



MIRACLE changing lives in northern Mozambique

Malema District of Nampula Province in northern Mozambique is tagged by most people as the silo of the province. It is around 350 km from Nampula town. It supplies onions, garlic, tomatoes, and other vegetables to Nampula and other districts of neighboring provinces such as Cabo del Gado and Zambezia. Most farmers produce a variety of vegetables twice a year, one rainfed and the other irrigated.

Soybean has never been produced in the district until the MIRACLE project introduced it during the 2011/2012 cropping season. Mr Henrique Hilário Avela was one of the six farmers who agreed to work with the project by hosting demonstration and participatory varietal selection (PVS) trials in his farm. He produced mainly onions and other vegetables as cash crops. Although he had heard of soybean from the radio and farmers from Gurue (a district of Zambezia province) before, he never had interest in trying the crop.

"I used to cultivate 1.5 ha of land for onions and other vegetables twice a year. This is my main source of income. I know how to grow it and I know where to sell it. I was earning a maximum of 35,000 Meticais (roughly US\$1,200) every year," Mr Avela narrated. "I did not want to try soybean because I did not know anything about it. After the introduction of the MIRACLE project in September 2011, I agreed, with some hesitance, to try the crop since I was told that IITA will guide me on things that I need to do. I have a big piece of land and I agreed to cultivate 10 ha for this crop. I had many questions in my mind and I had no idea what the outcome would be of this 'risk' I committed myself into," he continued.

MIRACLE provided 500 kg of four different improved IITA varieties, plowing, and labor for the first weeding. Mr Avela provided land, labor for second weeding and harvesting, and farm supervision. From

the 10 ha, he harvested 15.7 tons, 40% of which he returned to IITA as agreed. From the remaining 60% (9.42 t), he kept some as seeds for the 2012/2013 cropping season, a little for home consumption, and sold the rest at 40 Mts/kg. "My joy was immeasurable as I was seeing this huge amount of money for the very first time in my entire life. I couldn't believe it was mine," he recounted with a big smile. "I have shown you the house where I and my family used to live in the village. After realizing I had that much money, I and my wife decided to build a house in a piece of land in town which my parents gave me long time ago. We managed to build a three-bedroom house, and we will paint as soon as this cropping season (referring to that of 2012/2013) is over," he continued with excitement.

Now convinced of the economic potential of soybean, he even expanded the land area he cultivated during the last cropping season to 20 ha. As of July, he was still threshing his harvest and is expecting roughly 20 t of certified soybean seeds. "I will be a millionaire in no time. The next time you will visit me, you will see my retail shop in town, you will find my house fully furnished and beautifully painted, you will see my truck parked in my yard," he said seriously. "I have 100 ha of land. I will continue producing soybean and buy myself a tractor so I can cultivate the entire area," he said.

Mr Avela is not alone. Mr Paulo Potocosse shares the same joy. He cultivated only 1.5 ha out of his 150-ha land holding because tractor service for land preparation was not easy to find. From the 1.5 ha, he harvested 2.5 t and earned 36,000 Mts (roughly \$1,200). From this, he bought a motorbike and expanded his house (added two more bedrooms). He is using the motorbike to buy and sell fuel in the village. "Apart from the fuel business, I use it to help other community members during emergencies," he said with a sense of pride.



Mr Potocosse and wife in front of expanded house (right half is the old small house; left half are the newly added two bedrooms)

During the last cropping, he cultivated 2 ha and his wife also cultivated 1 ha.

Supporting Mr Avela's and Mr Potocosse's claims, Celestino and Bonifacio (also lead farmers and leaders in their respective communities) declared "This project has changed the entire Malema district. Until 2011, people think only of maize, onion, and a few vegetables. After seeing and experiencing the benefits from soybean both economically and healthwise, people have become wiser. Most of us are now growing maize only for home consumption and devote the rest of the land to soybean. Most farmers are now trying to legalize their lands because even a small parcel with soybean can improve their lives," Celestino said. "Before, we just cultivate our land. Now, we have seen that soybean production can change our lives and we are now treating it as a serious business. Not many of us have the financial resources to cultivate bigger land sizes. If we really want to go into the soybean business, we need to borrow from the bank, where DUAT (a certificate issued by the government giving the holder the right to use the land) is required as a collateral. This is the reason why many of us are now in the process of legalizing our lands," Celestino continued.

"Women have also become highly interested in producing the crop for themselves after learning what they can do with soybean. They might have shown you those skin-and-bone children our women are working with. A few months after being fed with soybean porridge and milk, they look healthier. To us these things that are happening are truly miracles. This improvement in the lives of farmers will not happen had IITA not introduced this project," Bonifacio added, with tears in his eyes.



Left: Mr Avela in front of his village house. Right: His improved house in town.

Land O'Lakes and IITA organize a learning visit for Malawi farmers

Land O'Lakes and IITA have organized an exchange visit in Nigeria for the Nkhotakota Cassava Processors Association and its partners for learning opportunities in cassava production with their Nigerian counterparts.

The visit program is under the framework of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA)-funded Food for Progress program.

Land O'Lakes has been working with various partners including Nkhotakota Cassava Processors Association in the cassava value chain.

Dr Kenton Dashiell, IITA DDG (PCD), says the institute is very excited to facilitate their visit this week.

IITA is hosting and facilitating the exchange visit, which aims to:

- provide executive members of the association and other partners a learning experience

to understand the research component of cassava and varietal breeding.

- learn the various uses of cassava to increase the usability of the crop and thus increase demand and production, and also explore the possibility of substituting wheat for cassava in Malawi.

The trip will also assist the association to position itself to seize any opportunity in the production, use, promotion, distribution, and marketing of high quality composite flour (HQCF) in Malawi following government efforts to reduce imports while increasing exports.



DDG for Partnerships and Capacity Development Ken Dashiell with the Land O'Lakes visiting farmers from Malawi.

IITA emphasizes importance of risk management New M&E system in IITA set up

The Risk Management Committee was reactivated and reconstituted by Director General N. Sanginga late last year. The Committee's main task is to develop and monitor the Institute's risk management process.

The Committee revised its Terms of Reference and made some changes in the membership composition and tenure. Members of the Committee are drawn from different units of the Institute. The Internal Auditor, Mr Rasheed Fagbenro acts as the facilitator. Current members of the Committee come from Finance, Project Administration Office, Capacity Development Office, Research, Supply Chain, Communication, Human Resources Services, Security, Facilities Management Services, Regional Administration, and Information Communication Technology.

Early this year, the Committee had developed and circulated a risk assessment template to unit heads to document risks in their workplaces. Unit heads were requested to identify and describe risks; rank each identified risk based on its likelihood of occurrence, impact on operations; determine its weight; identify current efforts/control in place, further actions required, and the person/s responsible for further actions. The data had been sent to the Biometrics Unit for analysis. Many diverse risks were identified by the respondents, which provide enormous information about different occurrences among the various units in the institute. A copy of the committee's report on risk management submitted to the board last April is available on the Intranet. For any questions, contact Bussie Maziya-Dixon, committee chair at b.maziya-dixon@cgiar.org.

IITA and its partners share the responsibility of ensuring the delivery of high-quality science and effective use of resources.

To achieve this, a functional performance-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system needs to be set up to provide evidence-based reporting on outcomes and impacts.

"M&E is needed for IITA to show its achievements," explains Thomas Wobill, IITA's M&E Specialist. "Good quality data generated through an M&E system would provide 'proof' or 'evidence' that short and long-term outcomes and impacts have been realized."

"Measuring achievements of activities and outputs is not sufficient to demonstrate results," he added. "M&E information will help us focus on the actual effects of these achievements."

Every IITA employee thus has a level of M&E responsibility as part of professional activities by ensuring that M&E information is properly documented and used to show how we are performing our duties and the extent to which we achieve our results.

If you have any questions about M&E, please contact Thomas at t.wobill@cgiar.org or via skype at thomas.wobill.

Welcome

Dr Setegn Gebeyehu, an Ethiopian national and former Program Officer of Water for Agriculture Program of Oxfam America, Horn of Africa Regional Office, joined IITA-Zambia recently as the Regional Scientist (Agronomy) at Chipata. Previously, he was the Director at Melkassa Agricultural Research Center (March 2009 to June 2011), Coordinator of Pulses, Oilseeds and Fiber Crops Commodity Research Program of EIAR (September 2008 to March 2009), Coordinator of the National Bean Research Program (March 2007 to July 2011) and Coordinator, Research Extension and Publication Office at Ambo College of Agriculture (March 2000 to December 2000). His areas of research experience and interest include cropping systems, seed systems, crop management and improvement, and crop adaptation to environmental stresses. He



has supervised several postgraduate students in addition to offering postgraduate courses at universities in Ethiopia.

Dr Gebeyehu obtained a BSc in Agriculture (Plant Sciences) in 1991 and MSc in Agriculture (Agronomy) in 1997 from Haramaya University, Ethiopia. He received his PhD in Agriculture in 2006 from Justus-Liebig University of Giessen, Germany.

He is married with two children. His e-mail address is s.gebeyehu@cgiar.org and his telephone number is +260 971 250380.

