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Summary of lessons from the partnership case study

SWISSCONTACT AND HOME HARVEST

Enhancing access to quality
inputs, knowledge, and
market opportunities

Nakivale, Isingiro

The partnership between Swisscontact and Home Harvest Limited, funded by USAID's Uthabiti Activity, sought to improve the horticulture sector in Isingiro District by enhancing access to quality inputs, knowledge, and market opportunities for refugees and host communities. Home Harvest worked with Swisscontact to extend the supply chain to Nakivale, creating trade links, generating employment, and boosting revenue.

This summary presents key insights from a learning activity conducted in March 2024, featuring focus group discussions (FGDs) with refugee and host-community members, as well as interviews with representatives of Swisscontact and Home Harvest. These findings shed light on the partnership's emerging achievements in improving livelihoods and household well-being.

Emerging successes from the partnership

This learning activity revealed that the collaboration between Swisscontact and Home Harvest enhanced market access for both refugee and host communities. Key insights from this partnership include:



Increase in incomes thanks to improved farming practices

Transitioning from traditional, subsistence-oriented farming methods to modern commercial farming practices such as row planting, fertiliser use, and proper post-harvest handling helped refugees and host communities increase yields, maximise profits, and strengthen economic stability over time.



Improvement in household well-being, particularly for women

Women shared that they experienced increased autonomy and confidence through income-generating activities, managing household expenses, supporting education, and investing in family futures.



Enhanced nutrition due to improved diets and food access

The partnership's focus on balanced diets and nutrition through incorporating diverse vegetables reduced illness and healthcare costs, improving well-being and quality of life within the community.



Community cooperation and knowledge-sharing

Refugees and host-community members shared that the project fostered cooperation and knowledge sharing through group activities and trainings, enriching farming practices and strengthening social bonds within the community.

Key factors that made this partnership a success



Close collaboration and localised presence

The collaborative relationship between Home Harvest and Swisscontact was characterised by responsiveness, approachability, and mutual support. Swisscontact demonstrated a willingness to engage, address challenges, and provide timely assistance, fostering a conducive environment for effective partnership and shared success.



Monitoring and responsiveness to beneficiaries

The partnership's effective implementation and monitoring mechanisms, with Home Harvest acting on the ground to implement activities while Swisscontact provided oversight and support, also led to tailored support for refugee and host-community members.



Capacity strengthening as a value-add for both beneficiaries and partners

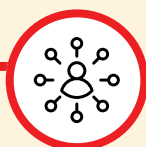
Swisscontact's involvement extended beyond agricultural activities to include capacity building and business development support for Home Harvest. This comprehensive approach enabled Home Harvest to strengthen its operations, expand market presence, and enhance its role as a supplier of quality agricultural inputs.

Lessons learnt from this partnership



The value of comprehensive training and support

Implement thorough training programs covering various aspects of farming, including crop cultivation, post-harvest handling, and market access. Provide ongoing support to ensure participants grasp concepts effectively and can apply them practically in their agricultural activities.



Valued training will be spread through communities

Encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing among community members by facilitating group activities, workshops, and forums where individuals can exchange ideas, experiences, and best practices. Create a supportive environment where participants feel empowered to learn from each other and work together towards common goals.



Holistic programming leads to sustainable outcomes

Take a holistic approach to community development, focusing not only on immediate outcomes but also on long-term sustainability and prosperity. Invest in building local capacity, strengthening institutions, and fostering entrepreneurship to create lasting positive change and resilience within the community.

