

TLIII PROJECT ON GROUNDNUTS; CHANGING LIVES OF SMALL HOLDER FAMERS IN NORTHERN UGANDA.

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Loyokwo farmers group has discovered fortune in groundnut seed production to improve their lives.

This 30 member group with over 70% women found in Alero Sub-county Nwoya district in Northern Uganda started groundnut seed production last year on a one acre piece of land but their interest for the crop is only growing every other day.

Last year 2016, a team of National Agricultural Research organization scientists supported by the Tropical Legumes project now in its third phase (TLIII) led by Dr. Kalule David Okello, identified and trained members of this group in groundnut seed production with SERENUT 5,9 and 14 as their preferred varieties.

During a monitoring visit to the group by the project coordinator Dr Chris Ojiewo and the Seed Systems Specialist Dr Essegbemom Akpo from ICRISAT Nairobi ,the visitors applauded the farmers' group for their hard work "your garden is super standard, very few seed companies can beat this" said Dr Ojiewo

These farmers chose not to sell off the harvest from last season but rather to increase their acreage to ten acres and hope to expand further.

During the interaction, farmers could comfortably tell how their knowledge in groundnuts seed production has been improved and have

put into practice technologies like proper field preparation, planting in rows, spacing, timely weeding and pest control among others

According to Dr Kalule David Okello the head groundnuts improvement programme in Uganda, access to improved groundnut seed in Uganda has been one of the challenges to groundnuts production. This is because very few seed companies are interested in producing the seed since they are not hybrids.

This three year project that started last year 2016 to run up to 2018 will help improve access to groundnut seed especially to small holder farmers across the country to improve their incomes and livelihoods.

The Tropical legume III project is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and implemented in collaboration with ICRISAT Nairobi.