

USAID Field visit to C3P Partners in Uganda 18-21 June 2007

Two staff (CRS Region-C3P and USAID) made field visits to Luwero, Mbale and Mukono districts to visit CRS-Uganda C3P partners implementing C3P activities. The partners visited were CARITAS-Kasana Luwero, CARITAS-Lugazi and World Vision.

Two sub counties; Nazigo and Busana in Mukono (CARITAS-Lugazi), 3 subcounties; Kikyusa, Luwero, and Wakyato in Luwero (CARITAS-kasana Luwero) and 1 subcounty; Namanyonyi in Mbale (World Vision) districts were visited on 06/20/2007. At least, a macro-propagation site, a banana mother garden and cassava multiplication sites were visited.

Macro-propagators

The propagators were operational and suckers had started shooting up. Each macro-propagator constructed by CARITAS-Lugazi has a capacity of producing 20,000 suckers using 800 corms per output. One corm can produce a maximum of 25 suckers if all management practices are followed and all buds exposed whereas a minimum of 10 suckers if not all practices are followed. In addition, one macro-propagator can produce at least twice in a year although 3 times are also possible making a total of 40,000-60,000 suckers being produced per year. The CARITAS-Lugazi propagator visited had 400 corms at the time of the visit expecting 10,000 corms to be produced per propagator. Note has to be taken that, CARITAS was to add in more corms otherwise the propagator was not being used to full capacity. It can accommodate about 800 corms per route. CARITAS-Lugazi has 6 macro-propagators and each has 400 corms expecting to get 60,000 suckers from one route.



Using macro-propagation technology for banana multiplication in Luwero district (CARITAS-Luwero)

Using macro-propagation technology for banana multiplication in Mukono district (CARITAS Lugazi)

Using macro-propagation technology for banana multiplication in Mbale district (World Vision)

or while Mbale (World Vision) had 300 per propagator. The propagator sizes. This also means that: CARITAS-Kasana Luwero expects to produce 11,250 corms per propagator while World Vision will produce 7,500 per propagator.



Dr. Maina and one farmer identifying the right size of corm that can be used for macro-propagation of bananas. This should be from a clean source (field) (photo1 & 2), decapitating the corm to expose buds (photo 3) the more buds exposed, the higher the number of suckers that can develop from a corm.

Mother gardens

Three mother gardens (Mukono, Mbale and Luwero) districts were visited. CARITAS-Lugazi and Luwero used tissue culture suckers while World vision used corms to establish the mother gardens. Luwero project coordinator pointed out that,

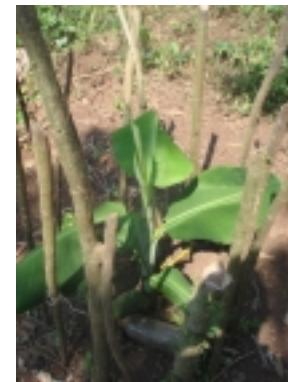
- Tissue culture plantlets are very delicate and face damage during transportation, especially when the distances involved are long. The partners faced some losses. This situation was not unique to only CARITAS-Luwero but also CARITAS Lugazi.
- The corms were costly which resulted into reducing the number of corms bought in order to fit into the budget.
- World Vision used corms because the supplier of tissue culture plantlets had promised them in July which would be late for planting. Use of corms can easily be substituted fro tissue culture plantlets.



A mother garden in Nazigo sub county, Mukono district. Also to note: pupils look after the garden as part of their agricultural



A mother garden in Mbale district. About 3 banana varieties have been planted in this mother garden making a total of 500 corms planted.



Mpologoma banana variety in a mother garden in Kikyusa sub county, Luwero district.

Cassava multiplication sites



A farmer in Busana sub county, Mukono district, showing an AKENA cassava variety field he planted in December 2006.



A farmer field of AKENA cassava variety in Nazigo sub county, Mukono district.



A farmer field of MH2961 cassava variety in Wakyato sub county, Luwero district.



An MH2961 cassava field owned by a farmer group in Wakyato sub county, Luwero district they planted in December 2006. This particular group will be rationing the crop in September and plan to sell to get money to hire more land in order to expand the acreage used under cassava production



*Adding value to the cassava crop:
This farmer produces flour using local method.*

The partners together with the farmers hoped that, dissemination of the cassava cuttings will probably begin in the month of September 2007. A dissemination system therefore needs to be put in place to enable effective dissemination of the cuttings.

Lessons learnt

- Working with partners who have already established themselves in the farming communities helps speed up the process of dissemination of information and new technologies. However, these partners need to be strongly linked at the grassroots and “present” in the communities.
- Although providing for the vulnerable household is one of the activities targeted in C3P, selection criteria should take into consideration the households that are willing to participate in the program to minimize loss of material.
- Need to strengthen farmer groups at the grassroots because it is such an important component in successful implementation of projects in communities