

# Enhancing Community based home gardens via improved Indigenous knowledge and adaptation to new technologies; a case for the optimal utilization of NUS in Nigeria

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**Theme: Upgrading value chains of Neglected and Underutilized species**



## Introduction

Home gardens play an important role in securing food and income as well as having important cultural significance for the rural poor. For centuries, small farmers and indigenous communities have used very specific knowledge for the cultivation, utilization, marketing and conservation of their indigenous "underutilized" crops. Maximizing the potentials of underutilized crops in rural communities via home gardens can be sustained when approaches that combine indigenous knowledge with science and technology are in place.

### Project Aim

Using the community farmers of Umuanunu-Obinze, Owerri West L.G.A, Imo State, Nigeria as case study, this study was aimed at a combination of technological approaches which were adapted to improve the community indigenous knowledge for the optimal utilization of Okazi and Utazi, two popular NUS in the area.

### Project Inputs

- Plantlets of Okazi and Utazi were provided to farmers to establish home gardens.
- Prior to this, intensive training programs which combined indigenous knowledge and modern scientific methods were carried out to train farmers on handling, growing, processing of products as well as marketing potentials of their plants.
- The marketing chain distribution methods were adapted from the giz initiative to promote effective value chain network.



### Project Outputs

- Over 100 Home gardens were established for 100 households in Umuanunu Obinze.
- Value chains supplied by many small producers was helpful for conservation of the plants biological diversity. This counteracted progressive genetic erosion of these plants.
- This was because there were more subsistence farmers and small farmers due to an increase in the number of home gardens.
- The large number of small suppliers also indicated that a production sector was accessible to all hence an increased marketing potential within local markets around the community.

