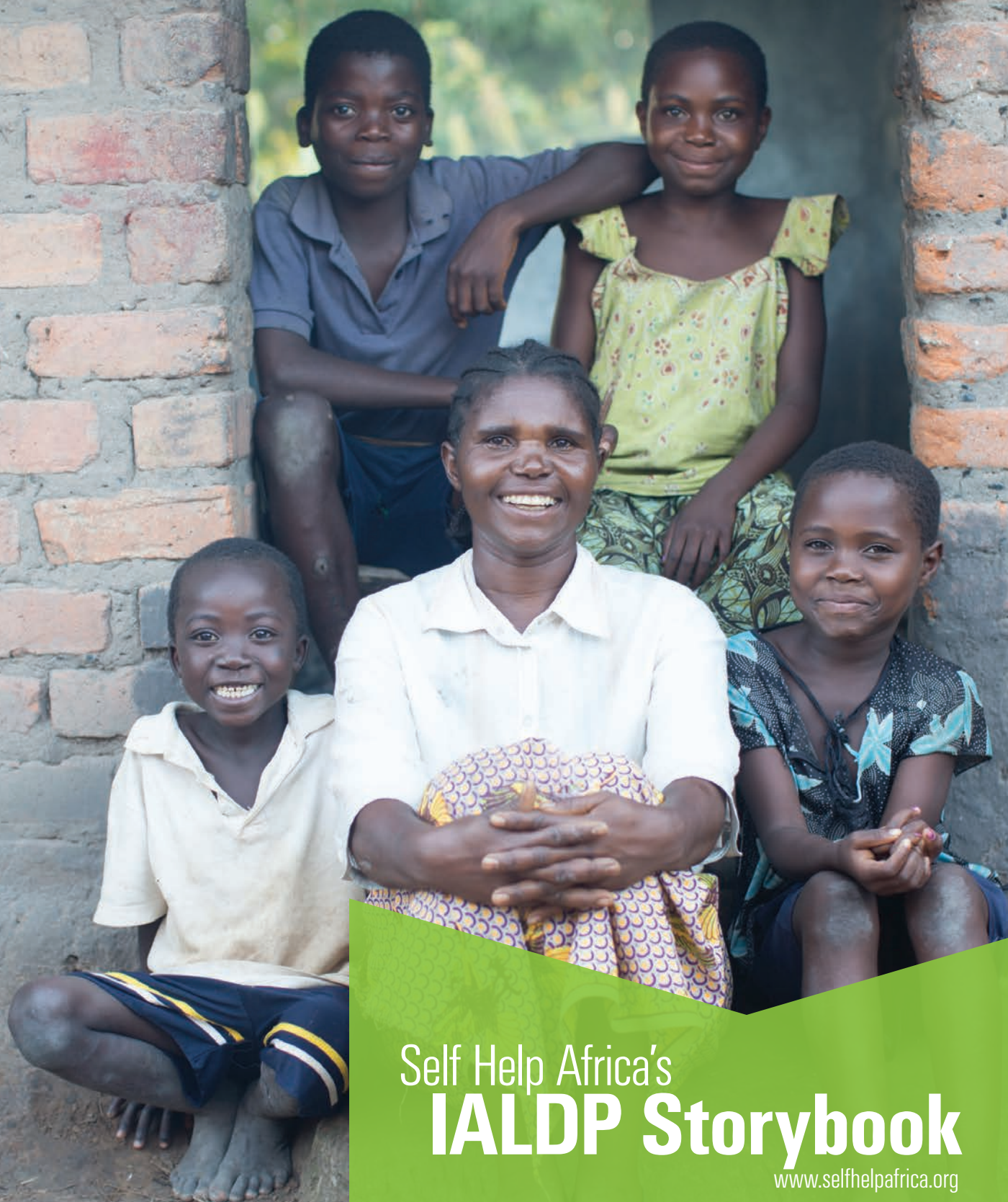




Self Help  
Africa



Self Help Africa's  
**IALDP Storybook**

[www.selfhelpafrica.org](http://www.selfhelpafrica.org)



# FOREWORD

Rural Zambia is home to some of Africa's poorest people. In its remote Northern Province are communities amongst the poorest of all.

Over half of the children are chronically malnourished, health services are limited, and school attendance is amongst the lowest in the country.

Self Help Africa works in the far north - in Mbala and Luwingu districts - where support services are scarce to non-existent, many people survive on just a single meal each day, and poverty is at its most extreme. Work here is being undertaken on a five-year local development project that is being funded by Irish Aid.

The villagers of Malela and Nsunda are amongst 80,000 people in the far north who are receiving assistance. Families here are being supported with farm training, new crops and agricultural methods are being introduced, and livestock breeding, enterprise development and a range of other activities are taking place – to end poverty and alleviate suffering.

Here are the stories of some of the people.





# TWO VILLAGES

This is the story of two villages.

It's also the story of two roads that are crucial to the lives and the prospects of the people of Malela village in Liwingu District, and Nsunda, in Mbala District, both in Zambia's Northern Province.

For rural communities the road can be their only connection to the outside world. People access schools, health services, markets and information, by road.

However, for the people of Malela and Nsunda, two roads have very different stories to tell.

Both villages are located at a distance of close to 100 miles from their nearest significant centres of population. But there, the similarities end.

The route from Liwingu (popn. 80,000) to Malela village, situated in the east of the province and less than 100 miles from the border with neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo, is a heavily rutted and often impassible track that snakes southwards through scrub and over wetlands. Over the past three years the road has deteriorated, with stretches virtually impassable in the rainy season.

The village is close to the end of the line. Because of the poor road condition, vehicles are rarely seen. Only a handful of the 250 villagers in Malela have ever ventured as far as Luwingu.

Villagers say their road has changed little over the years. They see little prospect of change in the coming years either, although improving local farming systems is prompting some to start thinking about how where they might reach markets with any surpluses that might be produced at harvest.

This situation is in sharp contrast to the story in Nsunda, a village in the far north that's situated on the edge of a what used to be a wide dirt road that is the main artery from the region across the border to Tanzania.

A major internationally funded road building scheme was recently completed from the former border outpost Mbala (popn. 25,000), to Tanzania. The 700 inhabitants of Nsunda can now travel to Mbala and back in one day while, in the past, they would have had to spend the night there.

As road traffic increases, local farmers trade grain, beans and other produce with passing trucks and buses. For villagers, the new

hard-top road has meant new markets for their goods across the border to the north, but also better access to financial and health services, information and more.

"It is good for us farmers," says 53-year-old Kennedy Musengo, one of the lead farmers in Nsunda. "When we have something to sell we can put it at the side of the road. Vehicles that pass can just stop and buy something." His enthusiasm for the road is mirrored by all Nsunda residents.

"I used the new road once, it allowed me to take my daughter to the clinic in Chileshe," explains Felister Namfukwe, an elderly farmer, mother of five and grandmother to 19 children.

When questioned on what the new road will bring for the future of her village, Felister responded with the simple: "Life will change".

And indeed it will change, all villagers are sure of that. These roads do not tell the full story of the people of Malela and Nsunda, but they do have a bearing on their lives and on the future prospects for these two rural poor village communities in Northern Zambia.



The road leading out of Nsundu will be completed in the next few years.



# STEPHEN KANGWA



## 14-year-old schoolboy Malela village, Northern Province, Zambia

**S**tephen's 14. He dreams of being a soldier. Last year he said he'd like to be a priest when he grows up.

Like dozens of other young teenagers in Malela village in Northern Zambia, Stephen Linga has hopes and dreams. With your help, Stephen can achieve the future he wants.

Stephen's family is now growing more food and earning a better living from their small plot of land.

Stephen recently began secondary school in a village within his district. He stays with relatives in the locality, and his parents pay for his upkeep.

He used to worry that they wouldn't be able to afford to educate him beyond primary level, but the sale of farm produce has allowed them to send both Stephen and his younger sister to school.



# CHARITY KAMWALA

56-year-old widow  
Nsunda village, Northern Province, Zambia

**T**he warm smile on Charity Kamwala's face speaks volumes about the transformation there has been in her life.

A widow, who cares for seven children and grandchildren, Charity has received farm training from the IALDP project, and is also a member of a local enterprise group which encourages savings, and disburses small loans to members.

She is growing new crops, and is able to provide her young dependents with a much healthier diet. She has also added extra rooms plus a new tin roof to her previously ramshackle mud-brick home.

"When I look at the house now, I still can't believe it's mine. Owing it, I feel like a different person."

Life remains hard, as Charity says that the back-breaking labour of digging, planting, weeding and harvesting with only hand-tools will soon be beyond her. But she has a plan, and says that as her income improves she will spend money on hired help.

This will reduce her workload, and provide work for someone else, she says.

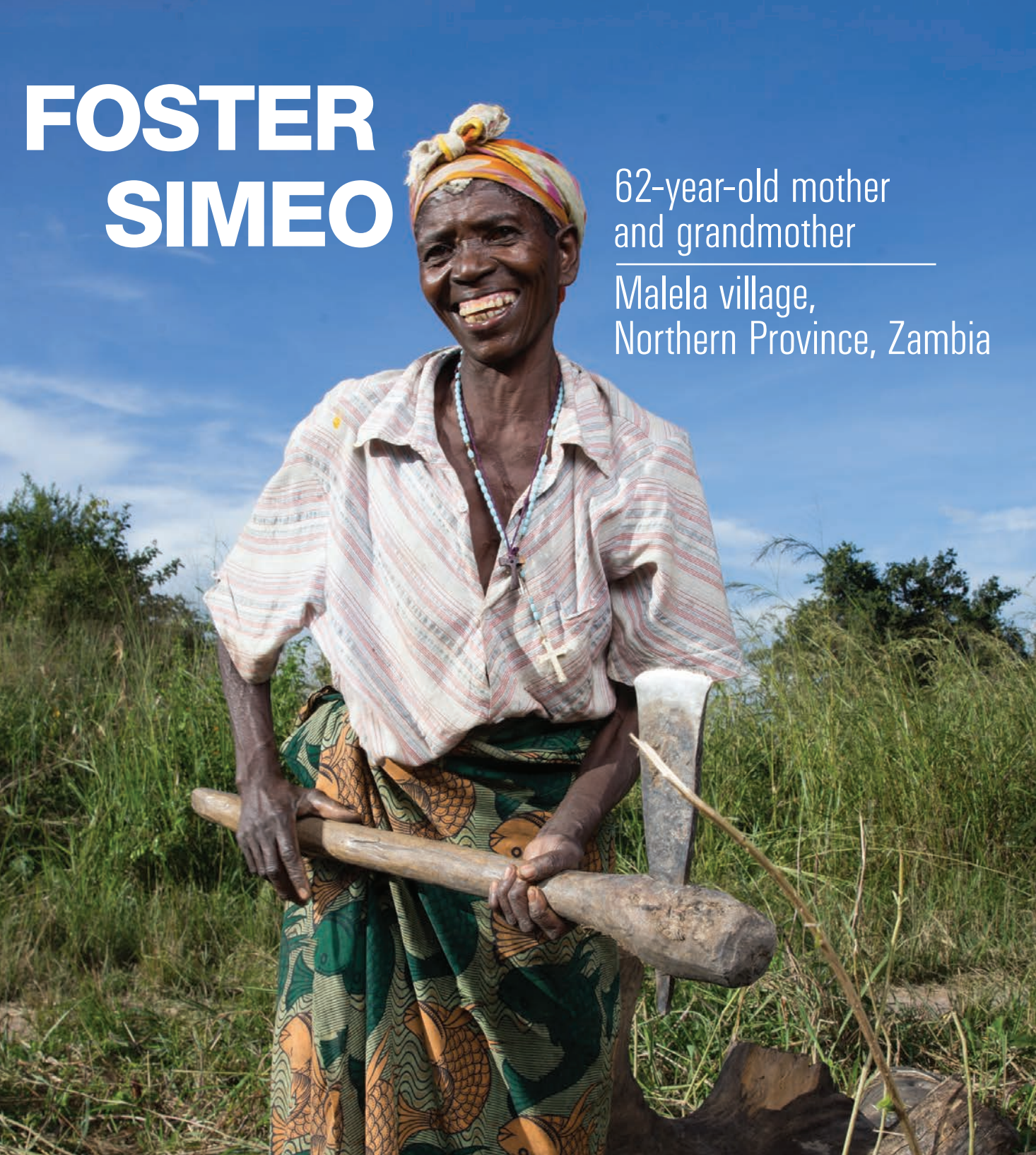




# FOSTER SIMEO

62-year-old mother  
and grandmother

Malela village,  
Northern Province, Zambia



**F**oster Simeo has 15 grandchildren, and has lived in Malela village all her life.

She's happy that most of her family live nearby, but knows that village life is tough. "There are no opportunities here apart from farming, so most of us live from our land," she says.

"For most of the year we eat once

a day." Food is a porridge made from boiled cassava, sometimes mixed with green leaves.

But things are changing. For the last two years Foster and her fellow villagers in Malela have been involved in a farmer training programme funded by Irish Aid.

"Things are starting to improve" Foster says.

"People are now growing beans, some have groundnuts, and others have soya bean, which we never saw here before. I have joined a village group that has started to plant maize (corn)."

"It is getting easier because we now have some help," she adds.



# SYDNEY KALOTA

22-year-old farmer engaged to be married  
Nsunda village, Northern Province Zambia

In rural Africa, people sometimes have to grow up too quickly.

Such was the case for Sydney Kalota, who lost both his parents before he was 15.

Now 22, Sydney says that he did the only thing that he could when his mother died – farm.

Sydney participates in a village training group in Nsunda, and is

learning how to grow new crops.

“Two years ago I had barely enough, but now I have a small surplus that I am able to sell,” he says.

Hoping to marry his childhood sweetheart next year, he is currently saving to expand his simple, one-room hut to a home more suited to a young family.

“When I get married, life will be easier – I will no longer be alone...We can live together, work together, and grow more in the fields.”





# ROSEMARY CHATE

41-year-old mother of seven  
Malela village,  
Northern Province, Zambia



“The situation this year has changed. Now my family has been able to eat twice a day because of all the changes,” says Rosemary Chate with a vibrant smile.

Rosemary, her husband Joseh and their seven children are now not only eating twice as many meals as before, but are also enjoying a

far more varied diet. This has led not only to better health for the children, but also better results in school.

Even with these big improvements, things still aren't easy for Rosemary and kin. Concerns are still held over the long distances to hospitals, schools and mills which eat up valuable energy and time.

Nevertheless, Rosemary only sees Malela as home.

“I love Malela and don't want to move from here. I love the land and the way I am able to go straight to the field, do my work and know I will be able to feed my children tomorrow.”



# KENNEDY MUSENGO

53-year-old father of eight  
Nsunda village, Northern Province Zambia

**W**ith eight children of his own, plus three of his sister's, Kennedy Musengo has many a mouth to feed.

"Things are changing bit by bit," he says with a quiet confidence. "Not all change comes at once."

Kennedy has set up a fish

business, using a small loan he received as a member of a local enterprise group to buy lake fish over the border in Tanzania that he sells locally.

This has allowed Kennedy to save for the first time and pay school fee for his dependents. Never content with just that Kennedy is already looking ahead to the future

and already has plans for the year to come. "I plan to change things this year. If I have a good harvest, I want to build a new house. One with iron sheets and stronger walls," he tells us.

Ever the optimist, Kennedy says things are going just the way he wants them to right now.

"I am comfortable and have enough food for myself and my family. Life in Nsundu is good at the moment."





# PASCALENA MULENGA

22-year-old mother of three  
Malela village, Northern Province, Zambia

**A**ged 22 and the mother of three young children, Pascalena Mulenga believes that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

She describes life in Malela as tough. “The soil isn’t fertile, and nobody has enough grows enough food to last them for the full year. We go to other farms to help, and get paid in food.”

Pascalena and her husband Martin have been provided with training so that they can become better farmers. They have also received good quality groundnut seed that they are growing alongside their staple food, cassava.

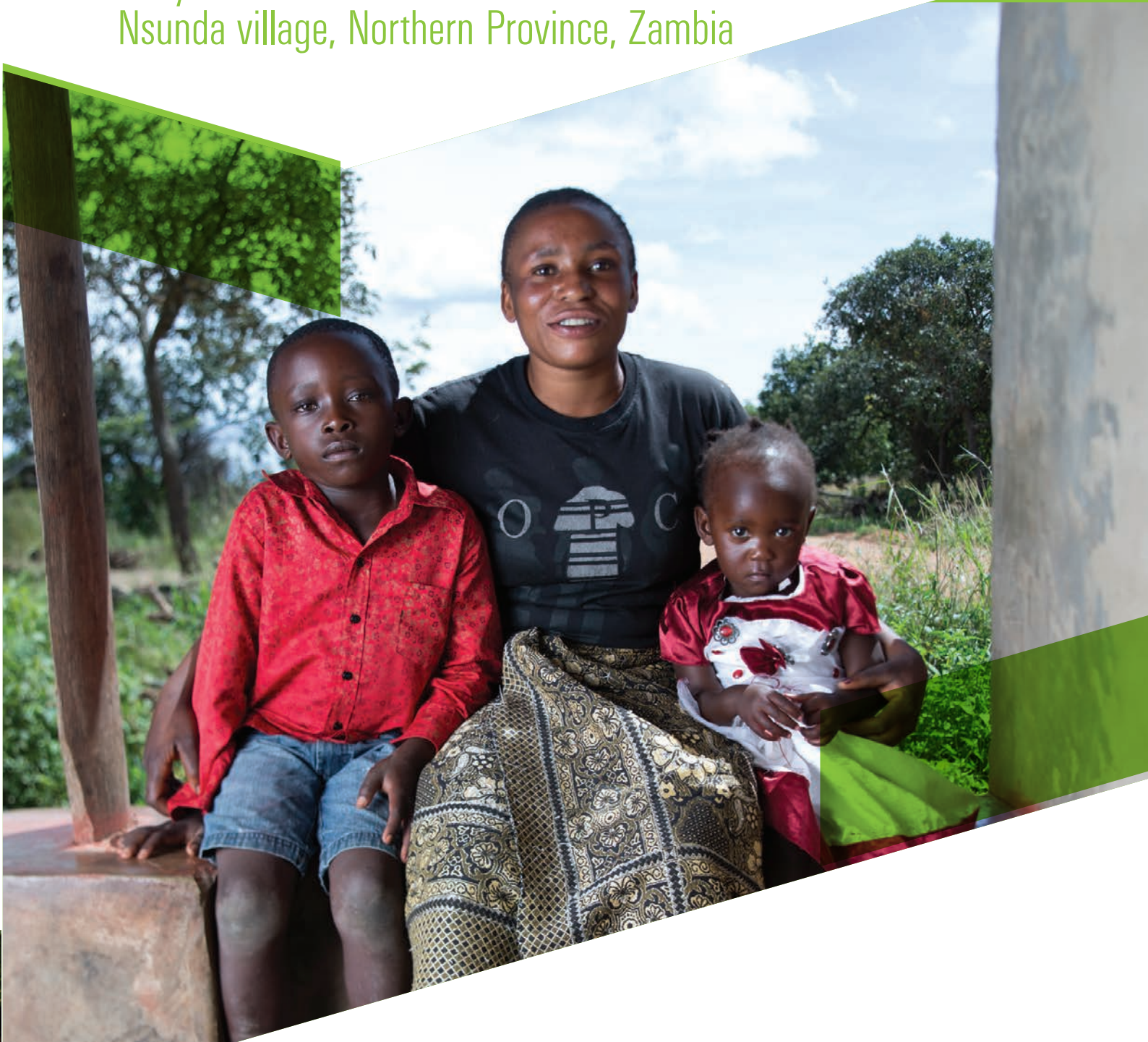
“Cassava isn’t as good as other crops. It just fills your belly. Last year it dried up, along with the maize that we had grown as part of a village group. The groundnut that we’ve planted is looking pretty good. We will harvest in May,” she says.





# GRENDA NAPONDWE

25-year-old mother of two  
Nsunda village, Northern Province, Zambia



**G**renda Mapondwe grows beans that she sells to passing motorists close to Nsunda village in the far north of Zambia.

It's a new business, established since she received support that has enabled her to plant beans

and other produce on her small farm.

25-year-old Grenda has been able to produce more food and sell beans as a cash crop to earn an income. She says that life has changed a lot in Nsunda.

"If somebody who left this village two years ago were to come back today, they would be confused. There have been a lot of changes, and our lives are getting better," she says.



# MALELA VILLAGE



**B**landina Nkandu is a 54-year-old mother. She is married to Emmanuel Musondo and is the mother of Imelda Musondo. She lives with HIV and spends a lot of time resting, making it difficult to work her land.

**E**mmanuel Musondo is a 53-year-old father living with HIV. He is the husband of Blandina and father to Imelda. Emmanuel finds it difficult to work on the farm with his illness.



**I**melda Musondo is a 16-year-old daughter of Emmanuel and Blandina. Last year she was absent from the village as she was in hospital suffering from malaria.

**F**rancis Miushela is a 46-year-old father of six. His crops were badly affected by the rains this year, but is still positive about the future.



**F**elister Chungo sadly past away this year. She was the wife to Tandeo Chungo. Together they have eight children and almost forty grandchildren.

**T**andeo Chungo is a 79-year father and grandfather. He is village headman of Malela and is married to Felister.



**I**gnatius Mulenga is a 22-year-old schoolboy. He began attending school again this year as he was once again able to afford school fees.

**J**uliet Mwelma is a 47-year-old mother of two. Her biggest challenge is feeding her two children as a single mother.





# NSUNDA VILLAGE



**F**elister Namfukwe is a 60-year-old mother who currently cares for two of her sons. She is divorced and lives away from her husband who was abusive towards her and their children.



**D**orothy Kasungwa is a 73-year-old mother. Seven of her eight children have passed away.



**J**ustina Nkangwa is a nineteen-year-old mother of one-year-old Eric. Justine finds it difficult to care for Eric, with no support from her parents who passed away when she was young.



**M**illy Nachula is a 19-year-old mother of two. Milly had to stop going to school at thirteen due to a lack of funds.



**L**ina Lungu is a 46-year-old mother and grandmother. She is married to Kennedy Musengo with whom she has nine children.



**S**howthem iki-ombe is a 54-year-old father and grandfather. His farm feeds three of his children and five grandchildren.



**C**retas Musengo is a 14-year-old schoolboy in grade 6. One day he would like to play for the Zambian national football team. He is the son of Lina and Kennedy.



**E**mma Kayela is a 58-year-old widow who lives alone. Her biggest challenge is having to farming alone.





# FARMING FOR AFRICA'S FUTURE



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