



## KENYA

# Linking Smallholder Farmers to Markets

### Market Access in Brief

WFP Kenya country programme is supporting 21,000 smallholder farmers in 300 farmer organisations to competitively engage in formal and structured markets. Smallholder farmers often lack the skills and the knowledge to trade effectively, yet most are fully dependent on their farms for income. Through the Market Access programme, WFP is training farmers in marketing agricultural commodities, mainly grains, connecting smallholder farmers to markets, and supporting the economic empowerment of women and men.

### Objectives

The Programme aims at increasing marketing opportunities for targeted producers and traders of agricultural products and commodities, mainly grains at national and local levels by;

- Using food procurement for humanitarian operations and other food assistance programmes in Kenya to build the marketing capacity of smallholder farmers.
- Enhancing smallholder grain farmers' access to the Home Grown School Meals market and other structured markets.
- Supporting the government's efforts in resilience building by transitioning communities out of food assistance through market linkages.
- Supporting communities to earn more income from agriculture through value addition for grains i.e. milling and fortification.
- Improving post-harvest handling and storage at community level, and disseminating aflatoxin mitigation strategies in areas prone to contamination.

### Achievements

WFP has bought over 13,600 mt of food, valued at US\$ 4.6 million, from smallholder farmers in Bomet, Bungoma, Elgeyo Marakwet, Kitui, Nandi, Siaya, Tharaka Nithi, Trans Nzoia, Turkana and Uasin Gishu Counties, through 52 farmer organisations and 13 small-scale traders.

Farmer Organisations have increased their marketing capacity, selling over 11,700 mt to other buyers. Some organizations have started adding value to their produce by milling the grains.

About 13,000 farmers, small traders and partners (among them 7,845 women) have been trained on various modules such as marketing and commercialization, resource mobilization and financial literacy, grain quality, post-harvest handling, storage, good agricultural practices and entrepreneurship.

WFP procurement activities have raised awareness in rural areas on food quality, particularly regarding aflatoxin contamination in maize.

30 farmer organisations have completed constructing food stores with a total capacity of over 5,000 mt. WFP has supported the construction and repair of warehouses on a cost-sharing basis.

21 farmer organisations have accessed loans worth over US\$ 1 million in order to fund investments and commodity aggregation.

Drought-resistant crops, such as sorghum, pigeon peas and cowpeas have been promoted and locally purchased by WFP.



## Increasing Market Demand

WFP is working towards stimulating rural markets primarily by injecting cash into the economies of arid and semi-arid areas. A market survey conducted in 2012 concluded that replacing part of in-kind food with cash or vouchers was a viable means of diversifying families' diets while stimulating markets. WFP is continually exploring cost efficient means of disbursing assistance while investing in the skills of the farmers, traders, school pupils, board members, parents, and local authorities, to ensure the programmes run smoothly.

### **Buying from smallholder farmers**

WFP buys grains from smallholder farmer organisations that are registered as vendors, and recruits new ones in areas where farmers have marketable surpluses. WFP also trains farmers, supports construction of stores and gives post-harvest handling equipment. Women's participation is promoted.

### **Linking farmers to the Home Grown School Meals market**

WFP is handing over its school feeding activities to the government. The national Home Grown School Meals Programme serves over 850,000 school children with a hot meal. Money is transferred to schools to purchase food locally. This creates an opportunity for smallholder farmers to supply commodities to schools within their localities, stimulating production practices amongst small-scale farmers and promoting sustainability and community ownership.

### **Value addition**

WFP is providing financial and technical support to refugees and the host community in Kakuma, Turkana county, to mill grain for the school meals programme in the refugee camp.

### **Post-harvest handling**

Most of the smallholder farmers' crop is lost after harvesting. WFP offers equipment and training to help improve the grain quality and prevent aflatoxin contamination. This ensures food supplied to schools and other markets is safe.

### **From food assistance to food vendors**

WFP aims to transition beneficiaries in livelihoods projects out of food assistance and to help them market their produce. WFP is advocating for County Governments to buy from smallholder farmers.

### **Lessons so far**

- Sustainable market linkages for smallholder farmers require an enabling environment (policy, roads, credit) and 3-5 years of steady capacity development and marketing.
- Pro-smallholder procurement is an effective tool in developing the marketing capacity of Farmer Organisations to aggregate and supply quality produce.
- Smallholder farmers with access to structured markets with predictable demand and supply, produce more and have higher incomes.
- Improved access to finance is key in unlocking some the barriers to collective marketing by smallholder farmers.

### **Coverage**

