

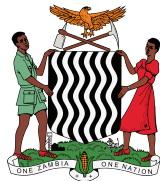


COMMUNITY VOICES

SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE SUN TA PROJECT IN ZAMBIA



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



USAID Scaling Up Nutrition Technical Assistance Project



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About the SUN TA Project

The Scaling Up Nutrition Technical Assistance (SUN TA) is a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to support the Government of Zambia to implement the First 1000 Most Critical Days Program (MCDP II) which aims to reduce stunting among children under the age of two.

Various Government ministries are implementing the program, with the National Food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC) coordinating all stakeholders.

OUR TARGET

Women of reproductive age and children under two.

PROJECT GOAL

Contribute to the reduction of stunting among children under two years of age in Zambia.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Adequate Quantity and Quality of Dietary Intake among Target Groups
- Adequate Health Conditions for Biological Utilization of Nutrients

PROJECT DURATION

2019 - 2023

MAIN PARTNER

Government of the Republic of Zambia

SUBCONTRACTOR

Technoserve

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

Central Province

Mumbwa, Chibombo, Kabwe and Kapiri Mposhi

Copperbelt Province

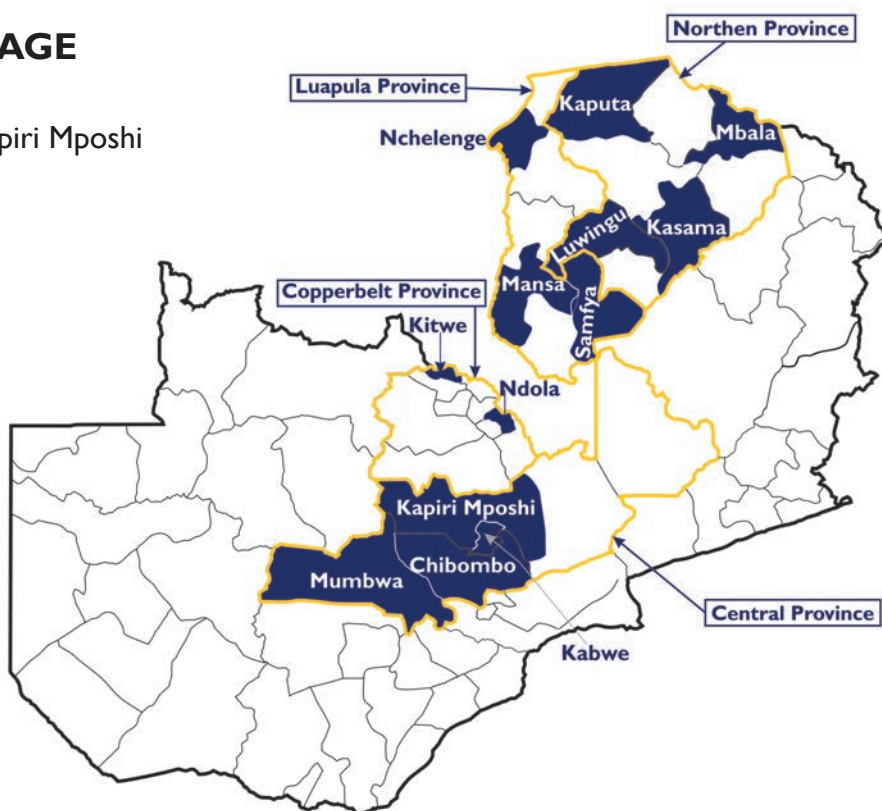
Ndola and Kitwe

Northern Province

Kasama, Mbala, Luwingu and Kaputa

Luapula Province

Mansa, Samfya and Nchelenge



SUN TA Project Pillars

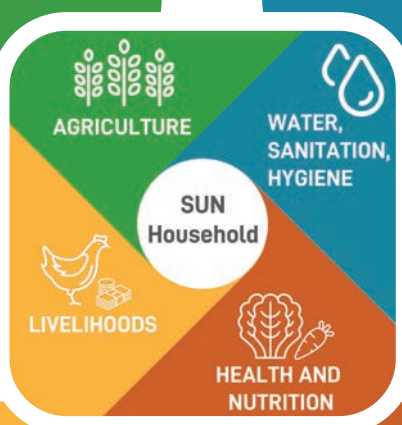
The SUN TA Project supports the Government of Zambia to implement a variety of activities aimed at impacting the household and contribute to a reduction in stunting.

AGRICULTURE

The Agriculture component aims to increase access to safe, diverse and nutritious food through nutrition-sensitive agriculture. The project works with the ministries of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries to increase and diversify food production. Since inception, the project has supported training of farmers with improved agronomical practices and establishment of gardens in communities and at health centres to increase nutrient intake, especially among women and children.

WATER, SANITATION, HYGIENE (WASH)

Improving sanitation and hygiene and increasing access to safe and clean water is key to preventing diarrheal diseases that are a leading cause of stunting in children. SUN TA works with various Government departments and community structures to improve sanitation and hygiene and deliver clean safe water to communities and households. Since inception, the project has delivered hundreds of new and rehabilitated waterpoints and helped communities become more hygienic.



LIVELIHOODS

Supporting the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services to increase access to affordable finance and diversify livelihoods through entrepreneurship/small businesses.

Through this, the project has facilitated formation of hundreds of savings groups and thousands of small businesses across the 13 districts.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

The Health and Nutrition component seeks to improve infant and young child feeding (IYCF), caring practices, and Maternal and Adolescent Nutrition. The project supports the Ministry of Health to deliver nutrition-specific, high-impact interventions such as antenatal care, early initiation of breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and systems strengthening for Iron, Folate and vitamin A supplementation by targeting pregnant, breastfeeding women, teenage pregnant adolescents, and children under two years of age.

Message from the COP



Karen Doll
USAID SUNTA
Chief of Party

Our work at SUN TA is centred on supporting the Government of Zambia in 13 districts across four provinces to improve the health of mothers and children.

Together we have educated mothers on correct maternal and childcare practices, ensuring healthy mothers and children.

We have trained thousands of farmers who are overseeing the production and consumption of a variety of nutritious foods that are important for the prevention of stunting.

We have delivered hundreds of new and rehabilitated boreholes providing clean and safe water to diverse communities and closer to homes, thereby reducing the burden on women and girls. Improving sanitation and hygiene has created cleaner communities, potentially impacting health outcomes such as reduction in diarrheal diseases.

Through community savings and loans groups, we have increased access to finance for thousands of women who have established small and micro enterprises that are now a sustainable source of livelihood.

We achieved all this by collaborating with Government departments at national, provincial, district and subdistrict levels.

A special 'Thank You' to our community volunteers who are reaching the last mile and directly interacting with households to bring about many stories of change, a sample of which you are about to read.

So, welcome. Turn the page and get reading.



HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Taking it Personal: Matilda Delivers Family Planning Services to the Community

A personal experience of not having had access to information on family planning inspired 36-year-old Matilda Njamba to become a community-based distributor of family planning commodities in her village.

Pregnant at 15 and thereby dropping out from school, Matilda did not attend antenatal sessions and ended up delivering from home.

Now a mother of five, Matilda of Modomona village in Chibombo District, has taken it upon herself to ensure that younger women are better informed on family planning.

Family planning prevents unplanned pregnancies among women of childbearing age and helps in spacing children, thus contributing to the health of mothers and children, and allows more time for mothers to care for their children and enabling families have children they can manage to look after.

“I didn’t go to the clinic for antenatal checkups until I delivered at home,” she said.

On one of her visits to the health facility after delivery of her third child, Matilda was advised to access family planning services. “I engaged my husband on the need to start family planning and explained to him the benefits for us as a family,” she recalls.

Her experience motivated her involvement in family planning activities, sharing her experience with young women who she did not want to have a similar experience.

When the Ministry of Health, with support from the SUN TA Project, organized a training on family planning for community volunteers, Matilda was one of the 60 trained. The purpose of the training was to have a cadre of community volunteers who could take family planning services closer to households.

Matilda engages women and men on the benefits of family planning and provides counseling sessions using the knowledge from the training and her personal experience.



Matilda Njamba of Modomona village in Chibombo District taking stock of her family planning commodities after attending to clients.

By taking family planning services closer to the community and sharing the benefits thereof, the government and SUN TA are helping increase uptake but also contributing to the long-term outcome of healthier mothers and children.

“Women are happy that they don’t have to walk long distances to access family planning products.”

-Gertrude Chisulo, Community-Based Distributer, Kamakuti Health Centre, Kabwe District.

“The work of Community-Based Distributers has reduced the number of women coming for family planning as the service is available in their communities. This has also reduced the workload on health facility staff.”

-Mwape Lwando, Nutrition Technologist, Mulenga Health Centre, Kitwe District



CBVs Bridging the Gap to Deliver Health Services

In Kitwe District, the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) program is working in 26 health centres. Trained community-based volunteers (CBVs) are playing a critical role in their communities, promoting recommended maternal, infant and childcare practices.

This education is crucial to the reduction of stunting and ensuring children have the best start to life through proper physical and mental development.

One such CBV and health promoter is 47-year-old Peter Sakala attached to Mukuba Health Centre in Twalima community. Residents of this area cover more than nine kilometers to access health services. But Peter’s presence in the community helps bring much-needed health education closer to the mothers so they can raise healthy children.

He provides health education and counselling to mothers on recommended maternal and childcare practices. He is also a trained lead farmer with 12 follower farmers and advises on good farming practices, including preparation and utilization of locally grown foods to improve the nutrition status of mothers and children.



Beatrice with her baby, Angela

“The women I work with have come to understand the importance of good nutrition, growth monitoring and promotion, early antenatal bookings and the importance of family planning,” he says. “As a result of the lessons on improved childcare practices, I am seeing fewer malnourished children and diarrheal cases.”

“I started attending the SUN Mother Support Group meetings in December 2020 and from the time I joined, I have learnt a lot. I have gained more information about breastfeeding and how to prepare nutritious meals for my children.”

- Beatrice Nanyangwe, 23-year-old mother of two, beneficiary of health education and counselling from Peter Sakala



Health Staff and CBVs Work Together to Improve Maternal Outcomes

Dorothy Nkomanga Mungule is a nurse at Malambanyama Health Centre in Chibombo District, Central Province. She has worked there for 19 years, providing maternal and childcare services to the community.

In May 2020, the Ministry of Health selected Dorothy to be trained in organizing SUN Mother Support Groups (SMSG). The SMSG Model is a community-based strategy that the ministry and SUN TA use to teach mothers vital health information, with a focus on maternal and child health and nutrition.

Post-training, she organized a similar training for 18 community-based volunteers (CBVs) who later spread into the communities to mobilize mothers to join the SMSGs.

In the time she has worked at the health center, she recalls the challenges she faced trying to encourage pregnant mothers to start antenatal care visits as soon as they found out they were pregnant. As a result of lack of information, most mothers delivered at home rather than at the health facility with a skilled health professional.

However, since recruitment of the CBVs who have been trained and are now working in the community, she reports that the health center has recorded a marked increase in mothers coming for antenatal care and delivery.

“The work CBVs are doing with the mothers in the community has helped us increase institutional deliveries compared to earlier when most mothers delivered at home,” she said. “We have also noticed a reduction in late immunizations as mothers now know the importance of having their children vaccinated early.”

HEALTH & NUTRITION

Dorothy appreciates the role CBVs play in educating mothers on various health and nutrition issues, especially given the inadequate health staff in rural areas.

In Kitwe District, Nutrition Technologist at Mulenga Health Centre, Lwando Mwape, says the work of the 56 trained CBVs in the area has helped increase awareness on nutrition among mothers.

“Because of the work of CBVs we have noticed a reduction in the number of children who are severely malnourished. The CBVs are able to do assessments and refer such children to the health facility.”

The story of Chibombo and Kitwe is a common theme across the 13 districts where SUN TA is supporting the government to implement the SUN program.

CBVs play an important role in the delivery of health services as they bridge the gap between health facilities and their communities and contribute to improving overall maternal and child health.



HEALTH & NUTRITION

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- Mwape Lwando, Nutrition Technologist, Mulenga Health Centre, Kitwe District



Breaking Gender Barriers in Delivering Childcare Education: The Case of John Mwelwa

At household and community level, it is rare to find men involved in childcare, as this is largely considered a women’s role. But for 56-year-old John Mwelwa of Kabwe, involvement in childcare at community level is something he has done for a long time. Between 2004 and 2015, John worked with STEPS-OVC, a USAID-funded project, until it ended. He was trained in Home Based Care.

When the SUN TA Project started working in Kabwe in 2020, he was one of the community-based volunteers who was identified and expressed interest in working with the SUN Mother Support Groups (SMSG), prior to which he was volunteering as a child health promoter at the health centre.

A husband and father of eight, John was oriented in the SMSG model, a community-based strategy SUN TA is using for improving coverage and social behavior change with focus on maternal and child health and nutrition. It is used as a service delivery entry point to reach beneficiaries at the community and household levels.

He is attached to Pollen Health Centre, one of the 38 where the SUN TA project is supporting the Ministry of Health to reach pregnant women and mothers with children under two.

He says before he joined the work of the SUN TA Project, he had little knowledge on nutrition for children under two and especially what stunting meant. “I am more enlightened now,” he says. “My desire is that I continue this work and gain more knowledge.”

“I am more enlightened now, my desire is that I continue this work and gain more knowledge.”

- John Mwelwa, Community-Based Volunteer, Kabwe District



John Mwelwa conducting a learning session with members of the SUN Mother Support Group.

As expected in this unusual cultural setting, some mothers were shy to express themselves before a male colleague, but they soon realized that he was their regular facilitator and opened up.

He is grateful to the Ministry of Health and SUN TA for the support rendered to his community through the SMSG model as mothers have improved their childcare practices.



One of the mothers giving feedback during a learning session facilitated by Mwelwa



Alice Musuku teaching mothers on the use of the feeding bowl during the cooking demonstration with Twampane SUN Mother Support Group.

Alice Musuku: Joy in Teaching Mothers

Alice Musuku is a 50-year-old mother of four from Bulaya village in Nchelenge District. She is one of the community health volunteers the Ministry trained in the SUN Mother Support Group (SMSG) model. The model is a community-based, integrated approach to combat stunting among children under two years old.

Alice's work entails meeting mothers in the community to promote maternal, infant, and young child feeding, growth monitoring and promotion, and family planning. She also teaches mothers the importance of early antenatal bookings to protect the unborn child and gain access to folic acid supplements, ferrous sulphate, and deworming tablets. She also identifies malnourished children in the community and refers them to the health center for treatment.

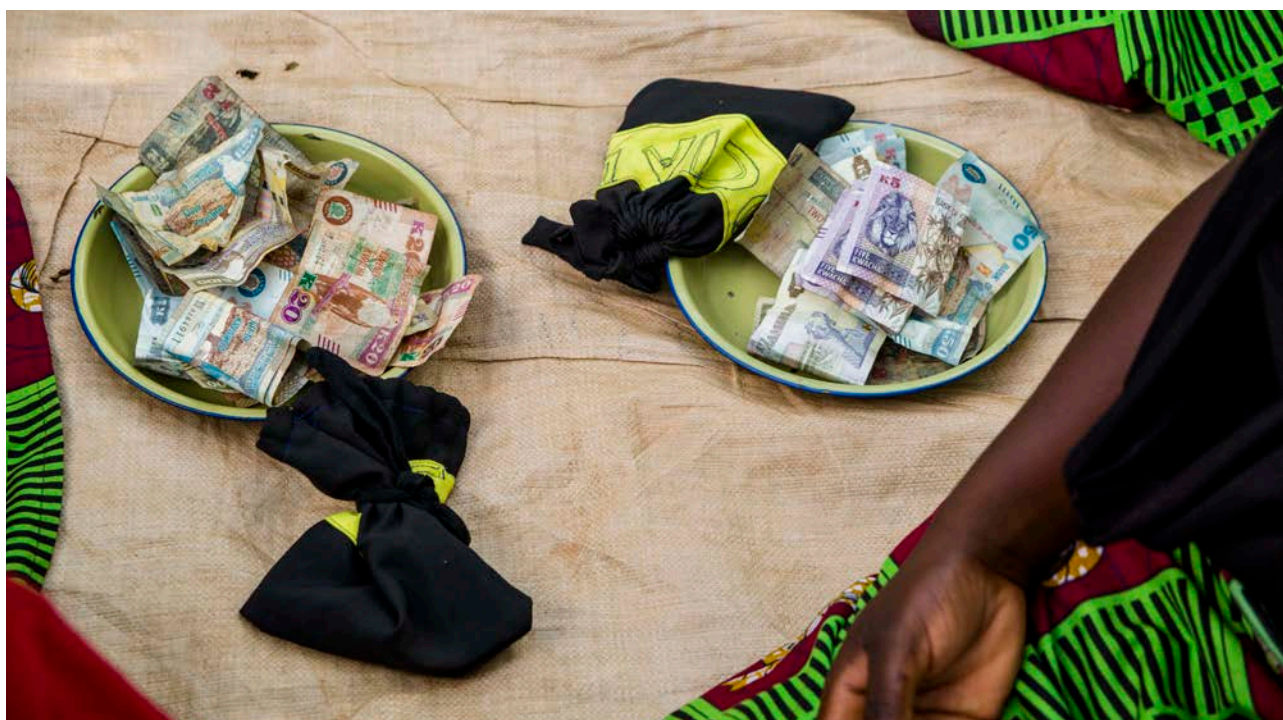
"I formed my first group called Twampane SUN Mother Support Group which had 14 members in May 2020. Most of the mothers then were not willing to be in the SMSG. But after seeing pregnant women delivering healthy babies and other mothers being able to prepare healthy meals using locally available foods with minimal resources, more women came. Men also encouraged their wives to join," she says.

An active growth promoter, TB treatment supporter, and HIV counsellor, Alice also conducts cooking demonstrations with the SMSGs regularly using the complementary feeding books and feeding bowls that SUN TA procured and handed over to the Ministry of Health.

Improving knowledge on childcare among mothers helps them adopt the correct practices and contributes to raising healthy children. When children are healthy, mothers spend less time seeking treatment at hospitals and they can then focus on other productive ventures to improve their livelihoods, and kids perform better in school setting them on a path to a brighter future.



AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS



Increased Access to Finance Improves Women's Livelihoods

Financial institutions are typically concentrated in urban centers, making it difficult for people in rural areas, especially women, to access finance. Further, women are considered uncreditworthy and are locked out from financial services.

One way the Government of Zambia is addressing this challenge is to bring affordable financial services closer to rural communities.

The USAID SUN TA Project is supporting the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services to increase access to finance to improve livelihoods, particularly among rural women, and generate income so households can purchase nutritious food and other basic needs.

Through SUN TA's support, the Ministry has trained hundreds of community facilitators who in turn have trained and organized women using community savings and loans group (CSLGs) methodology.

The women meet regularly to save and borrow. By providing low-interest loans within communities, savings groups are increasingly proving to be a gamechanger for women like Ivy Mazubuko.

Ivy is a community-based health promoter who covers Mungule Rural Health Centre in Chibombo District. She joined Bukale Bubotu savings group in September 2020 and was among 17 women in her village trained in the methodology.

During the saving cycle which ran from September 2020 to June 2021, Ivy borrowed different amounts, the highest being K5,000, which she used for fertilizer, seeds, and pesticides for her tomato, maize, and soybeans fields.



Ivy in her maize field

In addition to accessing loans, Ivy received an additional K4,000 when her group shared out their savings in June 2021, which she used to construct a poultry house as she is also a demo farmer for village chickens, standing at 294 in June 2022. From her vegetable sales, Ivy bought bricks and roofing sheets to complete the family house.

“Through the saving group, I have learned to make my own money and I am able to provide food for my family and education for my children. The savings group helped me buy the seeds and chemicals for my garden which gave enough profit for me to invest in other things.”

A wife and mother of five, Ivy shares her knowledge on crops and poultry with fellow women in her community.

“Savings groups are helping us improve our lives and we women now have the confidence to stand on our own financially.”

Ivy was one of the farmers USAID Administrator Samantha Power visited on her trip to Zambia in June 2022.

“Savings groups are helping us improve our lives and we women now have the confidence to stand on our own financially.”

- Ivy Mazubuko, Community-Based Health Promoter and Farmer, Chibombo District



How Charity Nalumbé Started a Grocery From Savings

When Charity Nalumbé, a resident of Mbala District, heard the government was helping establish savings groups in her area, she went in search of how to join.

She was connected to the Community Facilitator and she was added to the group of women that were trained in the savings methodology.

At the end of her group's savings cycle, she collected K4,100 and discussed with her husband. They decided she should invest in a small grocery.

Charity has seen her life improve. Before she joined, she was a housewife not engaged in any income generating activity. Now, she runs a business that is catering to the household needs of her nearby community, but more importantly she earns an income that is contributing to her wellbeing and that of her family.



Meet Martha: Farmer and Savings Champion

Martha Chinyama is a Community Facilitator (CF) in Mutakwa village in Chibombo District. The 51-year-old wife and mother of four children was trained as a CF in 2020 under SUN TA’s support to the Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare that is harnessing the power of microfinance to improve women’s lives.

A Community Facilitator is a trained community based volunteer that forms, mentors and oversees the operations of savings groups.

Since then, she has formed and successfully managed two savings groups with a membership of 40 (all female). She is a member in another group with 21 females that saved K46, 340 and grew it to K99, 539 which they shared out. She walked away K12, 000.

During the saving cycle which ran from June 2021 to May 2022, Martha borrowed different amounts, the highest being K7000, which she used for fertilizer, seeds and chemicals for her tomato, maize, cucumber, and eggplant garden.

She harvested tomatoes, fresh maize and pumpkins, raising K27, 550.

On her visit to Zambia in June 2022, USAID Administrator Samantha Power visited Martha to appreciate her efforts at making a difference with the support she received.

Stories such as Martha’s underscore the power not only of increasing access to finance in communities, but of empowering women who are real change agents for their households and communities.



Martha sharing her story with USAID Administrator Samantha Power



From Green Beans to Soybeans to Chickens, Robert Banda Does it All

When the USAID SUN TA project and the Ministry of Livestock were looking for model farmers to expand the village chicken value chain in rural communities, they sought farmers who could inspire others with both knowledge and practice.

In Kabwe District, the team identified and selected 52-year-old Robert Banda. He is an active and productive farmer that stands out as an inspiration to his community. He grows a variety of crops such as cabbage, tomatoes, carrots, green peppers, green beans, soybeans, maize, eggplants, garden eggs, onions, lettuce, squash, and iron rich (Mbereshi) beans, as well as raises chickens.

Robert left formal employment in 1995 and has since built his livelihood as a farmer. His involvement with the SUN TA project started in 2021 and brought a new dimension to his farming, increasing his knowledge, and in turn, income.

He received training in improved agronomical practices that helped improve his vegetable, legume, and grain production. He also learnt about the nutritional value of different crops and has used that information to intentionally grow crops that help prevent malnutrition in children.

The project also trained him in village chicken management. As a demonstration farmer, he has mentored ten other follower farmers on how to grow and sell village chickens, passing on valuable knowledge.

“I was motivated to start rearing village chickens because of the nutritional benefits and the good market price,” he said. Because of the knowledge he gained on growing village chickens, he reported his production capacity has increased from 60 to 300 chickens. Local restaurants drive the high demand for village chickens because of their tasty meat and sell for as high as K150 per bird.



Aerial view of Robert Banda's farm

“As I learn, I provide training to follower farmers on crop management and chicken rearing. I have also learned the benefits of using organic manure instead of chemical fertilizers. Organic manure adds nutrients to the soil and prevents the soil from becoming acidic which contributes to healthy crops.”

He is also involved in another SUN TA driven activity – he belongs to one of more than 2,500 local savings groups established by the project. In these community savings and loan groups (CSLGs), people save and borrow money to expand their various small enterprises. He started by saving K100, but by May 2022, he had collected K8,000 which he's using to buy an incubator to further his poultry business.

“I was motivated to start rearing village chickens because of the nutritional benefits and the good market price,”

- Robert Banda, Model Farmer, Kabwe District



Lucy Chunda: Making Good Use of Information

While visiting her local health centre, Lucy Chunda heard about a project that was teaching mothers how to look after their children to prevent malnutrition. She got interested and went in search of the community-based volunteer in charge of her area. Since then, she has not looked back and has embraced the project's activities wholeheartedly.

A resident of Kitwe's Limaposa area, Lucy belongs to a SUN Mother Support Group where she has learnt about the various improved maternal and childcare practices that are key to the healthy growth of children. She is a member of a savings group which enables her to save and borrow money, and she grows crops and rears chickens.

When the SUN TA Project and its government partners talk about convergence of activities at the household, Lucy represents exactly that.

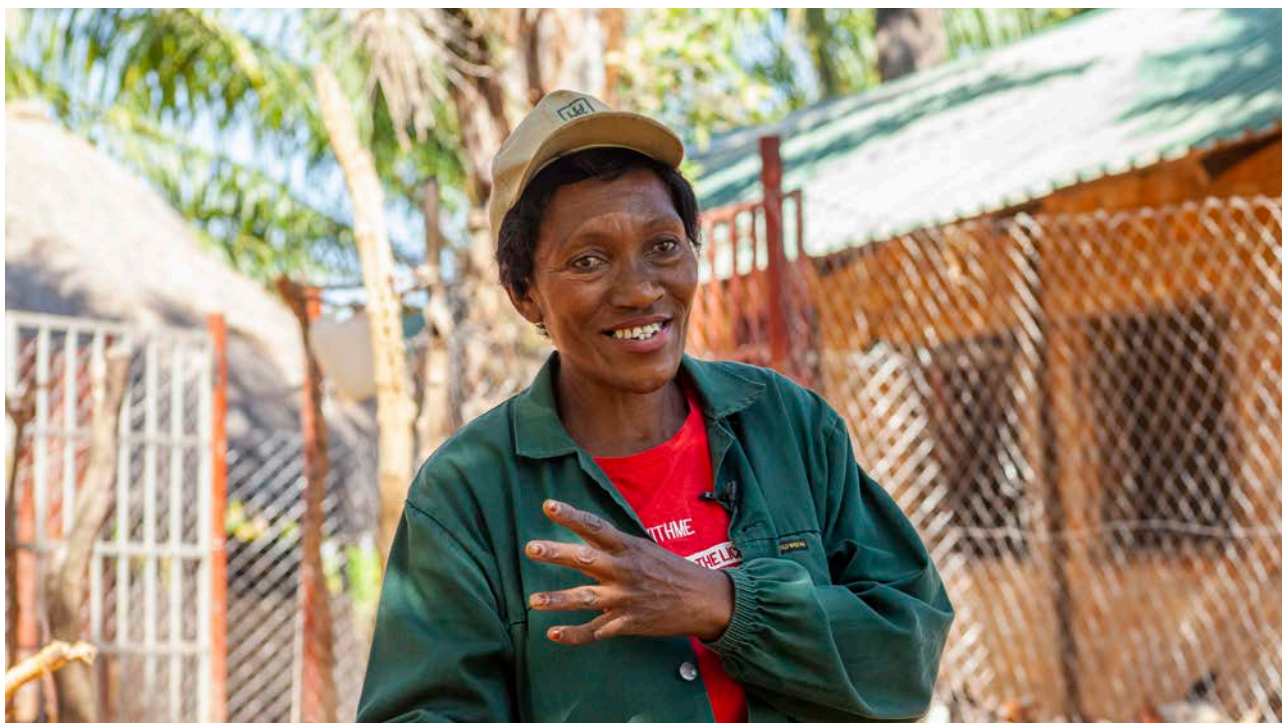
A mother of three, Lucy has learnt more than just how to take good care of her children to prevent malnutrition. She knows that all the activities she is involved in have a bearing on the nutritious status of her household.

"The SUN Mother Support Group is where I learnt all the things I am involved in. I wasn't in a savings group before but after we were taught by the community volunteer, we understood how issues of money are connected to nutrition," she explained. "The lessons on good hygiene and preparation of nutritious foods are benefitting our children."

She was one of the demo farmers SUN TA and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries picked when rolling out the village chicken value chain and she has follower farmers looking up to her. Using the knowledge she gained from the training on management of village chickens, she makes her own chicken feed using soya and maize.

She is excited about her chicken enterprise and has quite some ambition: she plans to expand the chicken run and become a bigger player in the business.

She is an example of how access to something as small as a piece of information that she heard at the health centre can bring about a lot of change. Don't they say information is power?



Maureen Chipasha: Not Just Healthy Children

If you are looking for another place where the totality of SUN program activities comes into view, it is in Nchelenge District’s Kasumpa area where Maureen Chipasha is a health promoter supervisor, a vegetable farmer, a village chicken demonstration farmer and member of a savings group.

“What we have come to appreciate about this project is that it’s not just about healthy children but also empowering the community,” says Maureen.

“I volunteered to work with the SUN TA project in 2020 and after attending trainings in SUN Mother Support Group formation, I was chosen to be a health promoter supervisor, supervising four health promoters who are teaching mothers on how to look after their children to prevent stunting,” she recalls.



AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS



As a health promoter supervisor, she makes sure her four community health volunteers under her care regularly meet their groups of pregnant or lactating mothers and delivering the correct information on maternal and childcare.

As a lead farmer, she uses her thriving vegetable gardens to teach follower farmers (mainly women) on the importance of growing a variety of vegetables to increase nutrient intake at the household.

“In 2021, I was identified to be a demo farmer for village chickens in Kasumpa area,” says Maureen, whom the project supported with 552 chickens and construction materials.

Being a demo farmer means she mentors and assists other people in her area to become chicken farmers, thus expanding the supply chain. The project is supporting the production of village chickens for protein and income purposes.

By belonging to the savings group in her area, one among many which the Ministry of Community Development has established with SUN TA support, Maureen is able to raise money to buy feed and vaccines for her chickens.

“I am a happy mother because my household has learnt the importance of good nutrition through healthy eating practices, good hygiene, and livestock production.”





WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)



Construction of latrines increases hygiene and sanitation in communities

Total Sanitation in Kaputa

Kaputa District in Northern Province was in 2021 declared an open defecation free (ODF) zone. This means the district has attained very high levels of sanitation and hygiene, with all households and institutions having toilets and handwashing facilities.

Government, SUN TA, traditional and community leaders and volunteers worked together to mobilize communities to attain the status.

Improving sanitation and hygiene is key to reducing diarrheal diseases, a leading cause of stunting among children under the age of two. When children are healthy, mothers spend less time on nursing sick children and can focus on productive activities.

Chief Kaputa: “Achieving Open Defecation Free (ODF) means an end to diseases and I am very happy that we worked with the Council to achieve this.”

Venture Matebele, community based volunteer: “With the coming in of SUN TA we have seen improvements in trainings, reporting system and the assistance with mobility through bicycles which enable us reach more households.”



A representative of His Royal Highness Chief Kaputa showing a Certificate of ODF Achievement on 12th April, 2021

Council Secretary Moses Mutyoka: “We thank our team of community champions, headmen, the chieftainess, the Council, SUN TA, and Ministry of Health. We worked as a team to achieve ODF.”

The benefits are evident. Health authorities did not record any cholera case in the 2020/2021 rain season, a huge difference from the past where cases of the diarrheal disease were prevalent.



Better Sanitation in Samfya's Chikunyu

Chikunyu, an area with 424 households and a population of over 2,500 sits on the edge of the vast Lake Bangweulu, one of the world's great wetlands.

In the past, the area did not have a safe disposal of fecal matter as communities practiced open defecation.

The SUN TA Project supported the District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education (D-WASHE) Committee, health facility staff, village headmen, church and civic leaders to engage the public to change the situation.

“The lake is our main source of water. With open defecation in the past, all the waste was washed into the lake,” says Chiseba Sondala, a community volunteer whose role is to educate households on improved sanitation and hygiene. “There is change in our village, every household now has a latrine and this will make us live healthier lives without diseases.”

Traditional leadership is key in influencing social and behaviour change. “I worked with the Community Health Assistant at Chikunyu Health Post, the community champions and the Sanitation Action Group members trained by the project,” says headwoman Esther Mumba Kasongo Nsauni of Lameck village. “Together with the people, we built latrines across the village. Where people had relocated for fishing, we built latrines and they found them when they returned; then we told them ‘no more open defecation’.”

The headwoman is proud that “today you can walk around the village, you will not find faeces anywhere. We are now an ODF village and we have seen reduced diarrheal cases among our children.”

The change recorded in Chikunyu is evidence that when informed and mobilized for change, communities can take step steps to improve their own living conditions.



Before and after: This borehole in Kayoche village was non-functional and abandoned for two years before the SUN TA Project repaired it, restoring access to clean and safe water.

Luwingu's Kayoche Village Gets Clean Water

Kayoche village in Luwingu District of Northern Province is home to over 70 families whose main source of drinking water for two years was a nearby stream. The borehole had broken down in 2019. The water from the stream was dirty and diarrheal diseases were common.

However, the situation in Kayoche Village has now changed. With support from the SUN TA Project, the District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education (D-WASHE) Committee identified boreholes in need of rehabilitation and the borehole in Kayoche was one of them.

Hellen Bwalya, a mother of two and a resident of Kayoche village, says the rehabilitation of the borehole has cut the distance she previously walked to get water from the stream from 300 metres to 50 metres. But more importantly, Hellen and her household now have access to clean and safe water.



SUN TA and the D-WASHE also trained 17 Area Pump Menders in Luwingu who undertake repair and maintenance of water points, thereby ensuring regular supply of clean and safe water to communities.

“For over a year, our source of water here was the stream. The water was dirty, my children suffered from diarrhea every week but now I am happy that this borehole has started working and the water is clean. We thank the government and SUNTA for this.”

- Hellen Bwalya, Kayoche Resident

Women drawing water from the rehabilitated borehole

Ndola's Mushili Health Facility Benefits from Reconstructed Borehole

Mushili Health Centre in Ndola District services over 62,000 people in one of the city's most populous townships. One of the challenges the health facility faced was inadequate water supply as piped water was erratic and sometimes unavailable for days, while the borehole at the institution had been non-functional for four years.

"We ended up asking for water from households with shallow wells," recalls Shirley Namanjele Muzyamba, the Health Centre In-Charge.

In its quest to increase access to water, SUN TA worked with the District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education (D-WASHE) to identify boreholes at schools and health centres in need of repair and communities requiring new boreholes.

The borehole at Mushili Health Centre was one of the five rehabilitated and was given a major overhaul that included flushing it to remove the clogging that had reduced its yield. New non-corrosive, non-toxic pipes were installed, replacing the old ones. The borehole was fenced and a new apron was constructed with a drainage to the soak away pit to eliminate possibility of contamination from water seepage.

It was handed over to the institution in June 2021 and this elated staff who now share the benefits.

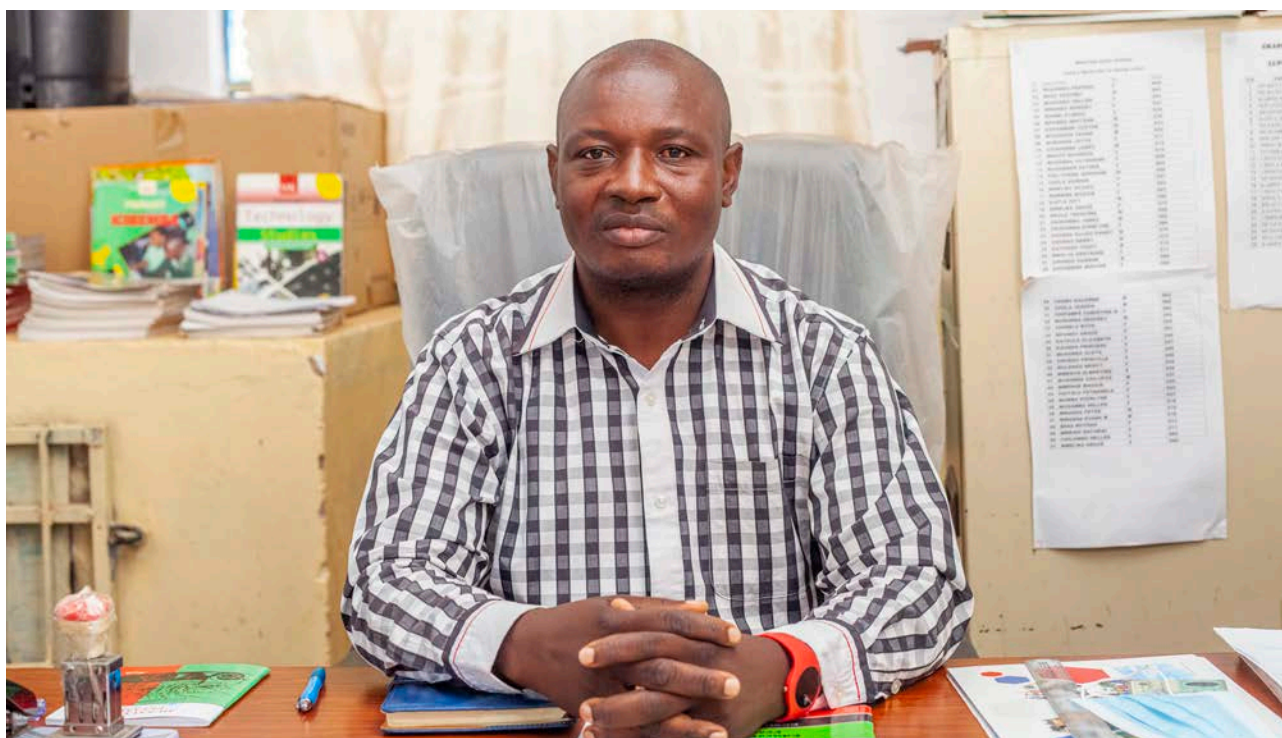
"Since SUN-TA repaired the borehole, the water is very clean, clear and palatable. The challenge we now have is that everyone in the community wants to draw water from it. However, through the water point committee that we have established for sustainable operational and maintenance we agreed that the borehole will only be open during work hours to prevent its abuse which can lead us back to when it was non-functional," said the Health Centre In-Charge.

Environmental Health Technologist at the facility, Pauline Muloongo: "With adequate water now at the institution it is easy to enforce COVID-19 prevention behaviours like handwashing. Previously, it was a serious challenge as we rationed water for handwashing."

"Our toilets are now clean, all thanks to the water that is now readily available," said Suwilanji Sichivula, a nurse. "We now have a cleaner and safer environment that a health centre should have and we can also store water for other uses."



Before and after: This borehole at Mushili Health Centre was non-functional for four years before the SUN TA Project repaired it, restoring access to clean and safe water.



Donald Chanda, Head Teacher at Mwatishi Primary School in Nchelenge District

Rehabilitated Borehole Relieves Students of Early Morning Chore

Mwatishi Primary School in Nchelenge District is situated 21 kilometers from the town's center and has a surrounding population of nearly 700 people including teachers, students, and the general community.

With over 760 students, the school experienced water problems after the only borehole at the institution broke down in December 2020. This forced school authorities to rely on water from Lake Mweru and a borehole in the village.

“We had to send pupils to a nearby village every morning to fetch water before they started classes. This resulted in less concentration by students as they were already tired by the time they got to class,” recalls school Head Teacher, Donald Chanda. “It was also risky for pupils to draw water from the lake.”



Pupils drawing water from the rehabilitated borehole at Mwatishi Primary School in Nchelenge District



With support from the USAID SUN TA Project, the District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education (D-WASHE) Committee undertook a water needs assessment across the district to identify communities and public institutions in need of waterpoints.

The borehole at Mwatishi school was one of those identified and listed for rehabilitation in November 2021 and was handed over to the school in 2022.

With the borehole at the school now rehabilitated, no pupil is missing out on class on account of fetching water. The school head predicts this will also contribute to improved class performance among his pupils.

“We are very grateful for this gesture from the SUN TA Project which worked with our government to repair our borehole,” says the school Head Teacher.



“Before the borehole was rehabilitated, we would sometimes knock off early from school because of lack of water. We are now able to learn without difficulty because we have water within the school.”

- Justina Nyirongo, Head Girl, Mwatishi Primary School, Nchelenge District

Kalindila Village: In not so many words....



This is where some residents of Kalindila village in Mansa District accessed their drinking water.



In response, the SUN TA Project constructed this new borehole that now provides clean and safe water to the people.



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