

UGANDA

Principal Investigator: Dr. Robert Kajobe

Internship Title: Development of a working manual for organising farmers into groups to solve specific constraints along the vegetable value chain.

Time Period: 3rd to 17th August

Project Background: Muni University (<https://muni.ac.ug/>), together with partners are undertaking a horticulture research project to contribute towards Feed the Future Horticulture Innovation Lab program of Transforming the horticulture sector in East Africa. The overall objective of the project is to develop innovative horticulture technologies for improved income and livelihoods among small scale women farmers in Uganda. Horticulture plays an important role in food security, employment opportunities and income generation. The project is being implemented in the 6 out of 12 districts in the West Nile region of Uganda, following the Embedded Research Translation (ERT) approach that integrates all stakeholders early and throughout the research collaboration. It targets women (70 %) and men (30 %) comprising both host population and refugees in the target sites. The Overall objective of the project is to develop innovative horticulture technologies for improved income and livelihoods among small scale farmers in Uganda.

Vegetable production in Uganda is predominantly done by smallholder producers, majority of whom produce and market singly. The project baseline showed that merely a third of the farmers belonged to any form of farmer association. Moreover, these few predominantly belonged to saving and credit societies (SACCOs) that majorly address credit rather than the more comprehensive farmer groups and/or cooperatives which address the entire value chain i.e., credit, input access, production as well as post-harvest, bulking and collective marketing. Therefore, one of the project intervention areas (subtheme three) focusses on formation of farmer groups, cooperatives, or shared aggregation centers to minimize exploitation and increase bargaining power. However, formation farmer cooperatives is a gradual process that develops organically from farmer groups and primary cooperative societies that further coalesce into large cooperative unions. Therefore, in this project we plan to ignite this process by supporting development of primary groups centered around priority value chain problems such as input access, produce transportation, post-harvest storage among others. Insights around this intervention area will be compiled into a scalable or otherwise adaptable guide that can be used in other smallholder farmer settings. This internship assignment is therefore to develop a working draft of the farmer organization process which will be refined on the fly by learnings from the implementation.



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Research Question(s) or Specific Issues to be Addressed	Range of Acceptable Disciplines	Deliverables
<p>What are the major value chain constraints that can be addressed through farmer groups?</p> <p>What are the existing options for farmers organization?</p> <p>What are the key aspects necessary for nurturing viable primary farmer cooperatives?</p> <p>What are the key sustainability issues and how can they be addressed?</p>	<p>Horticulture/Agronomy/crop science. Agriculture Extension and Education. Agriculture Economics/Agribusiness. Social work/administration.</p>	<p>The intern will be expected to develop a draft training material with key modules necessary for building a viable primary cooperative (or farmer group) targeting solving a particular value chain constraint.</p>



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