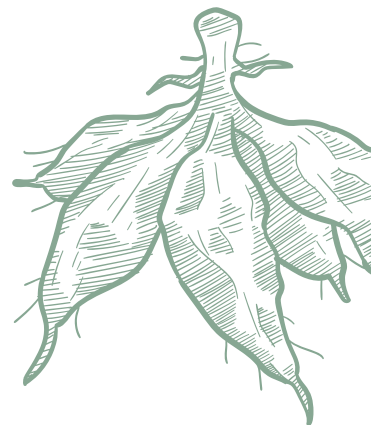




**Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations**



**GHANA**

## Strengthening linkages between small actors and buyers in the roots and tubers sector in Africa

Cassava is both a subsistence and commercial crop in Ghana. Due to the growing demand for cassava and its products, the Government has identified cassava as a priority crop. Nevertheless, cassava farmers and small processors face challenges such as difficulty in marketing, lack of business management orientation and transportation issues that hinder the development of the sector. In order to improve the livelihood of those involved in the cassava value chain, the project aims at the following results: (i) existing national and regional strategies are aligned with initiatives supporting the development of improved regional market integration for the roots and tubers sector; (ii) the competitiveness and viability of roots and tubers value chains are strengthened by improving inclusive business models, sustainable intensification of production, and the capacity of small and medium enterprise and farmer organizations; (iii) access to information services and finance is improved for smallholders; and (iv) smallholder producers have access to climatic risk management instruments.

### WHAT WAS ACHIEVED

The skills of 157 value chain actors on contract negotiation and good manufacturing practices were improved and as a result, individual farmers who had almost no access to main market outlets, in the past two years have managed to sell 34.3 m of fresh cassava roots to buyers. In the Gomoe East District, 20 individual farmers accessed a loan of GHS 20 000 (USD 4 000) each from Opportunity International Savings and Loans, for investing in processing equipment. Similarly, 26 individual farmers received working capital loans ranging from GHS 1 000 (USD 200) to GHS 4 000 (USD 800) from the Microfin Rural Bank, through the project's support.

Yields have increased from 12 mt to 18–20 m/ha per hectare on farmers' fields. The yield increase is largely attributed to the introduction and planting of improved cassava varieties and adherence to good agronomic practices that farmers observed through the project.

The project has driven relevant institutional changes in the country. As a result of the technical assistance provided to policy officers on the relevance of cassava in Ghana, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture requested the project to formulate a policy to make cassava a partial substitute of the imported wheat, whose demand in the country is high and steadily increasing. Therefore, a Composite Flour Policy was developed to establish a partial substitution of the imported wheat with the High Quality Cassava Flour (HQCF) produced locally.

### HOW IT WAS ACHIEVED

The African Roots and Tubers project, in collaboration with other existing initiatives of FAO in the country, conducted trainings on adoption of good practices in cassava production using Farmer Field School (FFS) approaches. The project trained 70 facilitators to support the establishment of 26 FFS in all five project districts. The FFS participants, consisting of 780 smallholder farmers (including 234 women) now apply good agronomic practices, use inputs efficiently and manage natural resources sustainably. These farmers also have access to planting materials of improved cassava varieties.

**Demonstrations during the training on cassava chips processing, Ghana**



A compendium of improved cassava varieties is being developed in collaboration with Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) that will guide the producers in their selection of appropriate varieties during the pre-production stage.

In addition, the project trained 19 cassava farmers and processors on inclusive business models (IBM). They use the IBM approach to analyze various business models and identify common priorities within potential business partners. Among the participants, John Awutey Agbenorxevi, Managing Director of Agricultural Engineers Ltd AGRICO, reported applying the analysis to upgrade his cassava-processing operations.

The project collaborated with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research to strengthen the capacity of small agribusinesses and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) on value addition and agribusiness management. This enabled 255 actors in the cassava value chain, including producers and processors, to hone their skills in entrepreneurship, cassava processing and marketing. To assess the potential demand of cassava in Ghana, the project conducted studies on the

institutional food procurement policy of Ghana and market demands for cassava. The studies highlighted opportunities for smallholders to supply institutions and the cassava industry, especially for cassava chips. In addition, the project facilitated business-to-business (B2B) meetings between producers and buyers that had been identified through the market research. These meetings provided a platform for five farmer organizations and four buyers to share production and market information and initiate a dialogue that will lead to contract arrangements. Taking advantage of the great market potential for cassava chips that emerged during the meetings, the project trained 90 farmers and processors on cassava-chip processing, in collaboration with buyers.

To improve access to financial services, the project trained 44 cassava stakeholders on agricultural value chain financing and improved access to financial information and investment opportunities in Ghana. A meeting between financial services staff and value chain actors briefed farmers on available financial products for agriculture and the conditions/requirements for accessing them.

#### Regional workshop on Cassava Production and Protection, Kumasi, Ghana



This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of FAO and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.



#### AFRICAN ROOTS AND TUBERS PROJECT

Agricultural Development Economics Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

[www.fao.org/in-action/african-roots-and-tubers](http://www.fao.org/in-action/african-roots-and-tubers)



Some rights reserved. This work is available under a CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO licence