

FOOD & BUSINESS APPLIED RESEARCH FUND

APPLIED CASSAVA RESEARCH FOR FOOD SECURITY IN NORTHERN UGANDA – UGANDA

Consortium Members

- i. Oxfam Novib in Uganda – an international NGO working on engendering agriculture and value chain
- ii. National Agriculture Research Organisation - National Crops Resources Research Institute (NARO-NaCRRI) - A Government of Uganda institution for agriculture research and extension
- iii. Africa 2000 Network – an Uganda civil society organisation working in Northern Uganda on strengthening sustainable livelihood

Impact activities and preliminary results

The project, implemented in 3 sub counties, works with 12 farmer groups each hosting a demonstration plot, a field trial and multiplication garden. On-going and planned activities are:

- **Demonstration plots for two existing cassava varieties:** 6 out of the planned 12 demonstration gardens for two existing cassava varieties were set up in farmers' fields. This aims at increasing farmers' knowledge on cassava production & disease management. 6 farmer groups with about 30 members each were trained on cassava agronomic practices such as spacing, choice of stem cuttings & disease management.
- **Evaluation of near-release six cassava varieties:** 6 promising cassava genotypes have been planted in farmers' fields at other 6 locations. These will be evaluated with farmers to determine their suitability regarding cooking quality, agronomic performance (yield & architecture). Results of the participatory evaluation will be used for variety release.
- **Multiplication centres to increase farmer access to quality planting materials:** Improving access to quality planting materials will be enhanced through setting up community based multiplication centres. 6 out of 12 multiplication gardens have been established. Each centre is between 1-1.5 acres and planted with 3 disease resistant varieties. From each acre, the expected harvest is a minimum of 21,000 stem cuttings, enough to plant 5 new acres by the farmers. This has a huge potential for farmers to grow cassava stem cuttings as a business. Farmers will be trained in business planning to enhance income generation.

Participatory planting of experimental plots (left) and farmers learning about virus disease symptoms on cassava storage roots (right)



Project description

The project aim is to boost cassava production, utilisation and improve market access for farmers in northern Uganda where it is the most important staple crop. The specific objectives are to:

- i) Evaluate near-release cassava genotypes together with farmers
- ii) Increase farmers' knowledge on cassava disease management
- iii) Increase farmer access to quality cassava planting materials
- iv) Improve quality of cassava products for better markets

The project is using a co-creation approach which brings together implementers and farmers to develop the cassava value chain.

The anticipated impact of the project is: Improved food and income security situation of 2,500 direct participants -60% women - in the districts of Oyam and Pader in Northern Uganda by 2018.

Impact activities and preliminary results

- Set up demonstrations for chippers and dryers in at least two groups in each district.
 - Establishing collection centres in each sub county and each will be equipped with drying and storage facilities
 - Institutional strengthening at local government, farmer level and consortium members.
 - Training, exposure visits and networking of cassava stakeholders to assist small scale cassava farmers strengthen their operational structures, necessary for self-reliance and sustainability.
 - Strengthening district level Cassava Multi Stakeholder Platforms (CMSP).
 - Data collection, compilation and dissemination through websites, scientific papers and newsletters. Information generated will also be disseminated through seminars and workshops at national level, organised with consortium members, farmers and other relevant stakeholders such as MAAIF, the Civil Society and other local and international NGOs for results validation.
- Based on results obtained, booklets with success stories will be produced and distributed to key stakeholders such as line ministries, CSOs, private sector, extension institutions, research & academic institutions, and farmer organizations among others.

Opportunities and challenges

- Increased interest of private sector players using cassava as a raw material for commercial products
- Increased demand for cassava planting materials motivates farmers to become cassava seed entrepreneurs.
- Cassava is a priority crop by government for the whole country (Active cassava research programme)
- Lack of cassava policy limits cassava value chain development
- Climate change effects
- Emergence of pests and diseases is a challenge