

Outsmarting harsh climate to produce bananas in Central Uganda

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'Meet' Mr Mbidde Elias!



- Lives in Nakaseta village
- Kyetume Parish
- Ziropwe Sub-County
- Luweero District, Central Uganda



Project context



UFAAS received a sub grant from the CAADPXP4 through the AFAAS to implement a project on Climate Smart Agriculture

One of the activities was to map CSA activities



Mr Mbidde



Small scale mixed farmer

- Bananas (cooking banana)
- Goats, pigs
- Chicken
- Other food crops

Income generating activities

- Brick laying
- Casual labourer in the area
 - Agricultural labourer



Status of banana farming in the area



On a broader outlook:

Despite being the staple food in the area, productivity was very low

Most farmers believed that the soil in the area was not conducive for banana production.

Note: Average ideal yield: 54-54 tonnes/ha/yr (Tumuhimbise et al, 2015)

Typically,

- the bunches were very small,
- the fruiting would take longer-1-1.5 years,
- stools would rise to the soil surface after 1-2 years
- the plantations in the area would die out in less than 6 years.







The game changer

He joined Zirobwe Agaliawamu
Agribusiness Training Association-
a producer organization

Attended a farmer exchange visits
organized by ZAABTA in Bundo
village (about 6km away)

Saw a healthy looking banana
plantation



In his words....

“When I saw the banana plantation I said to myself: I am not lame, I have two hands, two legs and a brain, why can’t I have a plantation like this? That night, I did not sleep. I spent the whole night thinking how I can go about having a banana plantation as healthy as what I saw at Nehemiah’s”.

Elias said



Action!

He established a new plantation where he applied the learnt practices.

- Started with 1 acre



CSA practices



Mulching

- Retain water in soil
- Suppresses weeds



CSA practices



CSA practices



Water bunds to collect run off



Water bunds-collect runoff



CSA practices



Dug deeper and wider holes

- To protect roots and collect water



Good practices continued



Farm yard manure

- Applied manure to improve fertility,

Good practices continued



Planted/reserved trees

- Provide leaf fall nutrients and
- act as windbreakers,

The changes he observed...

These practices quickened the fruiting of the bananas (at 7-8 months),

Gave bigger bunches, and less weeds, improved soil conditions.

The status of his farm made him popular and a model farmer



Benefits of the Climate Smart Agriculture technology:

- Cash
- Respect and
- Creates opportunities for Farmers



Scaling climate smart technologies beyond the Mbidde family

- Mbidde family has become a model within the community. He provides services for banana plantation set up and management.



Mr Mbidde is optimistic

While he hasn't yet sold many bunches, Elias is optimistic that adopting climate-smart agriculture practices gives high yields, and benefits him beyond food.

The plantation has made him popular, and he has used proceeds from the farm and advisory services to mobilise more mulch, pay school fees for his children, and buy DSTV.

He is very confident that his family will always produce well on healthy soil, and that they will apply all the technologies learned in various aspects of farming for increased production and productivity at his farm, resilience to climatic shocks and variability, and reduction of greenhouse emissions.



Mbidde is a happy man!

“Everytime time I pray, I ask God to bless Nehemiah who was willing to share with me knowledge of producing bananas amidst harsh weather conditions, and ZAABTA which organized the visit. I am now a respected man in this village, and I even have rich friends who come to me requesting to visit my farm”



What do we learn?

- We need role models-the farmer exchange visit worked
- Information sharing is KEY



Climate Smart Agriculture pays!



Acknowledgement



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Thank you



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