

Waymakers Changing the World

Your Program Impact Report—Fall 2023

Waymaker describes Opportunity International’s clients who work tirelessly to lift themselves out of poverty, despite being faced with hardships of hunger, lack of education, isolation, and exclusion.

Waymaker also describes you, a loyal supporter of Opportunity International, whose dedication clears a path toward sustainable, healthy, equitable living for our neighbors living in the depths of extreme poverty.

Together with our **hardworking staff around the world**, our clients and our supporters are changing the world, one family at a time.

OUR GRATITUDE

Thank you for empowering Florence (right) and her family to build a sustainable livelihood. We are humbled by the force of will, depth of faith, and extraordinary commitment of the families we work with, who every day show us what it means to be Waymakers: to embrace opportunity with vigor, heart, and grace.

Head of Agriculture Finance Tim Strong shared a beautiful reflection on the incredible challenges faced by our clients: “What strikes me the most about life in a rural community is that it inherently is a life of faith—a constant belief that life will improve, despite seemingly insurmountable hurdles. Imagine that your hopes and dreams for the future, that these dreams can be pinned by your faith that a small bag of seed will sprout when planted in the ground and over the next four months, grow into a mature plant that produces enough to cover the expenses for the year, enough savings to plant again in the next season, enough profit to afford school fees for your children, and enough tucked away to manage unexpected emergencies, like a child’s bout of cholera from bad water or malaria from mosquitoes. Many farmers here in Malawi repeat the old proverb, ‘Tsokonombwe anathu mitundu ndi kudumph’—‘A grasshopper crosses a large field through many hops.’”



Florence (left) grows soya, groundnuts, and maize on her farm in Malawi. She is on her second Agriculture Finance loan. Her first loan cycle enabled her to increase her income, improve her home, and send her children to school.

Thank you for investing in this difficult but life-changing work.

WAYMAKER CAMPAIGN

At the end of 2019, Opportunity International set an audacious goal to raise \$100M to serve 25 million more people living in extreme poverty. We made commitments to give women access to loans and savings accounts; equip smallholder farmers and rural families with the resources and knowledge to increase their harvests and incomes; and increase access to quality education for children living in poverty.

THE CONTINUING IMPACT OF YOUR PARTNERSHIP

Thanks to your belief that all people deserve to live with purpose, dignity, and hope, we raised \$100.9 million, which, when multiplied through our partnership model, is putting over \$1 billion to work in the hands of hardworking families around the globe. Our overarching goal: to reach 25 million more people – which we achieved with your help. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we reached them in different ways than planned:

Microbanking

WAYMAKER GOAL: Reach 3M more clients (15M more people)

RESULTS: Reached 1.7M more loan clients and 5M more savers

Reached 5M additional with COVID Rapid Response programs

TOTAL: more than 27M people

ONE KEY LEARNING:

9 of 10 Opportunity clients reported increased income and being better able to manage their finances.¹

AgFinance

WAYMAKER GOAL: Reach 4.5M people in rural farming communities

RESULTS: Reached 4.2M people (1.5M new) in farming villages disrupted by COVID closures

ONE KEY LEARNING:

Our Farmer Support Agents reach more vulnerable groups than traditional ag lending: 72% in extreme poverty (vs 44%) and 57% women (vs 6%)²

EduFinance

WAYMAKER GOAL: Reach 13.6M children cumulatively

RESULTS: Reached 12.4M children (7.1M new), amid the pandemic forcing lengthy school closures

ONE KEY LEARNING:

When schools access capital, students perform better (more than 7 percentile points on national testing).³

Results are as of June 2023

¹ Figures are averages across the 10 Opportunity partners participating in the 2023 60 Decibels Microfinance Index, available Oct'23

² Results from peer-reviewed publication of study on FSA Model in Malawi. Ready the [publication](#).

³ EduFinance Research – Uganda. [Read the study summary](#)

YOUR GENEROSITY IS STILL AT WORK. What excites us the most right now?

- ▶ **Piloting an urban Graduation Program:** 250 Colombian families living in extreme poverty are halfway through an 18-month program to help them begin businesses, with intensive tools, training, and support.
- ▶ **Expanding Savings Groups:** Group members are holding each other accountable as they learn how to save even a small amount each week, changing behaviors in ways that have long-term, positive impact.
- ▶ **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion:** Gender bias is often a barrier to quality, engaging, inclusive education. Opportunity's EduFinance team is working toward full gender mainstreaming across operations, including piloting projects to incentivize financial institution partners to lend to more women school owners.
- ▶ **Reaching farmers in Kenya and Nigeria:** We are gathering partners and resources to launch Agriculture Finance in Kenya and Nigeria, two areas of great need and potential.