

UNITED IN BUILDING AND ADVANCING LIFE EXPECTATIONS (UBALE)

JANUARY 2015 – SEPTEMBER 2019

FUNDED BY:

USAID \$3,001,872

PRIME: CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES



TARGETS

FARMERS TRAINED: **29,000**

INTERVENTION VALUE CHAINS: **SESAME
PIGEON PEA
GROUNDNUT**



Producer groups in Nsanje, Malawi meet to assess which value chains are of local value.

UBALE

NCBA CLUSA is supporting Catholic Relief Services by leading the agribusiness strategy, providing technical leadership in value chain strengthening and business development services, identifying on and off-farm employment opportunities for youth, women, and vulnerable participants, and building the technical and institutional capacity of the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM).

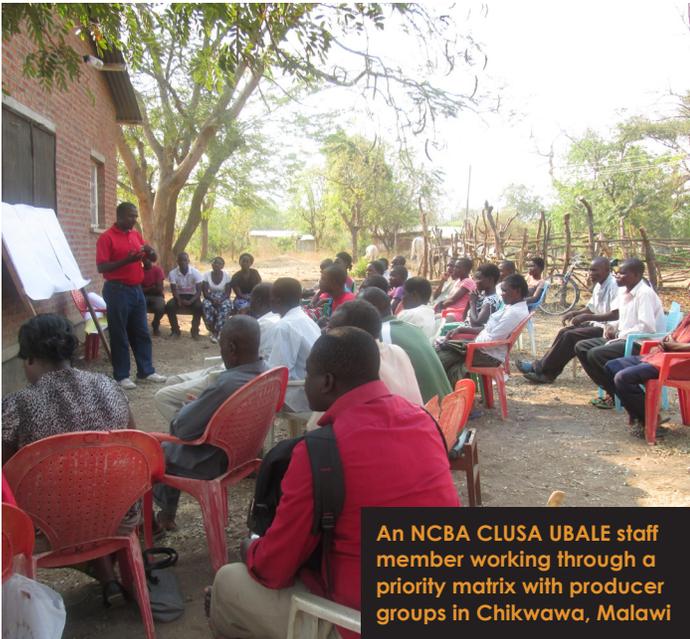
NCBA CLUSA will work with NASFAM to strengthen farmers clubs into marketing associations of about 1,500 farmers and provide them training in negotiation, quality, and organized delivery. NCBA CLUSA, with NASFAM, will create linkages between farmer associations and local, national, and international buyers; commodity exchanges; agro-input suppliers; financial service providers such as Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs) and commercial banks; micro insurance providers; and technical training providers.

In 2015, NCBA CLUSA completed the sesame value chain assessment, one of the first value chain assessments done on sesame in Malawi and is working with Agriculture Commodity Exchange (ACE) Africa to develop a Marketing Information System for our marketing groups.



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An NCBA CLUSA UBALE staff member working through a priority matrix with producer groups in Chikwawa, Malawi

A FOCUS ON FINANCE

Training up farmers on post-harvest handling, and improved farming techniques is only one part of the puzzle for improving value chains. For many farmers, it is the access to credit and finance that makes the difference in being able to access markets. The UBALE project also focusses on business skills development and entrepreneurship trainings.

Another, less obvious indicator, is access to insurance. Using the financial system, savings accounts and loans are important, but so is being able to feel secure in those investments.

NCBA CLUSA's role in the UBALE project is to help facilitate these public-private and financial links to producer groups and marketing associations along the value chain. At the producer level, increasing how many farmers are using business plans and applying for insurance. At the organizational level, supporting marketing associations to operate to standard in practices such as bulk purchasing.



A LOCAL SOLUTION: COMMUNITY VALUE CHAIN ASSESSMENTS

To accurately assess which value chains are important to each community, UBALE staff work with producer groups and assess various crops using priority matrixes. Understanding what are the most important crops to the community helps define what would make the biggest impact. Value chain assessments take into account the farmers' interest, the markets, and buyer's interests. After scoping missions and value chain assessments in Malawi, NCBA CLUSA identified three crops for intervention: sesame, pigeon pea, and groundnut.

NCBA CLUSA was founded in 1916 and has worked in over 85 countries building democratic institutions and providing technical assistance to cooperative businesses and local organizations. We currently work in Africa, Asia and Latin America providing expertise in co-op development, food security, youth empowerment, governance and natural resource management.

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