

Indigenous

Common names: Ateso: Keo **English:** Lowland bamboo **Lugbara:** Odra **Luo:** Koo **Madi:** Ordra.

Ecology: In continental Africa the lowland bamboo grows in Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia. It is the most hardy of the three African bamboos, often found on very poor soils. In most places it is in demand for building purposes. In Uganda it is confined to the ecozone of wooded grassland savannah (Guinea-Sudano ecozone), mainly in Arua, Nebbi, Moyo and Kitgum Districts.

Uses: Poles (building), fences, fodder (leaves), walking sticks, tools, tool handles.

Description: A tall grass to 7 m or more, in dense clumps, arching over. Unusual in having **solid stems**, up to 10 cm in diameter at the base. **LEAVES:** blue-green, **base rounded**, the **tip long and spiny**, usually 15 x 2.5 cm, but up to 30 x 5 cm. There are **irritating dark brown hairs** on the leaf sheath. **FLOWERS AND FRUIT:** spikelets narrowed, pointed, 2.5 cm in dense **rounded clusters** 6 cm across. **Flowering takes place about every 7 years.** Then the clumps die down but shoot up one year later from the rhizomes. **Propagation:** Suckers and rhizomes; rarely, seed.

Seed:

treatment:

storage:

Management: Needs to be controlled by cutting back.

Remarks: Like most bamboos, each plant flowers only once and then dies. Fences are susceptible to damage by termites and borers. The plant survives fire in its natural habitat. Small stems can be used for pipes and arrow shafts, larger ones for fences, building, furniture, beds and baskets.

