

## **A brief report on farmer training during my March/April trip to Uganda.**

**Purpose of travel:** To conduct pre-scheduled seasonal farmer training on good agricultural practices (GAPs).

**Location:** Busukuma Climate-Smart Farm, 24km North East of Kampala, Uganda.

### **Background**

To support ongoing farmer training efforts by public and private sectors in Uganda, we started a demonstration farm in 2014 North East of Kampala in a village called Busukuma in Wakiso District. The farm runs on a mixed farming model focusing on bananas, common beans, passion fruits and dairy. The farm offers agricultural advisory services to farmers and supplies quality banana and bean planting materials suitable for various agro-ecologies. The farm also offers two free farmer training at the beginning of every cropping season, i.e. March/April and August/September.

During the short rainy season of 2018, we focused on good husbandry practices for beans and passion fruits. Fifty farmers including men, women and youth were trained on best practices for common beans and passion fruit husbandry practices (see in pictures under each training section). Common beans are key sources of protein for many households in Uganda. Passion fruits are a high-value crop grown for juice production locally and across the East Africa region.

### **Common bean production**

During the training, we focused on many common husbandry practices such as;

Suitable soil characteristics essential for beans. We trained farmers on the use of local indigenous knowledge such as observation of the current vegetation on the land and presence of microorganisms in the soil such as earthworms. They were also advised to take advantage of soil testing facilities within the national research institutions. We trained farmers on planting, spacing and varietal selection. Varieties with high iron and zinc content, fast cooking and climate-smart were emphasised. Moreover, farmers received training in pest and disease identification and strategies for minimising pest and disease pressure in common bean production. The strategies included; planting of certified seed, timely planting and weed management.



Figure 1 Common beans training at Busukuma Climate-Smart Farm, Uganda on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2018

## Passion fruit production

The training attracted many young from different regions of Uganda. Farmers were training on varietal selection, nursery bed establishment, planting, the establishment of a creeping platform using local and synthetic materials such as nylon nets (see Figure 2a), pest and disease identification, use of pheromone traps to common pests, harvesting, marketing and record keeping. I also visited a farmer we trained in 2017 (see Figure 2b)



Figure 2: Training of youth in passion fruit production at Busukuma Climate-smart farm on (2a). In 2b, Warren (in a blue short-sleeved shirt) at a passion fruit farm whose owners benefited from our seasonal training in 2017

## Acknowledgements

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