

Episode 24: Grace Maloba – Cross Border Trader, Kenya



Grace Maloba is a member of the **Busia Cross Border Women Traders Savings and Credit Cooperative Society Ltd., Kenya (BCBWT SACCO)**. She is the Grocery Cluster Leader.

Grace has been a cross border trader for twelve years. She trades in a variety of items as dictated by the different seasons and varying prices, with a concentration on fresh vegetables purchased in Uganda, for sale in Kenya.

Grace is a wife and mother whose earnings support a large extended family.

Challenges: The most difficult challenges Grace faces as a cross border trader are: (1) The large amount of time trading consumes. Sourcing the right produce for the right customer is time consuming. Sometimes she is away from home for over 12 hours a day, and (2) Small scale traders are always considered a lower priority versus large scale traders who get to take their pick of the available produce. By the time the small scale traders are invited to make their produce selections, all the best produce has already been taken.

Benefits From the GIZ-Funded Cooperatives Accelerator: Grace observes that learning how to collaborate through joint or collective transactions while participating in the Accelerator has equipped women cross border traders to delegate responsibilities, which in turn frees up time for other activities. Within the Grocery Cluster which she leads, instead of every trader having to go to the market to obtain daily product prices, just one cluster member obtains the prices and shares the information with other cluster members via mobile phone. Similarly, instead of all cluster members flocking to the market to purchase produce, they simply transfer funds to the cluster member at the market via mobile phone. A single trader therefore purchases on behalf of the entire cluster. This has the additional benefit of positioning the single cluster member as a large scale trader who is given priority during the produce selection process. Another benefit has been the winning of supply tenders at local establishments because as a cluster, they can supply the required volumes which they could not supply individually.

Dreams: Grace dreams of identifying and supply fresh produce to markets well beyond her home of Busia, Kenya.

Useful Resources

GIZ: <https://bit.ly/2R6if75>

IIDEA: <https://www.eaciidea.net/>



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