Since 2015, with recognition and funding from agencies, Totahara’s operational capacity has been increased to produce about 325 tons of flour per year for 105 shops. Christella also mentors other milling SME’s and is linked to over 1,250 women farmers planting bio-fortified beans varieties. As a Stage 4 and a Maturity level 3 innovation, these platforms have permitted farmers to easily access markets with their better seeds and improved nutrient-rich bean varieties. This has increased the demand as consumers buy nutrient-rich foods that increase their well-being. The flow between supply, demand and quality of the products enhanced has helped improve the business environment with rising interest from policy makers to invest in this innovation to increase the income of actors along the value chain who contribute to nutrition and food security goals.

Bean Business Platforms are designed to implement program interventions by bringing together critical actors to improve business ecosystems and incentivize actors in bean corridors. PABRA and CIAT collaborated with the Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi (ISABU) in 2015 and engaged a startup entrepreneur Christella Ndayishimye to scale up production of composite bean flour for weaning infants and lactating mothers. Launched in 2009, Totahara was Christella’s answer to the sheer need for good quality, nutritious porridge flour for her baby’s weaning. Equipped with her own recipe of bean-based composite flour after a PABRA facilitated training and with nine employees, Christella started Totahara as a small enterprise from her backyard producing up to 1 ton of flour per month. PABRA helped Christella upgrade the flour processing facilities, link to markets and technical capacity that saw her production increase exponentially.

Business platforms around school feeding programmes in Tanzania integrating farmers, schools, district education boards, agro-dealers and off-takers have resulted in nutrient-rich bean varieties reaching over 200 communities around these schools. As a Stage 4 and a Maturity level 3 innovation, these platforms have permitted farmers to easily access markets with their better seeds and improved nutrient-rich bean varieties. This has increased the demand as consumers buy nutrient-rich foods that increase their well-being. The flow between supply, demand and quality of the products enhanced has helped improve the business environment with rising interest from policy makers to invest in this innovation to increase the income of actors along the value chain who contribute to nutrition and food security goals.

“Wide scale demonstrations through public-private partnerships can play a key role in creating awareness of High Iron Beans (HIB) in Zimbabwe. Besides, facilitation and increased engagement of various actors (including the private sector) in seed production and dissemination is needed to accelerate the pipeline of various seed grades from breeder seed to certified seed”

Christella distributes her products to 19 wholesale outlet shops and non-governmental organizations in Burundi, besides 10 retail outlet traders in DR Congo, and 2 traders in Rwanda. Since 2020, she also supplies bean-based flour to World Vision which runs 22 under-five pilot community school programmes which have seen a reduction in stunting levels from 58% to 52% within ayear of using this flour.

http://gldc.cgiar.org