

PROJECT PROFILE

<u>Sector</u>	Agriculture
<u>Sub-sector</u>	Crops
<u>Code</u>	AG 09(C)
<u>Title</u>	Root Crops
<u>Implementing Agency</u>	NARO
<u>Location</u>	Nationwide
<u>Total Plan Exp.</u>	US\$ 0.48m
<u>Funds Secured</u>	US\$ 0.48m
<u>Funding Gap</u>	Nil
<u>Start Date:</u>	1987
<u>Completion Date</u>	2002

Background

Cassava is the most important root crop in Uganda. In Africa, Uganda ranks fifth in quantity produced and the area under production. Uganda produces about 4.0 million tonnes of fresh cassava roots p.a. Cassava ranks second among food crops in Uganda being preceded by bananas and closely followed by sweet potatoes and finger millet. It is grown in all districts particularly in the drier Eastern and Northern regions where it plays a major role as a staple food. Cassava is mainly grown by small holder farmers on plots ranging from 0.1 ha. in the Lake Victoria region to 0.9 ha. in the Eastern, Northern and North-western regions. Fifty per cent of cassava is inter-cropped with various annual crops, such as groundnuts, beans, maize etc. which are harvested after 3-4 months to leave a pure stand of cassava. The fact that the crop is available all year round, makes it a very important food security crop. Cassava has also become an important cash crop because it is sold for food, brewing beer and for the manufacture of industrial starch.

The cassava green mite has been in Uganda since the 1970s but the cassava mealybug is a new development. In the late 1980s cassava was almost wiped out by these two diseases in East and North West Uganda.

In order to preserve this valuable root crop this intervention has been found most appropriate.

Objectives

To develop improved varieties and develop better husbandry practices acceptable to producers and consumers. The project aims at developing integrated methods of controlling the major cassava pests and diseases.

Expected Outputs

- Improved technology options for cassava production generated and transferred to adaptive research pathways in national research systems.
- Improved cassava production technologies adapted for different production systems and packaged and supplied to uptake pathways.

Performance Indicator[s]

- Cassava yields increased by 20% in major cassava producing areas by the year 2001.
- Range of cassava-based products increased by 30% at household and market level by the year 2001.

Technical Description

The project operates a breeding programme on local and imported germplasm. It conducts on-farm research and agronomic studies so as to develop appropriate packages for farmers. It carries out pathological studies to control diseases such as the African cassava mosaic virus, bacterial blight, green mite and the mealybug.

It undertakes post harvest programmes to develop and disseminate improved technologies for storage and processing. There is a training component for project staff and farmers.

Feasibility Study

Individual researchers approached IDRC to fund their programmes on root crops and cereals. It was on the basis of such work that a national programme on cassava research was developed.

Financing

The project is funded by IDRC, the Gatsby Charitable Foundation of U.K. and GoU.

Plan of Operation

The project has the following activities.

- i. socio-economic studies on production practices and technologies.
- ii. development of cassava varieties acceptable to farmers and consumers.
- iii. multiply and distribute cassava
- iv. enhance farmers knowledge and capacity on the different methods of eliminating cyanide in cassava.
- v. carry out an integrated pest management programme.
- vii. continue activities aimed at accelerating transfer of cassava production technologies to farmers and consumers.