COMMUNITY SEED BANKS FOR SEED SECURITY, FOOD SECURITY, INCOME AND RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

DID YOU KNOW WE HAVE COMMUNITY SEED BANKS IN UGANDA?

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What are Community Seed banks??

- Seed stores managed by farmers in particular communities
- The seeds kept in this store are produced by farmers in those communities after being trained in good quality seed production techniques
- Farmers borrow the seed at the start of the rainy season and return it after harvesting with interest in form of extra quantity of the amount of seed borrowed
- The seed returned has to meet quality standards of the seed bank as set by the farmers in that community

Why are Community Seed banks important??

- Farmers used to buy poor quality seeds from markets, shops, neighbors etc.
- Farmers make a choice of the types of seeds they want which they lacked before
- Farmers lacked choices because there were few varieties available
- Farmers used to move long distances looking for seeds but now the stores are within the community
- Some types of seeds had totally disapeared from the communities

Some of the Benefits from Seed Banks

- Since its establishment in 2010, for example,; Kiziba/ Kabwohe seed bank has increased common bean seed types in the area from 27 to 69 types and benefited 1027 farmers.
- Over 500 households are accessing good quality seeds annually from the three seed banks
- The farmers' bean yields have improved by 50% as a result of planting good quality seeds from the bank
- The increase in yields has led to improved food security and improved access to bean protein by households
- There is improved income from the sale of beans
- Beans are grown together with bananas and they fix nitrogen which improves the soil and the yields of bananas
- The co-operation and social harmony has increased in the families due to the seed bank making them work together which has improved the general social cohesion of the communities
- Over 60% of the seed bank beneficiaries are women and this has empowered them financially and are now able to take on leadership roles
- Seed banks promote farmers rights of; saving , using and exchanging seed, sharing benefits and participating in decision making

Seed banks have brought back seed types that had disapeared from communities through linking with the National Gene/ Seed bank of NARO

Once trained and motivated, farmers can play a lead role in supplying different types of good quality seed of crops like beans through community seed banking.

COME ON, LET US PROMOTE COMMUNITY SEED BANKING

Seed banks provide seed security; keep different types of seeds in their habitat enabling them to adjust to the changing weather conditions and provide choices of different types of seeds to farmers. All these enable farmers fit into the changing climate of today such that they can continue to harvest despite that challenge.

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