

the Integrated Cooperative Business Model produced notable results in Peru and Malawi. In Las Lomas, Peru, a successful pilot project helped a micro-enterprise—completely owned and managed by 18 women co-op members—to sell 23.5 tonnes of organic fertilizer. The women, who will invest their profits into expanding their business, have become a symbol of empowerment in their households and community. In Malawi, 44,762 people (16,413 women and 28,349 men) in three districts were trained in financial literacy. This was a game changer. Equipped with the right knowledge, the farmers could meet with credit unions on equal footing, as clients and service providers respectively. Results included new, customized loan products and services tailored to the needs of smallholder farmers.

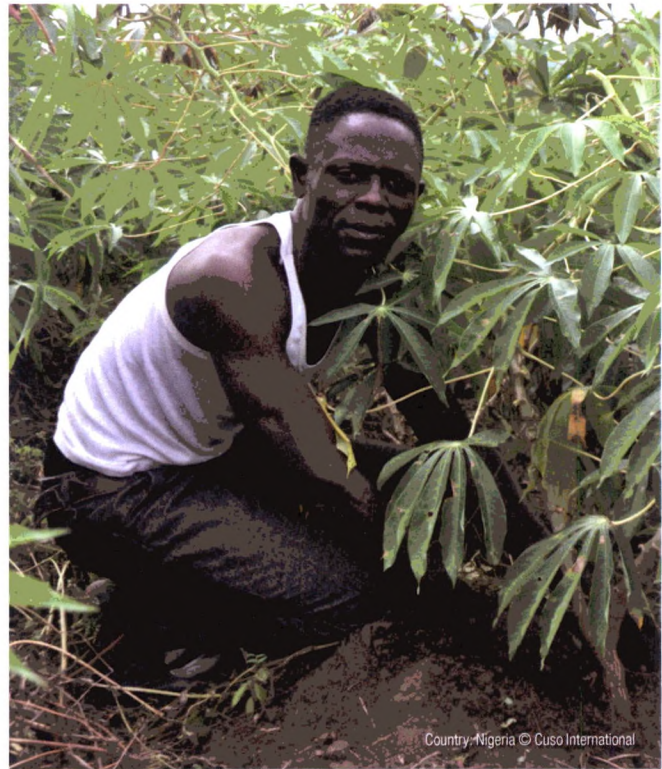


In Afghanistan, the Government of Canada partnered with local organization Zardozi on a \$5.92-million Economic and Social Empowerment for Afghan Women project. The project aimed to strengthen the ability of Afghan civil society organizations to better coordinate, advocate, protect and promote the rights and empowerment of women and girls. In 2017-2018, 4,083 women were trained, and for those who had set up businesses, monthly incomes jumped by an average of 302%. Two thirds of the women trainees said they were survivors of violence; this innovative project helped build their self-confidence and independence. The women went on to find employment. In addition, of 130 community business centres supported, 30 took action to improve women's rights and protection issues in their community.

In Egypt, the GET Ahead for Women in Enterprise project aims to advance economic rights for women living in poor and low literate communities. There, only 15% of businesses are owned by women. The Decent Jobs for Egypt's Young People project helped adapt the GET Ahead training package to local circumstances. (This project is an International Labour Organization project that receives funds from Canada.) The GET Ahead package trained the trainers, who then trained 2,000 potential women entrepreneurs in marginalized regions of rural Egypt. Half of the women went on to launch their own business. The institutionalization of a public-private partnership by the National Council for Women, in conjunction with local NGOs, will ensure sustainability and scaling up throughout the country.

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE MARKETS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Individuals and enterprises in developing countries, particularly those led by women, often need help to become more competitive and innovative, and to crack market opportunities. What they need are targeted efforts to promote inclusive markets and support entrepreneurship.



MAKING A LIVELIHOOD THROUGH CASSAVA PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING: OJO'S STORY

"My name is Ojo Amos, from Cross River State (in Nigeria). Last year in November, I participated in entrepreneurship development training organized by the YouLead project being implemented by Cuso International in Nigeria, and funded by Global Affairs Canada. During the entrepreneurship training organized by YouLead project, I experienced a mindset change and reorientation. I realized that I do not need huge amounts of money to start up a business. I learned how to think outside the box, how to think big and start small. I learned how to develop a business plan, and how to add value to a product in order to make it competitive. I realized that knowledge is the first thing an aspiring entrepreneur needs, not necessarily finance. Looking at the big picture, I am confident that in the next few years, I will be able to compete with the big cassava companies in my community."

Cuso's Youth Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Access and Development (YouLead) project in Nigeria has helped establish youth resource centres to support the economic empowerment of youth. Youth learn about financial institutions and services, grants, employment opportunities, career options and opportunities, and communications technology training. The project has benefitted 18,964 people (9,544 women and 9,420 men) since its inception.