



## Poor Families in Uganda Transform Their Lives



Photo: Peter Simon Esaku

Godfrey Omony brings bulls to fellow farmers in Gulu District, Uganda as part of USAID program.

“I did not plant timely and I obtained poor yields. In 2001, we formed a group, were trained on animal traction, and were given two bulls and an ox plough. I support two children in school from some proceeds I sell [from produce] for money - this has really transformed me!”

- Godfrey Omony, a farmer from Bobi sub-county, Gulu District.

Godfrey Ormany is one of 3,281 model farmers in northern Uganda trained (through a USAID-funded program) in the use of better seeds and efficient farming techniques. These model farmers, like Godfrey, then share the knowledge and skills through a network of 27,213 farmers in the region. This simple support is maximized through the farmer network and has resulted in tremendous increases in farmers' yields overall – beans (369%), sesame (135%), groundnuts (174%), and respectable increases of maize and rice. As a result of these greater commodity sales, the families' incomes have increased.

USAID also addresses specific needs of farmers through “in kind” loans of livestock, equipment, transportation to markets, and other carefully chosen one-time investments that allow the farmers to become more self-sufficient. For instance, a group of farmers will receive a pair of oxen and a plow. After two years, they are expected to repay the loans based on the value of the items, which is then used to purchase a new pair of oxen and plow for another group of farmers. A similar strategy is used for marketing associations which receive cash for specific marketing activities which they then repay within eight months.

First Person

