Entrepreneurs find success in Kenya through the M-SAWA project
Yet, small businesses and farmers face many obstacles to creating prosperous businesses and farms. They have the talent and drive but lack the business supports needed to prosper. Without access to investment capital, technology, proper inputs and other forms of financing, business owners and farmers in Kenya struggle to get by. Women-led small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and small entrepreneurs (SEs) face additional challenges due to longstanding gender inequalities and barriers. These barriers translate into missed opportunities for businesspeople, farmers, and the many communities that could benefit from the value they generate.

Your investment ensures farmers and entrepreneurs have access to the tools they need to prosper in business and create decent work opportunities. Your partnership has made a significant impact. Below is the story of Esther. Through her involvement with MEDA’s M-SAWA project, Esther gained the tools to build a better farm and business that created positive ripple effects for herself, her family, and her community.

The Power of Diversification
How Esther created a better future for herself and her community

In Kenya, agriculture is the cornerstone of the economy. More than 80% of Kenyans work in this sector to feed and support their families.

With twenty years in the business, Esther is familiar with the ups and downs of farming. On her plot of land in Turkana County, Kenya, she’s had good rains in some years, where she can grow good produce. In other years, there is less rain and fewer profits. Lately, there were further challenges: the National Irrigation Board of Kenya stopped buying her products, which took away another layer of security.

As a mother, farmer, and local government official, Esther knows the value of diversification. Because of the unpredictable nature of farming, she’s always looking to find other ways to provide for herself and her family. Luckily, one day, she connected with MEDA’s partner organization, Paves Vetagro Limited (PVL). PVL is an agent and distributor of animal health and agricultural products that support livestock keepers with practical skills and training. It received a Lead Firm matching grant through the M-SAWA project to support clients like Esther while growing their own business. Through PVL and the M-SAWA project, Esther learned she could use her leadership skills to mobilize farmers and become an Agrovet dealer (a salesperson that sells medication to pastoralists). She also learned how to find and use better crop inputs through this project.

Her involvement with the project increased her farm’s productivity and led to better harvests and sales. Esther became an Agrovet dealer and received financial support to purchase the necessary licenses to operate her business legally. She has also been able to hire two employees to run her business and about five seasonal employees to aid her two-acre farm. In the last season, she grew tomatoes and maize.

Esther’s business is now profitable, allowing her to pay for her children’s education and improve her family’s living standards. She has also contributed to her community by hiring local workers and buying products from other farmers. Her hard work with PVL has also paid off for 30 SEs who gained access to environmentally safe, labor and time-saving technologies, such as more affordable knapsack sprayers, injection syringes, and animal dewormers. The community has appreciated the benefits of the technology that Paves and sales agents like Esther facilitated. Now, the farmers who have benefited from these technologies are also seen as models which other community members can emulate.
By partnering with our clients, you support:

- **New Knowledge**: Improved SE knowledge of profitable green business models and market opportunities.
- **Innovation**: Improved access to environmentally safe inputs and time and labor-saving technologies.
- **Business Alliances**: Access to profitable market opportunities through increased aggregation and collective product marketing.
- **Growth Strategy**: Increased capacities of businesses to implement more gender-equitable and environmentally sustainable business growth plans.
- **Supply Chain**: Increased capacities of SMEs to reduce their environmental footprint and supply high-quality products through strengthened supply chain connections.
- **Frontier Investment**: Increased access to capital by SMEs in target sectors.

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Your generosity continues to make a big difference in the lives of people like Esther. Your giving has created decent work and sustainable livelihoods for small-scale farmers and small business owners throughout Kenya.

M-SAWA is another example of how your partnership can create decent work and make a substantial impact. Through your remarkable generosity, hardworking farmers and entrepreneurs gain access to the necessary tools to build profitable farms, businesses, and reliable value chains that support their growing industry.

**Thank you for your invaluable support.**

Watch a short documentary about the M-SAWA project by scanning the QR code with your mobile phone camera.

Or online at https://vimeo.com/772124908

“Being a farmer and Agrovit dealer has provided me with a source of income that enables me to educate my children and sustain my family’s needs,” Esther said.
Your impact by the numbers

25
SMEs awarded Lead Firm grants to support SEs within their supply/distribution chains

54,000+
(54% women)
SEs supported with decent work opportunities

314
(177 women)
received business development services support and technical assistance

12
(seven women-led)
SMEs awarded alliance/association grants

144
(130 women-led)
SMEs provided with third-party financing

12
(four women)
business associations awarded matching grants to support their SME members

43
(13 women)
SMEs were assisted in accessing investment capital through private equity funds

THANK YOU – Your support continues to equip farmers and entrepreneurs with the tools and training needed to create decent work and build thriving businesses and prosperous communities.

PROJECT DETAILS
7 Years: 2015-2022
MEDA Private Supporters and Investors $10M CAD
Global Affairs Canada $18.7M CAD