

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF UGANDA'S FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SECTOR TO COMPLY WITH PHYTOSANITARY REQUIREMENTS

Locations	Uganda
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Summary

Uganda's rural agriculture sector is the main driver for the country's economy and a major employer – exporting fresh fruits and vegetables (FFVs) supports both rural employment and economic development. However, challenges faced by managing pests and diseases are causing Uganda to face export rejections. This project helped Uganda to comply with EU phytosanitary requirements and improve market access to high-end and regional markets.

The problem

In Uganda, the rural agriculture sector is a main contributor to its economy, contributing to 42% of the national gross product and 80% of its export earnings. 84% of it's working population are also employed in the sector and in rural areas, farming is the main source of income and of those working in the sector, 90% are women.

Therefore, the importance of the sector to securing livelihoods, increasing incomes and reducing poverty is integral.

However, challenges are faced by farmers, producers and exporters and others along the value chain in managing pests and diseases on farms and meeting international phytosanitary trade requirements. These challenges cause the horticulture value chain to not meet its full potential in producing and exporting fresh fruits and vegetables (FFVs). Challenges include: excessing residue levels, poor agronomic practices, inadequate extension services, poor markets and market infrastructure, weak producer groups and poor coordination amongst stakeholders.

Exporters have faced great losses where produce is being intercepted by EU markets because of pests. For example, the false codling moth was found in chillies and *Trioza app* was identified in curry leaves. As a result, Uganda face a temporary export ban on chillies and further impending bans on other FFVs such as jack fruit, mango, basil and okra.

In order for Uganda to meet the Government's Uganda Vision 2040 in using agriculture to strengthen the economy and transform society to a modern, prosperous country, the agriculture sector need to improve its capacity in regulations and enforcements and comply with phytosanitary rules.

What we are doing

The project's overall goal was to improve market access to the EU, other high-end and regional markets for Uganda's FFVs, with its key purpose to improve compliance with international phytosanitary standards for the production and export of FFVs. In doing so, efforts would lead to market growth, sustain the incomes of producers and their employees, increase economic development, reduce poverty and increase food security.

Expected outputs of this project included:

1. Diagnostic mapping of partners and the formation of a multi-stakeholder platform, identifying priority areas for capacity building and input on inspection and certification
2. A capacity development plan to include the training of inspectors, farm scouts, farmers, transporters and traders on pest management, conducting inspections and managing pack houses
3. Streamlining the inspection and certification system based on public-private partnerships
4. A specific phytosanitary survey and monitoring systems will be developed and made operational
5. A marketing strategy on exporting Uganda FFVs with the aim to increase exportation to new and existing markets
6. Awareness and support at a national level, and in the horticulture sector, of project systems and outputs for inspection and certification will be raised

CABI was contracted by STDF to manage the project, ensuring the project is delivered in a timely manner, resources are allocated as needed and quality work is undertaken by providers. CABI also provided technical oversight on all project deliverables at varying levels of input.

Results so far

The main outcome of this project has been improved coordination of activities and collaboration and capacity for phytosanitary compliance amongst the public and private sectors which has led to increased preparedness to reduce interceptions in the EU.

This was achieved through training and equipping inspectors and advocacy for an APEX horticulture body that allows self-regulation by the private sector.

Improved communication through regular scheduled meetings also enabled a multi-stakeholder platform and the development of various Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Training was delivered to 1400 smallholder farmers on SPS compliance to facilitate trade on key commodities. Furthermore, 70 Inspectors and Commissioners are now equipped with tools to conduct their work including inspection kits and personal protective clothing. Training was also given training on the importance of Integrated Pest Management, food safety and awareness of SPS export requirements. The crop pests and diseases focused on included false codling moth, fruit flies, potato virus Y (PVY), mango stone weevil, psyllids, thrips, white flies and leusinodes species.

Other training included multi-stakeholder workshops where participants were trained on various export SPS requirements including the importance of pest control at a grower's level, tracking and tracing, functions of an export certification system, EU phytosanitary import requirements and other markets' import requirements. Participants also learned of the importance of the risks Uganda face in losing the EU market and the benefits of forming and working in partnership in improving the current fragmented horticulture value chain.

The project developed the capacity to conduct specific survey and monitoring systems (SSMS) and SOPs of priority pests while mapping and prioritising the phytosanitary services required. Inspectors, farm scouts, farmers, transporters and traders' capacity on pest management along the production value chain was built.

The project also helped streamline the inspection and export certification system and produced a guide on Good Agricultural Practice for key export commodities; chilli and hot peppers, bitter gourd (Karela) and aubergines.

Donors	World Trade Organisation (WTO), Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE), Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF)
Partners	Uganda Fruits and Vegetable Exporters and Producers Association (UFVEPA), Uganda Agribusiness Alliance (UAA), National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO), Uganda Export Promotion Board (UEPB), Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC), Uganda Horticulture Exporters and Processors Association (UHEPA), Horticulture Exporters Association of Uganda (HORTEXA), Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Uganda, Department of Crop Inspection and Certification
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