

Empowering Women and Youth in Structured Cross-Border Grain Trade

MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT – AUGUST 2025

BY AGMARK

Project Overview



Duration:

Sept 1, 2024 – Aug 31, 2026

Targeted Border Points:

Busia KE-Busia UG, Namanga KE-Namanga TZ,
Kasumulu-Songwe, Tunduma-Nakonde

Value Chains:

Maize, Rice, Beans, Soybean, Groundnuts

Key Outputs and Targets



8

CBTAs Supported



800

Traders Trained



10,000 MT

Grains Traded



5,000

Jobs Created



100

FOs Linked



4,000

Farmers Linked



USD 2.5M

Commodities Traded



USD 1.7M

Investment Leveraged



USD 3.5M

Procurement Investments

Highlights & Achievements

KEY ACTIVITIES DONE THIS MONTH



Key Activities **this Month**

Supported capacity building of **1** Cross-Border Trade Associations

Formed 1 new CBTA in Kasumulu border to enhance regional trade collaboration

Trained **240** new traders focusing on women and youth

Conducted training for 240 traders in Busia-UG; Kasumulu; Nakonde; Tunduma; Namangs-TZ; and Songwe;

Facilitated trade of **344.98** metric tonnes of grains

Tracked the movement and sale of a total of 344.98MT of grains at Busia, Kasumulu, Namanga and Songwe borders by a total of 53 traders

Created **1,239** new jobs linked to grain trade

Monitored and tracked employment opportunities related to grain trading for 829M, 410F youth in at Busia, Kasumulu, Namanga and Songwe border.

Linked **9** farmer organizations and **614** farmers to markets

Linked 9 farmer organizations whose members are a total of 614 members to traders across Busia, Kasumulu, Namanga and Songwe borders.

Leveraged **\$323,275.70** in trade value

This was as a result of grain sales of 227.10MT in Busia border, 40.45MT in Kasumulu; 12.07MT in Namanga and 65.36MT in Songwe

Monthly Progress

Indicator	Project Target	Achievement as of June 2025	July – August Achieved	Achieved to Date As of end of August
# of CBTAs Supported	8	7	6	8
# of Traders Trained	800	200	240	440
Grain Traded (MT)	10,000	1,879.82	344.98	2,224.80
Jobs Created	5,000	365	1,239	1,604
Farmer Orgs Linked	100	30	9	39
Farmers Linked	4,000	505	614	1,119
Agric. Commodities Traded Value of Trade (USD)	\$2.5M	\$398,700	\$323,275.70	\$721,975.70
Investment Leveraged (USD)	\$1.7M	\$39,062	0	\$39,062

Project Indicators & **Progress YTD**

INDICATORS TRACKING



Project Indicators Progress

INDICATOR	Target	Achieved As of August 2025	%ge
1.2.1.1 Intermediate Outcome: IMTF 2.0: Expanded market access, investment, and capacity for inclusive market actors			
3.0 IMTF.2.0-11: Percent increase in volume sourced from smallholder farmers by target off-takers.	33.30%		
1.2.1.1.1 Output: IMTF 1.0: Market linkages between smallholder farmers, service providers and market actors enhanced:			
3.0 IMTF.2.0-O1: Number of new market linkages created by actors.	8	8	100%
3.0 IMTF.2.0-O3: Number of farmers selling produce through structured platforms/arrangements (membership of aggregation units).	4,000	1,119	27.98%
3.0 IMTF.2.0-O2: Number of off-takers supported to buy /source commodities from Smallholder farmers	100	73	30%
3.0 IMTF.2.0-O5a: Quantity (MT) of produce sold.	10,000	2,224.80	22.24%
1.2.2.1.1 Output: IMTF 1.2: Capacity of Business Development Service providers to deliver services to inclusive market actors and smallholder farmers enhanced.			
3.0 IMTF.2.1-O6: Number of Business Development Services (BDS) providers supported.	800	470	58.75%

Project Indicators Progress Contd.

INDICATOR	Target	Achieved As of August 2025	%ge
1.2.3 Long-Term Outcome: IMTF 3.2: Improved enabling environment for inclusive markets, trade and finance (especially youth ag. entrepreneurship)			
3.0 IMTF.3.2-09: Value of new investments in supported value chains and companies.	\$1,700,000	\$39,062	2%
1.2.3.1.1 Output: IMTF 1.4: Market data and information systems strengthened.			
3.0 IMTF.2.2-O12: Number of market data and information systems and platforms supported.	1	1	100%
1.2.3.1.2 Output: IMTF 1.5: Governments /institutions supported on policies reforms that enable market, trade, and financial markets to function effectively.			
3.0 PSC.2.1-O6: Number of policies, reforms ,regulations, certifications standards supported (IMT.2.2-O15)	2		
3.0 IMTF.2.2-O14: No. of governments and institutions supported with new or improved policies, reforms, regulations or procedures on inclusive trade, market, and finance	100		

Project Indicators Progress Contd.

INDICATOR	Target	Achieved As of August 2025	%ge
1.8 Business Line: Development Partners			
1.8.3 Long-Term Outcome: Mastercard			
3.0 YE.41-b: Number of training events held to build capacity of farmers and other value chain actors along focus value chains	8	8	100%
3.0 YE.02-a: Number of youth in work	5000	1,604	32%
3.0 YE.43: Number of enterprises/groups accessing Business Development Services	100	48	
3.0 YE.45. Number of youth accessing or reached by services or products (direct outreach)	10000	2,200	

Success & Stories

BUSIA WOMEN CROSS BORDER TRADERS
ASSOCIATION (BUSIA – UGANDA)

BUSIA WOMEN CROSS BORDER TRADERS
SACCO (BUSIA-KENYA)



Busia Women CBTA Expands Membership and Influence

When AGMARK, with support from the AGRA, launched its project on “Empowering Women and Youth to Participate in Structured Cross-Border Grain Trade”, the Busia Women Cross-Border Traders Association (CBTA) on the Uganda side became one of the early champions of change.

Under the leadership of Mariam Babu, the association has participated in two AGMARK trainings designed to equip women traders with knowledge on structured trade, market linkages, and collective business management. These sessions were not just about learning—they became a platform for transformation.

Armed with new confidence and practical skills, Mariam actively used the trainings as an opportunity to recruit 25 new women members into the CBTA, with numbers still growing. For women who had been trading informally and often in isolation, joining the association meant access to collective bargaining, better information on grain standards, and new market opportunities.

This story is proof of concept: when women are empowered with skills and platforms, they multiply impact. In just two trainings, Busia Women CBTA’s membership base expanded significantly, strengthening its position to negotiate with buyers, reduce exploitation, and influence cross-border trade policies.

For AGRA and AGMARK, this success validates the project’s design—that empowering grassroots CBTAs catalyzes inclusion, economic resilience, and sustainable trade opportunities for women and youth across Eastern and Southern Africa

25

**# of new members
joining Busia Women
Cross Border Traders
Association**

“The trainings opened my eyes to what we can achieve as a group. I used that momentum to encourage more women to join us, and they responded positively. Our membership is growing, and so is our confidence.”

*– Mariam Babu,
Chairlady, Busia Women
CBTA*

Unlocking Potential: AGRA-Funded Trainings Transform a Kshs. 5M Milling Plant into a Thriving Business

Early this year, the Busia Women Cross-Border Traders Sacco (BWCBTS) in Kenya received a milling plant and solar dryer. Financing for the enterprise came from a combination of another investor's full support for equipment and members' own contributions, which included purchasing land worth KES 2.4 million through loans and shares, the total value of the plant is KShs, 5,000,000 (\$39,062). This model has given members a real sense of ownership—profits from sales are shared annually as dividends, while savings build the association's financial base.. The infrastructure provided the “hardware” needed for processing local crops such as cassava, soybeans, and millet.

Funded by AGRA, AGMARK delivered hands-on trainings on: Structured cross-border trade and market linkages. Group governance and financial management. Quality assurance and value addition — from sorting, drying, and milling to packaging, sealing, and labeling to the leadership and members of the association. Further on, the project trained youth members of the association to equip them with skills to market the plant. These trainings gave the CBTA women the skills, confidence, and systems to maximize the return on investment. Without this knowledge, the plant risked operating below potential

The Impact:

- 15 new members recruited into the CBTS following trainings.
- Production of 100 kg/day, translating into 150–200 bags/month sold in shops, supermarkets, and across into Uganda.
- Quality, preservative-free products with a six-month shelf life, appealing to health-conscious consumers.
- Financial sustainability: Members jointly contributed KES 2.4M (through loans and shares) towards land, ensuring local ownership and dividends from sales.
- Youth inclusion: Young members now support digital marketing (Facebook, TikTok) and earn commissions, linking generations through trade.

100

Kgs per day

100 kg/day output,
150–200 bags sold
monthly locally and
across the border

“The equipment gave us capacity, but it is the AGMARK trainings that gave us the knowledge, confidence, and skills to make the investment work. Now we are producing, packaging, and selling in new markets. With continued training, we can grow even bigger.”

— Florence Atieno,
Chairlady, Busia Women
CBTS.”

Formation of Kasumulu Cross Border Traders Association

AGMARK successfully mobilized and facilitated the establishment of the Kasumulu Cross-Border Traders Association (CBTA) at the Kasumulu One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) in Tanzania, marking a significant milestone in advancing regional trade collaboration. Following its formation, the CBTA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with AGMARK, formalizing their partnership. Additionally, AGMARK has requested the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to integrate the association into the Joint Border Coordination Committee (JBCC), with selected CBTA officials serving as committee members.

The impact of this initiative is already evident. TRA is now leveraging the newly formed CBTA to organize and deliver seminars on recent budgetary changes. This development illustrates how building trader associations not only strengthens cross-border networks but also provides a structured platform for government agencies to engage with traders, ensuring that policy updates and regulatory changes are effectively communicated and implemented at the grassroots level.

Challenges & Mitigation



Challenges and Mitigation

CHALLENGES

Presence of Infants in Training Sessions

Some participants brought infants to the training sessions. Occasional crying and movement caused distractions, reducing concentration levels for both trainers and participants.

Language Barrier

A few participants had limited proficiency in English and could only communicate effectively in the local language (Luganda). This created gaps in comprehension and limited engagement during technical sessions

MITIGATIONS

With venue management, we established a child-friendly space at the venues, additionally requested the traders with infants to have a caregiver to support them while they attend sessions.

We applied interactive training methods (demonstrations, role plays, visual illustrations) to reduce reliance on English fluency.

Trainings promoted peer-to-peer learning by pairing participants who are fluent in English with those more comfortable in Luganda

Next Month Activities

Planned Trainings

Structured Trading Systems/Regime in
Busia-KE, Namanga-KE, Nakonde-ZM

Advocacy

Continued empowerment of traders,
particularly women and youth, to seek a
favourable environment for their
enterprises to thrive

Market Linkage

Market Linkages to be done during the
Structured Trading Systems/Regime in
Busia-KE, Namanga-KE, Nakonde-ZM

Reporting Deliverables

- 100 traders trained
- 15 FOs linked
- 500MT of grains traded recorded
- 500 new indirect jobs documented
- USD 200,000 of investment tracked



Busia Women Cross Border Traders SACCO