

Overview of on-farm tree seed supply in coffee-banana farming zone, Uganda

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Introduction: Tree seed is an important input in agroforestry and forestry at large. This is because shortage of quality tree seed hinders the scaling-out of agroforestry interventions and constrains adequate tree growing. A study was conducted to characterize agroforestry tree seed supply chain in Masaka, Kalungu, Lwengo and Bukomansimbi to develop realistic options for germplasm production.

Methodology: Face to face interviews and field observations were used to collect the required data. Data were collected from 50 respondents comprising of seed collectors (13), farmers (8), nursery operators (27). Key Informant Interviews were conducted with key agroforestry stakeholders in this region.

Results and discussion:

The various actors (Fig. 1) in agroforestry tree seed chain conducted more than one role in seed supply. Farmers, collectors and nurseries operated informally and their roles in the tree seed chain often overlapped.

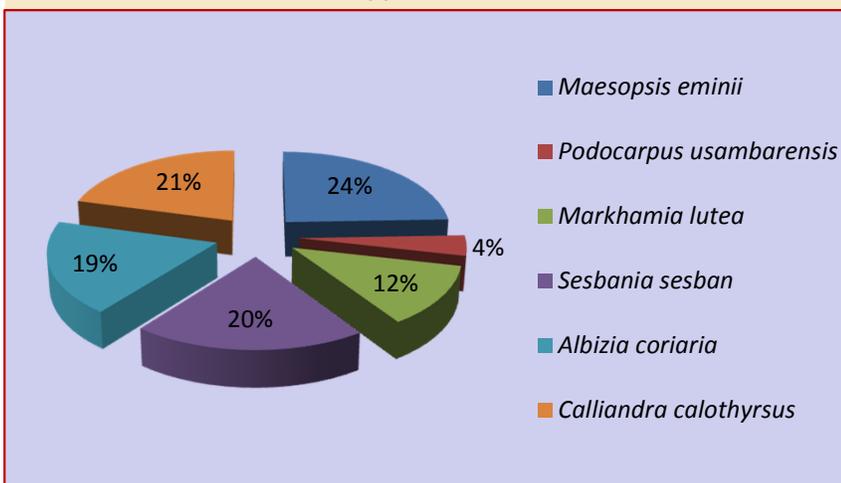


Figure 2: Proportion of seed collected of selected agroforestry trees

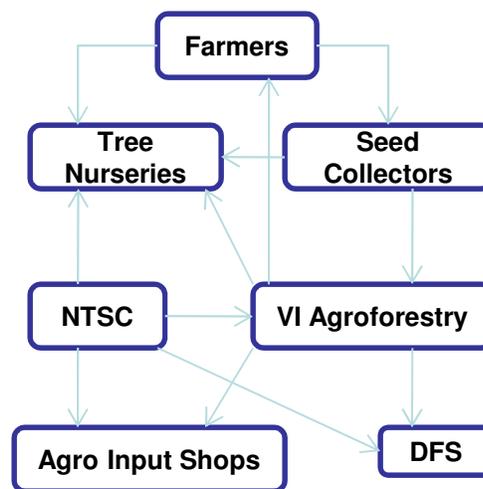


Figure 1: Agroforestry tree seed flow among the main actors



Figure 3: Mother trees on farm

Farmland was the main source of tree seed (Fig.3). The choice of tree seed to collect was almost exclusively based on availability of market and seed sources. Consequently, *M.eminii* seeds were readily available (Fig. 2) as this tree is commonly used for shade in coffee and bananas in this area. *P.usambarensis* was least collected as it was got from far areas e.g. Ssesse islands and also hard to propagate.

Main challenges in agroforestry tree seed supply

- Lack of efficient technology and markets
- Lack of technical knowledge
- Limited seed sources
- Lack of quality control systems
- Seed pests

Conclusion and moving forward: Tree seed supply was limited as the actors at the grass root were not directly involved in its production. Tree seed chain actors were highly scattered, informal and faced by various technical and market challenges. The supply of agroforestry tree seeds can be improved through establishment of sound seed sources, quality assurance options, effective distribution pathways, practical training and extension services.

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