

UCA - Agricultural Cluster Development Project Inception Training of Trainers



State Minister for Cooperatives at the official closing of the training for Trainees in Seeta along side officials from Ministry of Agriculture Animal industry and Fisheries

From 13th to 19th July 2020, Uganda Cooperative Alliance in partnership with Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries organized a one weeklong inception training for trainers who will train Farmer organizations and Agricultural Cooperatives dealing in five enterprises that's Coffee, Rice, Beans, Maize and Casava across the country.

The purpose of the project is to increase productivity, production and marketable volumes of rice, maize, beans, cassava and coffee commodities in 57 districts. In the 57 districts, ACDP targets to work with 450,000 households organized in 30,000 farmer groups, 3000 RPOs, 300 Area Commodity Cooperative enterprises.

The Agriculture Cluster Development Project (ACDP) thus has “farmer empowerment and organizational strengthening” as one of its key output areas to enable farmers in groups/cooperatives access E-vouchers, undertake collective action to be able to participate in value chains, support input and output bulking, invest in value addition activities, attract profitable market linkages, and improve their internal resource mobilization strategies to support investments inter alia

Under the project, UCA was tasked to strengthen 30,000 farmer groups spread in 57 districts. UCA will form and or strengthen the capacities of new and existing farmer organisations where these do not exist and or are weak so that the effectively participate in the e-voucher scheme.

UCA will also facilitate the establishment and strengthening of group financing schemes like the weekly savings and inter-loaning systems among the participating farmer groups to support the uptake and utilization of e-vouchers.



UCA facilitator Mrs. Justine Ssesanga monitoring the Trainees during the group discussion

This will be achieved through a stepwise training approach involving centered training for key staff at district level as supervisors, training sub-county level staff (Agriculture officers, Community Development Officers (CDOs) and Community Based Facilitators (CBF)) who have been mentored alongside UCA staff during the implementation process for sustainability purposes.

Other partners including Enterprise Uganda are working on the business component. The project fits well in the NDP III with a theme of “Sustainable Agro-industrialization for inclusive growth, employment and sustainable wealth creation”.

The ACDP project in brief is supporting farmers:

- To increase production, productivity of marketable volumes of the five enterprises: Beans Coffee, Maize Rice and Cassava
- Through their Cooperatives/farmer groups have been supported with storage facilities.
- To access high quality inputs like fertilizers, seeds etc. using the E-Voucher management system. this is aimed at increasing production and productivity

- With post-harvest handling facilities like tarplines aimed at improving the quality of farmers' output for better returns
- With business skills to be able to migrate from subsistence to commercial farming.
- To collectively aggregate their produce through the warehouse receipt system for better prices and hence eliminate persistent exploitation of farmers by the middlemen.
- Access to affordable financing through SACCOs, VSLAs and formal financial intermediaries as they prepare to put in place a cooperative bank.



During the training, the trainees were taken through a 5module course to support in forming and strengthening Farmer organizations. Module 1 provided an understanding of what a farmer group is, the status of farmer groups in the project farming communities, why farmer groups matter and why ACDP works with farmer groups. It further outlines the criteria for selection of farmer groups to participate in the e-voucher system of ACDP and how the farmer groups can benefit from the project.

Module 2 guides the identification of the farmer group core members and the business idea. Module 3 guided the trainees to establish the feasibility of business idea.

Module 4, the trainees were taken through preparing the business plan.

Module 5 provides guidance on the organizational set-up of farmer group.



At the official closing of the training the State Minister for Cooperatives Hon. Fredrick Gume Ngobi appreciated the World Bank for supporting Farmers across the country and also told the Trainees to take up the project seriously as it will act as a land mark.