



# THE AGRICULTURE CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

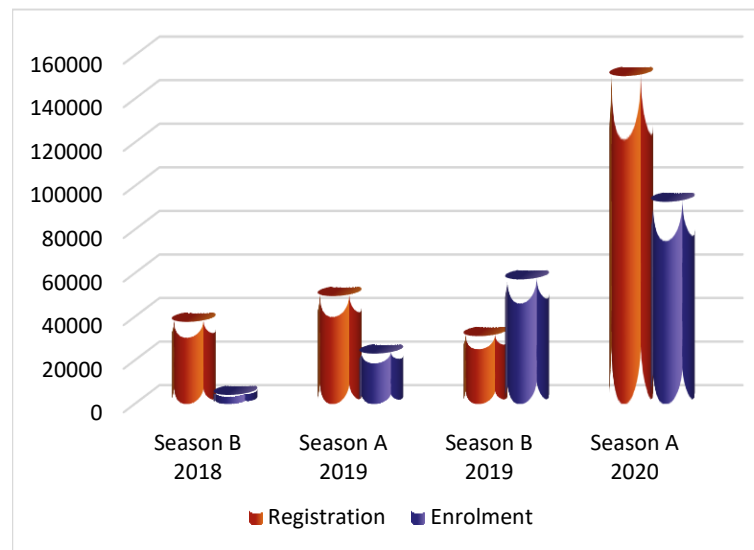


ACDP NEWS BULLETIN | March 2020 | Issue 3

## More farmers embrace the e-Subsidy program to enhance on-farm production

**A**CDP supports farmers with subsidized inputs for the intensification of on-farm production and productivity. The subsidized inputs are delivered to farmers using the electronic Voucher Management System (eVMS). Although there are a number of challenges like systems failure, low redemption and limited knowledge by farmers on how the eVMS works, there has been a steady registration and enrolment of farmers since the beginning of this year. This has been possible due to the persistent and continuous farmer mobilization and sensitization by the joint ACDP/MAAIF officers and the district teams. As a result, enrolment to the eVMS increased from 4,166 (27% of targeted 15,000 farmers) in November 2018, to 23,131 Season A 2019 (16.9% of 136,500), to 57,215 (42 % of 136,500) to 92,808 Season A 2020, representing 20.6% of the targeted 450,000 project beneficiaries.

From the above projections, it can be seen that farmer enrolment and registration, tremendously increased in Season A 2020. This is expected to be much higher since seven roll out clusters constituting 32 districts have come on board. However, the current lockdown due to COVID-19 Pandemic has slowed down the mobilization exercises, enrolment and input redemption. Despite this challenge, in order not to hamper the previous efforts in farmer enrolment and participation in the e-Voucher scheme, Project Coordination staff have been deployed to the 12



Farmer enrolment & registration between 2018-2020

clusters to continue working with district coordination teams and key project stakeholders in farmer mobilization for season A 2020. The targeted partners include sub county extension staff, farmer groups, NGOs, opinion leaders, institutions, churches and political leaders. It is expected that this will increase the registration and enrollment figures. Apart from that productive partnership alliances will be strengthened. Other measures adopted include recruitment of Uganda Cooperative Alliance and Enterprise Uganda to strengthen institutional and business capacities of existing groups and form new farmer groups.

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# Input Redemption at the different Clusters amidst the COVID 19 lockdown



Hybrid Maize seed from Simlaw seeds company being off loaded at the Bukwo stores.



Yumbe DAO, Supplier and Owner of the field verifying the number of cassava stems per bag.



Farmers receiving all their respective inputs at Bwongyera Sub county, Ntungamo district.



Registration and input redemption while observing the Ministry of Health SoPs like hand washing & social distancing, Ntungamo Cluster



ACDP staff support farmer input distribution efforts - Serere district.



A farmer receives her inputs- Pallisa Cluster.

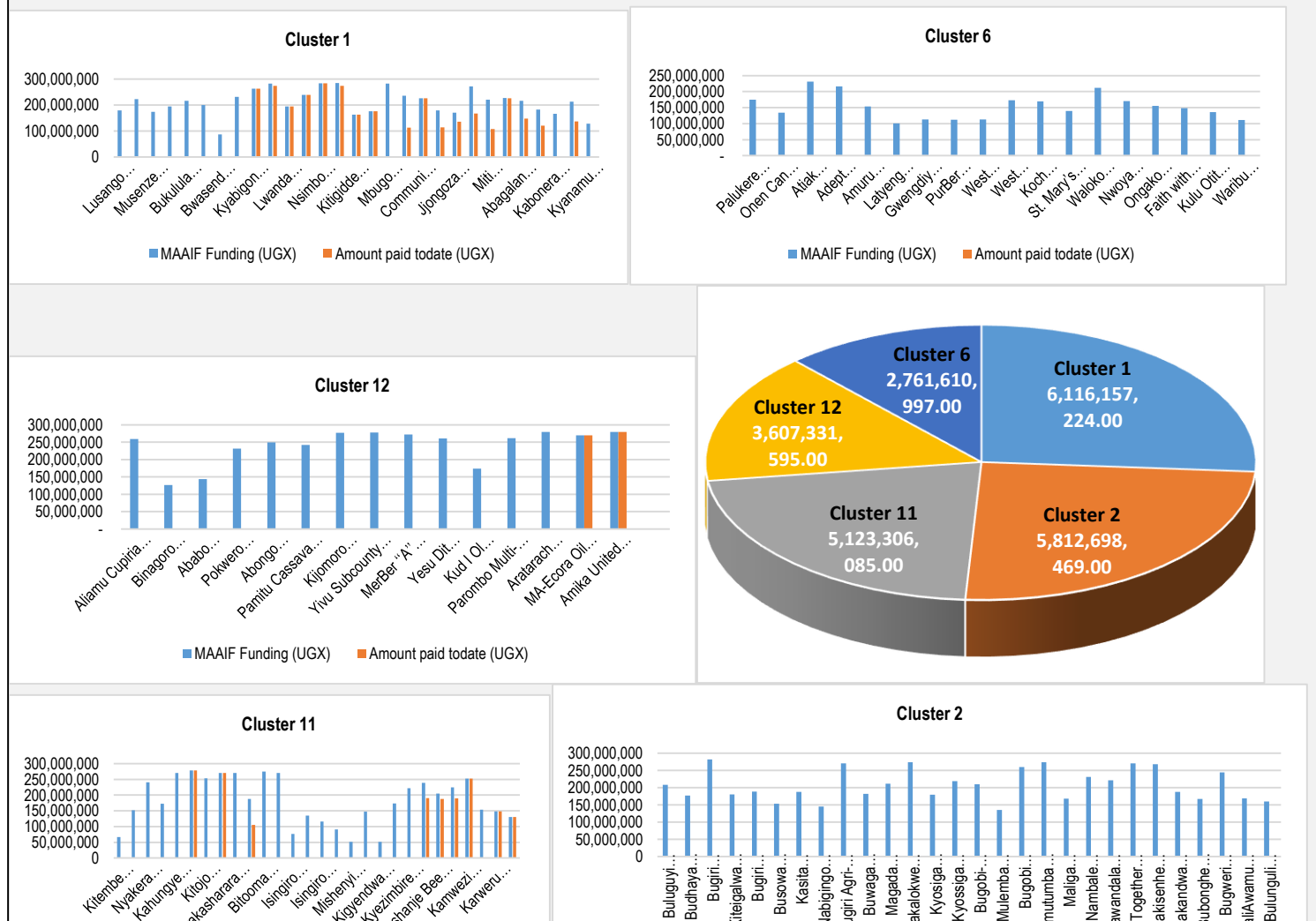
# ACDP disburses 12 Billion to 64 Farmer organizations to develop Post harvest and Value addition facilities

**A**CDP subcomponent 2.2, focuses on supporting investments of locally based farm cooperatives and associations in community-level post-harvest handling, grading, bulking and storage as well as processing for value addition. In the last two quarters of the financial year 2019/2020, 550 business plans for postharvest management and value addition were received from farmer organizations from the 12 ACDP geographical clusters. The Matching Grants Management Committee reviewed the first batch of 188 business plans from the pilot clusters and 96 Farmer organizations were recommended for grant awards.

So far, a total disbursement of 12.61 billion Uganda shillings (54%) has been made to 64 grantees out of the 23.4 billion Uganda shillings awarded to the 118 farmer organisations.

In the 32 rollout districts 300 farmer organisations are being supported to develop business plans. District core teams are also receiving mentoring across all project districts to continue supporting farmers in business plans development. The dashboard below shows the proportion of Award Grants disbursed to date.

## Proportion of Awarded Grants disbursed



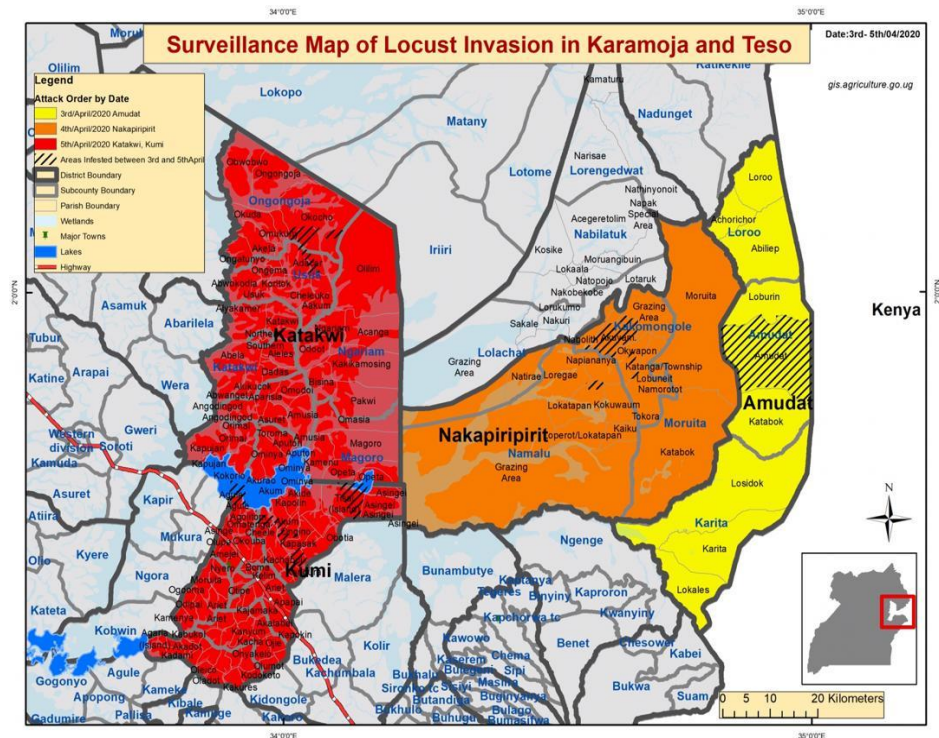
# ACDP approves \$1 million to support Locust control

In February this year, Uganda was invaded by desert locusts from neighboring Kenya through Amudat and 24 districts in the six sub-regions of Acholi, Karamoja, Lango, Sebei, Teso and Bugisu reported cases of locusts swarms. These regions are known to be the leading producers of cereals (maize, wheat, barley, sorghum, and millet), root crops (sweet potatoes and cassava), pulses (beans and pigeon peas) and oil crops (soy beans, simsim and sunflower).

MAAIF technical teams with support of the National consultant and in collaboration with experts from Desert Locusts Control Organization for Eastern Africa, Food and Agricultural Organization and National Agriculture Research Organization trained and built the capacity of 2,045 UPDF soldiers, 385 Extension Workers, 85 Uganda Wild Life Authority staff and District Local Government and 450 other district local government staff to support the surveillance and control efforts of the desert locusts swarms.



A swarm of Locusts in Karamoja



A swarm of desert locusts can contain millions of individual insects covering several square kilometers at one time. Desert locusts are known to multiply 10 to 20 times per generation. A solitary female can lay about 95 to 158 eggs.

The capricious destruction path is largely determined by the prevailing wind patterns of the day. It is this highly localized effect that allows identification of the impacts of such an infestation. Therefore, the government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Agriculture moved fast to enhance surveillance by studying the migration patterns and areas where the desert locusts could be laying eggs. Surveillance and GIS teams worked hand in hand with

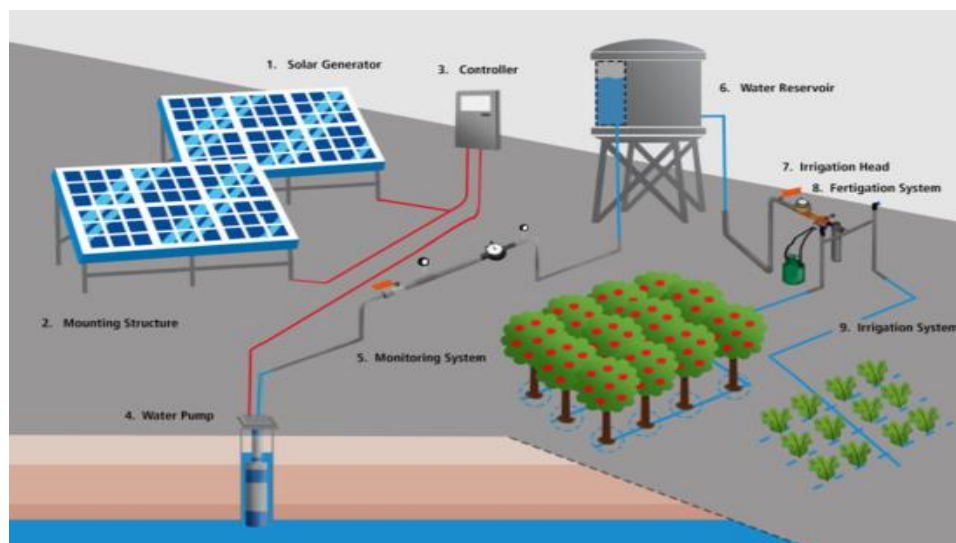
the support of the UPDF in the regions to construct maps of sites where the eggs could have been laid. This has enabled the technical staff to survey and monitor the hotspots for any further locust outbreaks.

It was against this background and the possible threat to food security that the ACDP project approved \$1 million towards emergency response for

- ◆ enhanced surveillance
- ◆ awareness creation and
- ◆ procurement of agro-chemicals

More information on Locusts control can be accessed at <https://www.agriculture.go.ug/desert-locust-control/>

## Development of Smallholder Coffee Irrigation systems



Diagrammatic representation of a typical solar powered Irrigation scheme

Climate change has continued to have an effect on agriculture, with many farmers experiencing damage to crops and facing food insecurity as a result of prolonged droughts and heavy rains associated with climatic variability. Total dependence on rain-fed agriculture and poor soil health coupled with land degradation has increased the vulnerability of farming systems thus exposing rural households to the risk of food insecurity and poverty.

Surveys indicate that coffee growing by households in Uganda is mainly carried out on small holder farms. In order to increase household income, there is need to increase the productivity of the small land holdings by adopting improved agricultural practices like irrigation. The Ministry of Agriculture, through ACDP sub-component 3.2: Agricultural water management investment is conducting studies

for the development of small holder irrigation systems for coffee. Coffee growing has largely remained traditional and conservative, and will greatly benefit from innovative technologies in irrigation.

Several studies also show that coffee productivity is severely affected by long-term water shortage, especially during the critical stages of flowering and fruit setting. Due to the above challenges, ACDP will support smallholder farmers in the development of smallholder irrigation coffee systems to enhance coffee production.

### Objective of the support

The objective of this support is to develop smallholder irrigation systems for coffee and to demonstrate the practices and benefits of irrigated coffee farming.

This support will be available to some beneficiaries in the ACDP coffee supported districts.

### Selection criteria

Beneficiaries will be selected through a demand driven and competitive process. The selection will be based on responses to a call for Expression of Interest that will be advertised in the daily newspapers. The advert will also be posted to the various noticeboards of the respective districts and sub counties. For a beneficiary to qualify, they should;

- ◆ already be implementing improved agricultural practices under the ACDP e-Voucher system.
- ◆ Should be a member of a coffee farmer organization and have a valid membership.
- ◆ Beneficiaries must also commit to demonstrating to other members of the farmer organization the practices and benefits of irrigated coffee farming.

### Expected achievements

- ◆ Increased yield per acre per season (e.g Robusta can increase from 1,236 Kg/ha for rainfed coffee farming to 2,060Kg/ha for irrigated coffee farming).
- ◆ Better quality of coffee
- ◆ Demonstration of irrigation practices and its benefits to other coffee farmer organization members, and
- ◆ Subsequent adoption of the smallholder irrigation systems for coffee by other farmers.

## ACDP conducts Process Evaluation in preparation for Mid-Term Review

The Agriculture Cluster Development Project was declared effective on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 and has completed three years of implementation. To review the project progress, a mid-term review is scheduled to take place in May 2020. The objective of this review is to obtain an independent and objective assessment of the project implementation process and the progress achieved in line with the overall project development objectives. Success, lessons learnt and challenges will also be documented and recommendations for improvement suggested.

In March, 2020, Makerere University, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences was engaged to undertake the process evaluation on behalf of MAAIF. The review process started with inception meetings and the subsequent data collection, which has now been concluded at the district level.

The stakeholders contacted included farmers, farmer organizations, agro-input dealers, stockists, district coordination teams, cluster multi stakeholder platforms. The process evaluation Team is now conducting interviews with key informants at the national level. The respondents include ministry staff, e-Voucher management agency, NITA-U, the World bank, and the National Steering Committee.

While the project was scheduled to hold a technical mission with the World Bank from the 23<sup>rd</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in preparation for the mid-term review, this has been rescheduled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and subsequent lock down. However, the Project implementation Team has continued working remotely in preparation for the mid-term review exercise.



*Focus Group Discussions with Enumerators in the field during data collection.*



## ACDP adopts Disruptive Agriculture Technologies to identify ICT Solutions



Some of the participants at the Proof of Concept Workshop. Front row, middle; The Director Agriculture Extension Services MAAIF officiating at the workshop

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), in collaboration with the World Bank, hosted the Disruptive Agricultural Technologies (DATs) Innovation Challenge on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019, at the Speke Resort Munyonyo, in Kampala, Uganda. The objective of this challenge was to explore opportunities offered by DATs to address the ACDP implementation challenges.

Disruptive Agricultural Technologies are digital and non-digital innovations that enable smallholder farmers to leapfrog their current constraints and improve their yields, incomes, nutritional status and climate resilience. Examples of DATs include mobile Apps, solar applications and portable agricultural devices.

During ACDP project implementation, several challenges emerged that slowed down the progress of activities especially in Component one (*Support to intensification of on-farm production*).

Some of the challenges were low farmer registration and enrolment, hitches in the e-Voucher management system, for example, the menu did not offer some services like mechanization, yet this was critical at the land preparation stage, especially for cassava producers. Redemption of improved inputs through the e-Voucher system was also challenging due to lack of training on the system use. Other challenges were not directly related to implementation, but were likely to impact the desired project outcome.

Out of the fifteen systems developers and firms, selected for the challenge, four winners emerged and these were; M-Omulimisa for *Advisory and Information for Agricultural Productivity*, Quest Digital Solutions/Akello Banker for *Market Linkages*, M-Cash for *Financial Inclusion*, and Data Care Limited for *Data Analytics*.

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## ACDP adopts Disruptive Agricultural Technologies.... continued

In February 2020, as a follow-up step to the acquisition process, the four firms that won the challenge were invited to a Proof of concept workshop to further clarify on the functionalities of their innovative Apps. Relevant stakeholders invited to this workshop included MAAIF technical staff, the World Bank and selected local governments officials.

This was done because the winning Apps as presented at the Innovation challenge demonstrated approximately 70 to 80 percent of ACDP ICT solution requirements. Therefore, the objective of the engagement was to identify functionality gaps, and come up with Terms of Reference that would enable fully functional systems, that address the implementation challenges as had been identified.

To finalize the acquisition process, there are predefined procurement guidelines that have to be followed as

defined by the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority (PPDA), together with the funding body, the World Bank. So far, the Request for Proposal document, along with supporting documentation have been submitted for processing through the pre-defined channels.

It is expected that by June 2020, these winning Solutions will have been acquired by ACDP. However, just like with any other business processes within the sector and the country at large, the effect of the COVID-19, are likely to slow this process, and acquisition might span into the Financial year 20/21. The technical team however continues to engage and follow-up with the innovators through virtual meetings using video conferencing platforms like Webex and zoom, to agree on the various modifications as identified during the proof of concept engagement.

## MAALF/ACDP earmarks 6.4BN for small works to improve Farm Road Access

Rural economies in most African countries are primarily agrarian with minimal supply chains and inadequate infrastructure to enable access to markets. Most markets for food products are more than two to five hours away from farm households and this is a serious constrain to transportation of produce and movement in general.

In Uganda, the poor state of community access roads is often escalated during the heavy rain seasons, when rural road bridges are washed away and roads become impassable thus disconnecting farmers from potential market areas

The spoilt road sections are often referred to as chokes that impede the regular movement of motor vehicles, motor cycles or even people. These road chokes are a major challenge to the inflow and outflow of commodities to and from rural farming communities.

Through the ACDP sub-component 2.3, technical and financial support has been ear marked for small works to make farm roads accessible at community level and usable for the movement of commodities. The major activities of this sub- component include;

- ◆ Mapping of high production areas.
- ◆ Selection and prioritization of the roads to be rehabilitated by cluster multi stakeholder platforms.
- ◆ Identification of potential site-specific Environment and Social Risks and Impacts.
- ◆ Preparation of detailed designs and bills of quantities for selected roach chokes.
- ◆ Rehabilitation of road chokes and
- ◆ Supervision of works by the MAAIF teams.

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## MAALF/ACDP earmarks 6.4 BN for small works to improve Farm road access ..... continued



*Effects of heavy rains on Nabitende -Bwengo road in Iganga Cluster*

An average four roads have been identified by the district committee teams for the five pilot clusters per district and the corresponding road chokes. A total of 794 road chokes have been prioritized and 6.4 billion Uganda shillings ear marked to fix the road chokes.

Environmental and Social Safeguards assessment of potential sites was conducted in the five pilot clusters to identify gaps and prepare the host communities where works will be undertaken in the areas of Gender Based Violence and Violence Against Children. To handle any complaints by project-affected people. Grievance redress committees have been sensitized to handle such cases as they arise.

For the five pilot clusters, field surveys were undertaken and information collected which guided development of drawings, technical specifications, bills of Quantity and road section profiles.

From the designs, cost estimates for the rehabilitative works were developed and used in the prioritization of roads to be worked on.

The advert to procurement contractors to rehabilitate roads in the pilot districts was run on November 17, 2019. However, the heavy rains of late last year resulted into floods that damaged roads and other infrastructure. This has necessitated the need to revise and update the Bills of Quantity to replace the earlier approved ones.

As a result, the estimated costs of the works in the pilot districts increased from UGX 6,400,750,020/= (approximately USD 1.73M); as assessed in April 2018 to UGX 13,219,237,150/= (approximately USD 3.57M). This double increment is attributed to the long period over which the road conditions have progressively deteriorated.

**Implementing Partners**  
Ministry of Agriculture,  
Animal Industry and  
Fisheries.

Fifty-Five District Local  
Governments.

**Funded by**

The World Bank

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## ACDP New Staff Appointments



**V**icky Auma, is appointed to the position of Financial Management Specialist effective 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020. Before this appointment, Vicky held the position of Finance and Management Assistant. Vicky brings to this position a wealth of expertise, with over eight years of experience from both the private and public sector. She is a Certified Public Accountant of Uganda and holds a Bachelor's degree of Science from the Uganda Martyrs University and a Post Graduate Diploma in Financial Management.



**A**melia Atukunda, is the New Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist effective 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020. Before this appointment, Amelia held the position of Monitoring and Evaluation Assistant. She brings to this position over nine years of experience in Monitoring and Evaluation in the public sector with four years in the Agriculture sector. Amelia holds a Master's degree in Management Studies in Monitoring and Evaluation from the Uganda Management Institute, and various certificates in M & E from Israel, South Africa, Tanzania and the Netherlands.

### News in brief



**Cluster Multi stakeholder meetings** held in Rakai, Kumi, Ntungamo, Amuru and Nebbi clusters



**70 Agricultural extension officers** undergo a five-day refresher training Continuing Agricultural Education centre- Makerere University- Kampala.

### Upcoming Events

- ◆ Project mid-term review
- ◆ Farmer registration and enrolment ongoing in all ACDP districts
- ◆ Regional Cluster Review meetings
- ◆ Project Steering Committee meetings
- ◆ Project Technical Committee meetings
- ◆ Sustainable Land Management write-shop