

# Connecting the dots .....

## Stories of change: Women in Local Economic Development

### Counting on customers boosts sales

#### *Summary*

Cecilia Mwewa, entrepreneur, business woman, Masaiti, Zambia

Project involvement: Women in Local Economic Development workshops

*Capitalising on a demand for new products and using the newly acquired marketing and customer relations skills learned during the WLED workshops, Cecilia Mwewa has turned round her chicken and fish business and increased sales. The increase in business has meant she can employ other people and bring benefits for the local community.*

#### *Background*

Cecilia Mwewa is a business woman based in the copperbelt in Masaiti Zambia. She sells chickens and fresh fish.

#### *Aims*

Cecilia had ambitions to expand her business. This would not only increase her own income but help to create employment in the area by employing more people as well as boosting the economic activities of the district.

Cecilia wanted to build her business by adding more products to the chickens and fresh fish produce she had on offer. She had noticed an increase in demand for dry fish and kapenta from her customers, and saw an opportunity to expand into kapenta, dry fish and goats.

#### *How the CtD project has helped*

Attending the WLED workshops gave Cecilia a new insight into business management. Thanks to the WLED programme, Cecilia was able to devise a business plan for expansion and learn about marketing to increase her customer base. She enlisted her niece to help with sales while she started sourcing suppliers for the goods she wanted to add to her product range in Luanshya, Kitwe and Mpongwe.

The WLED workshops also gave Cecilia an insight into the importance of aftersales service and keeping a customer database for follow-up and regular contact.

#### *Impact*

It has not been an easy road for Cecilia, especially with the impact of Covid-19 when business slumped. However, with her new business skills she has turned things around and is employing an additional person as well as her

niece to help with goat rearing and additional products and services.

Thanks to a new customer database and better communications with her customers, Cecilia is now offering deliveries of chicken and fish to peoples' homes and workplaces, resulting in a further boost in sales.

"My life and that of my community has changed completely," said Cecilia. "Other than my niece I have employed an additional person to help me with rearing goats."

"I learnt a lot through the WLED workshops especially on how to advertise my business and how to diversify as a business woman. The project has been very helpful to me and my business."

Cecilia is now looking to source additional funding to further expand and improve her business in the future.

