

PROLONGED RAINFALL AFFECTS POST-HARVEST HANDLING

Climate change and increased climate variability present new risks for smallholder farmers in Uganda who depend mainly on rain fed agriculture for their livelihoods, and natural sun heat for drying grains. Most often farmers dry their crops on the flour, rocks, roadsides and few afford tarpaulin, which affects the quality of the grains and even the market price.

UNMA released the SOND 2019 forecast on 4 September 2019, forecasting the rainfall will start reducing in late November to early December 2019. However in many parts of Uganda rainfall continued till December 2019 due to (raising temperature) warming of the Indian Ocean. The prolonged rainfall affected harvest and post-harvest handling of crops like maize, rice, simsim, beans, millet and sorghum.

Hoima, Masinda, Mubende and Busia are towns know for trading in maize, however trade in these major towns were affected since much of the maize had high moisture content. Mr. Stephen, a maize trader in Hoima was quoted to have said, “I used not to believe in the weather forecast information disseminated, but now I know it’s important for our business. We used predict the weather traditional and we knew the season, but now things have changed. This year, I had buy tarpaulins to dry the maize again before selling, farmers could not dry their maize well before selling, and the moisture contents were high. There was too much rain and little sunshine, many farmers regard tarpaulin to be expensive. I had to employ more women to dry and sort out foreign particles before re-bagging to sell. To address climate-related risks and improve capacity to adapt to climate change, farmers are coming together through collective action groups. These groups are important platforms for receiving weather and climate



information, innovative partnerships that provide new knowledge and skills, and build the capacity of local farmers to change farming practices while adopting new interventions. They empower members to pool financial resources for savings, provide labor for farm operations, and make it easier to provide agro-advisory services and farm inputs (tarpaulins) of good quality at affordable prices”.

Women drying maize in market place in Hoima