
N2Africa Podcaster no. 6

April/May 2011

Introduction

When we launched the N2Africa newsletter in 2010 we ran a competition to give the newsletter a name. At the N2Africa planning meeting in February that was held in Harare, we were delighted to present a beautiful book entitled "Legumes of the World" to Professor Barbara Maasdorp, a forage legume specialist from the University of Zimbabwe who came up with the name N2Africa Podcaster. For those of you without a strong botanical background - the definition of a legume is a "plant with a pod" so we found the name highly appropriate. Barbara wrote after receiving her prize "Thank you so much for that wonderful book on legumes. I had no idea there were so many species. It's been giving me great pleasure browsing through it, and is also so good to be able to compare specimens from the bush with the photos of the same or a related species."



In this issue of the Podcaster we highlight two issues:

1. First we inform you about the N2Africa communication work stream, which has been developed by Alastair Simmons who many of you met at the Harare workshop.
2. Second we report on a wide-ranging set of activities of partners in the East, West and southern Africa.

We hope you enjoy reading of the developments and that this will encourage you to send in your own news items for inclusion in future issues.

Ken Giller

N2Africa communication

Alastair Simmons from UK based Strategic Communications, Project and Knowledge Management Consultancy, Taskscape Associates Ltd has joined the project as the acting work stream leader for Project Administration and Communications. Last year Alastair directed some videos to promote and explain the work of the project: and in February this year he facilitated the Annual Project Meeting in Harare. Here he explains briefly, why he believes good communication is key to the success of N2 Africa.

"N2Africa is an ambitious and geographically dispersed project to do Development (applied) Science at speed and volume. When I made the videos last year I saw high levels of commitment and enthusiasm from N2Africa teams, partners and collaborators. Without doubt, everyone means what they say about the purpose of the project.

This lines up well with a proverb by that most prolific of writers, Anon. It says that good communication is **'Meaning what you say and saying what you mean'**.

So I am also pleased to report that at the Harare meeting, it was well understood by everyone that turning a project idea like ours into reality needs more than commitment and enthusiasm. Saying what we mean both internally and externally is critical to our success.

I'm here to help with saying what we mean, in a clear and timely fashion. Particularly when we share questions, concepts, instructions between ourselves. Doing this faster and more fluently will help meet the challenges of speed and volume that we face on the project.

The Podcaster and N2Africa website provide information for our partners and collaborators, part of a large group of people interested in what we are doing and achieving. This group is growing all the time. Please help us all to keep in touch. At the many meetings you attend, please regularly collect the participant list and email a copy to N2Africa.office@wur.nl so that we can keep everyone up to date.

There is an intranet site for those directly involved. It supports the day to day operation of the project and is essential viewing. If you are in a N2 work stream or country team, please make your "log in" a TAB on your browser and use the site, it is your window on what is going on in the project. The N2 intranet is intended as the primary source of operational information and planning for the project: and its function will expand in the



coming months. Monitoring of people logging in” suggests people are not visiting frequently enough. Please let Marcel.Lubbers@wur.nl know immediately of any difficulties in accessing the site and we will find solutions for you. If you do not visit the site regularly you will miss vital messages and information.

Marcel Lubbers has designed a number of new features recently in response to user requests. I will be explaining these in a communications bulletin that I will issue shortly and post on the intranet. Please look out for that, it will also contain advice for the June / July project and donor reporting rounds”.

Alastair Simmons

Participatory evaluation of an agronomic trial, a farmer field day organized by Development Rural Durable (DRD)

In Rwanda, N2Africa has 5 partners, among which 1 research institution (ISAR), and 4 non-government organizations (NGOs), namely DRD, COCOF, EPR, and CARITAS, involved mostly in technology dissemination.

One way to facilitate technology dissemination is the participatory evaluation of agronomic trials established on - farm, from which farmers select the best technologies (e.g. crop varieties) to be tested in their individual farms in the following seasons. On February 17, 2011 in NEMBA action site, Burera district, a participatory evaluation of an agronomic trial on 5 varieties of climbing beans was organized by DRD in collaboration with ISAR scientists, local leaders, journalist and N2Africa beneficiary farmers.

The ISAR researcher in charge of the trial was also present. In total, 24 men and 44 women farmers participated in the evaluation.

On the agenda of the field day, the following points were highlighted:

1. Participatory evaluation of variety trial on climbing bean:

The climbing bean varieties in the agronomic trial were: Gasilida, RWV 1348, RWV 2070, Cab2, G2331(Mamesa).

From a brainstorming exercise facilitated by Jacques Hakizimana, DRD coordinator, farmers identified the following criteria to rank the varieties by preference.

- Large seed size was ranked first
- Seed color as a second criteria
- High grain yield followed
- Early maturity was ranked forth
- Resistance to heavy rains as last on this list

Using the above criteria, varieties were ranked as follow:

1. Gasilida
2. Cab2
3. RWV 1348
4. RWV 2070
5. G2331

Farmers selected 3 varieties - Gasilida, Cab2 and RWV 2070- for community based seed multiplication.

2. Community radio of Musanze (CRM)

DRD invited Musanze Radio in order to explain more about **N2africa activities** to many people, because this radio is heard in the whole country and even some parts of DRC and UGANDA. The community radio of Musanze does spot adverts (radio drama, announcements, greetings, entertainments), radio talk, communities are received easily and the radio collaborates with the



Variety Gasilida at podding stage, variety trial from Gakenke district

National radio, the public newspapers such as IMVAHO and La Nouvelle Releve. The Journalist called BIZIMUNGU Jean de Dieu followed the participatory evaluation of climbing bean varieties, and after interviewed the following people:

- First he interviewed **DRD Coordinator, Mr HAKIZIMANA Rwisebura Jacques** who introduced the N2Africa project. He explained the project description and vision of success, the role of different partners at all stages of the project implementation. Specifically the role of DRD which is mainly to work with communities to scale-up promising technology options, to assist farmers' groups in participatory evaluation of technologies tested, to organize field days, exchange visits and to lead training of Master farmers and other local facilitators.
- The second person interviewed was **NZEYIMANA Felix**, the ISAR researcher in charge of agronomic trials, who collaborates with DRD in research for biological nitrogen fixation by legume crops. Nzeyimana explained research and inoculant technology.
- Finally he interviewed two farmers, one man and one woman, **Mbonigaba Phocas** and **Julienne** respectively, who are members of the farmer group which was hosting the event. Both explained that they got new varieties of climbing bean from N2Africa, and they said that they were happy to choose themselves which varieties they have to promote. They also said that they were very proud to be the first to be able to transfer the technology to others, to disseminate the varieties chosen and they were able to make themselves the criteria of ranking varieties and to explain to new farmers who don't collaborate directly with N2Africa.



Group of women from Nemba action site, after the participatory evaluation of bean variety trial



Harvesting of the bean variety trial by ISAR scientists and DRD technicians before farmers final evaluation of the varieties



A farmer- Julienne, interviewed by the journalist from the community radio of Musanze

They told him that the varieties they have chosen have more yield. Phocas and Julienne said that they were very happy to have enough good quality seed to initiate a seed multiplication activity within the community, which will allow them the secure good quality seed for their own farms for next season, and also for dissemination to their neighbours.

This interview was aired on Community Radio Musanze the same day in the news.

Prepared by Jacques Hakizimana and Speciose Kantengwa.



Rapport de la formation sur les droits de la femme en matière d'accès à la propriété foncière et aux autres ressources liées à la terre, par COCOF dans le cadre du projet N2Africa (English translation below in blue)

Introduction

La femme rwandaise a été, depuis longtemps, victime d'une série d'injustices sociales générées par des lois, tant coutumières que modernes, qui la plaçaient dans une position d'infériorité par rapport à l'homme. Bien que, sur le plan juridique, certains changements ont été opérés dans le but de permettre à la femme rwandaise de jouir des mêmes droits que l'homme, force est de constater que beaucoup de femmes ignorent, jusqu'à présent, cette évolution des temps et du droit positif rwandais en leur faveur. La plupart des femmes rurales au Rwanda étant incapable de lire et de comprendre les textes juridiques, elles sont les plus touchées par cette ignorance et continuent, par conséquent, de subir les contrecoups des injustices sociales d'antan.

COCOF, en sa qualité d'organisation qui milite pour les droits de la femme sur le plan du développement économique et social a jugé indispensable de former cette dernière sur ses droits en matière d'accès à la propriété foncières et aux autres ressources liées à la terre. Il s'est focalisé sur la femme rurale étant donné que celle-ci vit essentiellement des fruits de la terre et qu'elle est la plus ignorante de ses droits.

Grâce au financement reçu dans le cadre du projet N2Africa, deux formations des formateurs, regroupant 80 femmes au total, ont été organisées et tenues par un consultant juriste recruté par COCOF. La première session de formation a eu lieu en date du 25 au 27 octobre 2010, et la deuxième a été organisée du 17 au 19 novembre 2010. Les participants venaient des secteurs de Musambira, Nyarubaka et Nyamiyaga, qui constituent les sites d'action du projet N2Africa.



Training on Land Rights for women from COCOF, 27 October 2010

Les objectifs poursuivis dans cette formation étaient les suivants :

- Objectif global:
 - Conscientiser les femmes bénéficiaires de COCOF dans le cadre du projet N2Africa, sur leurs droits en matière d'accès à la propriété foncière et aux autres ressources liées à la terre, en vue de renforcer leur capacité pour mieux bénéficier des bienfaits du projet N2Africa.
- Objectifs spécifiques:
 - Mettre en évidence et expliquer certaines lois coutumières qui ne permettaient pas à la femme rwandaise de jouir pleinement de ses droits en matière d'accès la propriété foncière et aux autres ressources liées à la terre ;
 - Expliquer des lois en vigueur qui permettent à la femme rwandaise de jouir des mêmes droits que l'homme en matière d'accès à la propriété foncière et aux ressources liées à la terre.

Le présent rapport sera essentiellement axé sur deux points: les thèmes traités et contenu de la formation ainsi que la production des outils de formation.



1. Les thèmes traités et contenu de la formation

Les injustices à l'égard de la femme commencent dès le fondement du foyer. C'est pourquoi le thème du mariage a été traité pendant la formation. Trois formes de mariage ont été mises en exergue et permettaient de montrer l'évolution du droit rwandais en matière de mariage.

- *Mariage coutumier*

C'est le mariage basé sur la coutume. Il ne découlait pas du libre consentement des mariés ; c'était plutôt les parents de la fille et ceux du garçon qui concluaient le contrat de mariage à la place de leurs enfants. Il était caractérisé par la polygamie et s'appliquait avant et sous l'empire colonial. Il était préféré parce que considéré comme une source de richesse : avoir plusieurs femmes permettait d'avoir beaucoup d'enfants et, par ricochet, une main-d'œuvre nombreuse pour cultiver ses terres et produire beaucoup. Il permettait aussi de constituer la grande famille, la puissance donc.

Une femme mariée sous le régime du droit coutumier ne pouvait hériter ni les biens de son mari, ni ceux de ses parents. En outre, la femme ne pouvait entrer dans les affaires de la famille qui la tenait comme étrangère. Il serait donc insensé de penser à la gestion foncière. Ses droits ne sont pas encore reconnus.

- *Mariage religieux*

L'arrêté du 5 juillet 1948 reconnaissait le mariage de certaines religions. Cette forme de mariage a été reconnue par la Constitution de 1962. Celle-ci plaçait le mariage religieux au même titre que le mariage civil monogamique. Donc un homme pour une seule femme. Cependant, à partir du 20/12/1978, les juridictions rwandaises ne reconnaissent plus les mariages coutumiers et religieux.

- *Mariage civil monogamique*

Avec le mariage monogamique, on remarque la volonté manifeste de l'Etat de placer la femme dans une position confortable dans la famille. Néanmoins, des entraves ne manquent pas qui bloquent son épanouissement économique, social et culturel. Aussi la part de l'Etat s'avère nécessaire pour aborder le problème d'accès de la femme à la propriété foncière et aux autres ressources liées à la terre.

Bien que la Constitution ait approuvé le mariage d'un homme pour une femme, elle n'a pourtant pas précisé comment il doit se faire.

Le code de la famille l'explique clairement: «*le mariage est célébré devant l'officier de l'état civil du domicile de l'un des fiancés ou de la résidence des futurs époux*» (art 170, al 2) et l'article 169 précise que seul le mariage civil monogamique est reconnu par la loi.

Les formes de mariage vues précédemment essayaient d'introduire la femme dans la famille. Le constat est qu'il n'était pas facile de démarrer le processus. Le mariage civil poursuit avec du nouveau : «*les époux ont les mêmes droits et les mêmes devoirs pendant le mariage et lors du divorce*». Ceci permettra cette fois-ci d'entrer dans la gestion.

- o **Du nouveau avec le mariage civil monogamique**

La femme est protégée par l'article 24 de la loi n°22/99 du 12/11/1999 qui stipule que les époux se partagent à parts égales les dépenses et les recettes.

Tous les êtres humains sont égaux devant la loi. Ils ont droit, sans aucune distinction, à une égale protection (art 16 de la Constitution).

La femme doit saisir le sens de l'article 11 de la Constitution qui dispose que «*tous les Rwandais naissent et demeurent libres et égaux en droits et en devoirs*».

2. Production des outils de formation

On l'a bien souligné, la formation dispensée était une formation des formateurs et cela implique la mise à la disposition de ceux-ci des outils de formation. C'est dans ce sens que, après la formation, des modules de formation destinés aux bénéficiaires de la formation, ont été produits. Cent modules sont déjà disponibles. Des textes de lois contenant certains articles évoqués dans ce rapport ont été également photocopiés et mis à la disposition des formateurs.



Conclusion

Dans le droit positif rwandais, il existe des lois qui permettent à la femme de jouir des mêmes droits que l'homme. Les participants en ont pris conscience et s'en sont réjouis. L'article 26 de la Constitution, qui a retenu l'attention des participants, ouvre à la femme rwandaise l'accès à la propriété foncière et aux autres ressources liées à la terre. Aussi donne-t-il une solution aux évoqués au cours de la formation et auparavant.

Recommandation formulée par les participants

Il serait mieux d'inviter les maris aux prochaines formations de ce genre pour que homme et femme aient la même vision et compréhension des lois qui protègent la femme. Les remarques et observations formulées à l'endroit des hommes pourraient être profitables et bénéfiques aux ménages.

Préparé par Semugaza Tharcisse, Coordinateur de COCOF

English version:

Training on women's rights concerning access to civil rights and other resources related to land, by COCOF in the perspective of the N2Africa project

Introduction

Rwandese women have, since long, been victim of a series of social injustices generated by the law, resulting from customary laws as well as from statutory laws that placed them on an inferior position compared to men. Although, on the level of jurisdiction, some changes have been achieved with the aim to allow the Rwandese woman to enjoy the same rights as men, one can only observe that many women, until now, do not know of these developments. Most of the women living in rural areas in Rwanda are not able to read and to understand legal texts. As a result they suffer the disadvantages resulting from social injustice.

COCOF, in its quality as organization that is fighting for women's rights in the area of economic and social development has shown to be indispensable in informing and training women on their rights to access to civil rights and other resources related to land.

Thanks to budget received from the N2Africa project, two sessions of training for 80 women in total, were trained by a consultant lawyer that was recruited by COCOF. The first session of this training took place from 25-27 October 2010 and the second one was organized from 17-19 November 2010. The participants came from sectors of Musambira, Nyarubaka and Nyamiyaga of Kamonyi district, which are the action sites where the N2Africa project is active.

The objectives aimed at in this training are:

- Overall objective:
 - Make the women benefitting from COCOF in the perspective of the N2Africa project, aware of their right concerning access to civil rights and other resources related to land, with a view to better use their capacities to benefit more from the positive impact of the N2Africa project.
- Specific objectives:
 - To give special attention to and explain certain customer laws that don't allow Rwandese women to optimally use their right concerning access to civil rights and other resources related to land;
 - Explain the current law that grants Rwandese women the same rights as men concerning access to civil rights and other resources related to land.

The current report will essentially focus on two issues: the themes discussed and continuation of the education as well as production of teaching material.

1. The themes discussed and continuation of the teaching

The injustice with respect to women started from the basis of the household. That is why the issue of marriage is part of the teaching. Three versions of marriage have been discussed and made it possible to show the evolution of the women's right within marriage.



- *Traditional*

This is the marriage based on customary laws. It does not result from free consent of the spouse, but most of the time the parents of the girl and those of the boy that negotiate the marriage contract on their behalf. It was characterized by polygamy and was the usual form of marriage before and during the colonial era. It was preferred, because it was seen as source of wealth: having more wives made it possible to have a lot of children and indirectly a large number of workers for cultivating the soil and producing a lot. It also gave the opportunity to establish a large family, and in such a way, power.

A woman married under the conditions of this regime of customary law could not inherit any of the possessions of her husband, nor from his parents. Besides that, the woman was not allowed to take part in the family's affairs while the family treated her as outsider. It therefore would be unacceptable to think of land management. Their rights are still not recognized.

- *Religious marriage*

The resolution of July 5th 1948 recognized the marriage of specific/certain religions. This form of marriage was recognized in the constitution of 1962. This qualified the religious marriage the same status as the monogamous civil marriage. So one man marrying a single woman. However, from 20/12/1978, the Rwandese law does not recognize the marriages based on custom and the religious marriages anymore.

- *Monogamous civil marriage*

With the monogamous marriage, the clear wish of the state to place women in a comfortable position within the family is demonstrated. In spite of this, there are still impediments to economic, social and cultural development. Also contribution of the state has proven to be necessary to tackle the problem of access to civil rights and other resources related to land.

Although the constitution had approved the marriage of one man with one woman, it still did not make clear how it should be interpreted/should be acted.

The family code explains it clearly: «*the marriage is celebrated before the officer of the Register Office of the place of residence of one of the fiancées or of the place of residence of the future spouses*» (art 170, al 2) and article 169 states precisely that only the civil marriage is recognized by the law.

The forms of marriage seen before tried to integrate the woman in the family. The overall picture is that it was not easy to speed up this process. The civil marriage aims at the new phrase: «*the spouses have the same rights during the marriage and at the moment of divorce*». This will allow them this time to enter in the management.

- o Something new in the monogamous civil marriage

Women are protected by article 24 of law no.°22/99 of 12/11/1999 that stipulates that spouses equally share costs and profits.

All human beings are equal in the eyes of the law. They have right, without any exception, to equal protection (art. 16 of the constitution).

Women should make themselves familiar with the meaning of article 11 of the constitution that prescribes that «all born and living free in Rwanda have the same rights and the same obligations».

2. Production of teaching material

It is well emphasized, that the training given was a training of trainers and that implies to get teaching materials at their disposal. Likewise articles containing law texts which had been discussed during the training, were photocopied and given to the participants as a tool for further training to other women in their respective sectors.

Conclusion

In the written Rwandese law, rules exist that permit women to have the same rights as men. The participants have taken knowledge of that and are glad about that. Article 26 of the constitution that was in the centre of attention of the participants, gives Rwandese women access to civil rights and other resources related to land.

Recommendations formulated by the participants

It would be better to invite the husbands as well for further training sessions to make sure men and women have the same vision and understanding of laws protecting the women. The remarks and observations written down with respect to men could be profitable and wholesome to households.

Prepared by Semugaza Tharcisse, coordinator of COCOF

Field days in Malawi

N2Africa Malawi has conducted field days from the 11th February 2011 to 5th May 2011. The field days were attended by N2Africa farmers, CIAT as well (the IFAD project staff), DAES and WVI as partners, the Government Departments, Chiefs and local people. The field days act as a forum for farmers and stakeholders to interact and learn from each other on the crops that have been demonstrated. The field days targeted demonstration plots by Lead Farmers, but in other places even the plots by the members of the group lead by the Lead Farmer were also visited as a support to the technologies being showcased at the main demonstration plot.



Lead Farmer explaining on Soybean Production at a Field Day in Dowa



Farmers at a Cowpea plot during a Field Day in Salima

So far, 13 field days have been conducted in 4 districts (Dedza, Dowa, Salima and Ntcheu). Mchinji and Lilongwe Districts are yet to conduct their field days. The field days aimed at providing feedback on the technologies that N2Africa is implementing with the farmers are. They are also aimed at imparting more skills and knowledge to the farmers on Good Agriculture Practices for the four legume crops (Cowpea, Soybean, Groundnut and Bean) being promoted by N2Africa.

Many lessons have been learnt from the field days. These include variety performances with regards to time of planting, dry spells, fertilizer application, inoculation, and many more. Many farmers have also appreciated the effects of nodulation on Soybean especially in Salima District. Farmers have also learnt that for better markets they have to grow legume crops by variety like Soybean. Most farmers never knew that Soybean comes in many varieties as well.

Observations during the field days include the better performance of fertilized beans (Phaseolus Bean) with TSP fertilizer over non-fertilized ones. The pods of the fertilized beans looked very strong and healthy; and the beans inside filled the pods and look very healthy. Napilira is a preferred



Farmers and Partners in a Groundnut Plot during a Field Day in Dedza



variety to Maluwa in Dedza in terms of outlook and no of pods per plant. On Soybean, all the varieties distributed have outdone the local seed fetched by the Lead Farmers in terms of number of pods per plant, quality of the plants, quality of the pods and physical nodulation. The fertilized groundnut (with TSP and D Compound) is maturing later than the farmer's check where no fertilizer has been applied. The Cowpea variety of IT81E-16 has also outdone the local one as well as Sudan 1 in almost of all plots. The farmers are appraising this new variety of cowpea in terms of number of pods per plant and the healthiness of the Cowpeas. It is a high yielding cowpea variety.

Farmers have requested if pesticides would be easily accessed by the farmers to curb pests that start destroying the crop while in the field. Soybean farmers have requested for Inoculants to be accessed easily also. Markets have been requested at all field days.

Gloria Kasongo

N2Africa partnering with ISFM

The N2Africa project is partnering with a new project called "Increasing smallholder farm productivity, income, and health through widespread adoption of Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) in the Great Lake Regions and Southern Africa." The leader of this project in Zimbabwe and Malawi is Nelson Mango (the person on the right with a big hat). He visited several N2Africa research and dissemination sites in Malawi and Zimbabwe and held discussions with several of our dissemination partners on how the project he is leading can assist with strengthening the marketing skills of Community Based Organizations that are members of the N2Africa dissemination team. Here he is shown discussing various options with Joseph Mhango, N2Africa Research supervisor (left of middle), Mr Chikoti, extension agent with Malawi Government



Extension Department (far left) and Mr Kalolokesya, Coordinator of agricultural extension development in the Ministry of agriculture (second from right) of Malawi.

Nelson Mango

Dissemination Update from West Kenya

BNF dissemination activities in west Kenya are entering their second year and are built around some great new legume varieties, recently commercialized rhizobium inoculant and some key accompanying technologies. During its first year, the project mobilized the efforts of 14 grassroots farmer associations and local NGOs to install 87 grain legume technology demonstrations and conduct 3410 on-farm BNF technology tests. During the second year, the number of collaborators will increase to 23 grassroots groups and 4000 new farmers examining soybean (SB 19 and 24) and climbing bean (cv. Tamu). MEA Ltd., a Kenyan-based fertilizer company, has licensed production of BIOFIX inoculant from the University of Nairobi MIRCEN and is meeting the project's needs through a series of advance orders. MEA is also blending a fertilizer formulated by the project for symbiotic legumes (SYMPAL 0-23-16+) composed of 7 parts TSP, 7 parts SSP, 5 parts KCl and one part MgSO₄. This blend is packaged into two kg bags and distributed with one kg of legume seed and 20 g of BIOFIX inoculant to farmers joining the project. Clearly, all the necessary components are in place to promote BNF and grain legume enterprise and the challenge before us is to assist farmers to adopt these technologies on a large scale.

An exciting new dimension to the activities in west Kenya is the recent participation of Promasidor Ltd., a company that produces a textured meat substitute SOSSI at a factory outside of Nairobi. In the past, Promasidor has relied entirely upon imported soybeans but recently announced two tenders for locally-supplied soy, 3,000 tons for July 2011 and 10,000 for February 2012. It has recruited a local company Smart Logistics to arrange for collection, transportation and quality assurance. Soybeans must contain >20% crude protein, <18% oil, <10% low-quality seed (e.g. off-color, insect damaged) and < 1% foreign matter. Interestingly, the varieties selected last year for promotion, together with some sensible post-harvest handling by farmers, easily meet



these specifications while several of Kenya's older varieties contain too much oil to form a solid product. With some good fortune and suitable varieties, we now have a reliable market to help drive farmer adoption.

Much of our dissemination efforts over the next year will be directed toward helping our cooperators participate in the Promasidor soy tender. One group of 400 farmers, led by Kleen Homes and Gardens in Butare, bulked 10 kg of seed each, and planted $\frac{1}{2}$ acre (2000 m²) of soybean this season and are expecting to produce 100 tons of soy worth \$38,000. N2Africa assisted them by providing inoculants and extension literature. The Kenya Soybean Farmers Association (KESOFA) has organized a similar effort. N2Africa is also helping these groups to design post-harvest protocols that meet industry standards and to establish efficiently operating collection points. Our larger goal is to assist thousands of more farmers to bulk seed in the current season and then participate in the larger tender next growing season. Briefly, a farmer receiving one kg of seed this season plants 200 m² producing 20 kg of soybeans that are planted the following season on one acre (4000 m²) producing about 750 kg of soybeans worth \$280 at the local collection point. In this way, we can produce 3000 tons of soybean worth \$1.13 million. Incidentally, Smart Logistics has established an innovative repayment system based upon mobile telephone money transfer, relieving us of the headache of supervising cash flows.

That is all for now from the West Kenya BNF technology dissemination team. In the next issue we will update readers on the soybean tenders, our efforts to promote climbing beans among resource-limited households and how we respond to the outbreak of pest and disease on our improved legume varieties.

Paul L. Woomer,

Inoculant Dissemination Specialist

Field Days in Zimbabwe

The months of March and April earmarked the harvesting season in Zimbabwe and farmers who participated in the N2Africa Project showed their appreciation and how much they gain the project by organising field days in their respective Districts and wards.

An example is ward 18 in Guruve district where a field day was organised through CLUSA – ZAPAD (Cooperative League for the USA – Zimbabwe Agricultural Production and Agribusiness Development Project), an N2Africa partner organisation working in the district. The field day was hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Bopoto, lead farmers in the N2Africa project.

The field was attended by 70 people and 50 of them were women. Government departments were also invited to attend and learn about the new technologies that are being used in the production of legumes. The Department of AGRITEX (Agricultural Technical and Extension Services) which is a technical department in the Ministry of Agriculture in Zimbabwe assisted with technical advice for the production of the legumes and also gave lectures at the field day.



An N2Africa learning centre in Guruve Zimbabwe showing the soyabean crop (Photo Isaac Chabata)



Mr Peter Mukwenya showing off his two Sugar bean varieties (Photo Isaac Chabata)



In other districts field days were also hosted and farmers in the N2Africa project took turns to explain other farmers how they had benefitted from the use of inoculants in the production of legume crops and how they had learnt about attainable production levels of legume crops. It was encouraging to hear that farmers who participated in the N2Africa project had benefitted from the knowledge, practice and increased production of legumes. One farmer, Mr Peter Mukwenya pictured left showed the clear differences in performances between two sugarbean varieties that he had planted in his field. The varieties he planted were Speckled Eye and Red Cardinal.

Isaac Chabata

In Zimbabwe, Isaac Chabata has recently joined the N2Africa team as Farm Liaison Officer.

Isaac is an agronomist with more than 10 years of experience in rural development, food security and agricultural projects. Isaac has worked for the Department of Agriculture Technical Research and Extension in the Ministry of Agriculture in Zimbabwe. He has also worked for the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), USAID – FEWS NET, and the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society. He has experience in all the stages of agricultural and soil fertility projects, he has provided a wide range of trainings for farmers and extension workers and has experience in research, M&E and impact assessment.

He holds a Bachelor of Science honours degree in Agriculture, Crop Science from the University of Zimbabwe, a Diploma in Agriculture, a Certificate in Agriculture, and an Executive Certificate in Project and Program Monitoring and Evaluation. Isaac Chabata is happily married and has three kids.

Judith de Wolf

N2Africa Ghana Planning Meeting Held

In anticipation of the imminent arrival of the rainy season in northern Ghana any time from the month of May, the annual N2Africa planning meeting was held to develop implementation work plan for the forth-coming season. The meeting was held in Tamale, the capital of the Northern Region, on 28-29 March 2011. A major issue of discussion during the meeting was how to effectively link farmers to market. Accordingly, the meeting had a large representation from non-governmental organisations and producer groups led by Catherine Phiri of ADVANCE, a USAID-funded project that facilitates linkages with various value chain actors to help them upgrade and expand their businesses. Also in attendance were representatives of Kharma Farms, Candell company, Savanna Seeds Company and IFDC (International Fertiliser Development Centre).

A key highlight of the meeting was the address by the Director of the Savanna Agricultural Research Institute (SARI), who reiterated the interest that Government, farmers and other stakeholders in Ghana have shown in N2Africa activities and the expectation for a resounding impact. He enjoined N2Africa to increase their visibility by scaling up activities and engaging the media.

Highlights of the results presented at the meeting showed that despite the late delivery of inputs, the various technologies promoted were well received by farmers. Additionally, the Satellite Farmer concept facilitated the scaling up of dissemination activities at minimal cost. Inoculation led to soybean yield increase of up to 36%, with average yields of about 2000 kg/ha compared to 1,300 kg/ha in non-inoculated plots.

Dissemination activities in Ghana this year are expected to reach at least 10,000 farmers in three regions and about 8 districts. A major challenge will be to deliver inputs timely, given the vast terrain that will be covered across the 3 regions in northern Ghana.

Abdullahi Bala

Nigeria Holds Annual Planning Meeting

The N2Africa 2011 planning meeting was held in Kano, Nigeria, on 23-24 March 2011. The meeting was attended by about 50 participants, made up of staff from N2Africa and partners from international organisations, governmental and non-governmental organisations, research institutes, universities and the



private sector. Participants reviewed the activities of the previous year, drawing lessons from challenges, successes and failures and developed an implementation work plan for the 2011 season.

Results of the dissemination activities show that inoculated soybean yield on demonstration plots averaged 1240 kg/ha compared with about 790 kg/ha in the control plots. All the farmer groups, without exception, chose the technology with the combination of inoculant and phosphorus as their first choice during the technology evaluation session. Among the 8 soybean varieties disseminated, TGx 1904-6F, and TGx 1935-3F were the most preferred by farmers in Kaduna State, while the early maturing variety, TGx 1835-10E, was rated the best by farmers in Kano State. Plant characteristics considered in rating the varieties were plant vigour, plant biomass, pod/seed size, uniformity in flowering, and, in the case of Kano, earliness.

Cowpea variety IT90K-277-2 was selected by most farmers in Kano State for its earliness, and high grain and stover yields. Variety IT97K-499-35 was selected by other farmers for its striga resistance. Average yield of IT90K-277-2 on farmers' fields was 1,420 kg/ha compared to 900 kg/ha by the local variety and about 1200 kg/ha and 1110 kg/ha by IT89KD-391 and IT97K-499-35, respectively. In Kaduna State, IT90K-277-2 was the most preferred variety in northern Kaduna, while the medium maturity variety IT89KD-288 was the best in southern Kaduna.

Groundnut variety RMP 12 had the best performance in both Kano and Kaduna for its relatively large grain and stover yields and ease of harvesting. It was followed in Kano State by Samnut 22 and Samnut 23 for yield and relative resistance to drought and aphids.

One of the major lessons learnt was the need to get inputs deployed to farmers in good time. Late arrival of inputs last season led to farmers reserving degraded lands for N2Africa activities and this had a profound impact on the yields obtained in both research and dissemination plots. An emerging issue is the poor response of crops to fertilisers in degraded soils. Nutrient omission trials are set to be conducted by graduate students to find out the underlying causes for the non-responsiveness of crops to fertilisers on such soils.

New partners that N2Africa has identified for collaboration, especially in the dissemination of inoculant technology, include the Kano State Agricultural and Rural Development Agency (KNARDA), International Fertiliser Development Centre (IFDC), AGRA Soil Health Programme (SHP) and Sub-Sahara Challenge Programme (KKM).

Dissemination activity in 2011 in Nigeria is expected to reach at least 10,000 farmers, with 90 extension agents working in 60 communities and 15 Local Government Areas. Sixty percent of the farmers are expected to work with soybean.

Abdullahi Bala

TechnoServe Boletim Informativo Soja-nr.2

The Soya team from TechnoServe sent us their [newsletter](#) and [supplement](#) in Portuguese.

The Podcaster is published each month – we look forward to receiving news and contributions – particularly from partners. Please send in contributions by the third week of each month. Contact address for this newsletter is: N2Africa.office@wur.nl

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