



2SCALE

Stories from the Field

Cash from cassava

A partnership between Psaltry International (an award-winning, woman-headed processing firm), 2SCALE and Nigerian Breweries has transformed the cassava sector in Nigeria. For the first time, smallholder producers have a guaranteed market, fair prices and production support.

In the last three seasons, Psaltry has purchased more than 80,000 tons of cassava from small-scale farmers. The cassava is processed into starch and the starch into maltose syrup, used in a range of products from beer to noodles to malt drinks. Psaltry sells mainly to multinationals like Heineken and Nestlé, but also to local food processors, and even farmer cooperatives who buy cassava residues for poultry feed.

The partnership, which began in 2014, includes 1400 farmers (350 women) in Oyo state, and at least 35 local businesses that provide stem cuttings, transport, microfinance and other services.

Links in the value chain

For small-scale farmers to commercialize, they need higher yields and better quality. We partnered with research centers to introduce new high-yielding, disease-resistant varieties with high starch content, and oversaw multiplication to ensure that sufficient planting material was available. More than 1 million stem cuttings have been distributed to Psaltry farmers.

We also introduced mechanized planters and harvesters, leading to substantial savings in time and cost. To encourage farmers to mechanize, Psaltry offers equipment on rental, 30-40% cheaper than commercial rates.

2SCALE consortium



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Food, beer, noodles – unlimited markets for cassava farmers.

*“I used to till by hand,
now I use a tractor.
I used to harvest
two pick-up vans
of cassava. Now I
harvest five vans
from the same land.”*

– Dauda Kehinde, woman farmer

Because cassava is viewed as a subsistence crop, very few farmers apply fertilizer. 2SCALE worked with fertilizer manufacturer Notore to develop a new high-sulfur blend specially formulated for cassava. The new blend was introduced in 2015, with an extensive education campaign to convince farmers the investment was worthwhile. It was distributed through Psaltry at discounted prices. In the past two seasons, more than 700 farmers have bought the new fertilizer, and yields have increased by 100 to 150%.

Scaling out

Our newest partner is the Nigerian government. Psaltry has been chosen as an ‘anchor borrower’ – an agribusiness that can help distribute government loans to small-scale farmers. The anchor program was rolled out in June, with 250 cassava farmers (96 women) receiving loans of 133 million naira (\$ 368,000). The interest rate was 9%, one-third the market rate. Along with the loan, farmers received additional support to buy planting material, fertilizers and herbicides.

Psaltry has tripled its starch production in the past three years, and plans to expand further in 2018. The secret? Fairness, transparency and a robust outgrower scheme with input credit, extension support and prompt payments. Last season, when market prices rose, Psaltry increased its previously-agreed prices by 16%, ensuring that farmers remained loyal. Crucially, the company made its commitment clear even before the crop was planted, and farmers responded with record production.



The 2SCALE project is funded by the Netherlands government and implemented jointly by IFDC, ICRA and BoPInc. 2SCALE was launched in June 2012. By mid 2017, our partners included 567,000 smallholder farmers, 1300 agribusinesses and nearly 1500 cooperatives in nine countries across sub-Saharan Africa.