

AIVDP ROUNDS OFF DISTRIBUTION OF 300 MOTORISED CASSAVA GRATERS AND PRESSES TO BENEFICIARY FARMER GROUPS OF SOUTH WEST

Having identified post-harvest losses and inappropriate processing technology (knowledge, skills and machinery) as major challenges to agricultural development in the South West Region, the Agriculture Infrastructure Value Chain Development Project continues to focus on improving agricultural production/productivity and developing the value chain of key crops to generate income and create jobs for the rural population, particularly the youth and women. Less than 6 months after its initial distribution of 150 cassava graters to farmer organizations in the South West, the Project adhered to its promise of assisting cassava farmer cooperatives in facilitating their value chain activities through a second phase of distributions of the motorized equipment. The various receptions, which took place during mid-November, in Buea, Tombel, Kumba and Mamfe, were also accompanied by trainings on the operationalization and maintenance of the motorized units.



Above Left: AIVDP Project Coordinator Dr. Besong Ntui Ogork hands over motorized cassava graters and presses to beneficiaries during Reception Ceremony in Buea **Above Right :** Cassava graters and presses ready for reception by beneficiaries in Mamfe.

Mme Fese Mariam, a youth member of Edang Edang Farmers CIG, and mother of two, expresses gratitude for these units stating, ‘To produce gari was a very hard task, having to harvest then grate the cassava by hand was so strenuous, so I am extremely happy for these graters that have been gifted to us.’ Mme Mary Bassam a beneficiary and President of the Dikombe Women’s Empowerment Association from Nnian Division, underlines the economic significance of the motorized units to her community during these uncertain times relaying, ‘These graters alone with the cassava production we are already doing in the village, will help increase the population as it will bring employment. Many of our villagers who have left due to the crisis will want to

come back to the village and back to their cassava farms to benefit from this opportunity to transform their cassava into finished products and sell.”



Above Left : AIVDP Gender Officer addressing members of Edang Edang Farmers CIG and Dikombe Women’s Empowerment Association during Reception Ceremony in Kumba.
Above Right: Beneficiaries in Kumba posing with motorized equipment and operationalization manuals.

Complementing the distribution of the 300 cassava graters and presses, the Project intends to support 20 farmers’ organizations in the acquisition and installation of farmer managed semi-industrial processing units with a transformation capacity of 2 tons/hr. Additional specific actions considered by the Project in resolving value chain challenges includes; capacity building of producer organizations on agricultural value chain activities and the provision, construction and operationalization of agro-processing facilities for the key project value chain crops (cocoa, oil palm, cassava and rice).

These motorize units will play a pivotal role in the reduction of drudgery whilst ensuring food security and improving on the income levels of farmers (women and youths) involved in in cassava processing.