

# FarmerLed Documentation and Knowledge Sharing

Case Studies from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia



PELUM UGANDA



**© 2010 PELUM Uganda**

Published by: PELUM Uganda - Country Desk

Editors: Dr Matthias Magunda, Emebet Wuhib Mutungi and Stella Grace Lutalo

Illustrations: Stephen Mulyanga

Layout & design by: Andrew Kibuuka - Jona Treasure Stores



# Farmer Led Documentation and Knowledge Sharing

Case Studies from Kenya,  
Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia

# Table of Contents

<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Glossary of terms</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Foreword</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Background</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Purpose of the Publication	1
1.2 What is presented in the publication	1
1.3 Who will use the publication?	1
<b>Chapter 2: About Farmer Led Documentation</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Purpose of FLD	3
2.2 What can be documented?	3
2.3 How FLD works	4
2.4 What is used to carry out FLD?	5
<b>Chapter 3: Putting Farmer Led Documentation into practice</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 FLD case studies	6
3.2 Climate Change	7
3.2.1 Case Study 1	7
3.2.2 Case Study II	12
3.3 Local Innovation	16
3.3.1 Case Study III	16
3.3.2 Case study IV	23
3.4 Natural Resource Management.	27
3.4.1 Case study V	27
3.5 Indigenous Knowledge.	33
3.5.1 Case Study VI	33
<b>Chapter 4: Recommendations</b>	<b>39</b>
4.1 Success factors for FLD projects	39
4.2 General Challenges	40
4.3 General Tips for FLD facilitators	40
4.4 Lessons for further research and gaps	41
4.5 Sustainability	42
4.6 Conclusion	42
<b>ANNEXES</b>	
Annex 1: References and contacts	43
Annex II: Participants of the International exchange and capacity building workshop on FLD, November 2006	44
Annex III: FLD Write shop participants, October 2009	45
Annex IV: Participants of the FLD Publication Pre-test, February 2010	46

# Acronyms

<b>A2N</b>	Africa 2000 Network Uganda
<b>BEO</b>	Block Extension Officer
<b>DPPPP</b>	Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Pilot Project
<b>EA</b>	Environmental Alert
<b>ESAFF</b>	East and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum
<b>FLD</b>	Farmer Led Documentation
<b>GLM</b>	Green Living Movement
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>IK</b>	Indigenous Knowledge
<b>LISA</b>	Laela Institute of Sustainable Agriculture
<b>MACo</b>	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organisation
<b>NRM</b>	Natural Resource Management
<b>PELUM</b>	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management
<b>PET</b>	Participatory Education Theatre
<b>PROLINNOVA</b>	Promoting Local Innovations
<b>QAS</b>	Question and Answer System
<b>REN</b>	Rural Empowerment Network
<b>TOT</b>	Trainer of Trainers
<b>UCRC</b>	Ugunja Community Resource Centre
<b>VEDCO</b>	Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns
<b>VS</b>	Voucher System
<b>ZAMSEED</b>	Zambian Seed



# Glossary of terms:

**Climate Change:** refers to a change in the statistical distribution of weather over periods of time that range from decades to millions of years or any change in global temperatures and precipitation over time due to natural variability or to human. Also commonly referred to as “Global Warming”

**Local Innovation:** refers to the process through which individuals or groups within a given locality discover or develop and apply improved ways of managing the available resources – building on and expanding the boundaries of their indigenous knowledge.

**Indigenous Knowledge:** refers to the long-standing traditions and practices of certain regional, indigenous, or local communities.

**Natural Resource Management:** refers to efficient utilization and preservation of natural resources to ensure sustainable development.

**Small-scale Farmers:** refers to farmers that till on small plots of land of less than 2 acres mainly at subsistence level and relying solely on rainfall.

**Conservation Farming:** refers to any system or practice which aims to conserve soil and water by using ecologically sound practices. Conservation farming normally combines a number of approaches or practices.

**Soil Fertility:** refers to the ability of soil to retain and supply plant nutrients

**Subsistence Farmers:** refers to farmers who grow crops primarily to feed themselves and their family using basic elements and depend on family labour.

**Local Farmers:** refers to native farmers who use basic farm tool elements with little external inputs and extension services.

# Foreword

Improving the livelihoods of poor and marginalized farmers is a big challenge for different stakeholders. Women and men living in farming communities struggle daily with how to produce sufficient food for their families, how to get a good price for their products in the market, how to cope with recurrent droughts or other effects of climate change and variability, and how to meet other basic needs. On top of this, several families are affected by HIV and AIDS or other (health) problems.

It is also a challenge for the farmers' associations to support their members in these endeavors, amongst others through networking, mutual support and joint action. And finally, for development agencies, research institutes and government bodies which are committed to promote sustainable rural livelihoods and agriculture.

Learning and knowledge sharing on livelihoods approaches that have worked is a very valuable tool to strengthen the capacities and skills of farmers and their associations. If experiences on 'what has worked' or 'what has not worked' are shared, more farmers tap into the available knowledge, build upon it and apply it in their daily practice. Using participatory and empowering approaches to promote learning and sharing can greatly contribute to the success of these actions. It also contributes to the broader agenda of empowering female and male farmers and their associations to fight for their rights.

This publication gives an overview of six pilot projects in four Eastern and Southern African countries where participatory approaches for learning and knowledge sharing were experimented. Under the umbrella of a project 'Farmer Led Documentation' (FLD), a group of development partners and farmers associations implemented activities that promote farmer's leadership roles in the process of capturing their knowledge in order to share it within their own communities, other farming communities and other stakeholders. This led to a very diverse set of experiences. Generally, the participating farmers enhanced their documentation skills and started to use those skills. This generated substantial enthusiasm among the local communities as they actively took part in documenting their knowledge and practices. Some interesting results were achieved such as increased knowledge on climate change coping or adaptation strategies, and on the values and uses of indigenous plants. Local farmer innovations were documented and promoted among other farmers. These activities led to more exchange of knowledge between farming communities and in some cases to unforeseen follow up exchanges. Some participating organizations started incorporating elements of the 'Farmer Led Documentation' approach in their regular community development work despite the fact that the pilots were implemented on a limited scale.

This publication is therefore a source of information and inspiration for other farmers associations or development organizations, which intend to incorporate participatory learning and documentation methodologies in their work. They may use the information and the lessons learnt in these six pilots as an input to shape their own experiments. Agricultural research institutions and universities, as well as international and national policy makers may also incorporate some of the principles of the approach in research and policy cycles.



**Nicole Metz**

KIC - "Partnership for learning"

Knowledge Infrastructure with and between Counterparts

Oxfam Novib

# Acknowledgments

The Farmer Led Documentation (FLD) approach promoted by Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM), Promoting Local Innovations (PROLINNOVA) and Oxfam Novib has been implemented since 2006 involving a number of countries around the world. It was hosted by PELUM Uganda. The FLD steering group in 2006/7 included the out-going chair Emebet Wuhib Mutungi (Africa 2000 Network Secretariat / PELUM Uganda), Dorine Ruter and Laurens Van Veldhuisen (PROLINNOVA International Secretariat), Nicholas Ssenyonjo (Uganda Environmental Education Foundation / PELUM Uganda), Stella Grace Lutalo (PELUM Uganda Country Desk) and Nicole Metz (Oxfam Novib/ KIC project). In 2008/9, the group expanded to include Maryleen Micheni (PELUM Kenya Country desk), Precious Kabaso (PELUM Zambia Country desk) and Laurent Kaburire (PROLINNOVA/ PELUM Tanzania). The chair for this latter period was Ritah Lumala (Africa 2000 Network Secretariat). This steering group has played a great role in generally overseeing and coordinating efforts to promote FLD in sustainable agriculture and natural resource management as well as supporting the implementation of FLD pilots in, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

FLD programmes (2006 – 2009) would not have been possible without the generous financial support of Oxfam Novib. Special thanks go to Nicole Metz (Oxfam Novib KIC project) for her belief in FLD and the invaluable technical support given at each phase of FLD implementation.

We are enormously grateful to the participants as well as Emily Drani, facilitator of the International Exchange and Capacity Building workshop on FLD held in Uganda in November 2006 (annex II) and for all the FLD isolated cases shared. These cases provided a strong foundation for further promotion of the FLD approach.

We greatly appreciate the participants of the October 2009 FLD write shop in Uganda (Annex III) who shared great insights into their FLD pilot projects that are part of this publication. We acknowledge the contribution of cases from A2N-(Uganda - Kabale District), Farmer support Group (South Africa) , SMART Initiative (Kenya) as well as experience sharing from Environmental Alert and ESAFF Uganda, which are not presented in the case study section of this publication, but have greatly contributed to the lessons learnt and challenges captured.

Many thanks go to Anne Wanja for successfully facilitating the FLD write shop that led to the production of this publication as well as Kennedy Igbokwe and Emebet Wuhib-Mutungi for pre and post write shop technical support. We also enjoyed the support of our write shop editors; Linda Lilian and John Baptist Wasswa, and illustrator, Stephen Mulyanga as well as Ruth Nabaggala (PELUM Uganda Country desk) for effectively managing the write shop logistics and mobilizing FLD stakeholder input to the various drafts of this publication.

We are indebted to the farmers who engaged themselves in the FLD cases and experiences shared in this publication. This book is a tribute to them – the real heroes of FLD.

We are grateful to the participants of the FLD publication pre-test Focus Group Discussions (Annex IV) who gave valuable feedback on the draft and thus enabled production of an improved and user friendly version.

Last but not least, we express our gratitude to Dr. Matthias Magunda and Emebet Wuhib Mutungi for the support towards the final editing of this publication



**Stella Grace Lutalo**  
Country Coordinator, PELUM Uganda  
(Secretary, FLD Steering Group)



# Chapter 1: Background

**D**ocumentation in Africa has been lacking for many generations hence the African saying ‘*When an old man dies a library is burnt down*’. However the need to document and share information and knowledge has been growing in many sectors including agriculture, where the need to have indigenous solutions to a number of contemporary agricultural concerns such as climate change, natural resource management as well as the application of indigenous knowledge (IK) and innovations documented and shared has become very important. The drive to have this need met was responded to by the Farmer Led Documentation (FLD) pilot projects promoted in Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, by PELUM ([www.pelumrd.org](http://www.pelumrd.org)), PROLINNOVA ([www.prolinnova.net](http://www.prolinnova.net)) and Oxfam Novib ([www.oxfamkic.org](http://www.oxfamkic.org)). This publication therefore presents results of the Farmer Led Documentation pilots, highlighting experiences on climate change and variability, natural resource management, indigenous knowledge as well as innovations.

FLD as an approach was developed as a participatory communication strategy that would involve the farmer directly thus reversing the traditional cycle of government and development agents bringing information as well as services and impressing them on the local farmers. In this case the local farmers would unfortunately not fully understand what is given to them and why. In most cases the information given does not normally target their needs directly. The FLD approach provides local farmers with a new role of being their own knowledge managers, problem solvers and decision makers. In the FLD approach, the farmers own their development process. Through farmer meetings, discussions, identification of problems, provision of solutions, methods and strategies are developed in a joint manner with technical people from government, agricultural research and development organizations. This creates knowledge rich in the local communities’ views that can be put to use by the local communities, as well as the government, research and development organizations.

## 1.1 Purpose of the Publication

PROLINNOVA states that although development agents have been interested in FLD, little is known about the best designs of such documentation processes or about the available and appropriate media and their use including those making use of modern Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Therefore this publication aims at bringing out the FLD experience in varying settings in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, as well as different areas of interest (Climate Change and variability, Natural Resource Management, Indigenous Knowledge and Local Innovations) in order to demonstrate the FLD documentation process, commonly used methods, tools, and the impact these have on the local communities where FLD is practiced.

## 1.2 What is presented in the publication

The publication presents the FLD experience through the farmers own viewpoint. The case studies presented in this publication were written by the implementers of the pilots and were shared and edited during a write shop organized by PELUM Uganda. The case studies demonstrate the ownership of the FLD process by the local communities which includes problem identification by participating communities, setting objectives to handle the identified problems using FLD and the process used. This process included documenting: how it was done, how the farmers were enabled to take lead, who was involved and their roles. This publication elaborates the strategies used in the FLD projects, the results of the implementation, lessons learnt, challenges met and how the process was being sustained in the local communities.

## 1.3 Who will use the publication?

The publication acts a valuable toolkit to be shared by various stakeholders, primarily development practitioners and farmers’ associations, but also other categories of stakeholders involved in the field of agriculture and environment for the purposes mentioned below:



## **Farmers' Associations**

They may facilitate their members in joint learning and knowledge sharing activities. For that purpose, they may use this publication to learn from the FLD experiences given, and apply the lessons learnt from the pilot projects in their own work with farmers. This will enable farmers to share useful information amongst themselves on important farming methods as well as strategies, both indigenous and contemporary.

## **Development Agencies**

The publication is a good guide for development agencies to learn from and to use in their local interventions. From this booklet they will learn about local knowledge, how it can be generated and used as well as how to place the local farmers at the centre of the development process so that the farmers are able to solve their own problems and own their own development process. They will also learn how to integrate both the farmers' opinion as well as how to provide the farmers with up to date information, thus establishing a joint learning and implementing process for the development agencies and farmers.

## **Policy Makers**

Policy makers will learn the importance of participatory documentation and information sharing among the local people from this publication. The role local farmers' play in identifying their own problems and strategies to solve them will be an important experience for the policy makers to draw lessons from and inform their strategies for policy formulation and implementation.

## **Researchers**

FLD in this publication is presented as a source of reliable information that many researchers will find important. The publication will offer grass root experiences and also give researchers tips on how to use FLD in information generation and knowledge development.



# Chapter 2: About Farmer Led Documentation

**F**LD is an empowering process in which local communities take the lead role in the documentation process and where the results are used by the community members for purposes of internal learning and exchange between communities (horizontal sharing), and between communities and development workers/ policy makers (vertical sharing).

## 2.1 Purpose of FLD

FLD empowers the local farmers to take lead in their development process. In its methodology, the local farmers study their own situations, recognize their own needs, find answers to their own queries and work towards implementing knowledge gathered from their meetings as well as monitoring the whole process. While acting upon the information shared and knowledge developed, the farmers document their own experiences and testimonies as important current and future reference points in resolving similar situations in the community.

FLD ensures that relevant experiences and good practices at the community level are captured, are visible and are being put to good use. Documentation of these experiences, especially when done together with others, helps the farmer to analyse what he/ she knows and capture the information to share with other people. It provides opportunities for several people to learn from the experience of one farmer. Proper documentation retains its value in the future, so that it can be reused, making learning and education more efficient.

Traditionally, documentation for development purposes has been a top-down practice whereby technical experts (writer, video crew, photographer etc) take a lead role in the process and decide on the method, purpose and audience. In contrast, in FLD, farming communities take the lead role in the documentation process.

***“FLD amplifies the voice of community members to express their experiences in their own words and with their own vision.”***

## 2.2 What can be documented?

There are several types of experiences that can be documented. Farmer field experiences range from local hands on practices (yam cultivation, pig rearing etc) to less tangible aspects like knowledge, values and beliefs.



**A farmer, in Jinja district, Uganda, showing the comments written in her comment book for extension workers.**

## 2.3 How does FLD work?

FLD functions as an effective interactive methodology. There is an interaction between the local extension service providers and local farmers as well as the development agents and community leaders. This interaction involves focus group discussions, group sharing and consensus, then documentation. Experiences are shared and documented, problems are identified in a participatory manner then strategies to solve the problems are developed and also documented for future reference. **For a successful FLD process, farmers take the lead in the process while development workers play a facilitative role.** Some steps taken towards achieving FLD include:

1. Interactions are held with farmers through meetings or discussion groups in order to cause information sharing. In these meetings or discussions, problems are identified and prioritized. Methods to be used in solving these problems are also identified. Then the tools to be used in the collection of facts, information and knowledge aimed at solving the problem are taken into account. This is done for purposes of keeping record of the whole problem solving process.
2. Documentation is done using visual, audio and written formats. The experiences are shared and information is captured through the use of visual aids such as photographs, videos, drawing, audio aids such as tape recordings, radio presentations and songs.
3. Information sharing is done at the initial stage of FLD during the farmer, development agents and community leaders' interaction. However, it becomes more crucial after the documentation is done since solutions have to be disseminated alongside information of how the problem was identified and handled. This creates proof that problems can be solved by the local people themselves. In some cases, additional information has to be sought elsewhere, using the linkages within the farmers' movement or the contacts with research institutes or development agencies.
4. Monitoring and evaluation takes place at each stage of implementation in FLD. This gives a review of the process from the time discussions are held, problems are identified as well as methods and tools are used.

## 2.4 What is used to carry out FLD?

Documentation can be in many different forms including but not limited to written text, drawings, drama, poetry, dance, still photography, video and audio recordings. Being open minded towards the communication methods, both traditional and modern, and tools that are most appropriate for the context within which farmers live and work is important. For purposes of feasibility and sustainability of the documentation activities, farmers should be encouraged to start by using available tools.

### Tools used in the pilot projects

In order to achieve effective documentation and record the farmer led process the farmers were trained in the use of the following tools:

- **Tape recorders:** During the farmers meetings and farmer field activities, recordings are made of what is being shared and agreed upon.
- **Video cameras:** Most case studies in this publication show the use of video cameras as an exciting technology for the local farmers, who were trained to use the video cameras as a self evident tool that demonstrated what was being done in the FLD process.
- **Digital camera:** The use of digital cameras to take photos was another evidence based tool that showed FLD in action at the different localities. The farmers were trained in the use of the digital cameras and the photographs were printed and stored for reference.
- **Note books, flip chart paper, markers and pens:** These were used as tools for capturing information during the farmers meetings. Information shared was recorded. The note books and pens were also used in field visits when the farmers set out to interview and interact with other farmers in the field.
- **Computers:** These were used by organizations to enter information captured by farmers and stored for reference purposes. Farmers generated the information and it was processed for them and stored.

### Methods

The FLD methodology entails the use of a number of approaches to get information and generate a knowledge base in the community. In the case studies presented in this publication the following approaches were used:

- **Group discussions:** Farmer group forums were formed and farmers were able to express themselves, discuss and share their knowledge and experiences as well as testimonies. In the group discussions information was sought, knowledge was gained and participatory solutions were suggested.
- **Interviews:** Farmers went to the field and interviewed fellow farmers on the methods they used. This gave the opportunity for farmer to farmer interaction as well as support and guidance.
- **Music, dance and drama:** Through songs, drama and dance, the farmers where able to express their views as well as share knowledge among themselves. They also saw the use of these approaches as a sustainable approach to keep their experiences and knowledge active for current and future use.
- **Story narration:** Story narration was another approach used to share information and keep it active for current and future use. Farmers told stories about their experiences in farming and had them documented.
- **Drawing:** Farmers drew pictures of what they perceived, understood and knew in their local practice as a means of documentation and knowledge sharing.



# Chapter 3: Putting Farmer Led Documentation into practice

## 3.1 FLD case studies

**T**his chapter presents case studies from pilot projects conducted in East and Central Africa. They document how FLD was carried out, the process used to implement FLD, who was involved in the process, the outputs and outcomes realized in the FLD process, as well as the lessons learnt, challenges and sustainability measures for the continuity of FLD.

The case studies fall under the following themes:

### Climate Change

This theme presents two cases, one from Kenya (UCRC) and another from Zambia (ESAFF), reflecting on FLD measures undertaken in response to the effects of climate change and variability and how FLD became a basis of climate change mitigation through community discussions, agreement, shared knowledge and efforts.

### Local Farmer Innovations

LISA in Tanzania and REN in Uganda provided FLD case studies in the area of documenting and promoting local innovations. The two case studies demonstrate how FLD enabled the recognition of local innovations and their application among the farmer groups especially through the shared experiences aimed at solving local problems.

### Indigenous Knowledge

The VEDCO case study demonstrated the importance of promoting indigenous knowledge in Uganda. The case study showed how FLD was used to give a voice to the local farmers' need for local ground nut seeds to be protected, promoted and used. The FLD process increased interest in the local groundnut seed as well as farmers confidence in growing the groundnut seed and disseminating information about it.

### Natural Resource Management

GLM demonstrated a case in the use of FLD in encouraging natural resource management in Zambia. The local communities were organized into groups that shared and documented information concerning forest protection. The case study showed how FLD enabled the local people reflect on the importance of the forest and come up with strategies of maintaining forests.



## 3.2 Climate Change

### 3.2.1 Case Study 1

#### Small-scale Farmers' Experiences in Conservation Farming in Kafue and Mumbwa Districts, Zambia.

By Simon Mwamba, ESAFF Zambia

##### Introduction

Between 2008 and 2009, heavy rains ravaged rural southern Zambia causing floods that destroyed crops and disrupted planting cycles. The irregular but prolonged rains were attributed to changing climatic conditions and weather patterns.

With planting cycles disrupted, traditional and conventional farming practices could no longer guarantee enough yield to address household food security. The devastating floods swept away good soil, destroyed crops, and in many cases caused deaths of domestic animals often sheltered in makeshift structures. The floods were followed by drought. To cope with the new situation, farmers in many parts of Zambia became creative and adapted methods of farming that conserve the environment and improve land productivity. Several adaptation practices were being promoted by non-governmental organisations, however, documentation and information dissemination on the farmers' experiences with regard to adaptation to climate change has always been the preserve of the technocrats.

**ESAFF Zambia** is a farmers' forum that brings together small scale farmers' groups in Zambia. The forum has members in many parts of Zambia and was involved in other farming support activities before the FLD pilot. Many other NGOs have worked in farming communities where they introduced a variety of methods to cope with the effects of changing weather and climatic patterns. However, all these previous efforts were owned by the development agencies and the farmers never really benefited much.

ESAFF teamed up with extension officers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives to engage selected farming communities to find solutions to their problems using the Farmer Led Documentation approach. The FLD project was piloted in Shimbizhi and Kapyanga villages in Mumbwa District as well as in Munyeu and Mwembeshi villages in Kafue District, Lusaka Province. The project was implemented in a period of eight months from November 2008 to July 2009. The primary target were small-scale farmers in rural Zambia that owned 2 to 5 hectares of land using hand hoes and ox drawn ploughs. Five men aged between 35-55 and 10 women aged 35-50 and youth aged 18 were included in the project which eventually reached out to 230 families in 4 villages giving a total population of about 1300 people.

##### Objectives of the project

The main objective of the project was to promote FLD and disseminate small scale farmers coping mechanisms to climate change. The FLD pilot also aimed at building the capacity of ESAFF Zambia in participatory project implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes through the involvement of farmers in documenting their experiences.



## The Specific objectives were:

- To equip farmers with tools and skills in information documentation and dissemination
- To document and disseminate information on experiences on the suitability of conservation farming to floods or drought mitigation.

## Actions Taken to Address the Problems

The project involved the acquisition of 2 digital cameras for taking still pictures and provision of stationery to farmers to write their experiences on conservation farming. Orientation meetings were held to introduce the FLD concept and the objectives of the pilot project. Farmers were also trained on how to operate the cameras and basics in notes taking for documentation purposes.

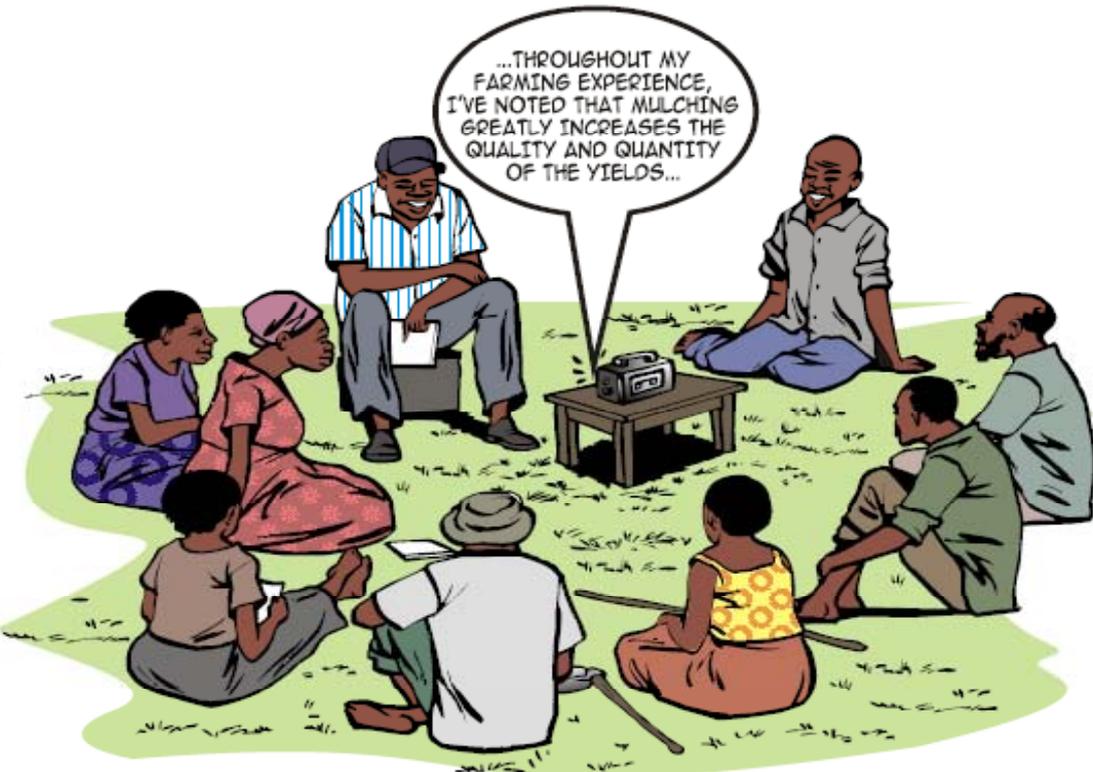
Documentation consolidation meetings were held in the communities where families that took part in the actual documentations made presentations to community members. Exchange visits and field visits by farmers involved in the project were undertaken to share their experiences as part of information sharing at community level and between communities. In addition, a radio programme was recorded and broadcast to enhance information dissemination.

# A case from ESAFF Zambia



VILLAGE A

DOCUMENTED INFORMATION (THROUGH RECORDING) IS SHARED AMONGST FARMERS IN DIFFERENT VILLAGES



VILLAGE B



## The FLD tools used

The project involved the use of still cameras, a portable audio recorder and written experiences. These were selected because farmers agreed that they were able to easily operate the equipment (camera and audio recorder) and most of the families had members that were literate.

The farmer group members were involved in the selection of the methods and lead farmers. This was done during trainings that were being undertaken under the climate change adaptation project (Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Pilot Project - DPPPP) before the project began.

To ensure that farmers take lead in the documentation process, the project staff did not dictate what had to be documented, therefore the farmers were allowed to choose for themselves anything being carried out by the community in response to effects of climate change.

## Stakeholder Participation

ESAFF Zambia worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative (MACo) Block Extension Officer (BEO) in the execution of the FLD project. The MACO staff worked with the farmer leaders in making work-plans and were highly involved in monitoring the progress of the documentation process. The BEO also assisted in planning and implementation of community exchange visits. Their involvement also assisted farmers in understanding technical aspects of conservation farming as they had been involved in Monitoring and Evaluation of the DPPPP.

## Outputs

Two major outputs were expected at the end of the project and they were realised:

- Farmers experiences in conservation farming practices for adaptation to climate change and FLD were documented, shared within the community and disseminated.
- Production of a radio programme and publication of a booklet.

## Outcomes

- The provision of cameras built the confidence of farmers in documenting and sharing their experiences.
- The farmers managed to produce one radio programme with the assistance of Zambia Agricultural Information Services. After the transmission of the radio programme, a farmer group from Monze requested for an exchange visit and visited the farmers that participated in the FLD.
- A publication of farmer's experiences with conservation farming will be published. The book was not published immediately due to financial constraints, however a seed company (ZAMSEED) has expressed interest to fund the publication of the booklet.



***The impact of FLD was seen in the progress participating farmers made in their farming after sharing knowledge.***

***In the picture, Elizabeth Nama, an FLD lead farmer proudly shows off her maize harvest. She took notes during a conservation farming training to which she referred to rectify problems with her crops hence increase in her yeild.***

**Lessons learned and factors influencing successes and failures**

The FLD project provided a lesson, that there is need to give attention to group dynamics especially after having introduced a new project such as FLD. It was observed that some farmers wanted to personalize the equipment and some farmers wanted to know the financial benefits of being involved in FLD. Therefore, it is important to explain to the target group what, why and who owns the FLD process in order to resolve conflicting interests of individuals in a farmer group.

The farmers managed to document other best practices that were not initially planned under the FLD or part of the DPPP. Below are pictures captured by farmers involved in the Pass on Living Gift Goat project.



**Ordinary Goat House**



**A Better Goat House**

***FLD assisted the farmers to observe and document the role that improved goat housing plays in reducing animal diseases. Farmers recorded a decrease in the number of young goats that were dying in the rainy season while using ordinary goat houses as opposed to improved goat houses.***

## Challenges.

- The limited time in which the project had to be completed was a challenge in that farmers wanted to document the most important part of conservation and that is the yields. A provision was sought to ensure the continuity of the FLD process and that was achieved by integrating it into ESAFF Zambia activities.
- The other challenge faced was inadequate resources to facilitate the farmers' access to computers for those who wanted to type the manuscript for the production of the book themselves. In the case of ESAFF Zambia the farmers proposed that a sample of the book produced out of what they had discussed and documented should be given to them so that they read it before the book is finally published.

## 3.2.2 Case Study II

### Farmer Led documentation on ways to improve Soil fertility and yield in Ugunja Community, Kenya

*By Rachel Owuor Adipo, UCRC*

#### Introduction

The FLD pilot initiative was implemented in Ugunja Division of Ugenya District in Kenya, covering 3 villages, namely, Nyamasare/Mundindi, Ulwani and Imbaya.

The FLD programme implementation aimed at helping a few farmers understand what FLD is all about and later on to expand the program to other villages. In the pilot phase, it was felt that working with a small number of people was better than working with a big group.

The project started in December 2008 and ended in June 2009. The implementation of the project started after the farmer-led documentation training was conducted. The participating farmers were chosen by the farmers themselves based on the type of technologies, methodologies and tools they were going to use in the field.

#### Background to the Problem

The Ugunja community members are peasant farmers with many having small pieces of land. With depleted/poor soils and unpredictable weather patterns, it is hard for the farmers to make a choice on the kinds of crops to plant. It is also hard for the farmers to decide on the right time of planting. The farmers do not practice good farming practices that could improve soil fertility and they are not using drought resistant varieties as an option to increase their yields. All these factors have significantly affected the agricultural production and the community rarely meets its food requirements three months after a harvest. The main crops grown for family use by the targeted community are; maize, beans, sweet potatoes and cassava.

As a result of low agricultural production, the community is reliant on the market to meet their food needs, thereby making them dependant on neighboring districts, like Busia in Uganda, for their food supply. The Ugunja farmers are always desperate and have limited understanding of how to improve their production capacity and take advantage of existing technologies and local market opportunities.

## Key Problem

- Reduced yields as a result of poor soils and unpredictable rainfall patterns

## Objectives of the Project

- Promoting farmer led experimentation.
- Encouraging farmer-based recording and documenting through knowledge building, information gathering and sharing.
- Establishing a data bank by ensuring all information gathered is disseminated among farmers through innovative technologies developed.

## Project Process

To make it easy to work with the Ugunja farmer groups and help enhance their confidence and ownership of the process, each group identified trainers of trainees (TOT) who were taken through an apprenticeship with UCRC field officers to acquire skills and knowledge which would be passed on to their group members during their meetings. The TOT were identified to help accelerate learning in the community and be able to help in the continuity of the project beyond the funding period. The FLD was seen as a value addition project and not a stand alone activity.

UCRC engaged the farmers in the use of FLD approaches to document their innovations and increase food production. To achieve these, the following steps were followed;

- Through formal letters, three farmer groups namely, Nyamasare/ Mundindi Change Team, Upendo, and Songa Mbele were invited by the field officer who assisted in facilitating the FLD process. The farmers attended a sensitization meeting where the groups' representatives were present. In the meeting they discussed the key problem affecting the community, which was, poor yields. The farmers identified possible causes of poor yields. These were, poor farming methods and poor seed selection. Farmers further discussed the possible farming practices to use in solving the problem. Adopting improved farming practices was identified as one of the solutions.
- To help build trust and confidence among the three farmer groups, the groups were integrated and subdivided into three new groups; namely, Kinda, Mango and Mwangaza. A two day FLD training was conducted in which 35 farmers from the three groups participated. During the training, the groups identified the following innovations for documentation; composting, seed storage, cassava growing, trapping termites and kitchen gardening techniques. The farmers also identified approaches to be used in the FLD pilot project, such as, group discussions, field visits, weekly meetings, trainings and consultations. The tools selected and used by the farmers were video and digital cameras, pens, books and a register.
- The farmer groups learnt how to use the tools and approaches they had identified for documentation and used demonstration plots which belonged to some of their group members to document experiences.
- Together with the field agents, they documented the farmer's experiences using digital and video cameras as well as pens and books. The photos and the video tapes were downloaded by the field agent. The video coverage was edited and the photos were developed.

## Key Outcomes of the Project

The FLD project implemented at UCRC led to the realization of outcomes both planned and unplanned. The outcomes and impacts realized by the project are detailed below:

Enhanced farmers' skills on documentation – *".... it is a privilege having known and worked with UCRC, they pull us from ravages of poverty and keep on teaching us how to produce food. They are now teaching us how to use sophisticated machines that only our sons bring with them from the city and do not allow us even to move next to where they are stored. They look down upon us as ignorant people! UCRC has enabled me learn about a video and I am able to use one ... "* **Says Jennifer Poch**

- Farmers acquired more knowledge on climate change coping strategies using organic farming methodologies. Through FLD, a databank of coping innovations was established which has helped farmers explain climate change in their own words for example the rise in temperatures, change in wind flow and change in the rain patterns.
- Increased opportunity for experience sharing forums - During FLD project implementation, three farmer groups from three villages were brought together. Opportunity for sharing and learning was created by the weekly meetings among the participating groups. The farmers would arrange on their own to visit their fellow farmers from other groups for learning and experience sharing purposes. The involvement of other stakeholders, e.g. ministry of agriculture, provided farmers the chance to get more information. The stakeholders also found an avenue to reach out to the community faster through such group meetings.
- Storage of information within the community learning resource centers increased access and availability of information for sharing. The available materials produced during the project would be shared among the centres to boost the rate at which information reaches the other community members from different learning centers.
- FLD project also gave an opportunity for UCRC to help raise the profile of the participating community and enhance their work by involving them in the Farmer Led Documentation process.

## Lessons learned and factors influencing successes and failures

### Technology

- The farmers were happy to practice using the tools for documentation, and the quote above from one of the farmers, Jennifer Poch, confirms that. Farmers never felt intimidated as is always the case when journalists document their activities.
- By documenting using cameras, it is easier to remember and follow the steps because the pictures easily remind one on the right steps to follow. The pictures also make it easier for others who are learning the steps for the first time.
- Farmers have many innovations that when given the opportunity and facilitated to document them, could lead to reduced incidences of risks and this will boost food production.

### Farmer led approach

- When the farmers are fully engaged in a process, they own it.
- In FLD farmers learn confidently and at their pace from their neighbors and members of the group. An example is that the use of TOTs accelerated learning.
- FLD enabled the farmers to change their negative attitude towards information sharing.
- The FLD approach aimed at documenting better farming options which helped strengthen the weak farmers, engaged them more in practicing sustainable farming, sharing information on the processes of the practice and also finding out what other people were doing.

## Institutionalization

- Use of existing and strong groups made the FLD project easier to introduce since this was a new project in the society.
- UCRC expertise and experience facilitated quick acceptance of FLD activities at the community level. For instance, UCRC is well known within the community in its endeavors to promote information sharing through community centres as well as computer literacy campaigns, and this helped a lot.

## Challenges

- **Prioritization** – farmers did not see the documentation project as a priority. They felt there were more important activities like tending to their gardens than learning the documentation skills. But when information was shared they found the process valuable.
- **Age** – some farmers felt their children should learn such kinds of methodologies as they would grasp the knowledge faster and will help the next generation. But when guided and involved they found FLD interesting and relevant.
- **Introduction of FLD to the community** – farmers perceived FLD as an activity for the elites and would be time wasting for them leading to several meetings being held in order to have them participate in the project
- **Reward** – the farmers were not confident about acknowledgement of their innovations and documentation. This required time to convince them which UCRC did by getting them to understand that in every production, the producer must be acknowledged as the source of information.
- **The documentation equipment was delicate** and required to be used with care and kept with care. Therefore staff supervised the use of the equipment by the farmers.
- **UCRC had proposed to use participatory educational theatre (PET)** to disseminate the learnings and documentation of innovation, using radio scripts, video and picture. Use of PET was not successful as the equipment for documentation like audio recorders and software for editing the voices was not available. However, because this was not the end of the project, other methods like PET have been shelved for the future as part of the sustainability of the project.

## 3.3 Local Innovation

### 3.3.1 Case Study III

#### Promoting Farmer Led Documentation in Kayunga District, Uganda.

*By Patrick Kasangaki and Eria Bwana Simba , REN*

#### Introduction

FLD was piloted by the Rural Empowerment Network (REN) at village level in Kayunga district targeting the rural farmers at the village (grassroot) level. The pilot project which worked with sixty subsistence farmers began in April 2007 and ended in August 2007. The farmers were subdivided into three groups to facilitate documentation and FLD learning process.

#### Background to the Problem

A number of initiatives provide farmers with agricultural information in Kayunga, but this information is not often used or understood and therefore does not meet the local farmer's specific needs. This is mainly caused by lack of farmer involvement in information generation, documentation and packaging. This has led to an information gap in the local farming community causing low productivity and reduced incomes.

#### Objectives of the project

The main objectives of the project were:

- To enhance farmers' expertise in the documentation of agricultural information
- To build rural agricultural information archives at the village level
- To catalyze communication among farmers and to encourage farmer-to-farmer exchange of agricultural information.
- To mainstream best practices of FLD into REN's activities

#### Project Process

REN undertook the following process in implementing FLD among the following three farmer groups in Kayunga: Kiwana Rural Development Association, Busaana Farmers Association, and Patience Pays Farmer Group.

- The farmers and REN were involved in the selection of the three (3) farmer groups.
- Farmers had group discussions and were trained in the use of the digital cameras. 60 Farmers got hands-on practical experience in the use of the digital cameras and they took photographs of the other farmer's problems.
- Farmer Information request forms were developed jointly with farmers and distributed for information generation.
- 10 Expert Farmers were identified as resource persons among the farmers, and these gave information, knowledge and documentation support to the other farmers and played a key role in developing the information request forms as well as answering the questions. During the village meetings the 60 farmers involved in the project were always given refreshments and transport refund / allowances.

- Photographs taken by the farmers were downloaded to computers for printing, dissemination purposes and for documentation.
- Photographs were pasted to the information request form as visual aids to help farmers who would be answering the questions.
- Compilation of information archives was done and an information database established. There was a database of expert farmers. The expert farmers are those that were identified for the purpose of responding to questions from other farmers within the project area. These are located at both the REN resource centre and at the village level where copies of the information archives are located. Each of the three farmer groups that participated in the pilot has an archive and an expert database at village level.
- Farmer-to-farmer information exchange was achieved through the information and knowledge generated and availed to the farmers.
- Farmer evaluations were conducted by the farmers based on the information given and the application of the knowledge was assessed for relevance and timeliness of the information.

Farmers set the agenda by asking specific agricultural questions and in return get specific and timely responses from fellow farmers. In other words farmers took the lead in the process, that is, they drew up the questions on the information request form and participated in answering them. REN staff provided guidance.

Farmers were trained in the use of digital cameras and the cameras were then used to capture farmer agricultural problems. The information request form compiled by REN with guidance from the farmers assisted in the systematic capturing of the questions which would be used for information collection. The farmers were trained on the use of these tools. Farmers were also involved in the management and use of the agricultural information archives in which the information was fed. The archives which mostly contain agricultural information generated by the community and entered into the computer were made by the community with the support from REN, which helped the farmers form a database of experts from the information collected.

The involvement of the farmers in the generation and documentation process through the Question and Answer Service ensured that they understood and utilized the information better.

## **The FLD method used**

The project used the Question and Answer Service (QAS) voucher system approach with the intention of incorporating Farmer Led Documentation (FLD) in this process by training and involving farmers in formulating, capturing, and documenting their questions and answers.

## **The Question Answer Service (QAS) voucher system (VS) for farmers**

The Question and Answer Service (QAS) voucher system for farmers was chosen because it is a demand driven, open, and decentralized communication and information system. Vouchers were used to turn farmers' information needs into demand for information. The vouchers were handed out to farmers to enable them to ask questions of their choice and to get answers from expert farmers among the participating farmer groups.

### FARMER INFORMATION REQUEST FORM

1. Date of Request: 9/05/2007	2. Name of Farmer: Mr. Samuel Wamala
3. Postal Address of Farmer: Bunyumya, Kayunga	4. Village, Parish, and Sub-county: Bunyumya, Kayunga Sub-county



5. Farmer Question: Simple and Precise.  
 Many pawpaw are being attacked by a strange infection leading to rough and wrinkled surfaces. Tried to remove infected pawpaw in order to try and stop the problem from spreading.  
 What is infecting my pawpaw and how can I prevent them from rotting?

6. In what Language do you Prefer the Answer? Luganda

7. Do others have the Same Problem?	No	Some	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Many
8. Age of Client	Below 20	20 To 30	30 To 40	Above 40 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. Gender	Male	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Female	
10. User Category	Subsistence Farmer		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commercial Farmer
11. Are you Affiliated to an Organisation?	No	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
12. Name of Farmer Organisation	Kiwana Rural Development Association		13. Number of Group Members	200
14. Is the Request Submitted by an Individual or Group?	Individual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Group	

### ANSWER SHEET

#### Practical Solution:

#### What Caused the problem?

The cause is due to Papaya ring spot disease. Aphids transmit the virus. The disease affects the Fruits/pods, leaves, stems and the whole plant. Plant parts liable to carry the pest during transport include fruits, flowers, leaves, seedlings, roots and stems. Pawpaw plants are susceptible to the disease at any age and generally show symptoms 2-3 weeks after infection. The symptoms may vary in intensity according to the age at which the plant becomes infected. The leaves become intense yellow and distorted. Dark-green blisters may be present on the leaves.

Dark-green rings are almost always present on fruits and they become less visible as the fruit matures and yellows.

#### How can the Problem be solved?

The disease is controlled by preventive practices that reduce or delay the spread of the virus. These practices include the use of clean seedlings to start new crops, planting in partially isolated areas or as far as possible from old infected pawpaw.

- Destroying diseased plants once every 2 weeks
- Avoid planting pawpaw near vegetables
- Weed frequently to reduce the aphid population

Expected long-term effect:	- Healthy pawpaw harvests - Reduced prevalence of aphids
----------------------------	---

Expert Name:	Bwette Richard
Phone Contact:	0772863508
Postal Address:	Ndeeba Village
Physical address of expert:	Ndeeba Village
Date of answer:	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2007

Above is a sample of the QAS forms used by farmers in the REN project  
 (The front on the left and the back on the right)

## The method used.

Farmers were trained in the use of digital cameras and they captured images of their problems and used information request forms to compile questions, and recorded practices that they found useful. The farmers, with guidance from REN, designed and came up with an information request form which they unanimously agreed to use as a tool to use in capturing their farming problems during the FLD pilot project. The images that were captured with digital cameras were of diseased parts of their crops and animals. They were also trained in interviewing skills so that they are able to capture questions from other farmers. Some selected farmers with basic computer skills were invited to the REN resource centre and were taught how to download the photographs from the cameras to the computer before they could be printed out.



***Farmers capture cassava wilt, one of the problems for documentation***

The questions along with the digital images were submitted to expert farmers among the farmer groups to answer. In a few cases where the expert farmers were not able to provide adequate answers, researchers and other subject matter specialists were consulted to provide the answers. The information provided to the farmers was free. In some cases the internet was used to search for more information to enrich the answers. When the answers were ready they were delivered to the respective farmers with adequate explanations. After the farmers received the answers, they were given a chance to evaluate them before they were archived together with their respective questions.

## The role and contributions made by the stakeholders

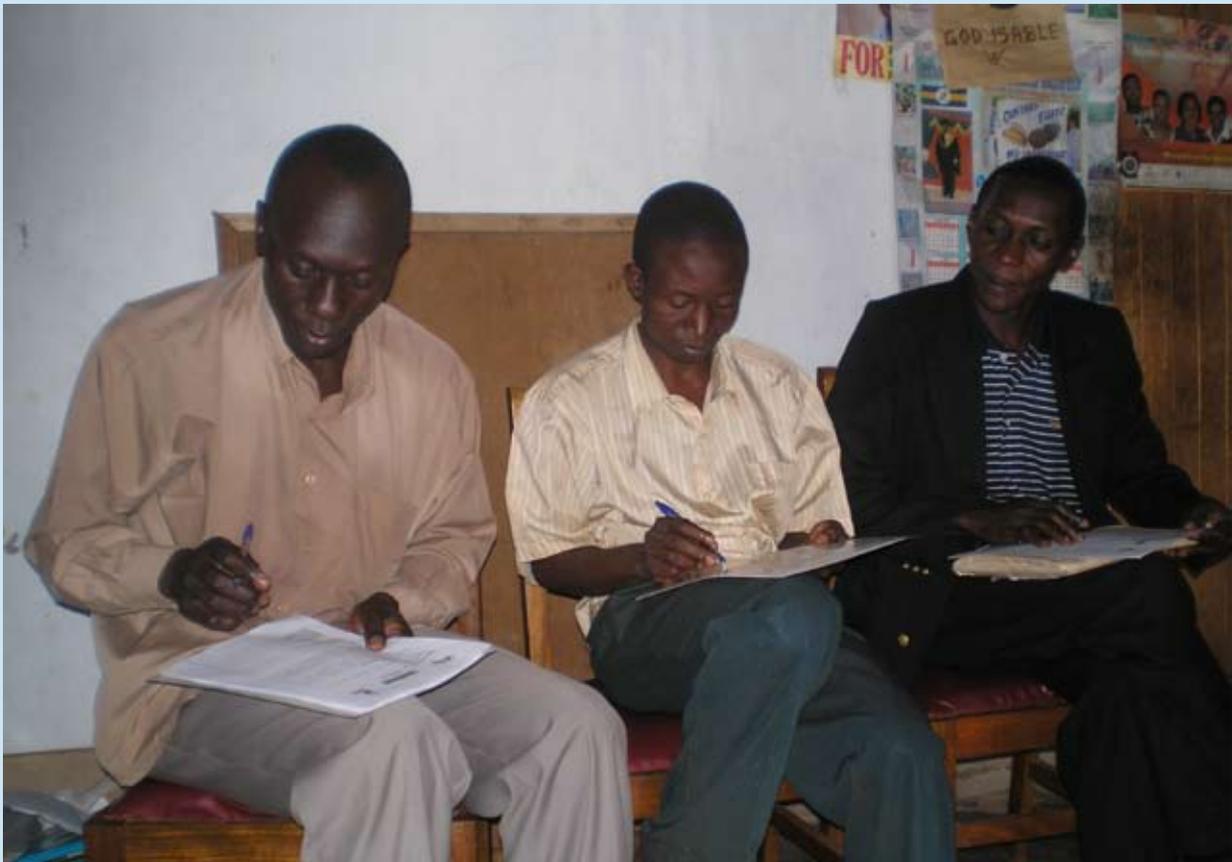
REN and the farmers were involved in the entire process of project conception, implementation and evaluation. Specifically they were involved in:

- Analysis of problems and issues
- Problem definition and setting priorities
- Designing and development of the action plan to address the problem

- Implementation of the action plan
- Awareness raising
- Monitoring and evaluation (formative/interim)
- Impact evaluation

The farmers were involved in the compilation and delivery of answers which involved identifying and printing the farmer problem photographs, gluing/pasting the photographs to the information request forms, and providing answers to these questions.

After the questions had been gathered from all the participating groups, they were read out by selected farmers. By show of hands, farmers who thought they were competent enough to answer the questions were identified. Other farmers confirmed that they expected good answers from these experts on account of their long experience on a particular crop or animal. Most of the experts identified confirmed that they had for a long time been helping other farmers in their communities with vital skills and information, and they were willing to continue doing so.



*Some of the expert farmers responding to farmer questions*

# REN'S FLD PROCESS

It takes a farmer about one week to go through this process.

## A case study by R.E.N



1. IDENTIFYING AND PHOTOGRAPHING THE PROBLEM (BANANA WILT DISEASE)



2. FILLING IN THE REPORT FORM



3. RIDING TO R.E.N RESOURCE CENTRE



4. DOWNLOADING PHOTOS AT THE RESOURCE CENTRE



5. PASTING PHOTOGRAPH ONTO THE FORM



11. THE FARMER SOLVES THE PROBLEM BASING ON THE ADVICE GIVEN BY THE EXPERT FARMER.



10. THE SOLUTION IS PROVIDED USING REFERENCE FROM THE PREVIOUS SIMILAR CASE



9. ANOTHER FARMER WITH A SIMILAR PROBLEM SEEKS HELP FROM THE CENTRE



8. FORMS FILLED AND KEPT IN THE RESOURCE CENTRE ARCHIVE



7. EXPERT FARMER GIVES THE ANSWER TO THE FARMER



6. TAKING FORM TO THE EXPERT FARMER

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND SOLVING PROCESS

3 YEARS LATER

## Strategies and methodologies employed

- The expert farmers read out the answers to the farmer groups to enable the farmers to evaluate them. The criteria of evaluation included timeliness and relevancy of the answer, whether the information was new to them, and whether they would want to continue using the FLD QAS in future?
- All the responses were evaluated as relevant and practical to the farmers. Farmers were also asked to give suggestions on the best ways to improve the service. They suggested that the process of answering farmer problems should be more frequent, and proposed a meeting with expert farmers at least once a month.
- The other suggestion was that REN avails them with all the contact addresses of the expert farmers from the different farmer group to ease future access to them.

## Outputs

- 60 (24 women and 36 men) farmers trained in the use of digital cameras
- 60 (24 women and 36 men) farmers trained in documentation skills
- Three (3) agricultural information archives at the community level established
- Information shared through farmer to farmer information exchange
- Expert database of purely farmers knowledge developed
- FLD tools developed for use by REN
- FLD became an integral part of REN's activities

## Outcomes

- Increase in delivery of relevant agricultural information to farmers
- Access to agricultural market information improved through farmer to farmer information exchange
- Communication between farmers and farmer experts was initiated
- Rural agricultural information archives established at community level by the community which gave ownership to the farmers and became a means of project sustainability
- The best practices and approaches were shared and integrated into REN's activities
- Farmer-to-farmer agricultural information exchange increased

Testimonies that give evidence to the effectiveness of FLD came out. One of the successful examples was that of Ms. Rose Sserwadda from Bunyumya, Kayunga who had problems with her passion fruits that were wrinkled. She wondered what the problem was. An expert farmer, Mr. Njuba Moses, gave her practical solutions to her problem and she was able to overcome it.

## Lessons learned

- Farmers' abilities should never be underestimated. REN is privileged to learn that if farmers are shown what to do with regard to directing their own documentation processes; they can very ably accomplish it with minimal cost and coaching.
- REN's approach to this project involved helping farmers to appreciate that they are custodians of vast information resources by means of their experiences at the farm level and the indigenous knowledge and practices that they have been using for many years. One important lesson from this experience is that once farmers are made aware that experts exist among themselves, they become enthusiastic about their positive contribution to the project. It is therefore important to involve expert farmers in providing information to other farmers.
- Another lesson that REN learnt is that farmers are more willing to provide information if they are convinced that it is going to assist other farmers. This is helping REN to mobilise and build up a database of expert farmers to take a leading role in documenting their expertise.
- REN also learnt that farmers have the capacity to give suggestions on the best ways to improve the QAS delivery. For example it was a farmer suggestion that the farmer information request form is redesigned to include a photograph of the farmer's problem. This was adopted by REN.
- It is becoming clear that farmers become motivated when they are allowed to take the lead in deciding how to document their problems and the solutions to them. This ensures that they own the process and its results.

- Tools / Technology: The digital camera was a useful tool / technology that contributed to the success of this project because it enabled timely capturing of farmer problem photographs which were forwarded to expert farmers for response. The compilation of archives of these photographs and their accompanying questions and answers were useful and timely innovations of the project.

## Successes

- The participation of the farmers contributed to the success of the project because it was possible to identify information that they had over the years and document it. The farmers felt that they owned the whole process since they were involved at all stages of the project.
- The project generated a lot of lessons and learning experiences, farmer enthusiasm and participation. Farmers have a lot of hidden expert knowledge which can be harnessed to solve their day-to-day problems. They are also willing to document this knowledge and share it with others if they are allowed to take the lead in this process. Documenting and sharing of farmers' experiences will go a long way to improve household incomes and ultimately their livelihoods.

## Challenges

- Among the constraints was the varying literacy level among the farmers in the groups that the project targeted which was a big challenge to the implementation of the project. Any attempt at documenting the information even in the local language was hindered by the fact that a large percentage - more than 80% - of the farmers could not read and write in their local language. The use of more digital photography and less textual information was suggested as the best way forward to address this challenge.
- The concept of FLD was a completely new process for the farmer groups that REN worked with, and as with most new concepts, there was a lot of worry as some farmers wondered why the Question and Answer Service (QAS) does not provide immediate answers to their pressing problems as other interventions are doing. However, after being sensitized, they were guided to realize the value of knowledge development and its potential use.
- It was a challenging task to try to explain the concept of FLD to some of them at the beginning. However, most farmers later appreciated FLD when they got into the practical part of it.

## 3.3.2 Case study IV

### Documentation of Farmer Innovations in Laela Parish, Tanzania.

*By Gaudens Athanas Masebe, LISA*

#### Introduction

The Laela Area, in the South West highlands of Tanzania near the border with Zambia, experiences long periods of drought. The dry season normally starts in April and lasts until November or even December. Unlike many parts of East Africa, this area has one rainy season and farmers have had to come up with creative methods of coping with the dry spell. Over time, local farmers made innovations which they passed on by word of mouth to other generations. The innovations covered a variety of aspects of farming. However, the local innovations are not written down and as such they do not spread far and wide.

The Laela community comprises largely of peasant subsistence farmers with high levels of illiteracy which is another challenge to accessing information for improving farming methods. The Laela Institute of Sustainable Agriculture (LISA) has been involved in a number of initiatives in the area to help local people improve their farming methods. LISA employed the Farmer Led Documentation approach to make the local farmers realize the potential in the community to create change in the way they farm.

The target area of the pilot was Laela Parish which is the current mandate area for the organization. The Parish has about 25 villages, from which 5 villages were selected to implement the project. These villages are Kalambazite, Kivuko Mteta, Kisalala, Laela 'A' and Laela 'B'. The beneficiaries of the project were both men and women from the project area. The project lasted for 9 months from November 2008 to July 2009.

## Problem Tackled

Low levels of education and high levels of illiteracy in Laela Parish made farmer documentation on innovation as well as the promotion of these innovations difficult. Thus the pilot project focused on the documentation and promotion of local farming innovations in order to improve the living standards of the innovators.

## Specific Objectives

- To strengthen capacities of farmers in FLD through various experiments
- To document processes of experiments of local innovation by identified farmers in five villages
- To disseminate and promote documented cases within the target community, among other villages and beyond for national as well as international use

## Project Process

Awareness creation meetings were held to discuss farming innovations. These discussions facilitated the process of documenting and promoting innovations. After creating awareness among farmers in the villages, training followed.

Five training workshops for farmers on documentation were conducted. There was one training in each of the five selected villages. These entailed training on the use of tools like cameras and recorders, which the farmers used. LISA supported purchase of 2 cameras and 6 radio cassettes for documentation.



***The innovator of moisture conservation (far right )  
of Kivuko Mteta Village learning how to use a Camera.***



*The local innovators in Laela A & B learning how to use a camera to take photos of their innovations*

## Description of the FLD Activities

The pilot activities focused on studying existing community level and traditional farmer-led documentation initiatives on farming innovations as well as encouraging their use in the community. This was done by concentrating on creating awareness about farmer's knowledge and local innovations, as well as documenting their experiences. Awareness creation on farming innovations and documentation was done in five villages of Laela A, Laela B, Kisalala, Kalambazite and Kivuko Mteta through awareness meetings with the farmers. This created interest in local farming innovations among the farmers in the community.

Capacity building on FLD was conducted for farmers from the 5 villages. Farmer innovators were picked from each village and trained on documentation in workshops organized by LISA. During the workshops, farmers made selections on the type of documentation that they wished to use. They improved on the traditional types of documentation and dissemination by using modern documentation methods such as photo taking, audio recording and writing. During the workshops activities were planned by the farmers and documentation roles were assigned amongst them.

## Innovations documented by the farmers included:

- Soil and water conservation for moisture conservation during the dry season
- Moisture conservation using un burnt bricks
- Local water conveyance structure innovations

## Experience exchanges

The project used the following methods in experience sharing:

- Photographs of local innovation taken by the farmers using cameras
- Audio tapes recorded from interviews with farmer innovators using tape recorders
- Sharing written texts and drawings on the innovations in awareness meetings using existing materials
- Inter village exchange – visits to farmer innovators in their villages

## Monitoring and evaluation

Regular monitoring and evaluation was conducted to assess the progress and impact of local farmer innovation on the community. This was done during regular project meetings.

## Stakeholder Participation

During awareness creation on FLD in the five villages of Laela A, Laela B, Kisalala, Kalambazite and Kivuko Mteta, farmers as well as government village leaders were involved. While the farmers took lead in documentation through shared experiences, the village leaders supported the mobilization process of farmers in the villages.

## Key Outcomes

- Local innovation from the target farmer innovators were promoted during the awareness creating workshops. Innovations like moisture conservation were not popular initially, but after project implementation they became popular.
- Documentation has improved as farmers can now document their innovation by writing, taking still photos or by recording. Farmers now understand that proper documentation can be done by themselves and not by an external person.

One farmer Ms Leokadia asserted *“I always thought I am not intelligent enough to take pictures. Now I am sure that I can also do it,”* with regard to the training of farmers in the use of cameras.

- Knowledge exchange among farmers increased as a result of farmer interactions in meetings and workshops. The project started with 6 identified innovators, but at the end of the project there were about 20 innovators.

## Sustainability Measures

Since FLD was done by farmers themselves, what was documented was owned by them and will continue to be an information resource to them. However the innovations can be shared among other farmers in and out of the working area.

LISA Access to Market Programmes integrated the project outcomes into its programmes which meant the project benefits would continue to be realised.

## Lessons learnt

- Use of digital cameras by facilitators during training and taking pictures in the field facilitated the success of the project. Many participants were happy to see their pictures immediately after they were taken. This increased their participation.
- Farmers taking lead as actors and taking responsibility for taking photographs, recording and writing resulted in each village group working hard to do better than the other. This also caused farmer achievements to be realized faster.
- There are a lot of innovations being done by farmers in the field, but in most cases there is no proper documentation being done. Therefore other farmers can not benefit from fellow farmer innovations unless FLD is continuously applied.

## Challenges

- During the implementation period it was found that some planned activities coincided with the harvesting period, therefore, the implementation of some FLD activities was postponed to more a convenient time, after the harvest.
- Although the project winding up/ closure was a challenge in itself because the project activities were interesting, an FLD network has been established by the local farmer innovators.

## 3.4 Natural Resource Management.

### 3.4.1 Case study V

#### Getting farmers to document Indigenous Knowledge on values and uses of plants, Zambia

By *Fredrick Chambanenge, GLM*

##### Introduction

Local farmers had identified forest depletion as the key problem in Chibobo and Serenje villages in Zambia. The farmers demonstrated ownership of the problem they identified. During the FLD process, farmers used the group meetings to discuss issues affecting their livelihood in relation to the use of the forests. Farmers identified and agreed on which tools to use for capturing information in forest resource documentation such as the use of: tape recorders, digital cameras and note books. The farmers were also able to identify solutions in the FLD process like planting a forest reserve. In so doing they owned the problem and solutions through the FLD process which acted as a guide in supporting their joint cause to preserve their forests.

Piloting FLD in Chibobo Village, Serenje, Zambia took nine months, from November 2008 to July 2009. The primary target population included ten local farmers (5 men and 5 women). The community as a whole was the secondary target population.

##### Background to the Problem

Chibobo Village is traditionally a farming community. But as farmers continue to clear natural forests for cultivation, they are destroying the source of forest products such as medicinal herbs, firewood, timber and wildlife. As a result the size of the forests are dwindling and locals are finding it increasingly hard to find vital resources like firewood, timber, mushrooms, caterpillars, wildlife and wild fruits.

##### The Problem

The community is not aware that their destruction of the forest has a disastrous effect on the welfare of the community.

##### What GLM sought to do

Green Living Movement (GLM) sought to change this situation by engaging the community and getting them to appreciate the importance of preserving the forest as a source of food, income, raw materials and other services.

##### Objectives

The specific objectives were (for the 10 selected persons):

- To take lead in the process of documenting the various forest products and how they benefit the community.
- To create a bank of knowledge on forests which benefit all communities (short and long term benefits).

## The Process

GLM approached the community to identify a group of five men and five women who would be trained in methods of raising awareness of the importance of preserving the forests. This is in line with the principles and practice of the FLD approach.

GLM had previously been involved with the community on other projects and already had a network of farmers' clubs. These clubs were involved in the preparatory meetings held at Chibobo village to design a strategy to deal with the forest problem. Others in the meeting were two GLM members and the Community Coordinator.



***Community members at the knowledge sharing meeting***

The meeting discussed the magnitude of the problem and what needed to be done. It also decided to involve the whole community so that the community could own the problem and the activities of reversing the effects of forest destruction.

The community agreed that they needed to gather information on forest resources and their importance. They also selected the committee of 10 farmers representing various farmer clubs to document the required information that would later be communicated to the community.

## Methods:

The committee of 10 farmers, together with GLM members, discussed the most appropriate methods and tools to be used to document the forest resources and uses. They identified the following:

- Detailed discussions (narration) with the elders
- Use of photography
- Use of videos
- Drawings where necessary

## Tools:

- Cassette recorders
- Video Cameras
- Pens and Papers
- Still digital cameras

GLM as an organisation provided the tools and trained the committee members on the use of the various tools, especially the cameras. The training of the committee, to equip farmers with documentation skills, was carried out in a one day workshop organized within Chibobo Village. After the training they were given the equipment to use in the documentation process. They were also trained in narration skills.

Farmers developed an elaborate work schedule and compiled information over a period of nine months from November 2008 to July 2009. The farmers analyzed the data collected and thereafter shared it with other community members. GLM provided a database where the compiled material was stored for processing and further refinement.

## Stakeholder Participation

Different stakeholders were involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project. These included the community members who were actively involved in planning, data collection and documentation. The Community Coordinator ensured coordination and communication of meetings and work schedules and GLM played a significant role in translation and communication of the collected information.

## Stakeholders Role in piloting FLD

- Analysis of problems and issues ( Farmers/GLM)
- Problem definition and setting priorities ( Farmers/ GLM)
- Design and Development of an action plan ( Farmers/GLM)
- Implementation of the action plan (Farmers/GLM)
- Awareness raising ( Farmers )
- Monitoring and evaluation ( GLM/ Community Coordinator)

## Outputs

- The committee comprising of farmers, the Community Coordinator and GLM members produced photographs and narrations of the identified plants.



*A participant identifies one of the medicinal plants*

## Outcomes

- Farmer empowerment and involvement was achieved. Ten farmers were trained in the use of a camera and narration for documenting and sharing local knowledge on important indigenous plants. The information was documented and shared with community members
- In the long term poverty alleviation will be achieved through sound management of forests which will improve availability of forest products and food needs, especially when delicacies like caterpillars and mushrooms are preserved.
- Local governance through sensitization (Community Coordinators) contributed towards the improvement of forest resource management as a result of enhanced knowledge on useful values of indigenous plants
- The Environment will be protected as a result of forest resources being used in an efficient and sustainable manner as people realize their benefits and become more aware of the long term consequences of forest depletion through FLD and sharing. The communities plan to establish a botanical reserve area stocked with important plants and this is a good initiative aiming at conserving the environment.
- The documented materials will be organized into a documentary and booklets in local languages and English and will be used in community seminars. The material will also be available to other information platforms like radio, television and the internet for use by other groups and organizations outside the Chibobo community.
- The documented material raised farmers awareness about the disastrous effects of destroying forests and the benefits forests bring to the community. The community developed a sense of ownership of not only the project, but also of the forest.
- In the long run, Chibobo community will eventually have more firewood, mushrooms, caterpillars and medicinal plants to improve their livelihood.
- Knowledge levels were raised among the farming community on the values and uses of indigenous plants.

# Case study on some benefits from forests



## Lessons learnt

- **Technology:** Resource management methods were important in FLD.
- **Farmer led approach:** A difference was made by the participation of farmers. It enriched the knowledge sharing process as they understood issues better. By taking the lead, farmers were empowered to own the process and the knowledge.
- **Left out farmers:** Some farmers who were not part of the pilot group felt ignored and the pilot group was later found to be too small to represent the whole village.
- **Institutional Mechanisms:** Institutional mechanisms which facilitated the success included effectiveness of GLM community mobilization and local capacity development interventions.
- **Government Policy / enabling environment :** The government Forestry Act of 1999 which promotes community participation in forestry management was not yet in effect and this needs to be addressed.

## TESTIMONIES

- *"Its funny how we spend money on conventional medicine when we can heal ourselves with free medicine from forests" Mr. Mbulo (participating farmer)*
- *"If exploited, forests have so much potential which can make our lives easy" Mrs Kunda (farmer)*
- *"In the olden days, we grew up with the full knowledge of important plants in the forests. It was not allowed to cut these trees down even if it was found in the fields. I would welcome the establishment of a botanical reserve" Chibobo village Headman.*
- *"There was a time we depended on forests for most of our medicines; we did not even know that science existed then." Headman when challenged to provide a scientific explanation for his malaria cure*

## Challenges

- The only camera that the project relied on was not sufficient for the group involved in the project. The group was divided into two working groups and with only one camera, the two groups could not work at the same time. This resulted in precious time being lost.
- Due to insufficient financial resources, it was not possible to undertake certain important activities especially in a new project like FLD. These activities included: monitoring visits for on the spot advice, involvement of technocrats with forestry knowledge on tree identification, and translating the report from the local language to English. Information dissemination opportunities within the GLM partnership and outside could also not be used due to insufficient resources.
- One training workshop on documentation skills was not enough to enable farmers acquire skills required to carry out the tasks effectively. A second training workshop would have been very useful.

## 3.5 Indigenous Knowledge.

### 3.5.1 Case Study VI

#### Documenting farmers experiences in saving seeds: A case of groundnut seed, Uganda

By Agnes Kirabo, VEDCO

#### Introduction

The use of the FLD methodology in promoting indigenous knowledge is demonstrated in this case study in Nakasongola and Lira districts of Uganda, where the women groups were mobilized into participatory discussions by VEDCO, leading to the choice of focusing on preserving an indigenous groundnut seed. The women identified their problem citing the expense of buying seeds from stores and how these seeds sometimes do not germinate. Through stories, drawings, drama, dance and music the women groups expressed themselves, providing information on how the groundnut seed could be protected and promoted in the local communities. This information was recorded in audio, visual and written form as recommended by the women, for purposes of current and future reference and dissemination. The FLD process in this case demonstrates a joint community initiative in which important information and knowledge is generated and put to use.

In Nakasongola district, VEDCO implemented the FLD project with two women farmer groups and one mixed group; namely Bivamuntuuyo Women's Group, Eyebikire Women's Group and Akugoba Farmers' Group respectively. In Lira district, VEDCO worked with Notte ber Women's Group, Awero Group, Dako Cwala Group and Bolwangineapur, Obanganamio in Lira district. The project covered the 3 villages of Awero, Mayirikiti and Kazwama; 4 parishes of Mayirikiti, Kazwama, Arotomito and Akano; 4 Sub counties of Kalongo, Kalungi, Oguru and Apala as well as the County/ Municipality and District/ Provincial levels, that is, Lira and Nakasongola.

The duration of the FLD project was 6 months from December 2008 to June 2009. The target population that benefited was 102 small scale farmers (men, women and youth) engaged in the production of groundnut seed.

#### Background to the Problem

VEDCO is an organization that works to improve the livelihoods of small scale farmers through enhancing their agricultural production and productivity. VEDCO has over time experienced, together with the farmers, problems associated with access to and control of seeds. This background did not only inform the FLD pilot project but also the seed security agenda item on VEDCO's advocacy agenda.

#### Problem

Seeds are very critical inputs in agriculture. In the past, farmers used to keep, share and replant their best harvest for the next planting season but today they are increasingly loosing the skills and opportunities of doing it. Slowly the seed saving and management systems are dying out together with the knowledge that is being eroded away with the old people in the communities. The seeds that farmers buy from stores are not only expensive and inaccessible by many farmers, but they also do not germinate and on some occasions they do not give the expected yield.

## A ground nut case study



OLD WOMAN DEMONSTRATES A TECHNOLOGY TO YOUNG ONES

SADLY THE OLD WOMAN DIES



...ADD 2 CUPS OF ASH TO 4 CUPS OF GROUND NUTS...



THE YOUNG ONES THEREAFTER USE THE TECHNOLOGY THAT WAS DOCUMENTED IN A BOOK

## Objectives

Broadly, the project aimed at promoting community seed management practices of groundnuts through documentation and information sharing among farming communities, development practitioners, policy makers and researchers.

Specifically the objectives were:

- To identify the traditional seed management practices of groundnut seeds in the central district of Nakasongola and Northern district of Lira.
- To facilitate farmers to document and disseminate traditional seed management practices of groundnuts with selected farmers in Nakasongola and Lira district
- To identify and promote existing documentation strategies/ methods for managing the groundnut seeds in the selected communities

## Project Process

Identification of resource persons to take a lead in the implementation of the project was done in December 2008. The activity was done based on three objectives - to identify the resourceful households/ farmers, to orient them on their roles in the project and to develop plans of how best the pilot will be done with the rest of the farmers. Although the districts of implementation were pre-selected, VEDCO was not yet specific in which sub counties and parishes the project would finally be implemented.

During this activity, Kalungi and Kalongo sub counties in Nakasongola, Aromo and Aparo sub counties in Lira were chosen. Additionally Mayirikiti and Kazwama Parishes were chosen for Kalongo and Kalungi sub counties and Akano and Arotomito Parishes were chosen for Aromo and Aparo sub counties respectively. In each of these parishes, a resourceful household was identified and a farmers group in close proximity was attached to the household. The selection of the sub counties and parishes was based on the intensity of groundnut production in the particular area.

This activity was spearheaded by VEDCO field staff in the respective districts. All resourceful households identified were introduced to the project, its objectives and their anticipated role in the project implementation. The study/ discussion subject (management of the groundnut seed) was received with excitement among the farmers.

Lead farmers developed strategies for conducting the activities with the attached farmers indicating venue and time of the learning meetings. These plans were made in consultation with the farmers group based on the best time that suits individual and group schedules. Farmer meetings with resourceful households were held to identify practices and means of documentation.

The communication and advocacy staff facilitated these meetings for each group aiming at identifying the seed saving practices, identifying and agreeing on the means of documenting these seed saving practices and demonstrating the documentation of the best practices with the farmer groups. The meetings took a dialogue approach between the farmers as they shared their indigenous knowledge as far as seed management practices (especially of groundnuts) were concerned. The presence of the VEDCO staff was instrumental in the dialogue as they were able to seek clarifications to keep the discussions on track and ensure comprehensive learning among the farmers.

The groundnuts seed management practices were identified amidst interesting discussions among the farmers as they sat under a big tree in Karungi, a church in Kalongo in Nakasongola district and under mango trees in Lira district.

Although farmers preferred narration during discussion as a way of sharing the knowledge, they agreed that after their death, the knowledge would be "gone too". Among the many means of documentation raised, writing and singing were supported most.



**One of the sharing sessions in Nakasongola district (left) and Akano parish in Lira district (right)**

Others selected drawings and illustrations. Mobilization and capacity building of farmers to come up with drawings and illustrations on groundnut seed saving were done.

Capacity building meetings were conducted with support from an artist who assisted the farmers to come up with drawings and illustrations. The exercise was picked with excitement especially by men as compared to women. Although farmers expressed appreciation of adding drawings, especially to their write ups, they had reservations on the use of illustrations and drawings done by hand because they felt that they did not bring out the reality of the technology/ practice.

The farmers preferred photographs because they felt photos captured the real practice/ technology and cannot be misinterpreted. For example, they commented that the illustration of the rat in the groundnuts looked more like a lizard than a rat. During the discussions, the question that remained unanswered was their ability to manage the cameras and the costs involved in developing and printing the pictures.



*One of the illustrations of a pot drawn by farmers in Lira*

## Development and publication of best practices

- The practices identified, shared and discussed were developed and published basing on the tools that the farmers chose to use; including writing, songs and narrations
- Publications were published in local languages (Luo and Luganda). Upon request by the farmers; the publications have been supported with camera pictures taken by VEDCO during the various sessions.
- Developed materials were taken back to the farmers for review and pre-testing. This however delayed the process of developing final copies of the publication.
- The project has also video taped the music and dance performances by the Lira farmers.

## Dissemination

- All groups developed dissemination strategies for the materials highlighting the target audience and means of getting the information to them.
- The common target for these materials were the schools because the farmers felt that because their children spend most of their time at school they miss out on the knowledge. The second target was the church which they said had the ability to inculcate knowledge and skills in masses because their messages are respected by many.
- Farmers had reservations on the use of community information points, because of issues such as managing these points and limited usage of them by community members.
- Monitoring of the dissemination strategies selected by the farmers will be done during mainstream community reviews that VEDCO conducts regularly.

## The FLD method used

### Writing down on paper (news print and manila):

In all the groups that participated, there were volunteers who chose to support the group by writing down their practices as they discussed. In addition, those that could draw also drew illustrations to demonstrate the practice. The final write ups that were shared in a wider meeting were handed over to VEDCO for publishing.



*One of the volunteers writing on behalf of others.  
Very few can write in rural communities*

## Music Dance and Drama

Only one group in Lira decided to share and demonstrate the practices in music and dance. They composed songs, enhanced them with dances with dramatic demonstrations of the practices. The farmers got so involved in the issue of focus; they composed the songs themselves, rehearsed them and presented them.



*Farmers of Arotomito parish rehearsing the songs and dances about the groundnut seed*

## Stakeholder Participation

- VEDCO- conceptualized the problem, introduced the project to the farmers, facilitated the processes, coordinated the project and contracted the publisher
- Group leaders – mobilized the participants
- Farmers – developed plans, implemented them, rehearsed the songs and performed them, wrote the initial scripts, told the stories and will do the dissemination. The farmers have village meeting during which the documentations are distributed according to where the farmer lives so that they can disseminate the information.

## Roles and Contributions of Stakeholders

- Analysis of problems and issues
- Problem definition and setting priorities
- Design and Development of action plan/ formulation of project/ program strategy to address problem
- Implementation of the action plan
- Awareness raising
- Monitoring and evaluation (formative/ interim)

## Outcomes

- Booklets with details of these practices were published. A DVD is in the process of being produced with songs and dances for those farmers that used music and dance as their tool.
- Traditional practices of managing the ground-nuts seed were identified, shared and documented. This led to increased knowledge of seed saving and management among farmers.
- Increased integration of farmer's knowledge in research.

## Impact

- Information sharing and knowledge development on the indigenous seed created the potential for increased ground-nut production and preservation which was a means to poverty alleviation for the farmers.
- Local governance staff learnt alongside farmers how to do documentation and this was envisaged as one way of improving documentation at local government and community levels.
- Farmer empowerment and involvement.

## Lessons learned

- Music is one tool that attracts people in a given community without age restriction. In Aromo sub-county, Arotomito parish, Lira district, where the farmers chose to use music, more participants were attracted to the sharing sessions and even passers-by stopped and attended the session. The learning is done with limited tension and information shared through music tends to stick in the minds of the participants.
- One needs to know the language to follow the demonstrations
- There is need to have performers and an audience.
- Perfecting the songs and the dances requires more time though farmers look at it as a leisure activity.
- In some communities, the use of music and dance at community level has gender connotations. Some men do not allow their wives to participate and also some feel proud to involve themselves in "child" like actions.
- Writing of experiences is desired because it provides an opportunity for the shared information to benefit a wider range of people and tends to stand against the test of time. However, the tool calls for literacy skills.
- The writing tool should be promoted under group work which will provide an opportunity for capable group members to engage in the writing and support those members who are illiterate.
- The identification of project participants should be done together with field staff because they are always with the communities.
- Illustrations can fail to bring out the actual technology
- There was no distinction between managing the ground-nuts as food or as seed.

## Challenges

- FLD requires more time than anticipated and so it was integrated in VEDCO's field activities for continuity.
- There was limited capacity within the organization to support the farmers in the process. However, once sensitized the farmers owned the idea and were self motivated to work through the FLD process.

# Chapter 4: Recommendations

This chapter provides general information for those agencies that might want to engage in FLD activities. It also outlines some of the issues and challenges that future FLD activities need to navigate through.

## 4.1 Success factors for FLD projects

Looking at the case studies presented, one can identify the following factors that led to the success of the pilot projects that could be used in future projects:

- (i) **Understanding group and individual dynamics:** In most reports, there was reference made to the importance of focusing on group and individual dynamics by FLD implementers in order to fix problems that arose as the projects progressed.
- (ii) **The magic in the technology:** The tools used, especially the camera and the recorders proved to be an innovation and gave the farmers a sense of acquiring an important new skill. The camera as a tool was specifically important for the success of the projects where it was used because it gave instant and accurate results; it was used by even those who did not know how to read and write. Above all, as the saying goes, a picture says a thousand words. It is also worth noting that the costs related to the new technologies are quite high and among the constraints.
- (iii) **Giving Opportunity:** One of the key aspects of the FLD approach is to give opportunity to farmers to find the right tools for themselves, propose solutions, experiment with methods and tools, and learn from one another. Giving farmers opportunity makes them feel valued and increases their self-esteem as useful members of society. It makes them feel they matter and this in turn keeps the FLD project going.
- (iv) **Methods:** the degree of success also depended on practical approaches, down-to-earth methods and simple steps that farmers found easy to remember and to follow. FLD does not need to be a complex process.
- (v) **The Value of Stakeholders:** Although farmers take the lead in documenting their traditional knowledge and wisdom, it is important to recognize and tap the potential and input of other players in the success of an FLD project. These include extension staff, field officers, government agricultural and forestry experts, researchers, and remote sources of expert knowledge. Where the input of a relevant stakeholder was invoked, the FLD project was more successful. In the case of GLM, for instance, the failure to have input from forestry experts where farmers were documenting valuable trees, or herbalists in reference to medicinal plants, deprived the project of added value.
- (vi) **The Principle of Sharing in the knowledge:** The whole idea that farmers and the community had to share in the findings and documentations was a stimulus to farmers to keep the project going. It had a reassuring effect that there was something to learn. It should be noted that farmers do not often get a chance to learn new things that improve their livelihood.
- (vii) **Focus:** It was important that FLD facilitators and implementers remained focused and clear on what the farmers were expected to do, what problem they needed to address, what to document, what tools to use, and what steps to follow.
- (viii) **Budgeting:** Few projects gave an indication of whether the funds were enough or not. Others were silent on this issue. However, one can conclude that proper budgeting and working within budgetary limits contributed to the desired success.
- (ix) **Goals and expectations:** Successful FLD projects required realistic goals and short term results so that farmers can see the impact the project was having on their activities.
- (x) **Pace:** Observations from UCRC indicate that an FLD project must be properly paced. Activities should not be rushed for the sake of finishing within the project time. Farmers are not in a classroom environment and they have many other genuine issues to think about. They learn at a different pace. As such realistic timelines contributed to the success of the projects.
- (xi) **Agency Acceptability:** In all these projects, the development agents were known and accepted in the areas where they conducted the FLD projects. They used previous contacts and networks to mobilize the community. NGOs and institutions intending to carry out FLD activities should start in familiar ground.

- 
- (xii) **Timing:** It was important to plan for the FLD project to take place when farmers were not engaged in seasonal activities like harvesting, in order to have their dedicated participation in the project activities. Those projects that had not factored in proper timing experienced delays when farmers were found busy harvesting, or in the case of GLM, hunting caterpillars.

## 4.2 General Challenges

The challenges listed below apply to stakeholders that will undertake to implement similar small FLD projects.

- (i) **Funding:** Some projects faced funding problems leading to cut backs or failure to secure necessary tools like cameras.
- (ii) **Attitude:** At least in every case study, there were reports of some farmers either monopolizing tools, or demanding some form of remuneration for taking part in FLD. However, proper explanation of the purpose and principles of FLD corrected these attitudes.
- (iii) **Literacy Levels:** This was a key factor in all cases. There were various ways projects handled this problem. In most cases, documenting using the camera and voice recorders or the use of music and dance solved the problem. The literacy factor seemed to be less pronounced during the sharing sessions. In future, organizations working on FLD may consider liaising with organizations or institutions working on adult literacy.

## 4.3 General Tips for FLD facilitators

The tips given below apply to the implementation of specific FLD projects as well as processes of incorporating the FLD approach into broader learning processes of the various stakeholders

- (i) **Identification of the problem:** It is important that the problem to be solved using FLD is properly identified. This helps in getting the farmers appreciate it and own it. Farmers will thereafter participate well in the FLD.
- (ii) **Motivation:** The FLD approaches, methods introduced and the relationship between the development agency and farmers must be motivating enough to keep the farmers interested in the project. The case studies have illustrated that showing farmers that they matter, and putting the challenge to them to lead in the various processes of FLD motivates them. Motivation also comes from constantly encouraging farmers, and mentoring them rather than lecturing them.
- (iii) **Clarity of Process:** There must be clarity of purpose and steps must be well understood by the farmers. In particular, those working with FLD should be clear about what the farmers should do and how they should do it.
- (iv) **Goals and Expectations:** These should be made realistically taking into consideration the capacity of farmers, time lines and resources available. As much as possible there should be short term goals so that farmers can witness results while the project lasts.
- (v) **Documentation:** Farmers and facilitators should define clearly what is to be documented, and how the documentation is done. Also, when documentation has been done, a catalogue of what was documented, the means and the tools are all important.
- (vi) **Start in familiar ground:** It helps to execute FLD first in communities where an organization is known and is familiar. This helps to tap into existing contacts and networks. It is possible that the organization will also have information about the group dynamics in the community.
- (vii) **Stakeholders:** The roles of all stakeholders should be clearly defined. FLD recognizes that whereas farmers should take the lead, several other stakeholders contribute to the success of the project. Their roles should be spelt out and their contribution acknowledged. Other stakeholders may be policy makers, extension workers and agricultural research institutes among others.
- (viii) **Testimonies:** It is good practice to facilitate the recording of testimonies of farmers during and at the end of the project. Testimonies reflect inner and genuine feelings of the farmers about the project. They make a statement of the general appreciation and execution of the project.

- 
- (ix) **Budgeting:** Those working with FLD need to make realistic budgets but also they must be frugal in spending. Proper budgeting ensures that the project processes and phases are not disrupted by insufficient funding.
  - (x) **Gender Balance:** This is obviously a good practice. FLD projects should consciously factor in involvement of both women and men.
  - (xi) **Knowledge Sharing and Spread:** FLD projects need to factor in platforms where knowledge documented is shared by farmers in the community. There should be a mechanism where this knowledge can be accessed by other communities, researchers or even policy makers.
  - (xii) **Scientific Validation:** Development agencies applying FLD should collaborate with academia in order to use opportunities for scientific validation of the (indigenous) knowledge gathered during the FLD process.
  - (xiii) **Impact:** The ultimate objective is for FLD to have meaning in farmers' lives. Projects should show how the knowledge gathered and documented improves the farmers' livelihoods. Testimonies are one way of assessing impact. Other measures of impact should be explored for each project.
  - (xiv) **Sustainability:** FLD projects have a lifetime. Those working with this approach should build in sound mechanisms to ensure that farmers continue practicing and benefit from the knowledge learned during the project.

## 4.4 Lessons for further research and gaps

The cases studies presented in this tool kit have shown considerable progress in the implementation of FLD projects within the Eastern and Central Africa region. There are, nonetheless, some issues that emerged during the projects that need further research to find the best solution. These issues are summarized below.

- (i) **Poverty Alleviation:** The case studies did not clearly indicate how the projects led to improvement in people's lives. It is important that FLD projects are not an end in themselves but a means to improve livelihoods. Indeed this is the goal of development agencies. FLD outputs should indicate how projects in the end contribute to improvement in livelihoods.
- (ii) **Ownership of rights:** The issue of who owns the rights to the knowledge documented by the farmers needs to be addressed. According to the case studies presented, this knowledge can be traditional wisdom that is documented, innovations by farmers to solve a problem, best practices, or a combination of local knowledge and inputs from experts. There is need to debate how to attribute this knowledge in the documentations.
- (iii) **Technology:** Most projects have worked well with cameras and voice recorders. One idea that emerged from the Kampala write shop is the possible use of the mobile phone, which is widely available across Africa as a documentation tool. Modern cell phones have a camera, video and voice facilities in addition to the traditional phone and SMS devices. FLD facilitators should research into the possible mainstreaming of the cell phone as a basic documentation tool. This will necessitate inquiry into support systems to download data and store it.
- (iv) **Use of Radio:** The ESSAF Zambia case study had a singular opportunity to have some of their activities captured by the Zambia Broadcasting Corporation. Despite the single broadcast during a farming program, it generated many inquiries from across the country about FLD. FM Radio has spread wide in most countries in the region. FLD facilitators should explore how radio, particularly community radio, can be used as a tool for knowledge sharing and spread.
- (v) **Beyond Documentation:** The documented information forms a very valuable database that can be used by researchers and policy makers. There is need to follow up on how this information is benefiting other stakeholders. Evidence on the use of this knowledge beyond the community should strengthen the FLD practice. For instance, how are medical researchers using local herbs to extract medicines identified in the GLM project? Or is there a technical institute working to improve on the bean planter mentioned in the LISA project?

- 
- (vi) **How to report FLD:** The case studies presented interesting realities experienced by farmers. However the reports were loaded with NGO terminologies and technical terms. Since FLD deals with ordinary people, it is necessary to develop a method of simplifying the reporting of FLD activities so that those who read them can easily understand. This can include simplified guides on, say, understanding and reporting difficult topics like climate change and natural resource management. Further training will also be required for those involved in FLD in writing reports in non - NGO language, since they are meant to benefit a wide range of people.
  - (vii) **Data Management:** All case studies talked of creation of a community data bank, but they were silent on how the databanks were managed and the systems of information retrieval. There is need to research into a possible development of standard software or templates for storage of FLD data and a central database. This will make it easy for those interested in accessing that information.

## 4.5 Sustainability

For sustainability of an FLD process, the following factors need to be considered.

- (i) Linkages need to be created with existing structures, e.g many of the pilots ended with an integration of FLD in the development agencies' community/ extension work.
- (ii) The approaches and tools selected for FLD should match the available resources
- (iii) Farmers should own the FLD process as well as the products
- (iv) Documented information should be used as a tool to fundraise resources for development purposes

## 4.6 Conclusion

Farmer Led Documentation (FLD) entails a social process that brings key local stakeholders (farmers) together to deal with situations relevant to them and in their own local context as well as experience. Farmers in the case studies presented in this publication engage in FLD through information sharing, fact finding, knowledge formation, documentation and dissemination. They become a point of reference to their own situations and need, as well as their solutions. The documentation done creates an evidence based database of practical knowledge not only discussed and shared but also appropriate for the local farmers and ready for application.

Therefore, FLD is appreciated as a means by which theory can be made practical through farmer involvement in the whole process, as farmers share their ideas to create the most ideal reflections and reference records for their own benefit, when putting this knowledge into use.

# ANNEXES

## Annex 1: References and contacts

This publication is a product of a three days FLD write shop held in Kampala Uganda on 13 – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2009

Below are the contacts for case studies included in this booklet:

### **Green Living Movement (GLM)**

Contact : Emmanuel Mutamba (Team Director)

P. O. Box 38254, Lusaka, Zambia.

Email: Greenlivingmovement@yahoo.com

Telephone: +260 979 784 927

### **ESAFF Zambia**

Contact: Simon Mwamba

P. O.Box 30443, Lusaka Zambia

Email:esaffzambia@yahoo.co.uk

Telephone: +260 977 828 109

### **Laela Institute of Sustainable Agriculture (LISA)**

Contact: Gaudens Athanas Masebe

P. O.BOX 21 Rukwa Tanzania

Email: laelalac@yahoo.com

### **Rural Empowerment Network (REN)**

Contact: Patrick Kasangaki/ Eria Bwana Simba

P. O. Box 9602 Kampala, Uganda

E-mail: fld@isicad.org

Tel: 256-782-671846

### **Ugunju Community Resource Centre (UCRC)**

Contact: Rachel Awour Adipo

P. O. Box 330, 40606, Ugunja, Kenya

E-mail: ucrc@gmail.com, Website: www.ugunja.org

### **VEDCO**

Contact: Agnes Kirabo

P. O. Box 1244 Kampala

Email: vedco@infocom.co.ug

Tel: 256 414 270598

## Annex II: Participants of the International exchange and capacity building workshop on FLD, November 2006

	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Organization / Country</b>
1.	Thabani Nicholas Madondo	Farmer Support Group/ PROLINNOVA - SOUTH AFRICA
2.	Yusuf Kiwala	NAADS - UGANDA
3.	Máximo A. García-Millán	ARTE NATURA - MEXICO
4.	Lucy Orech	WOUGNET - UGANDA
5.	Qureish Noordin	World Neighbors - KENYA
6.	Luis Carlos Aguilar Apaza	Agrecol Andes - BOLIVIA
7.	Norbert Apentibadek	ACDEP - GHANA
8.	Aselly Mwanza	PELUM - ZAMBIA
9.	Ritah Lumala	Africa 2000 Network Secretariat - UGANDA
10.	Martin Watsisi	SATNET - UGANDA
11.	Prince Deh	GINKS - GHANA
12.	Habtamu Admassu Ayana	ASARECA - ETHIOPIA
13.	Makojang Mahao	PELUM - LESOTHO
14.	Joshua Zake	Environmental Alert/ PELUM - UGANDA
15.	Meshack Shikuku	SACDEP/ PELUM - KENYA
16.	Jorge Chavez	ILEIA - NETHERLANDS
17.	Apolinary Medard Kahabi	SAIPRO/ PELUM - TANZANIA
18.	Richard Nguma	CEFORD - UGANDA
19.	Eria Bwana Simba	ARIS - UGANDA
20.	Habtemariam Abate	SLUF/ PROLINNOVA - ETHIOPIA
21.	Laurens Van Veldhuizen	PROLINNOVA - NETHERLANDS
22.	Dorine Ruter	PROLINNOVA - NETHERLANDS
23.	Nicole Metz	Oxfam Novib - Netherlands
24.	Nicholas Senyonjo	UEEF/ PELUM - UGANDA
25.	Emebet Wuhib Mutungi	A2N Secretariat/ PELUM - UGANDA
26.	Stella Grace Lutalo	PELUM Uganda Country Desk - UGANDA
27.	Emily Drani	Consultant - UGANDA
28.	Mary Jo Kakinda	A2N Secretariat / PELUM - UGANDA
29.	Justine Juliet Ssempebwa	Rapporteur - Uganda

## Annex III: FLD Write shop participants, October 2009

Country		Names	Organization/ Designation
<b>Uganda</b>	1	Yosam Osako	Rural Empowerment Network (REN) - Farmer
	2	Patrick Kasangaki	Rural Empowerment Network (REN) - Programme Coordinator
	3	Jimmy Musiime	Africa 2000 Network Uganda - Project Assistant
	4	Evelyn Tibemanya	Africa 2000 Network Uganda, Kabale - Farmer
	5	Agnes Kirabo	Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns (VEDCO) - Communications and Advocacy officer.
	6	Margret Omwa	VEDCO - Farmer
	7	Beatrice Twayaga	Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmer Forum (ESAFF) Uganda - Farmer
	8	Hakim Baliraine	Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmer Forum-(ESAFF) Uganda - Farmer
	9	Noah Bamulabire	Environmental Alert - Community Information Volunteer
<b>Tanzania</b>	10	Gaudens Athanas Masebe	LAELA Institute of Sustainable Agriculture - Crop Officer
<b>Kenya</b>	12	Gabriel Ofuwa Odour	Ugunja Community Resource Centre - Farmer
	13	Rachel Awour Adipo	Ugunja Community Resource Centre - Field Officer
	14	Everlyne C. Riripon	SMART INITIATIVE - Program Officer
	15	Moses Pacha	Smart Initiative - Farmer
<b>Zambia</b>	16	Simon Mwamba	ESAFF Zambia - Country Coordinator
	17	Fredrick Chambanenge	Green Living Movement Community - Projects Coordinator
	18	Boyd Chilekwa	Green Living Movement - Farmer
<b>Resource persons</b>	19	Anne Wanja	Farms-Firms & Diaries communications consult - Write shop Facilitator
	20	Stephen Mulyanga	Illustrator
	21	John Baptist Wasswa	Makerere University Mass Communications Department - Editor
	22	Linda Lilian	Mountains of the Moon University - Editor
	23	Ritah Lumala	Africa 2000 Network Secretariat - Chair, FLD Steering Group
	24	Stella Grace Lutalo	PELUM Uganda Country Desk - Country Coordinator
	25	Ruth Nabaggala	PELUM Uganda - Volunteer

## Annex IV: Participants of the FLD Publication Pre-test, February 2010

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1.	Ssebuwufu Edward	Farmer	Agency for integrated Rural Development (AFIRD)
2.	Kaganga John	Farmer	Kikandawa Enviromental Association (KEA)
3.	Miti Matthias	Development agent	Jinja Diocesan Development Coordinating Organization (JIDDECO)
4.	Kaluya. M .Geoffrey	Development agent	Integrated Rural Development Initiatives (IRDI)
5.	Muhumuza Zenah	Farmer	Send a Cow Uganda
6.	Fredrick Kawooya	Development agent	Action Aid international Uganda
7.	Kabishanga Emmanuel	Development agent	New Horizons
8.	Nalumansi Stella	Development agent	Uganda Environmental Education Foundation (UEEF)
9.	Alice Tibazalika	Researcher(Crop scientist)	Association of Uganda Professional Women in Agriculture and Environment (AUPWAE)
10.	Twinomugisha Ben	Researcher	Food Rights Alliance
11.	Moses Baregyeya	Researcher	National Agricultural Research Organization
12.	Kiwanuka Simon Peter	Policy Maker	Mukono District
13.	Dr. Ruth Nalumaga	Researcher	Makerere University
14.	Sarah Mayanja	Researcher	Agrinet
15.	Ritah Lumala	Chairperson FLD Steering Group	Africa 2000 Network Secretariat.
16.	Emebet Wuhib Mutungi	Moderator	
17.	Nabaggala Ruth	Volunteer	PELUM Uganda Country desk
18.	Stella Grace Lutalo	Country Coordinator	PELUM Uganda Country desk



**Participatory Ecological Land Use Management**

PELUM Uganda Country Desk. Plot 155, Kira Road - Kamwokya.

P. O. Box 35804, Kampala - Uganda. Tel: + 256 (0) 414 533 973

Email: [pelumuganda@utlonline.co.ug](mailto:pelumuganda@utlonline.co.ug), [pelumuganda@yahoo.com](mailto:pelumuganda@yahoo.com)

[www.pelumrd.org](http://www.pelumrd.org)