Women in Agriculture
Growing New Opportunities in Africa
Seeing the opportunity for growth

Young women in rural Africa need visionary philanthropists to help them grow climate-smart agricultural businesses — addressing hunger and providing secure employment at scale.

Women farmers face an escalation of challenges in sub-Saharan Africa as the population grows faster than anywhere in the world and the effects of climate change — such as extreme droughts and flooding — put increasing pressure on already scarce resources.

Women produce much of Africa’s food but, compared with men, they have access to fewer resources — in the form of land, finance, technical assistance and quality inputs such as seeds and equipment.

Research shows that if women farmers were given access to the same resources as men up to 150 million undernourished people in the world would be lifted out of hunger.

With climate-smart agricultural techniques, women will increase their productivity and build resilience to extreme weather. They will feed their families, and with the right support, create businesses that grow food, jobs and opportunities at scale for their communities.

With 25 years’ experience tackling poverty and inequality through high-quality, targeted action, the Campaign for Female Education is ideally positioned to reach 50,000 women in agriculture in rural Africa over the next five years — but we need your support to make it happen.
Bridging the productivity gap

The power of women in agriculture can be unlocked by the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED)’s Agriculture programme, which aims to reach 50,000 women in agriculture in rural Africa over the next five years. It has three core components:

**LOCAL EXPERTISE:**

Women are recruited from CAMFED’s 140,000-strong alumnae network (CAMA) and trained to serve as Agriculture Guides. Each trained Guide then mentors small peer groups of young women in a six-month programme of weekly modules. They impart practical knowledge, skills and techniques for climate-smart agriculture, including assistance to adopt affordable irrigation technologies, advice on agricultural growth sectors and recommendations on relevant information sources, such as mobile-based weather, pricing and banking apps. The approach replicates CAMFED’s successful school-based Guide model.

**FINANCIAL ACCESS:**

Guides are given access to affordable finance to grow local enterprises – either in the form of a micro grant or an interest-free “soft” loan. They also receive practical advice and support from partner organisations such as the National Board for Small Scale Industries in Ghana, Small Industries Development Organisation in Tanzania and Agricultural Extension Officers on how to maximise yields, safely store and transport produce, move up the agricultural value chain for improved productivity and profitability or access bigger, urban markets.

**PEER NETWORK:**

Inspired by the support they themselves received, alumnae in the CAMA network are highly motivated to support more girls to go to school and empower more women. It is the largest network of its kind in Africa, and one-quarter of members are farmers. They are challenging gender norms and enabling successful businesswomen and activists to step up as leaders of change in their communities.
A pilot group of 14 CAMA Agricultural Guides has already reached over 5,700 members of rural African communities with information and affordable technologies to help them improve productivity and build resilience to the effects of climate change. They have applied this learning on their own small-holdings, increasing yields despite the occurrence of droughts and creating an average of four new paid jobs each.

Annie N’gandu (pictured) is one of the pioneering CAMA Agricultural Guides. Tragically orphaned as a young child, her training in entrepreneurship and sustainable agriculture was funded by CAMFED. Annie developed a profitable farming business, became an elected CAMA leader and offered a home to three abandoned children. Within her first year of agricultural outreach, she trained 126 people across two districts in Zambia.

CAMA farmers are also working together to connect to new national and international markets. For example, in Zimbabwe, female poultry farmers have joined together to form informal producer organisations to supply large orders from hotels, restaurants and supermarkets. In Ghana, CAMFED-supported Ayisha Fuseini was recognised as Female Entrepreneur of the Year at the 2018 Invest in Africa Awards for her work with cooperatives of 300 women to improve their working conditions and incomes, whilst supplying her quality shea products to customers in the USA and Egypt.

Investing in innovation

I explain the spacing of maize and beets for example, so that they grow well, and how to use fertilizers safely and effectively, and how to make compost from manure. I teach people how to build a Patsari stove, which uses less wood and produces less smoke.

Annie N’gandu
Investing in the education and empowerment of women has an incredible multiplier effect. Research shows that women typically reinvest 90% of their earnings into their households – that’s money spent on nutrition, food, healthcare, school, and income-generating activities.

Based on previous outcomes, 50,000 women in agriculture educated by CAMFED will reach another 500,000 others as measured by increased household spend on food and education, new jobs and wide adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices.
Breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty

The next five years are critical for Africa’s growth. Enable young women to lift their communities out of poverty.

£2,000
One vocational training scholarship

£170,000
Ten higher education scholarships for degree courses and all related expenses

SCHOLARSHIPS IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, AGRICULTURAL PROCESSING AND VALUE ADDITION
Equip young women to build their technical skills in ways that are directly linked to their agriculture business success by undertaking vocational or higher education courses covering topics such as sustainable agriculture, value addition, irrigation technology etc. Many of these women will become Agriculture Guides and cascade their knowledge widely to others.

£10,000
A country-wide competition

A CLIMATE-SMART LEADERSHIP COMPETITION FOR INVESTMENT GRANTS
Celebrate young African women’s leadership for climate-smart agriculture with a competition rewarding activism and business success. Prizes would take the form of a £500 grant, administered by the CAMA network to fund business investment. These awards will help raise the status of agriculture as a profitable and attractive career for young people and reward the unpaid activism of CAMA Agriculture Guides.

£60,000
Set up and run the CAMA Demonstration Farm in Zambia, supporting the first 40 young women to grow their agricultural businesses

ESTABLISH THE CAMA DEMONSTRATION FARM IN ZAMBIA
Invest in the development of a 400-hectare demonstration farm, training curriculum and cadre of expert trainers to enable community members to gain hands-on experience of techniques to sustainably improve yields. They will learn from experienced CAMA Agriculture Guides about plant spacing, intercropping, waste management and soil preservation as well as technical skills for aquaculture, vegetable cultivation, livestock and beekeeping.

£100,000
Two lead districts supporting 400 farmers

£400,000
Across one country, supporting 2,000+ farmers over three years

HELP LAUNCH THE CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE GUIDE PROGRAMME
Launch the Agriculture Guide programme at district or country levels, enabling hundreds of women to build sustainable livelihoods. The programme allows for each Guide to mentor two peer groups of ten women for six months of weekly modules, covering practical and technical skills and techniques for climate-smart agriculture.
To find out more about how your philanthropy can make a difference, contact:

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