



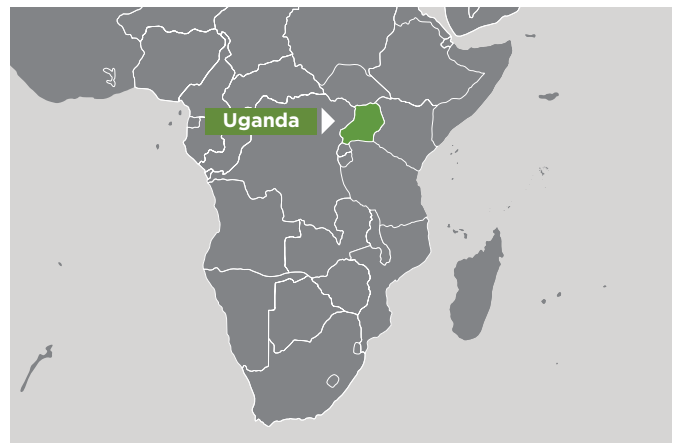
Harnessing dietary nutrients of underutilised fish-based products

Overview

Widespread nutritional deficiencies affect Uganda's poor, rural communities and are particularly prevalent in women of reproductive age and children under five. These groups have very limited access to animal protein and micronutrient-rich foods, especially fish.

Declining stocks of large fish, high exports and post-harvest losses have decreased the availability of fish to Ugandans. Consequently, the per capita fish consumption of 12.5kg per person, per year, is significantly less than the recommended 25kg per person, per year.

Currently, most Nile perch are processed for export markets, leaving behind just the by-products – skins, bones and heads – for locals. Poor handling and rudimentary processing of these by-products minimises the capture of nutrients. Improved handling methods and development of affordable, nutritious, appealing and safe fish-based products are needed to increase availability and accessibility of fish protein for Uganda's vulnerable populations.



KEY FACTS

ACIAR Project No. GP-2019-176

Duration: April 2019 to September 2022 (3.5 years)

Target areas: Uganda

Budget: A\$2,823,190

Project Leader

Jackson Efitre, Makerere University

Key partners

- National Fisheries Resources Research Institute
- Nutreal Ltd
- McGill University

ACIAR Research Program Manager

Dr Anna Okello

Objective

The aim of the project is to work with the fish sector and its associated value chains to address the nutritional needs of vulnerable groups who need high quality, nutritious diets.

The objectives are to:

- Increase availability, accessibility and consumption of underutilised fish by-products.
- Improve fish by-product processing techniques through public-private partnerships, to maximise the nutritional value.
- Increase sustainable food and nutrition security.
- Improve the livelihoods of vulnerable groups.

Expected scientific results

- Development of techniques to reduce post-harvest losses, increase product quality and improve the distribution of fish and fish-based products among populations living far from water bodies.
- Quantified post-harvest losses and promotion of cost-effective handling and processing technologies for underutilised small fishes and fish by-products.
- Assessment of socio-economic and institutional factors constraining access to and use of underutilised small fishes and fish by-products.
- Development of fish-based complementary foods for vulnerable groups using small fishes and by-products.
- Development of marketing models for efficient distribution of fish-based products.
- Increased capacity of partner institutions to sustain availability and consumption of small fishes and fish-based products.

Expected impact/outcomes

- Reduced micronutrient deficiencies, particularly among women of reproductive age and children under five.
- Diversified income opportunities created for around 200 people (50% women) through enterprise development in fishing, fish processing and marketing.
- Scaling-up facilitated by sharing project results and outputs with local and national policy makers.

