Since 2007, two projects — Tropical Legumes II and III — have also supported the development and release of several varieties helping to highlight their benefits: high yielding, resistant to striga, alectra and insect pests. Thanks to the Tropical Legumes Project the cowpea seed systems have been improved as well with 5,308 tons of certified seeds produced between 2008 to 2016. The seeds are a major source of plant proteins and vitamins for man, feed for animals, and also a source of cash income.

In a first adoption study, Inaizumi et al. (1999) found that 75% of farmers surveyed in Bunkure Local Government Area in Kano State of Nigeria had adopted dry-season dual-purpose cowpea varieties with T89KD-288 being the most popular (89%). Dual-purpose varieties are attractive to mixed crop-livestock systems dominant in the Sahel and Savannah agro-ecologies of West Africa. Improved cowpea varieties benefit rural and urban poor and helped reduce poverty by 5 percentage points in Nigeria in 2016, which is equivalent to about 929,450 people lifted out of poverty.

**Cowpea variety IT89KD-288**

**Higher grain and fodder yields**

&

**Enhance genetic gains**

- Institute for Agricultural Research
- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
- International Livestock Research Institute
- Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria

- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- United States Agency for International Development
- Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
- European Union
- The Department for International Development
- Sasakawa Global 2000

**IT89KD-288** is a dry-season dual-purpose cowpea variety. Since the 1990s, the cowpea varieties, as a key driver to agricultural income growth, have made an impact on the poorest people in Nigeria. Cowpea can fit as a niche crop in multiple cropping systems involving maize, sorghum, and millet. Being a legume, it provides soil nitrogen for its use, accompanying and subsequent crops. It is constituted of 25% protein and 64% carbohydrate helping to alleviate malnutrition among resource-poor farmers and to enhance food security and the productivity and sustainability of the crop-livestock system.

**“5 percentage-point reduction in the incidence of poverty”**

**"A versatile African crop"**

Effectively, The Sudan Savanna Taskforce used Innovation Platforms (IPs) comprising a coalition of partners and stakeholders, one in Musawa Local Government Area and another in Safana Local Government Area all in Katsina State of Nigeria to facilitate knowledge transmission, synergies and awareness of improved cowpea varieties. Accompanying innovations such as innovation platforms, seed systems, extension services and training have helped adoption by other beneficiaries while also helping linkages between stakeholder networks.

"**significant economic and social benefits**"

**"Cowpea is one of the most important foods in Africa"**