

SNAPSHOTS

from the
FIELD



Furaha Mwisha, Muebeba, Zambia, 2018

selfhelpafrica.org



**Self Help
Africa**



FROM FEAR TO FARMING



Supporting hundreds of displaced refugee households to become self-reliant small-scale farmers is the aim of an innovative Self Help Africa project in one of Africa's oldest refugee settlements.

21-year old Furaha from Democratic Republic of Congo has lived in UN-run Meheba refugee camp in Zambia for over half of her life.

Furaha was nine when she was shot, in an attack that killed both of her parents. Her life has transformed since she started working with Self Help Africa, more than a year ago.

By supporting refugees, like Furaha, with agricultural training, they can escape a life of aid and reliance. The project assigns households in Meheba camp with a plot of land and provides training, seed, tools and livestock to help them to establish their own small farms.

Farmers are also provided with assistance to access markets for their produce.

In just over a year, Furaha has moved from being a hired-hand on other small farms, to an independent farmer in her own right; "For the first time, I have my own farm," she says, "I have planted groundnuts on my small plot and am also keeping sheep, goats and chickens that I will trade."

She dreams that her young son will get a good education and the opportunity to study medicine, which was denied to her. "After all, I will be old someday, and I would like it if my son was a doctor, and could take care of me," she says.



Participants on a training course in Kenya use an app to scan cassava

DIAL UP DEVELOPMENT

From digital tools that track commodity prices, to applications that monitor pest infestations, the role of technology is assuming importance for Self Help Africa like never before.

Although many of the people we work with live without electricity, the work we are doing across Africa is being transformed by digital technology.

Mobile phones are now being used to disseminate information to farming households on a range of subjects, from commodity prices and weather forecasts, to providing advice on plant and animal disease treatments and other farming practices.

We do this to ensure that we can provide the most appropriate targeted interventions, in the correct order, and during the right season.

At the same time, smart phones and tablets with internet connectivity are

supplanting pen and clipboard in gathering data from the fields.

Self Help Africa is also currently investigating the use of remote sensing technologies to predict crop yields, and even nutrient deficiencies in crops.

The potential use of technology to detect levels of contamination, such as possible carcinogens (aflatoxins) in certain crops, and the use of imaging technology to analyse soil types and quality, is also under review.

These innovations - together with a host of others - are set to transform farming as we know it in sub-Saharan Africa.

CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF GORTA IN KERINGET, KENYA

The merger of Gorta and Self Help Africa in 2014 was inspired by the conviction that we could achieve more by working together.

For decades, the two organisations had done similar work in similar locations. By teaming up, we believed that we could reduce costs, increase impact, and do more with the funding that people like you trusted us with.

Five years on, as 'Self Help Africa', we are now reaching twice as many people - last year alone we helped over two million rural poor people in Africa. The legacy of Gorta, Ireland's original 'Freedom from Hunger Council' lives on in this work.

Take for example in Keringet, a district to the north-west of Kenya's Rift Valley, where Gorta had worked since the early 2000s. In Kenya, this is 'cattle country.'

Where once there were hundreds of poor families struggling to make a living on their small farms from their small herds, today there now stands a thriving small creamery that is buying, processing, transporting and selling milk and yoghurt to Kenya's urban markets.

Keringet Foods Ltd employs 21 people full-time, and has also started trading in other goods including Irish potatoes. They are helping farmers like father-of-four, Henry Tener, to earn a lot more from their farm work.

"I used to farm tea, like my father, but I never earned much. I moved into dairy and potato farming after the cooperative was started. I'm getting a good price for my milk, and I'm also farming potatoes," Henry says.

Many of the 1,500 farmers selling to Keringet Foods are women, like young mum Jacqueline Chepkemboi who says that she is earning over 20% more than she would in the local market from the milk that she gets from her single dairy cow, each day.

Your ongoing support is helping to change the lives of Henry, Jacqueline, and millions of other people like them; and today is making Self Help Africa a stronger and more effective charity.

Thank you - and we look forward to continuing the work of Gorta, under the Self Help Africa name, in Keringet and beyond, in the years ahead.

Jacqueline Chepkemboi





Ben Aziau (right) with members of Por Piggery Group

UGANDA'S YOUNG FARM ENTREPRENEURS



A training programme in Uganda is creating rare job opportunities for young people in the country's West Nile region.

Ben Aziau points to the three figures digging in a distant field. "They work for me. I am now an employer," the 28-year-old from Maracha District in Uganda's far north says proudly.

Since he started his business 18 months ago, Ben says that he has created part-time work for 10 people. He has one full-time employee. Ben breeds pigs on a 1.5 acre farm that he inherited from his father, and is leasing a piece of land where he grows vegetables to sell.

A member of Por Piggery Group, Ben is participating in a Self Help Africa enterprise development project that is creating local business and job opportunities for 3,000 young people in Uganda's West Nile region.

There are 20 similar youth groups in Maracha District, providing training and support to young people with livestock rearing, fruit and vegetable growing, as well as agri-processing, marketing and other local businesses.

LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY

Like you, Self Help Africa wants a world free from hunger and poverty. By leaving a legacy gift in your Will, you can support this effort and make an impact for generations to come.



Grenda Nampondwe
and new baby Sunny
(3 months)

A generous legacy gift to widow Grenda Nampondwe and her four children in Zambia provided her with vital training in horticultural production, which allowed her to produce food in a backyard garden at her home. She also received kid goats which she reared and sold – three years later Grenda says she and her family are in a much better place due to this support. “I am getting by now and want all of my children to get a proper education” she says.

It is easy to amend an existing will – just complete a codicil form which we have enclosed in this newsletter, and return it to your solicitor to be kept with your original Will.

For more information visit our website: www.selfhelpafrica.org/ie/legacy/
or call Louise on **01-6778880**

RUN, WALK OR DINE FOR CHARITY

Each year, Self Help Africa organises a host of events that allow our supporters to mobilise to support our work. 2019 is no different!



Keen to get involved? We'd love to hear from you, and we have plenty of helpful suggestions about how you can make an impact. Contact the fundraising team on 01-6778880 or email info@selfhelpafrica.org

RUGBY STAR ROB HERRING VISITS UGANDA

Taking time out of his busy training schedule, Ulster and Ireland rugby star Rob Herring recently visited farming communities in Uganda who are working with Self Help Africa.

As someone who grew up in South Africa, the Cape Town born hooker said that he was inspired by what he saw, and the impact that the projects were having on the lives of rural poor families.

“I have great affection for the African continent and I loved to see how Self Help Africa was providing practical support to millions of small-scale farmers in Uganda.”

“It goes to these places and empowers people with skills and knowledge, which provides something more sustainable for their futures. The people we met were assertive and confident thanks to these programmes, and that’s a brilliant way to build for the future.”



FARMER TRAINING IS VITAL

‘Training plays a vital role in improving farm productivity’ says national farmers’ union president.

Speaking about the huge potential of farming to improve the standard of living for millions of African people, the president of the Irish Farmers’ Association, Joe Healy, said that many people had few alternatives to farming for their survival.

“I knew that agriculture was significant but I was surprised to actually

see just how important farming is to the lives of people,” Mr Healy said, as he visited Self Help Africa’s programmes in Ethiopia and Kenya.



“Self Help Africa’s work really is an illustration of the saying that you should teach a man to fish rather than give him a fish,” the IFA president said.

Self Help Africa has been the chosen charity of the Irish Farmers’ Association for many years.



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FARMING FOR AFRICA'S FUTURE