



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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From Girls to Agricultural Leaders

"Were it not for FIPS-Africa, I would have been married at the age of 19," says 22-year old Dorcas Nyangasi, from Emuhaya, Western Kenya.

"I missed whole school terms because there was no money to pay the fees. I saw my parents struggle and I wanted to reduce the burden on them. Like many young girls in the village, I thought about marriage as a way out," she says. Now, thanks to an innovative agriculture program, Nyangasi is successfully self-employed providing farm inputs and training to local farmers.

Farm Input Promotions-Africa (FIPS-Africa) is a nonprofit company that uses an innovative approach to supply appropriate inputs, and advice on how to use them, to thousands of farmers quickly and cost-effectively, at the same time creating self-employment opportunities.

Young people in rural areas have trouble finding paid work. In January 2010, Nyangasi's life was transformed when she became a Village Based Advisor (VBA). The VBAs provide inputs, services and advice on best farming practices. For example, VBAs distribute small packs of improved seed varieties to give farmers the chance to try out new varieties on their own shambas, or small farms.

If farmers like the new varieties, they come back to the VBA to buy them next season. This motivates the VBAs to reach more farmers. "Within the first four months I noticed that I could make more money when I approached more farmers, so I expanded my operations to three more villages in Emuhaya district," Nyangasi says.

An energetic VBA like Nyangasi can earn 10,000 Kenyan shillings, (\$125) per month by selling small seed packs, seedlings and by vaccinating chickens.

On behalf of the American people, USAID is investing in FIPS-Africa to train more village-based advisors like Nyangasi. The program, which is part of the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, known as Feed the Future, is helping young women like Nyangasi break the cycle of poverty.

With her earnings as a VBA, Nyangasi has been able to support her family. "I bought my sister's school uniform, costing 2,500 shillings (\$30), and paid her tuition fees. Nothing makes me as happy as knowing that I touched her life in a special way. My sister is now in her final year at Esalwa Secondary School," Nyangasi says.

This story originally [appeared](#) on the USAID Mission Kenya website.