

Voices from the Field

The Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA) was founded in 1986 by Norman Borlaug, Jimmy Carter, and Ryoichi Sasakawa, to support smallholder farmers in Africa.

Voices from the Field offers an insight into the positive impact and benefits of SAA programs and activities, in the words of the smallholder farmers with whom we work. Through their experiences we continue to learn and improve, working together for a better future for Africa's smallholder farmers.

“SAA has built my capacity, and I can now train fellow farmers”

A story about how good agricultural practices introduced by SAA improves livelihoods

Henry Sebyala, a father of five living in the Nakaseke district of Uganda, has seen his productivity and income increase as a result of Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA) interventions. Henry was also selected to host various demonstrations as part of collaborations between the Nakaseke District Local Government and SAA.

“I ventured into commercial farming as far back as 2002,” Henry explains *“Back then, I mainly cultivated beans and maize on about two acres of land, respectively. However, the process was tedious and earned me barely enough money to provide for my family. I relied on traditional farming methods, and production was inadequate.”*

By observing farmer learning platforms established by SAA and engaging in training, Henry realized that a significant amount can be harvested from a small plot of land. As a result, he harvested 600kg of beans from half an acre, and 2,300kg of maize from one acre – previously Henry would harvest just 250kg-400kg of beans from one acre.

“SAA trained me on the best farming practices, climate resilient technologies and selected me to host the climate smart village. SAA also supported me in acquiring an irrigation system by linking me to equipment suppliers, installing the irrigation system, and providing technical backstopping. With the irrigation system in place, I am able to grow tomatoes, eggplants, pumpkins and cabbage all year round on four acres of land on a crop rotation basis.”

“Currently, I am growing vegetables on two acres of land while the remaining two acres rest for soil recovery. In the second season of 2018, I made \$514.24 from horticultural products, which enabled me to acquire a small truck to transport my produce – farmers in my community sometimes hire my truck at \$19.17 for a return journey. I was also able to repay a loan I got from the Namilyango Tweekembe Farmers Saving Group.”

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Henry and a Program Officer illustrating the use of a peddle pump



Better agricultural practices enabled Henry to purchase a truck

By adopting good agricultural practices, Henry is able to pay his children's school fees and the increased income has motivated him to purchase additional land to expand his vegetable production. Henry has ambitious plans for the future: *“SAA has built my capacity, and I can now train fellow farmers on climate smart technologies. Farmers in my community have realized the benefits of climate smart practices and adopted them. I have linked farmers to suppliers of irrigation equipment. Looking to the future, I hope to establish a nursery to sell seedlings, acquire more land and establish an agricultural learning centre.”*

