A participatory rural appraisal (PRA) was conducted in the northern region of Mozambique in order to obtain farmers’ groundnut variety selection criteria and production constraints which could be considered in future breeding programmes. Two districts, namely Namuno in Cabo Delgado province and Erati in Nampula province were selected for the study. Open-ended interviews with a group of farmers, guided by a questionnaire and with direct participant observation, were undertaken to obtain detailed information on groundnut production in the region. The main issues addressed in the study included major crops grown, farmers’ groundnut variety selection criteria, cropping systems, groundnut production constraints.

The study established that the main crops grown in the region were maize, groundnuts, cassava, and cowpea and sorghum. Groundnuts were the third most important crop after cassava and maize. Groundnut is the only crop which appeared in all existing cropping systems in the two districts and it was grown for both cash income and food security. The major constraints for groundnut production were diseases, insect pests and a lack of suitable improved varieties. About 27% of women and 41% of men reported that diseases, specifically groundnut rosette disease, were the most important constraint affecting groundnut production.

Farmers identified the disease using descriptive terms, such as plant stunting, leaf deformation and leaf yellowing. In Namuno, 100% of farmers grew local landraces and recycled their own seed every growing season, but in Erati about 56% of farmers had replaced landraces with improved varieties. In some cases, farmers’ selection criterion for groundnuts differed from that used by women and men in the same village and across villages.

However, farmers in this region preferred groundnut varieties with the following characteristics: erect or runner, medium to large seeded with red seed testa, early to medium maturing, medium to high yielding, high oil content, and resistant/tolerant to drought, diseases and insect pests.

**Keywords:** Mozambique, groundnut (*Arachis hypogaea*), participatory rural appraisal