

# Boosting family incomes

Hildah Chinoya has been involved with the **CHANYANYA IRRIGATION PROJECT** since 2008, earning money to buy food and household necessities.

Hildah lives in southern Zambia and is a member of the Chanyanya Smallholders' Cooperative Society. She and her husband pooled their land with that of their neighbours to enable irrigation infrastructure to be built. Hildah says, "Before the project came, farming was seasonal. We just grew some maize near our home to feed our family. I usually just sat at home with nothing to do."

Traditionally, men in Chanyanya engaged in fishing at the nearby Kafue Lagoon while women undertook subsistence farming. In recent years however, fish stocks have become depleted and rain-fed agriculture has been impacted by drought.

Hildah notes the transformation brought about by irrigation. "We were not like this before. With money from the garden I have

been able to renovate my house, to buy sofas, plates and cooking utensils and a new mattress to replace one that was old and uncomfortable. I am also able to buy food for my family after selling my crops." She adds, "I have nine children. My eldest daughter is helping us in the market garden today.

Today, I am planting sweet potato plants, but each year I do crop rotation and so next I will plant maize and tomatoes." In the future, Hildah aspires to further diversify her crops. "My plan is to grow what the market demands, I want to grow more than just rape (a local vegetable), egg plant, tomatoes and sweet potato leaves. I want to be able to save money to support my children's futures."

