



# Promoting profitable farming

Powder Hachilenge works land irrigated by the **CHANYANYA IRRIGATION PROJECT**, earning income to buy food and household items.

Rubbing the thick, clay soil from her feet, Powder says, "I have had a plot here at the Chanyanya market gardens for three years and I grow sweet potato leaves. Today I am planting. Planting is hard work, it hurts my back as I have to bend all day."

Southern Zambia is increasingly prone to periods of prolonged drought, impacting subsistence crops. "Before the irrigation came, I just planted some seasonal maize near our home, and I had to sit idle when there was no rain. Now I am busy! My life has really changed!"

Powder's sweet potato leaves fetch a premium at markets in Lusaka because they stay fresh for longer than those grown without irrigation. "With the money I earn selling these crops, I have been

able to buy blankets and a mattress. Before, I had no mattress or blankets as I had no money to buy those things – I just grew maize for family consumption. It makes a big difference sleeping on a mattress when my back is sore after planting here all day!"

Powder looks forward to the project's expansion which will provide cooperative members with a larger area of irrigated land to cultivate. "I think I could do more if I had a larger area. I would particularly like to plant sugar cane." Powder acknowledges that she does not yet know how to grow other crops but is willing to learn, "in the future I will need to learn how to grow a greater variety of crops to sell and for my family to eat."