

Our journey towards co-creating our dehydrated jackfruit.

AFYASILI



Betty Ikalany
Co founder & CEO



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ABOUT AFYASILI

Afyasili is a female-owned dried fruits and vegetable business based in Soroti, Eastern Uganda. Their company provides rural farmers (especially women and the youth) with modern agro-processing techniques to stimulate quality export products and at the same time enhance sustainable development for the rural poor.

START OF BLU PARTICIPATION

Afyasili has been actively engaged with BLU since the start of the accelerator programme in 2019. “It was a great opportunity to join the accelerator and learn directly from the companies involved how to process locally grown fruits, and especially to learn how rural women could get involved,” said Betty, Co founder & CEO Afyasili. Since the BLU programme also had a strong focus on empowering women, it also provided a platform for Afyasili to raise awareness about empowering women in agricultural value chains.

CONTRIBUTION

Afyasili has demonstrated an impactful role within the BLU program. The most valuable involvement within the programme has been standing up for women's involvement and power dynamics in rural households. Their active participation in meetings and presentations showcased their community engagement, challenged gender stereotypes, and inspired confidence in women's capabilities within the jackfruit value chain. Not only did they inspire the other BLU partners to focus on these subjects, but Afyasili itself was also a successful and practical example. With their team of eight female staff members, Afyasili played a crucial role in identifying and fostering direct relationships with farmers. Afyasili provided training to a group of around 20 female farmers throughout the programme emphasizing gender equality and preventing domestic violence.



When actual orders came in, they outsourced work to 5-10 additional women depending on the consignment. Additionally, Afyasili shared their expertise in the quality of fresh jackfruit, aiding BLU in understanding different jackfruit weights, types, and seasonalities. Regarding processing, Afyasili executed several trials with solar driers and bio dehydrators to find the best local processing methods. They were also involved in trialling the prevention of browning of the jackfruit before canning, which

made the product look unfresh and unsuitable for export. All different experiments however, shaped the conclusion that Afyasili's strength lies in supplying fresh jackfruit, which they continued doing until today.

In terms of traceability, Afyasili diligently entered farmer data into the BLU tool, contributing to farmer mapping. They also provided valuable feedback for tool improvement. The ability to edit farmer information in the field came from their suggestions.



SUMMARY

Afyasili's overall contribution has been instrumental in driving positive change and progress within the BLU program.

- Challenging gender stereotypes and inspiring confidence in women's capabilities within the jackfruit value chain - contribution to Gender Policy of BLU (ongoing)
- Farmer engagement: 284 farmers (23% women), and ~100 on the waiting list.
- Community engagement: 30 people involved in jackfruit harvesting (depending on the size of the consignment).
- Trials in dehydrating jackfruit and prevention of browning
- Sourcing fresh jackfruit: ~60.000 kgs

Our - young -jackfruit is peeled, cut, and dehydrated directly after harvesting in Africa.