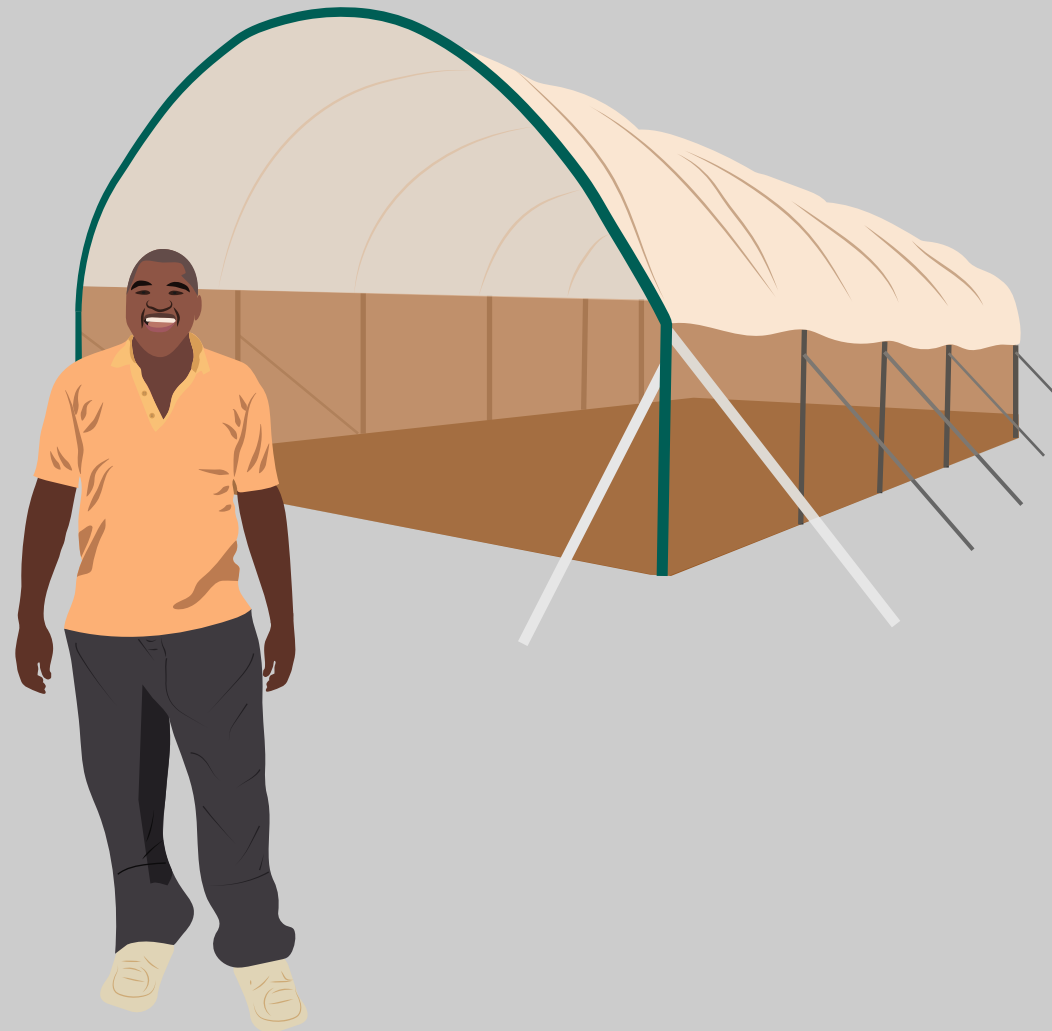




## Partnering for Innovation

### *Meet Peter*

Peter jumped at the chance to become a professional seedling grower for MRI-Syngenta in Zambia.



Peter Sifuba needed seedlings.

He knew that by planting seedlings instead of seed in his tomato, eggplant, and cabbage fields in rural Zambia he would get stronger, more robust plants, but he had to go all the way to Lusaka, a couple of hours away, to get them. Even then, they often weren't always available when he needed them for planting, preventing him from timing his harvests with adequate rainfall and high market demand. So, Peter decided to grow his own seedlings, planting some himself and selling some to his neighbors. Just as he had with the rest of his farm, where in addition to vegetables he grows maize and rears cows, chickens, goats, and sheep, Peter learned how to grow seedlings from other farmers, observing what they were doing. With no formal training, he was doing the best he could, but knew there was probably a better way.

When MRI-Syngenta came to his area looking for candidates for their young plant raiser (YPR) program, funded by USAID through Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation and aimed at increasing the availability of vegetable seedlings for smallholder farmers, Peter jumped at the chance to learn how to raise seedlings professionally. He was selected to be a YPR and attended a two-week training with other new YPRs to learn how to raise seedlings, how to market them in his community, and how to run a successful business. Now, he's prepared to raise tomato and cabbage seedlings and eventually expand to other crops. He is also prepared to set up demonstration plots to show farmers in his community the benefit of using seedlings and of growing high-value crops like tomatoes and cabbage. He'll do two demo days each year: one after transplanting the seedlings into the ground, to show people the benefits of using them and help them decide if using seedlings is right for them, and another shortly before harvesting, so people can see how well the plants are producing. He will also visit people's farms, sharing his new expertise on the best way to grow the plants and increasing his customers' chance of success. Through these activities, Peter plans to gain 300 new customers in the upcoming year.

Peter's plans for the future are to expand his farm and seedling business, growing new crops and building a large greenhouse so that he has year-round income. First, though, he will put what he has learned from MRI-Syngenta into practice, producing seedlings that help him grow more vegetables and earn more income, and spurring vegetable production throughout his community.