

WIMAC

Women's Improved Marketing and Asset Control Project



“We have learned how to grow groundnuts and soya beans. Out of these crops, we have managed to raise money through value addition.”

- Grace Toloka, chairwoman of the Tisadane Women's Group



Female Farmers Cook Up New Products for Good Business

The WIMAC Project empowers women's groups through business trainings and cooking demonstrations

Established in May of 2015, the Tisadane Women's Group—composed of 24 female farmers from surrounding communities—originally came together to jointly pursue business opportunities and grow their incomes by pooling and leveraging collective resources. However, the group encountered barriers to growth, as they were unsure how to effectively market and grow their business.

As part of its efforts to empower women, Agribusiness Systems International's (ASI) Women's Improved Marketing and Asset Control (WIMAC) Project, funded by the Walmart Foundation, partnered with local government ministries to improve farmers' capacity to organize effectively and implement sound business practices. The Tisadane Women's Group is one of 1,113 farmer organizations that have been trained through the WIMAC Project.

The WIMAC Project worked to promote the production and sale of soya beans and groundnuts which are nutrient rich crops, valued highly in the Zambian market, and considered culturally acceptable for women to plant. Women were taught how to grow and store these crops as well as how they can be prepared. Led by nutrition experts from Zambia's Ministry of Agriculture, trainings emphasized soya beans and groundnuts as sustainable local sources of protein. Through cooking demonstrations, the WIMAC Project showed how these foods can be processed and integrated into local diets for improved nutrition.

Eager to incorporate these income-generating activities into their business, the group purchased materials available in their local market and began cooking and selling *munkoyo* (a traditional beverage), *nthwilo* (groundnut flour), soy fritters, and soy milk—exciting new products for the region. The group also planted their first crop of groundnuts in order to source raw materials from their own fields.

As the group gains strength, they are planning to sell their products in larger markets. As a first step in this process, the group recently marketed their products at the 2016 Nyimba District Agriculture Show, where they were awarded first prize for their products. With the knowledge and know-how to grow, the Tisadane Women's Group has no intention of stopping and are already expanding into poultry and pork production.