



GO Organic

Achieve through research.

# Go Organic. Why?

Uganda is one of the leading countries for organically produced crops in Africa, with many thousands of farms employing organic farm management techniques and practices. On these farms smallholders grow organic cotton, sesame, coffee, fruits, and horticultural products for export, mainly to international markets. In recent years, domestic markets for organic produce have grown too.

Through organic agriculture Ugandan farmers sustain natural resources, increase agricultural productivity and earn a price premium for their certified organic produce. This raises farmers' household income which is reinvested in health, education and food. For this reason, organic agriculture helps to build sustainable livelihoods.

## Isn't that reason enough?



**Innovation  
needs research,  
not only skills!**

The transition to organic agriculture is a time and knowledge intensive innovation process. It requires localised decision making on natural resource management, crop choices and marketing channels by farmers themselves.

While most programmes support organic trade, we strengthen the long-term competitiveness of farmers. Our work therefore focuses on farmer participatory research, market opportunity identification, and the development of farmer-owned organic agro-enterprises.

The **Linking Farmers to Markets (F2M) project** conducts action research. It brings together farmers in Mukono and Hoima district, NGOs, the private sector and research & extension organisations.

They jointly test and apply the Enabling Rural Innovation (ERI) approach through which farmers transition from traditional subsistence farming to market-oriented organic agriculture. Farmers become entrepreneurs with capabilities in participatory planning, market research, experimentation, monitoring & evaluation and enterprise development.

This **ERI approach** enables farmers to access new market information (e.g. prices, quantities, quality requirements) and new research products (e.g. disease resistant germplasm, crop varieties for export, natural resource management technologies). Through this approach farmers build their capabilities to develop competitive and profitable organic agro-enterprises for food security, local markets and export.


**Farmer empowerment.** Farmers have become active players in organic value chains, carrying out research to make better informed production and marketing decisions.

**Association formation.** Farmers have formed groups and transformed them into several organic farming associations, already involving 1,200 households.


**Market linkages.** Farmers have gained access to domestic and international organic markets and entered strategic partnerships with organic export companies.

**Collective innovations.** Farmer communities have acquired collective capacities for continuous innovation that will improve livelihoods over the mid- and long-term.

**Scaling out strategies.** Scaling-out options from plot over farm to community level have been developed. This is supported by Geographic Information System (GIS) technology for identifying local soil quality boundaries in relation to crop suitability.



And it works!  
Our results...



# Contacts & Partners

CIAT (International Center for Tropical Agriculture)  
Amos Owamani | Robert Delve  
Kawanda Agricultural Research Institute  
P.O.Box 6247 | Kampala - Uganda  
Phone: +256 (0)782 801581  
Fax: +256 (0)414 567635  
owamani@yahoo.com | r.delve@cgiar.org  
www.ciat.cgiar.org/africa

BOKU (University of Natural Resources  
and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna)  
Department of Sustainable Agricultural Systems  
Research for Development Forum (DEV-FORUM)  
Michael Hauser  
1180 Vienna - Austria  
Phone: ++43 (1) 47 654-3766 or 3750  
Fax: ++43(1) 47 654-3792  
michael.hauser@boku.ac.at  
www.nas.boku.ac.at/oekoland.html  
www.boku.ac.at/dev-forum.html



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Makerere University Kampala (MUK)

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