

## Vaati Peter

Vaati owns a small vegetable farm.

Vaati is a 34 year old farmer. She owns one acre of land, and rents a second. Vaati and her husband grow vegetables such as aubergine and baby corn both for export and the local market.

She has a renewable six-month contract with VEGCARE, an export company which organises farmers into production groups, helps them to meet export standards, and provides loans to help meet business costs.

Vaati has a guaranteed price for her produce from the company. Other farmers are not so fortunate. Those without reliable buyers who urgently need cash must sell their produce at heavily reduced prices to brokers who visit the area on bicycles.

Vaati is currently harvesting her aubergines. She earns roughly 18,000 Kenyan Shillings a month growing vegetables. From this she must pay for seeds and fertilizers, and wages for the worker she employs, plus food and school fees for her family.

"It's farming that put up our house and meets our needs", says Vaati, who prefers her life now to her previous employment as a domestic worker in Nairobi. But it is hard work. "We work six days a week because once a crop is in the ground it must be cared for."

Secondary education is far from universal in Kenya, and completing school can make all the difference to a child's prospects. Vaati has high hopes for her teenage daughter: "I want her to be a doctor".

