

# Agricultural Livelihoods Capability Statement

## Why work with smallholder farmers?

With approximately 500 million smallholder farmers producing **80% of food consumed in Asia and Africa**, smallholder farmers play a vital role in feeding the global population. Agriculture in rural areas of Asia and Africa is the **main source of income and food** for the vast majority of the population, and therefore working directly with smallholder farmers has **significant potential to improve development outcomes and growth** in the countries we work in. Empowering farmers in the markets they operate in, giving them access to microfinance, increasing their bargaining power and promoting sustainable and efficient farming methods all improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and have a long-lasting and meaningful development impact.

## Our Impact

2016-2017

**180,000**

**farmers in Bangladesh** supported by local service providers

**300**

**farmers in Senegal** supported to lead field trials of fertilisers

**3,000**

**women in Ghana** enabled to process shea through a social enterprise

**64**

**enterprise groups created in Guinea** with improved links to markets

**2,000**

**farmers in Malawi** now practising conservation agriculture

**142**

**alliance farming pairs in Cameroon** resolving grazing/crop/ water conflicts

## Our Approach

### An empowering, farmer-led approach to development

United Purpose puts farmers at the centre of the work we do by employing a community-led approach to projects, and enabling farmers to advocate for their own rights. Our work supports farmers to make markets work for them by providing them with training, supporting farmers' associations and ensuring a pro-poor market environment.

### Understanding value chains and markets

Market Approaches: Smallholder farmers depend on markets for their livelihoods but hold little power within them. UP's work engages the multiple actors in markets with the objective of enhancing farmers' bargaining power to make markets work in the interests of smallholder farmers.

### Building innovative partnerships

We especially do this with small, local companies. By working with other NGOs, farmers' associations, local agricultural service companies and local governments, we can develop solutions to agricultural development that benefit the poor.

### Developing rural skills

Training in sustainable agricultural practices enables farmers to increase their yields, diversify and reduce environmental damage. Our projects integrate a gender lens throughout our activities, as well as supporting women to establish sustainable, effective businesses.

## Innovations

In **Senegal**, **Jokalante** is a social enterprise we support that provides ICT services to enable local farmers to understand value chains and markets, secure better prices for their seeds and produce, and improve production techniques. It is based around delivery of information and collection of responses in local languages and by voice – an approach more suited to the poor and women.

In **Malawi**, we use innovative methods to support **sugar outgrowers**, including: establishing an annual sugarcane farmers' competition; developing a monitoring system to empower communities to collect, monitor and track data themselves, increasing ownership of initiatives; and investing in Village Savings and Loans schemes, cleaner cookstoves and solar gadgets to increase outgrowers' incomes and improve living standards.

In **Guinea**, we are one of the first organisations to use the **Making Markets work for the Poor** approach, which aims to make markets work more effectively and sustainably for the poor. We support farmers to establish enterprise groups (80% of which are currently women's groups), build their business development skills, and facilitate links between actors in the value chain.



## .....● Case story Local Service Providers in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, we are contributing to improving the food security and livelihoods of 180,000 smallholder families in rural areas in the north and south of the country.

In partnership with Helvetas, we are assisting 900 Local Service Providers (LSPs) – entrepreneurial farmers that are selected by farmers in their communities. They act as change agents, providing basic training and advice, and facilitating interaction between their client farmers and traders, private sector companies, government agencies, NGOs and other service providers. UP helps them to identify prospective value chains, build capacity, and expand their activities to hard-to-reach communities. The project also builds the capacity of LSPs in agricultural technology, marketing and business development, and engages them in introducing innovative technology. Each LSP can cover between 150 and 250 fellow farmers, driven by either the fees paid for advice, or services or commissions made on the sales of inputs or farm produce. The informal nature of the approach is successful given the informal nature of smallholder agriculture, the low cost and the fact that, after mobilisation, the LSPs are largely self-motivated.



## .....● Commerical Partners

United Purpose has worked with a wide range of companies, both as project and funding partners, including **Cargill, Coca-Cola, Diageo, Illovo Sugar, Mitsubishi, PZ Cussons, Rio Tinto & The Co-Op.**

## .....● Examples of our Track Record

Country	Donor	Project	Project Value
Ghana	The Waterloo Foundation, MCFEA	Northern Ghana Shea Initiative	£100,000 loan £105,000 grants
Guinea	Big Lottery Fund	Building Markets for the Poor: Non-Timber Forest Products	£500,000
Mozambique	AGRA	Building the Capacity of Smallholder Farmers and Farmer Organizations	€2,531,564
Malawi	Irish Aid	Local Development Support Programme	€7,425,000
Bangladesh	DFID	Improving Food Security and Livelihoods	£1,132,250
Senegal	USAID	ICT Challenge in Agricultural Technologies	\$1,698,019

## For further information

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