



The humble cassava is at the root of our International Collaboration of the Year, a University of Greenwich-led initiative that has transformed the lives of 90,000 subsistence farmers in five African countries.

The starchy root vegetables is a staple of the sub-Saharan diet, but many growers barely get enough cash from their produce to feed their families: the roots are highly perishable, and traditionally produced cassava flour is of poor quality.

To tackle these problems, the Cassava: Adding Value for Africa (C:AVA) project developed technology to turn the vegetable into an affordable product hardly enough to replace imported wheat and corn, supported by further interventions along the supply chain to boost its value.

To deliver the project, Greenwich's Natural Resources Institute partnered five universities (one each from Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania and Malawi), backed by \$16.7 million (£10.5 million) awarded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

C:AVA has now helped 90,000 farmers to increase their annual income by between \$310 and \$370, enabling many to diversify their crops and send their children to school.

Some 24,000 tonnes of high-quality flour have been processed, supporting 89 village processing groups and 51 small enterprises.

In 2012-13, leadership of C:AVA was passed to Nigeria's Federal University of Agriculture. A follow-up project, C:AVA2, has been launched, funded by \$18.8 million from the Gates Foundation.

Joanna Newman, vice-principal (international) of King's College London and one of our judges, said Greenwich had given a "very clear lead" to a "complex web" of international partners. "This project very impressive for its scale, transforming the livelihoods of 90,000 subsistence farmers," she said. "it was a truly international collaboration."