

Cassava



Farmers weighing a high yield cassava harvest

Growing the Cassava Sector:

Agro-Dealers, Inputs Companies & Lead Farmers

Cassava is among the favorite staple foods grown in Nigeria and has an increasingly diverse use for its products. As a result of its multi-purpose utilization, cassava farming is becoming lucrative and offers numerous opportunities to would-be investors. Experts and operators in the business have stated that cassava and its products serve as food to about 90 per cent of Nigerian households.

In 2018, there was a significant expansion of all of PIND's interventions in the cassava value chain around best practices in cassava farming, improving the access of farmers to enhanced crop protection products and

processing technologies through demonstration plots, implementation of the out-grower schemes and market linkages activities.

A major contributor to this expansion and results in the cassava sector is the demonstration plot intervention. Four input companies and seven agro-dealers worked together to scale up demonstration plot farms to eight States in the region, reaching 4,499 farmers directly with technical and business training. Remarkably, PIND's partnerships with input companies and agro-dealers and promotion of linkage as a form of human capacity development contributed to improved practices which attracted new

investments as farm business owners invested in the adoption of the enhanced model introduced by PIND in their private farms.

With the skills received through demonstration farms, McThompson Ifeanyi Eke, a cassava farmer and other members of the Mezie Umukabia Farmers' Multipurpose Cooperative Society in Imo State started practising their cassava farming differently and with high yielding results.



Cassava farmers reported higher yields from their farms as a result of the adoption of improved practices

"We were not getting much because we were using our old system of planting. Then PIND came and did the cassava demonstrations. They use their herbicides on the land, the tractor came and ploughed the land. They harrowed it and now ridged it ready for planting. They came with the new, improved cassava stems. After planting, they showed us how to apply the herbicides. We did that, and after some months they came back told us to apply the herbicides again. We applied again until it reached the harvesting period. What we harvested there was something else. We did not know cassava can get such big tubers. So after then, we realized it's a business, so some of us entered into cassava and stem production".

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For example, a demonstration plot established in partnership with Harvest Field Industries Limited and The Association of Graduate Farmers in Ondo State yielded impressive output. According to Ayobami Melody, an executive of the association: "We realized

37.6 tons per hectare, which I have never seen since I have been doing cassava farming. We want to appreciate PIND".

FACT BOX

2018: Cassava

- Scaled up the demos to 8 States in partnership with 4 input companies and 7 lead agro-dealers
- 4,699 farmers reached with demos and training on best agronomic practices.
- 3,757 cassava farmers (female: 1,653) reported increased income in 2018
- 1,088 jobs created
- NGN632,503,086 (\$1,807,151) investment leveraged into the aquaculture sector
- Facilitated access to markets through cassava aggregation, resulting in over 200 tons of cassava sold.
- Incubated an out-grower scheme, leading to the setup of 5,000 hectares of land for cassava production and processing facility.