



SUCCESS STORY

USAID SUPPORTS FARMERS PRODUCING YAM TO GENERATE WEALTH AND REFOREST HILLS IN NORTH OF HAITI



Photo: DAI

Above, left pic: Julmeus' land before yam permaculture. Right pic: KOREPA farmer on Julmeus' land six months after yam project with DEED.



Photo: DAI

Above, the tree nursery where KOREPA reproduces yam using the miniset technique, and generates some income selling seedlings at a competitive price to the local market.



Photo: DAI

"Madames Sara" currently buy most of the yam for 1,000 gourdes a basket in Camp Cop, selling it in the capital for 1,250 gourdes. Considering their strong buying power, DEED plans to offer them training in order to improve the structure of their organizations through its business service provider in the north, GUIDE.

One year ago, Julmeus Meus's land in Camp Coq had a lonely oak tree with some cassava and peas planted, for his family's consumption. He had no prospects of gaining any revenues from his agriculture. But being a member of KOREPA, he was among the 100 farmers picked to take part in the first stage of a yam *granbwa* permaculture project with DEED, drastically improving his outlook on the future.

The *granbwa* is a highly nutritious variety of yam requiring shade for its harvest, versus the yam *intensif* which is grown in the sun and is more common in Haiti. Both plants are erosive in nature but DEED has introduced producers in Limbé to modern permaculture techniques - enabling them to grow the *granbwa* alongside other income generating trees and crops, which provide shade while protecting the soil from erosion. Six months ago, Julmeus planted some yam, as well as oak, cedar, banana, citrus, breadfruit, mango and pineapple with seeds provided through an in-kind loan by DEED. Today, his plot of land is covered with trees and climbing yam.

Other than the seeds, DEED offered to the producers training in soil conservation, technical assistance and partial financing for the construction of a tree nursery and stock room in Camp Coq. The secretary general of KOREPA admits: "*prior to our collaboration with DEED, we were planting in an unorganized and unsustainable manner. Now, we understand the importance of soil protection through crop diversification.*" The project also organizes farmer exchange visits for other organizations in the region, encouraging the reproduction of the model around Limbé.

25% to 35% of the profits from the first 100 farmers' harvest will be used to fund the 2nd cycle of the project for KOREPA's 266 other member producers.

DEED is now actively seeking market outlets for the yam *granbwa*. Some agro-industries are showing interest in signing future purchase agreements with the yam farmers, however, 80% of the current production is bought by street market vendors, aka "Madames Sara." As for the fruits, DEED is exploring options with various new buyers, such as a juice and popsicle factory near Cap-Haitien.

USAID's DEED is a project working in 2 of Haiti's watersheds, Limbé and Montrouis, to reverse environmental degradation while improving livelihoods among watershed inhabitants.