Kabale farmers advised to change their mindset

KABALE

By Job Namanya

Farmers in Kabale district have been asked to change their mindset if they want to benefit from the farm inputs given to them through government programmes.

Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) officials and their counterparts from the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) secretariat made the comments during a visit to various farmers in the district on Monday.

According to Col. Jack Muhanguzi, an OWC co-ordinator, some farmers in Kabale have failed to use the inputs they got from the Government to improve their farms and instead want the Government to do everything for them.

Muhanguzi said if farmers utilised the inputs they were given well, they would be able to improve production.

"If the Government gives you an animal or seedlings, it is good for you to put it to the most rightful use if you are to benefit from it. If our farmers keep looking at the Government for everything, it will not yield much," Muhanguzi said.

Everest Mulumba, the agribusiness development officer from the NAADS secretariat, asked farmers who are struggling to improve their farms to seek advice from their successful colleagues.

Mulumba said using the inputs given to them by the Government, it is possible for farmers to improve production and household income.



NAADS and Operation Wealth Creation officials meeting Rwomushana (left), a succesful fish farmer in Kabale on Monday. Photo by Job Namanya

Successful farmers speak

John Kaliisa, a dairy farmer from Mwanjari ward in Central division, Kabale municipality, who was given a heifer in May 2015, said his life has drastically changed.

He said the cow has so far delivered twice, giving him milk for sale and home consumption. Currently, Kaliisa is hoping for another delivery to increase the number of animals on his farm.

"I get eight litres of milk in the morning and six in the afternoon. Four of these are consumed by the calf and the rest is sold," Kaliisa said.

He said his biggest challenge is the cost of drugs to treat the cow whenever it gets complications.

Tomas Rwomushana, a fish farmer from Kitumba sub-county, said he does not regret venturing into fish farming following advice from the OWC team.

"I set up four fish ponds in January 2016 and harvested in December. In June 2017, I received 1,000 fingerlings from OWC which I hope to harvest soon," he said.

Rwomushana said fish farming is one of the most paying ventures.

"I harvest fish measuring above 1kg and I sell each at sh10,000, yet it requires less inputs," Rwomushana added.

Charles Byarugaba, an Irish potato farmer from Nyabyumbu village in Kamuganguzi sub-county, said the inputs he got from the Government greatly bolstered his farm.

Byarugaba set up a screen house in 2015 with the help of OWC. Since then, he has been supplying potato seeds to other farmers under the OWC programme.