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IMPACT

This season there are new crops growing in Orisai, Uganda that will move one family from subsistence to abundance. Michael is a farmer in the small village in Northeastern Uganda where Africa Rising partner CREED Africa is located. This season, in addition to his wife growing the staple foods of cassava and sweet potatoes for survival, Michael has planted maize and beans. He was inspired to do this as a result of visiting Africa Rising partner FADECO in Tanzania where he learning from the knowledge and passion of agricultural engineer Joseph Sekiku.

In February 2011 Michael travelled to Tanzania to represent CREED Africa at the food security and preservation cluster meeting organized by Africa Rising. According to Clement, the founder and dedicated patron of CREED Africa, Michael returned to Orisai a changed man. He is well positioned to make a nice profit this season from his maize and beans and to be a resource person for the community to share the knowledge gained from Tanzania about food security and preservation.



INNOVATION

In the early part of 2010 there was a surplus of food across most of Kenya due to favorable rains. This was a good problem to have. But every farmer knew that the surplus could be followed by several years of drought and famine. Many of our partners were asking, “How can we make the best use of this surplus to reduce the burden of future scarcity?” In response, Africa Rising made food preservation a focus for 2010-2011. This resulted in the food security and preservation training in Tanzania mentioned above.

In addition to planning how to preserve surplus fruits and vegetables, the Kilisa Village Development Committee (KVDC) in Kenya is prepared to pilot a food bank in their village the next time there is an abundant harvest. The food bank aims to reverse the current cycle of farmers selling at a deflated market price in times of abundance and buying staple foods at exorbitant prices during times of draught. Through purchasing and storing surplus food for later sale at a reasonable profit, as well as training the community in this process for replication, KVDC is contributing to achieving food security in Kilisa.



GATHERING

On July 21-July 23, 2011 Africa Rising partners from Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania are gathering in Naivasha, Kenya for the third annual partners meeting. The theme of the three day gathering is “Envisioning the East African Community.” Participants will explore how their dreams for their own communities fit into the opportunities and challenges of the region as a whole. Facilitated by Africa Rising, partners will envision together how their collective action can impact East Africa while building relationships that lead to collaborations.

Stay tuned for next month’s newsletter to hear about the results of the gathering from Jim Thomas, the founder of Africa Rising.

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Any questions please contact amber@africarising.org.