

Let's meet Esther from Tanzania



TANZANIA COUNTRY FILE

Location: East Africa

Official name: United Republic of Tanzania

Flag:



Population: 55.6 million

Life expectancy: 65 years

Currency: Shilling

Capital city: Dodoma

Languages: Swahili, English and others

Exports: Coffee, tea, cotton, cashew nuts

Statistics taken from Irish Aid annual report 2018

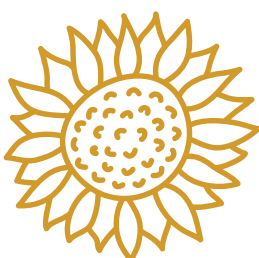
Ester Jerome Mtegule lives in Lyenge village, in the Dodoma region in central Tanzania. In 2011 Ester won a reality TV show called Female Food Heroes.

Ester is 39 years old. Her five children and her mother live with her on her small farm.



Ester working on her farm

ESTER GROWS:



Sunflowers



Ground nuts
(peanuts)



Millet
(a type of grain that is used to make flour)



Sorghum
(a type of grain used to make porridge)

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The Female Food Heroes TV show was organized by Oxfam International, a non-governmental organization (NGO or charity) which received support from our government programme, Irish Aid.

Women do a lot of the farm work in poorer countries that rely a lot on farming but, women farmers are often treated differently to male farmers, especially when they want to buy their land.

THE FEMALE FOOD HEROES TV SHOW CELEBRATES THREE THINGS:

- the important role played by women farmers in Tanzania,
- the need for women to be treated the same way as men
- how to farm in a way that gets the most out of the land while caring for the environment.

The year that Ester won Female Food Heroes the show was watched by 25 million Tanzanians. Ester and the other 9 finalists were chosen from 6,000 entrants. The show followed the 10 women farmers as they took part in a week-long X Factor-style 'boot camp' where they showed off their farming skills and learned new ways to grow crops and look after animals.

Since winning the show, Ester's life has changed a lot. She won a tractor, which she rents out to others in her community and, she has changed how she farms. Ester now produces 75 bags of red sorghum every year. Red sorghum can grow with very little water. Before, she planted the traditional, white-sorghum, which needs lots of water to grow, and produced only 5 bags every year.



This change is very important because the region where Ester lives gets very little rain. Ester tries to help other farmers to plant red sorghum. People in Ester's community are inspired by Ester and her achievements as a Female Food Hero.

Adapted from: <https://www.irishaid.ie/stories-of-progress/casestudies/archive/2013/september/female-food-heroes-in-tanzania/>; <https://www.oxfamireland.org/blog/sharon-corr-in-tanzania>; and, <http://www.trust.org/item/?map=top-10-food-trailblazers/#anchor7>.