

Food and Business Applied Research Fund

Stabilizing sesame yields and production in the Lango Zone, Northern Uganda



Africa Innovations Institute

Uganda

Consortium members:

Mr. Francis Ouruma Alacho, Agronomist, Project Leader, Africa Innovations Institute, P.O Box 34981, Kampala, Uganda, alacodnc@yahoo.com; Mr. Walter O. Anyanga, Plant Breeder, National Semi Arid Resources Research Institute (NaSARRI), P.O Soroti, Uganda, walanyanga@hotmail.com; Ray Agong Bruno, M & E Specialist, Uganda Oils Seeds Processors Association (UOSPA), rayagong@yahoo.com; Mr. Narcis Tumushabe, Agricultural Economist, FICA Seeds Ltd, P.O Box 34095, Kampala, Uganda, fica.project@mail.com. This project has a carefully selected skills mix of consortium partners who comprise of researchers, practitioners, farmers' organizations and a private company with vast experience and skills in the different aspects of sesame value chain development.

Main innovation aim/objective:

About 80% of the population in the Lango sub-region depends on sesame for food and income security but the yields and production are low and unstable due to use of traditional varieties, poor agricultural practices and extreme weather events that lead to frequent food shortages and loss of income. The overall objective is to stabilize and improve sesame productivity by developing new improved varieties, and, understanding the main challenges caused by climate change in order to develop and promote climate smart technologies and innovations to be shared with wider stakeholders.

Expected impact (including target group):

The project aims at developing technologies and innovations that will intensify sesame productivity and commercialization by smallholders in the districts of Amolatar, Otuke and Lira districts as a way of contributing to food security and inclusive economic growth of the poor to mitigate the impact of increasing inequality and population growth. The outputs will offer an opportunity to export firms, Knowledge institutions and NGOs to partner with in areas of sesame value chain, financial services, seeds and agribusiness.

Impact activities and results:

In order to understand the main challenges and opportunities caused by climate change impacts on sesame value chain, focus group discussions were held with 55 females and 109 males in the sub counties of Muntu, Akwon, Agikdak, Adwari, Orum, Olilim, Barr, Ogur and Agweng. This study confirmed that in the past 30 years there have been large fluctuations in yields and prices due to variability in extreme weather elements. The farmers had also developed varying coping mechanisms in sesame production. The glaring effect on the productivity and resilience were mainly manifested by declining yields.



(a) Focus group discussion taking place in Otuke



(b) Simsim variety selection trials at NaSARRI

In an effort to develop and promote suitable climate smart sesame innovations and ensure that farmers can access and adopt them to increase yields and stabilize production, a number of cost-effective innovations and improved lines are being evaluated based on the studies initiated at NaSARRI. Such climate smart sesame innovations, practices and varieties will be promoted and out-scaled. Information generated will be shared with farmers and other stakeholders.

Opportunities and challenges:

The great opportunity is that NaSARRI has preliminary sesame lines, management practices and innovations that are in different stages of evaluation as well as newly released varieties that are not widely adopted which will now be demonstrated and promoted together with UOSPA and FICA Seeds Ltd.

