

# Chanyanya: Working in partnership to grow Zambia's future



## Zambia

Irrigation    
 US\$3m    
 1,033 people

### Context

The village of Chanyanya is located near the Kafue River, 45 kilometres south of the Zambian capital, Lusaka. Farmland here is fertile but underutilised and yields are constrained by unpredictable rainfall. As a consequence, Chanyanya's smallholders live below the poverty line and are, at times, reliant upon food aid. Irrigation systems installed by nearby commercial farms have allowed them to diversify, extend the growing season and improve yields. However, smallholders lack the required scale, finance and specialist knowledge to emulate the successes of their commercial neighbours. The Zambian Government is committed to pro-poor agricultural development and has identified irrigation as central to long term economic growth and poverty reduction.

### Project

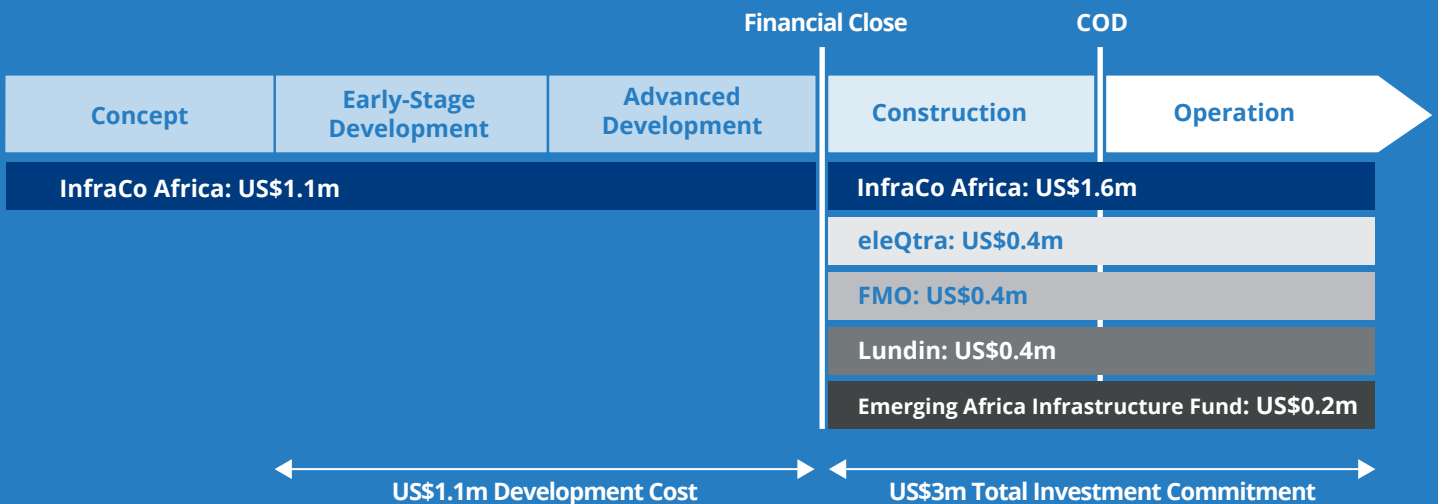
In Chanyanya, 126 smallholders and four commercial farmers formed an interim committee to secure the right to extract water from the Kafue River. In 2006, they approached InfraCo Africa seeking the financing and expertise needed to convert these rights into a bankable irrigation project. InfraCo Africa, through its principal developer eleQtra, designed a transformative project. Initially, the intention was to develop a single, irrigated and viable farm of 1,575 hectares. However, investors were cautious of the risks involved in greenfield, primary production in sub-Saharan Africa and the smallholders were reluctant to engage in an unproven model. To address these concerns,

InfraCo Africa funded a 'proof-of-concept' pilot project. The pilot project established the Chiansi Irrigation Company (CIC) and the Chanyanya Smallholders Cooperative Society (CSCS).

In 2008, CSCS entered into a partnership with CIC, collectively leasing its land in order to establish a commercial farm. CIC installed the bulk water infrastructure required to support four pivots and provide infield irrigation to 148 hectares of farmland. In turn, CSCS receives regular lease payments, holds shares in the commercial enterprise and has access to individual irrigated market garden plots. These plots provide smallholders with the opportunity to farm year-round and grow a variety of higher value vegetable crops. The pilot project also employs a full time Agronomist to run a demonstration market garden and a Social Development Officer to build governance capacity within CSCS. Once all investment into CIC is repaid, CSCS will own the commercial enterprise outright: an empowering long-term goal.

The project's success was recognised when Chanyanya was chosen to host Zambia's UN World Food Day in 2012 and awarded 'Silver Selection' by Infrastructure Journal in 2013. InfraCo Africa remains committed to this pilot project and are using its success to unlock ORIO grant funding and mobilise investment for the originally envisioned project; the full project will develop 22 new pivots to irrigate an additional 1,290 hectares of farmland and provide an additional 64 hectares of irrigated market gardens to three neighbouring communities.

### Investment for Chanyanya



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## Impact

In pursuing this innovative pilot, InfraCo Africa and the Chanyanya community have developed an exciting replicable model that will change lives in Zambia and beyond. Lessons from this project are being applied by the World Bank to their Zambian and Ghanaian irrigation programmes.

In Chanyanya, wheat, soya bean and barley have been regularly cropped with yields increasing by 36% over the last three years. Market garden plots are fully subscribed and smallholders have reported an increase in household income, health and improved food security. This project has empowered smallholders, many of whom can now afford to send their children to school, buy bicycles or otherwise invest in their own future. CSCS now has the governance

skills needed to define its constitution and develop an ambitious business plan to expand its market gardens and set-up complimentary agricultural initiatives.

*'...Our lives have improved, we enjoy a better diet through growing of vegetables and even the clinic has seen fewer cases of malnutrition and poor health...We now have food security, employment and money coming in...we had none of these things before...We are confident of our future...We have hope.'* (Maurice, elected councillor for the local ward of Chanyanya)

