with zero hunger.



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Read more about P4P and post-harvest handling:

[Fact Sheet: Zero Loss for Zero Hunger - WFP's Work to Prevent Post-Harvest Food Losses](#)

[Regional Knowledge Series: WFP Uganda and Burkina Faso's Trial to Reduce Post-Harvest Losses for Smallholder Farmers](#)

[Training Manual: Improving Grain Post-Harvest Handling and Storage](#)

[Article: How Can Reducing Post-Harvest Losses Support Food Security?](#)

[Article: WFP scaling up Successful Post-Harvest Programme for Smallholder Farmers](#)

[Article: Post-Harvest Food Loss Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa through improved Storage and Handling at the start of the Supply Chain](#)

[Article: WFP Further Invests in Food Quality and Safety](#)

[Project Document: WFP Uganda post-harvest loss prevention](#)

[Fact Sheet: WFP Support to Smallholder Farmers and Agricultural Markets](#)



Transforming Ethiopian Agriculture

In Ethiopia, the government has been building on the World Food Programme's Purchase for Progress initiative to scale up support to smallholder farmers. Khalid Bomba, head of the Agricultural Transformation Agency, discusses the benefits of P4P and the way forward for scaling up pro-smallholder support through strategic partnerships.

The Government of [Ethiopia](#) prioritizes agricultural development in its Growth and Transformation Plan, focusing on the commercialization of agriculture and targeting farmers' cooperatives for support. Recognizing Purchase for Progress (P4P) as a potent tool for achieving important elements of the plan, the Government's [Agricultural Transformation Agency \(ATA\)](#) brought together a group of partners to form the Maize Alliance in 2012. Based on the central platform of P4P, the alliance pools the efforts of actors, to maximize the use of resources and strengthen synergies, yielding greater results.

This broad and coherent support to smallholder farmers and their organizations enabled P4P to surge forward and made Ethiopia the pilot country with the greatest quantity and value of WFP purchases from smallholder farmers under the pilot.

Khalid Bomba, CEO of ATA, spoke at the [2015 P4P Annual Consultation](#). While acknowledging the magnitude of the purchases made under P4P, Bomba emphasized that the pilot's greatest benefit was building the soft infrastructure needed for the Government of Ethiopia to more effectively support smallholders to engage in markets. Additionally, he discussed the crucial role of strategic partnerships for scaling up support to small-scale farmers and strengthening the agricultural sector. Click [here](#) to watch the video interview with Khalid Bomba.





Five Facts about Linking Smallholder Farmers to Markets in Liberia

After years of civil war, and the outbreak of the Ebola virus in mid-2014, smallholder farmers in Liberia face a wide variety of challenges. The World Food Programme (WFP) and partners work to support smallholder farmers across the value chain – from production to post-harvest handling and marketing.

Despite steady improvements in agricultural production in recent years, Liberia remains a food-deficit country and depends heavily on international imports. Farmers' organizations generally have limited storage, processing and marketing capacity. This lack of infrastructure makes it difficult for farmers to access major regional markets. In addition, cooperatives do not have access to the financial services needed to effectively manage the agricultural value chain. The majority of smallholder farmers in Liberia are women.

1. Farmers have built both businesses and relationships

In post-conflict countries, an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion can make collaboration among smallholder farmers challenging. In Liberia, WFP's Purchase for Progress (P4P) programme has assisted smallholders to overcome this challenge. By [helping farmers to re-build relationships and grow their businesses](#), P4P has been driving a shift of mind-set among farmers and their communities.



Participants in a rice paddy parboiling training arranged by P4P in Gbokuma village.

2. Women have used farmers' organizations to look out for one another

The women of the [Gbonkuma Women's Association](#) have not only used their organization to strengthen their production and commercialization of rice, but also as a safe space in a volatile post-war context, where women and girls face increased risks of gender-based violence. The organization's achievements were recognized with two visits from the President of Liberia.

3. Slow progress improves crop quality

Commodities must be inspected by independent superintendents to ensure that quality standards are met. This is not always financially feasible for organizations aggregating low quantities of food; and farmers often compromise cereal quality to fill bags. Continued capacity development activities are needed to emphasize the importance of quality standards for procurement.



Crops are dried in a Liberian village.

4. Smallholder farmers supplied food distributed by WFP to people affected by Ebola

The Ebola outbreak, which began in mid-2014, caused a variety of challenges for smallholder farmers. These challenges threatened to disrupt WFP's efforts to link farmers to markets. However, farmers rose to the challenge, selling [700 mt of rice](#) to WFP. This rice was used to feed patients quarantined in medical centres.

5. Though infrastructure is being strengthened, poor roads are a major challenge

In partnership with the [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations \(FAO\)](#) and the [United Nations Development Programme \(UNDP\)](#), WFP has constructed and rehabilitated 14 warehouses, and provided 19 rice mills and accessories to participating farmers' organizations. However, Liberia's precarious road network and rainfall patterns make it difficult for trucks to adhere to farmers' schedules when uplifting crops from their warehouses.

Photo Galleries: Supporting Smallholder farmers in Afghanistan and Zambia



Since 2012, WFP and ACTED have been supporting smallholder farmers in the Afghan province of Faryab under the P4P initiative.

More information on this project is available [here](#).



The Rome-based agencies (FAO, IFAD and WFP) have joined efforts in Zambia, supporting villages such as Chimpili, which is shown in this [photo gallery](#).

UPDATES AND NEWS



Fighting food waste and losses

The Guardian highlights diverse efforts to reduce food waste, from densely populated urban areas to isolated rural villages. Ugandan farmer Hasifa Nakaziba, along with 166,000 other smallholder farmers in the country, is supported by WFP to reduce post-harvest losses.

Read the article [here](#)

Local producers and Kakuma refugees to benefit from new food voucher

WFP has introduced new food vouchers for refugees residing in Kenya, which will help diversify diets of beneficiaries and benefit local producers.

Read the article [here](#)

Making emergency aid work for the long-term

P4P Communications and ComDev Officer Ahnna Gudmunds discusses P4P's work, and how it aligns with WFP's continued transition from food aid to food assistance.

Read the article [here](#)



New fact sheet on WFP support to smallholder farmers

WFP works with smallholders by purchasing food from them to develop markets, boost local economies, and spur agricultural improvements, using learnings from its P4P pilot programme.

Read the fact sheet [here](#)

Refugees to benefit from agricultural training in Uganda

WFP will use experiences and practices from agriculture, market support and post-harvest loss reduction programmes to support refugee and host communities in collaboration with the Government and United Nations Refugee Agency.

Read the article [here](#)

CONTACT US

P4P coordination unit

P4P coordination unit:
wfp.p4p@wfp.org

George Heymell, P4P Director and Global Coordinator: George.Heymell@wfp.org

For more information

P4P webpage:
www.wfp.org/p4p

Twitter:
[@WFP_P4P](https://twitter.com/WFP_P4P)

Regional Bureau focal points

François Buratto, Asia:
Francois.Buratto@wfp.org

Simon Denhere, Eastern and Central Africa:
Simon.Denhere@wfp.org

Sarah Longford, Southern Africa:
Sarah.Longford@wfp.org

Nacer Benalleg, West Africa:
Nacer.Benalleg@wfp.org

Hebert Lopez, Latin America and Caribbean:
Hebert.Lopez@wfp.org