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#### Farmer led soil innovation to sustain food production in Northern Uganda Reaching the ultimate target group

Consortium Members: Alterra (Wageningen), ZOA & Makerere University (Uganda)

#### Introduction

- Communities in northern Uganda gazetted in satellite concentration camps for nearly 20 years.
- Period long enough to allow lands away from the satellite camps to rest & regain some fertility.
- How to sustain gains made following resumption of cultivation (keeping good fields good)?
- How to restore & sustain productivity of degraded fields (making poor fields good)?

# **Research approach**

- > Focus areas: Nwoya, Pader and Nebbi Districts
- Radio talk-shows:publicise project; articulate CA principles; identify model farmers with CA practices.
- Stakeholder workshops to: enlist political, LG & community support, engagement & participation in the project.
- Field visits, soil testing (field & laboratory) & onfarm trials (40 farmers in Pader; 25 in Nwoya, 36 in Nebbi).



## Research approach (example)

- > Treatments for 2016a:
- 1. Groundnuts
- 2. Maize
- 3. Maize with Groundnuts
- 4. Groundnuts + Fertiliser
- 5. Maize + Fertiliser
- 6. Maize with Groundnuts + Fertiliser.









# **Model Farmer Selection Criteria**

#### Radio talk-show

- In Nwoya and Pader, the project was announced on the radio, CA principles described and farmers who wanted to join and were interested, they were invited to link up to the project
- > After one hour on the radio, 6 farmers selected themselves. Next, multi-stakeholder workshops were organized with emphasis on local area politicians (LGs), extension workers and farmers to gain acceptance in the area.
- > Afterwards, local government's ZOA is directed to farmer groups in the community. Every group collaboratively selected one of the most innovative
- members
- With a questionnaire, the most innovative farmers and farmers with more unique practices are selected -> the model farmers

## (Dis)advantages of this approach

- Gives the chance to have direct contact with the model farmers.
- > Allows the interviewer to get the exact information from the model farmer which may not be possible through focus group discussions (FGDs) (group dynamics)
- > Takes time to reach the beneficiaries
- > There is a loss of information (compared to FGDs)
- > Build confidence among the model farmers.
- Leaves out the less advantaged farmers

# Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

- > The district and local government leaded us to 6 sub counties that were selected on elevation
- In Nebbi, ZOA researchers , farmer groups (min. 25) members) in 6 different sub counties
- > Farmers were asked about: perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitude about CA and their willingness to participate in





### (Dis)advantages of this approach

- It was easy to reach out to a large number of farmers (251) in a short time
- > Easy to collect information about a CA technologies
- Difficult in coming up with gender sensitive information, 17/36 of the lead farmers are women

# Local Government and Policy Relevance in reaching the target Beneficiaries

- Constant involvement of the LGs in project implementation. From inception to farmer selection
- Holding feedback meeting with the LGs and the innovative farmers
- Plat form meeting with the LG and the innovative farmer to give relevant policy information related to Agro input in Uganda.
- Follow up on dissemination and adoption of CA skill in the community.
- > Knowledge sharing to ease dissemination of practice.

# Expertise where it is needed!

Makerere University

- > Trial design / sampling
- Fertiliser trials

Nutrient deficiencies

ZOA NL

Maximising CA

Soil testing

- Alterra WUR
- Integrated soil fertility management



#### Unexpected, positive happenings!

- Trial farmers being
- hired to train farmers
  Trial farmers became input agents – trusted!
- Pass on farmers collected money to allow CA input purchase
- Beans can grow in Wadelai – Hot Nile zone



#### **Our last question**

 Farmer led innovation, how can this be combined with 'proper' research, if farmers decide what kind of experiments are implemented?