**Grant Proposal**

Project Title**: Mechanized Farming for Sustainable Livelihoods**

Submitted by: **Integrated Child Support Foundation (ICSF) Lira District, Uganda**

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Date: March 11 2025

**1. Project Summary**

Integrated Child Support Foundation seeks to transform agriculture in Ayach Village, Lira District by providing mechanized farming solutions to smallholder farmers who lack access to modern equipment. The initiative aims to procure a Massey Ferguson 4WD tractor with essential accessories to support farmers in land cultivation, increase food security, and boost economic resilience. A community led, self sustaining financial model will be established, where a percentage of farm produce sales will fund tractor maintenance and pay the operator. This will ensure long term sustainability while driving socio-economic recovery in a post-conflict region.

We request $106,000 to fund the purchase of two tractors, farming accessories, initial operational costs, and training programs. This initiative aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1, 2, and 8) by addressing poverty reduction, food security, and economic empowerment.

**Why Lira?**

Lira District, located in Northern Uganda, has endured decades of conflict and socio-economic hardship, particularly during the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency. This conflict displaced thousands of people, disrupted agricultural activities, and left many communities struggling to rebuild their livelihoods. While Lira has since stabilized, poverty, food insecurity, and limited access to agricultural resources continue to hinder economic recovery.

**Key Reasons for Focusing on Lira:**

**Post-Conflict Recovery:** Many farmers in Lira are returnees from internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, working to rebuild their agricultural capacity.

**Untapped Agricultural Potential:** Despite fertile land, mechanized farming is largely unavailable, leading to low productivity and food shortages.

**Economic Hardship:** Lira has higher poverty rates compared to other regions, with agriculture being the primary source of income for most families.

**Strategic Location:** Lira serves as a major agricultural hub in Northern Uganda, making it a key area for food production and economic revitalization.

**2. Organizational Background**

Integrated Child Support Foundation (ICSF) is a community driven nonprofit committed to enhancing the livelihoods of vulnerable groups, particularly children, women, and smallholder farmers in Uganda. ICSF focuses on agriculture, education, and social development as key pillars for building resilient communities. Our past projects include youth agribusiness training programs integrated into Mental health, livelihood support for refugee families, and community education initiatives.

**3. Problem Statement**

**The Challenge: Low Agricultural Productivity and Food Insecurity**

Despite having fertile land, Ayach Village faces severe agricultural underutilization due to a lack of mechanized farming equipment. Smallholder farmers rely on traditional manual farming methods, which are labor intensive, time consuming, and result in low crop yields. This has led to persistent food insecurity, economic stagnation, and high poverty levels in the region.

**Key Problems:**

Limited Access to Mechanized Farming: Farmers do not have access to tractors or modern agricultural tools, restricting land cultivation and lowering productivity.

**Low Crop Yields & Food Shortages:** Due to manual farming, only a fraction of available farmland is cultivated, leading to insufficient food production to sustain the growing population.

**High Poverty Rates & Economic Instability:** The reliance on subsistence farming keeps families trapped in low-income cycles, preventing economic growth in the community.

**Post-Conflict Recovery Challenges:** Many farmers are returnees from conflict-displaced backgrounds and lack capital to invest in better farming techniques.

**Climate Vulnerability:** The inefficiency of traditional farming methods makes communities more vulnerable to climate shocks, such as prolonged droughts and erratic rainfall patterns.

**Why It Matters**

Lack of farming mechanization is a barrier to food security and economic growth in Lira District. By introducing modern farming solutions, farmers can increase food production, boost local economies, and achieve financial independence. Investing in mechanized farming is a proven strategy to break the cycle of poverty and ensure sustainable agricultural development in post-conflict regions like Northern Uganda.

**4. Project Objectives**

Increase land cultivation by providing low cost tractor services to smallholder farmers.

Enhance food security by enabling farmers to grow more crops for both subsistence and commercial purposes.

Boost economic resilience through collective farming and bulk sales to suppliers.

Ensure project sustainability by reinvesting a percentage of farm produce sales into a tractor maintenance fund.

**5. Project Implementation Plan**

**Phase 1: Procurement & Training (Months 1-2)**

* Purchase a Massey Ferguson 4WD tractor and accessories (plows, harrows, planters).
* Recruit and train a tractor operator and maintenance personnel.
* Mobilize the community through awareness campaigns.

**Phase 2: Agricultural Support & Expansion (Months 3-12)**

* Provide affordable tractor services to farmers.
* Organize farming cooperatives to maximize land usage.
* Conduct training on improved farming techniques and agribusiness skills.

**Phase 3: Market Linkages & Revenue Model (Ongoing)**

* Establish agreements with bulk buyers and agribusiness firms.
* Implement a community-led financial plan, where a portion of crop sales is reinvested in tractor maintenance.
* Track impact and expand operations based on demand.

**6. Expected Outcomes & Impact**

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| **Outcome** | **Impact** |
| 200+ farmers gain access to mechanized farming | Increased land use and higher yields |
| Over 400 acres cultivated per season | More food produced, reducing hunger |
| 40% increase in household income for participating farmers | Improved livelihoods and economic resilience |
| Sustainable tractor operation model in place | Ensures long term impact beyond initial funding |

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| 7. Budget Breakdown |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Item** | **Estimated Cost (USD)** | | Two Massey Ferguson 4WD Tractors | $60,000 | | Accessories (Plows, Harrows, Planters) | $20,000 | | Initial Fuel & Maintenance Fund | $10,000 | | Training & Capacity Building | $6,000 | | Operators’ Salaries (First Year) | $6,000 | | Community Awareness & Mobilization | $4,000 | | Total Budget Needed | $106,000 | |  |

**10. Conclusion**

This is a high impact, community driven solution designed to break the cycle of poverty in Ayach Village, Lira District. By providing mechanized farming tools, this project will increase agricultural productivity, generate sustainable income, and foster resilience in a post conflict region. ICSF plans to work with refugees on the same model of agricultural practice to bridge existing food insecurity and hunger in the refugee settlements as well.