

## How to make school fees using chilli sauce



***Lucia Ntchela, a chilli farmer from Mwanza, Malawi***

“After I started growing chilli I realised that it is a profitable crop, as I was selling chilli at 2500 kwacha per kilogram this year and I made a lot of money”, says Lucia with a smile. Things have not been always rosy for Lucia.

Lucia Ntchela a mother of three children is one of the founding members of Tikwere Farmers Club. Like many other farmers in her area she was growing pigeon peas and was selling them at 350 kwacha per kilogram. However, the income from it was not enough to assist her family.

Life took a turn for the better when she got to know the techniques of how to grow chilli from Tikwere Farmers Club. Mr Mpinda is the pioneer who formed the club along with other farmers aiming to promote chili farming.

In February 2016 Mpinda Chizumeni received three Access Agriculture farmer to farmer DVD’s from Khuze Kuyabwe Telecenter in Mwanza district. There were many videos on different subjects on the DVDs, but Mr Mpinda’s interest was on how to grow chilli.

After trying out the methods shown in video, he had a bumper result in his chilli garden. He was able to harvest and sell the chilli to traders at the local market at 1000 kwacha per kilogram. Mr Mpinda also sold chilli directly to end users and food stalls around his



home. Mr Mpinda was later linked with NASFAM field officers during a meeting at a Flemish Extension fair in Lilongwe, and as a result was given “Birds Eye” chilli seedlings.

NASFAM is one of the main buyers of chilli in Malawi. It has good warehouses to store the crop. NASFAM also processes chilli into sauce at their factory in Mulanje for both the local and export market. When people are buying NASFAM chilli sauce they have a direct link to Lucia.

Lucia’s last crop of chilli weighed in at 50 kilograms. She can now rely on the income from chilli farming and no longer needs to grow pigeon peas. The money she earns from her chilli crop has helped her to meet household expenses and now she is able to pay school fees for her child.

The smile of happiness is always now on Lucia’s face... and it all started by watching a DVD about chilli in her local language of Chichewa.