



▶ CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF CASSAVA SEED SYSTEMS IN SOUTH INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

- Cassava mosaic disease (CMD) is widespread in India
- Significant impact on yield and starch content
- Considerable progress on the development of improved CMD-resistant cassava varieties under the Indo-Swiss Collaboration in Biotechnology (ISCB)
- How can the dissemination of new cassava varieties be improved within a reasonably short time?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- a. Identify the main constraints and bottlenecks for the dissemination of new cassava varieties to farmers in Tamil Nadu
- b. Suggest entry points to sustainably improve the dissemination process for new cassava varieties

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Multi-stakeholder approach
- Qualitative in-depth interviews and focus groups
 - Cassava farmers
 - Breeders
 - Extension and agricultural scientists
 - Agricultural economists
 - Cassava processing industry representatives

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

ECONOMIC VALUE OF CASSAVA

- Cassava as a 'marginal' crop in economic terms, highly fluctuating – mostly low – market prices for tubers
- Low willingness to pay (WTP) for improved varieties, low interest for quick adoption
- Farmers wish for a minimum support price (MSP)
- Farmers do not perceive a clear need for improved varieties

MULTIPLICATION CAPACITIES AND SEED SUPPLY

- Systems for seed multiplication and dissemination exist, but effective demand is lacking
- Insufficient capacities at research and extension level for seed multiplication and dissemination
- New varieties must be 'outstanding' to raise farmers' interest – and farmers must know about it (awareness of improved varieties is currently low)
- Micropropagation no feasible approach under current conditions – unless cheap and easy to use
- No involvement and interest of the processing industry

POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS

- Nobody has a clear mandate for seed multiplication and dissemination
- No specific support to cassava production
- No farmers' groups for cassava
- Indiscriminate re-use of infected planting material

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



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