



SUCCESS STORY

Putting Down Roots in Pabbo



USAID/Uganda

A farmer in Pabbo Sub-County heads home with seedlings she received through a USAID/OTI grant.



Farmers receive training in seedling care.

September 2009 – The armed conflict in northern Uganda not only took a great human toll but also left the environment in bad shape. Displaced people, seeking to survive by whatever means possible, indiscriminately cut down trees for firewood and charcoal.

The largest camp for internally displaced people in the north was in Pabbo Sub-County, Amuru District. At its peak, the camp housed more than 65,000 people who stripped the landscape bare in their search for fuel. In discussions with USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), Pabbo's leaders made clear that one of their main concerns was the denuded land, as the lack of vegetation meant an escalating level of soil erosion and flooding, especially during the rainy seasons.

The Pabbo leadership identified a solution in citrus and other fruit trees, which could both mitigate the impact of the environmental degradation and provide a source of income and food for residents.

The Amuru District production office was at the forefront of this initiative. It first carried out an assessment to identify farmer groups that would benefit from the grant and enrolled 151 farmers from all 6 Pabbo parishes in the activity. The farmers were then trained to plant and manage fruit trees. At the end of the training, each farmer received a package containing orange, mango, lemon, and jackfruit seedlings.

Local Council III Chairman Christopher Ojera, speaking on behalf of the sub-county leadership, expressed his thanks to USAID for providing over 10,000 seedlings. "This is a way of engaging the returned communities in meaningful income-generating activities," he said.

The beneficiary farmers were in turn grateful to their sub-county government leaders, who correctly identified the need to combat the deforestation and came up with a response that provided additional benefits.

Pabbo is one of the areas of northern Uganda chosen as part of OTI's sub-county strategy, which aims to help increase the visibility of the local government in the post-conflict reconstruction effort.