

Realising aspirations

Mailess Mwewmbo grows vegetables in market gardens established by the **CHANYANYA IRRIGATION PROJECT, earning money to feed and educate her family.**

Mailess has been involved with the Chanyanya Irrigation project in Zambia's Kafue District since 2010. Working by herself, she farms a 25m² irrigated market garden plot year-round. "I grow rape (a local vegetable), sweet potatoes and cabbages to eat at home and to sell at the markets in Lusaka."

Remembering what life was like before the land was irrigated, she says, "I have six children. Before I started gardening here, I could not send my children to school and I found it too difficult to get uniforms for them. The project has been good for the people of Chanyanya. Now we are able to get what we need."

Mailess and other smallholders pool their resources to hire vehicles to take them to markets in Kafue Town and Lusaka where they can sell their produce. Keen to maintain her independence, she says, "If I work well, I hope to be able to buy a bicycle which will be easy, I won't have to wait on others to be able to take my vegetables to market. It will also be there for my children to use."

Smiling broadly, Mailess says she is excited about the forthcoming expansion of Chanyanya's market gardens as she has plans to grow different types of crop like maize and corn which require a larger area to be grown in profitable quantities.