

**2017 ANNUAL REPORT HANDBOOK
FOR
SUSTAINABLE RURAL AGRO-ENTERPRICE DEVELOPMENT
(SURAD PROJECT)**

**BY
RURAL INITIATIVE FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT
WEST NILE**



WITH FUNDING FROM



**AUSTRIAN
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY**

**HORIZONT
3000**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Arua, Nebbi and Nwoya Districts



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Abbreviations:

CDF	Community Development Facilitators
ERI	Enabling Rural Innovation
IGA	Income generating Activities
PD	Participatory Diagnosis
PME	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PMR	Participatory Market Research
FPR	Farmers Participatory Research
ED	Enterprise Development
IPDM	Integrated Pests And Disease Management
RDC	Resident District Commissioner

BACKGROUND

Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment West Nile (RICE-WN) with funds from Horizont3000 and Austrian Development Agency is implementing a project called Sustainable Rural Agro- Enterprise Development Project (SURAD). The twenty-one-month project (April 2017 – December 2018) seeks to improve livelihoods of farming communities in West Nile Sub-Region and Nwoya District of Acholi Sub-region. The project also seeks to build capacity of farmers under three key pillars of food security, market orientation and sustainable natural resource management. The specific objective of the project is; 625 farmers and their families starting to engage in market-oriented farming while safeguarding food security and managing their natural resources sustainably through applying the Enabling Rural Innovation (ERI) approach.

- This objective is implemented using five models of ERI approach namely
- Participatory Diagnosis (PD)
- Participatory Market Research (PMR)
- Farmer Participatory Research (FPR)
- Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME)
- Enterprise Development (ED)

All these trainings have been conducted with the 10 farmer groups that were selected in year one of the project from six project sub counties namely; three groups each from Ajia and Logiri Sub Counties in Arua District, one group each from Erussi and Wadelai Sub Counties in Nebbi District and Puringo and Gotapwoyo Sub County in Nwoya District.

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

The results of the project have been achieved under five key result areas namely:

A) Farmer groups are strengthened and operational;

8 farmer groups have started group savings and others have increased their share value. The 8 groups conducting weekly savings have share values varying between one thousand to five thousand shillings saved every week. The savings are shared after every 12 months. These savings have created solidarity in group interventions such as provision of labour for group work and soliciting group projects.

All the 10 groups have women involved in their leadership structure.

The average participation of women in leadership is 60% and only 2 groups in Arua District have female leadership composition falling below 50%.

6 farmer groups are fully registered with the Sub counties in their respective areas while the other four have completed development of their constitutions and are awaiting registration.

B) Farmers have improved their food security

In all the districts, farmers developed value chains for staple foods including cassava, beans, simsim, millet, maize and pota-

toes to improve food security. In addition, 186 households have established backyard vegetable gardens for improving food security in their families.

C) Farmer groups have developed profitable enterprises in response to market demands and derive sustainable income from them.

6 farmer groups conducted collective marketing by bundling their products before sale.

10 market committees are functional and provide information to groups on changing product prices on the market. The farmers collect market information monthly through physical visits or phone calls and through friends.

Quote 2: *“We have never earned this amount of money as a group and we always plant individually and sell individually. Our group savings this year will increase and we will sit to plan how the group benefits from this money. It’s an effort made by all”* – Mr. Jumanyal Lawrence, Group Chairperson of Mic Pa Rwoth Farmers’ group, Nebbi District in January, 2018.

4 farmer groups have established alternative income generating activities for the members, including liquid manure, energy saving cook stoves, mats and sitting stools.

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

D) Farmers have improved their farming skills and apply sustainable natural resource management (NRM) practices

Nine (9) farmer groups have conducted experiments to test yield of different crop varieties and pest and disease resistance of different crops.

64 farmers are using different natural resource management practices. Due to heavy rains in the second season, most farmers practiced soil and water conservation methods to control soil erosion and improve soil nutrients. Groups planted cover crops and contour bands constructed for water conservation practices. For instance, the women group in Erusi Sub-County (Yesu Kende) and Ovuonyaku group of Ajia Sub-County, Arua District were affected by soil erosion during their first experiment.

However, the group members used the soil and water conservation method to reduce the erosion by constructing contour bands in the second experimental crop which germinated very well. In addition, 4 groups also made organic pesticides out of local materials such as neem, red pepper, tobacco, garlic among others.

A total of 6,250 agro-forest trees planted (10 trees per farmer).

E) Capacity Building: RICE WN as an institution and 6 of its staff have acquired expertise in the ERI approach and facilitate farmers to apply innovative approaches and also monitor their performance.

manual

RICE-WN staff can now confidently train farmers and are able to interpret the different visual aids and training manual



Project staff participate in training on ERI modules at RICE-WN Head Office, Arua District in March and December 2017 respectively

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

Farmers have developed profitable enterprises that have increased their incomes.



Some of profitable enterprise by SURAD Famers Groups.

A total of 180 farmers (110 men and 70 women) out of 306 farmers in the ten groups supported during the reporting period increased their house hold incomes. For instance, in Yesu Kende women group of Erusi Sub-County in Nebbi District, one farmer Ms. Aromborach Kodhina earned 900,000Ugx from 6 bags of Irish potatoes grown compared to 330,000Ugx earned in the previous quarter before she learnt about the best agronomic practices (**planting in lines**) under one of the ERI modules. Another farmer, one Apangu Moses in Ajia Sub County, Arua District earned 1,200,000 in the first season and 1,850,000 in the second season in comparison to previous earnings ranging between 400,000Ugx to utmost 600,000Ugx per season. He attributed this to the water and conservation farming method he learnt

from the trainings he attended.

Quote 1: *“I can’t believe I could earn this much this season because I was frustrated by too much rain that swept away part of my plantation. However, the water and conservation method helped to get rid of this situation and I did not give up”*- Mr. Apangu Moses, a farmer in Arua District (December, 2017).

There is increased food security in farmers’ households. Farmers are now engaging in grow-



Mr. Apangu Moses, a farmer in Arua District displaying his tomatoes during Famers Innovation Fair

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

ing food security crops and vegetables. 153 farmers (116males, 37females) have designated crops for safe guarding food security. In Arua District, farmers are growing cassava, beans and ground-nuts for sale and for food. In Nwoya District, the farmers have planted millet, beans and rice for food while farmers of Nebbi District have planted cassava, beans, Irish potatoes and yams for food.

Summary of the results achieved so far, including number of beneficiaries, gender disaggregated (separated by men/women)

- 48 (36M, 12F) farmers have increased their incomes through selling their produce.
- 153 (116M, 37F) farmers have two staple food types to safe-guard their food security.
- 10 farmer groups have regular meetings at least once in a month.
- 8 farmer groups do group saving on a weekly basis.
- 50% women involvement in leadership at group level in 8 out of 10 groups. 40% in remaining 2 groups.
- 7 farmer groups are already registered at sub-county level and have their certificates in place.
- 306 (134 male, 172 female headed) households have at least two staple food types in a season
- 5 farmer groups conduct collective marketing
- 10 farmer groups have functional marketing committees consisting of 5 members providing up-to-date marketing information at least once a season.
- 4 farmer groups are involved in alternative income generating activities
- 8 farmer groups conducted at least one agronomic experiment each for optimising their farming systems

- 64 (42 males, 22 females) farmers are using three different natural resource management practices (e.g. mulching, organic farming, water conservation, soil conservation)
- 10 farmer groups were trained on agro forestry. The planting of the trees is ongoing.
- RICE-WN staff now train farmers confidently and are able to interpret the different visual aids and training manual
- One baseline survey conducted across the project sites

CHANGE PROCESSES EFFECTED

Improved farming skills amongst the farmers. Being a capacity building initiative, farmers have received knowledge on different skills of farming better which have been implemented by some farmers leading to improved yields and marketing of their produce.

Increased farmer innovations in developing IGAs for the groups as their crops mature. As a result of training on Income Generating Activities, the Yesu Kende women group of Erusi Sub-

County, in Nebbi District started making liquid manure (September, 2017) and energy saving cookstoves (November 2017) for income generation. Members of Mic Par Rwoth are also making crafts as an alternative source of income for the group.

Relations and networks have been strengthened.

The farmers have established a stronger relationship and networks with buyers, partners and local leaders in their sub-counties. This has resulted

CHANGE PROCESSES EFFECTED

from trainings on Participatory Market Research which encouraged the farmers to undertake market visits and collective marketing of produce.

Positive attitude change observed amongst farmer group members. Most farmers are increasingly changing their farming skills to incorporate farming as a business. The capacity building for the beneficiary farmers has boosted their interests in selling as a group through bulking and setting farm gate price to sell more or take products to the market.



One of profitable innovations by Waledai Mic Pa Rwoth Farmer Group

In Nebbi, Mic Par Rwoth

farmers group have bought 1 acre of land for their farming activities and 15 (8 female, 7 male) out of 30 members have each acquired one goat in achievement of their short term goal of having 2 goats in two years for multiplication to diversify their sources of income.

FARMER INNOVATION FAIR

Farmer Innovation Fair is a general farmer exhibition day where all farmer groups implementing ERI in West Nile sub region and Nwoya participated in demonstrating the knowledge and skills that they have learnt through the project interventions. These skills range from production technologies to innovations for market orientation. A total of 166 farmers and leaders (112 males, 54 females) attended the Innovation fair in Vurra Sub County, Arua District on 17th March 2018. Other participants included district, and sub counties leaders form the project ares, others partners within the region, the media, women entrepreneurs and progressive farmers with relevant experiences and successes in the areas of food security, income generation and sustainable natural resource management.

The local farming community of Vurra Sub County also participated in the innovation fair. The demonstrations were on competitive basis where outstanding groups were awarded for their different innovations and technologies that they demonstrated. A team of evaluators were identified from all the participating districts to award marks for different groups

based on agreed criteria amongst themselves. This was majorly based on food security, income generation and sustainable natural resource management practices. A key component of this was the different innovations initiated by the respective. The RDC of Arua District presided over the function as the Guest of honor where in his speech; he noted opportunities in vegetable production, milk production and honey citing ready markets for these products

Objectives of the Farmer Innovation Fair

This activity was carried out to enable farmers learn from the successes and good practices of other farmers, get new ideas and solutions to production, marketing and sustainable land utilization challenges in addition to networking with potential buyers and stakeholders in produce business. These objectives to a greater extent were achieved as farmers had enough time to interact with their fellow farmers and other stakeholders that participated in the exhibitions.

GALLERY ON MONITORING VISIT



Nursery bed by Yesu Kende Women Group



Farmers showcase their cassava plantations for food security (staple food) and also for sale during monitoring visits in October 2017.



One of the farmers showcasing her vegetable experimenting site



Woman from Yesu Kende women's group showcase their liquid manure ready for sale in October, 2017.



Bulking Center by Obawa Famer Group Aja Sub County Arua District



The Yesu Kende women group during the innovation fair



One of the group farmers making wood craft during the innovation fair



Wood craft innovation by Waledai Mic Pa Rwoth Farmer Group

GALLERY ON FARMERS INNOVATION FAIR (17/03/2018)



Mr. Omoya Alfred from Cac-Peyweka Farmers Group in Got-ApwoypS/C Nwoya District testifying how the project have boosted his life during the fair



RDC of Arua District Mr. Peter Debele awarding the best group during the innovation fair



*(Left)RDC of Arua District buying chicken
(Right)Sec. buying banana during the fair*

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED AND MODIFICATIONS

Prolonged drought throughout the first season affected farmers' production volumes due to crop failure. In turn, this affected food security and their incomes, since a majority of the farmers could not harvest enough. The farmers were trained on soil and water conservation practices such as mulching and the construction of water ditches to address this challenge.

Furthermore, there was a wide spread of army worms that affected maize, a major food crop for farmers in the project areas. This affected the whole maize value chain. The farmers were trained and advised to use natural pesticides, especially pesticides made out of chilli to spray their crops. Additionally, coaching was done for staff without technical agricultural background to obtain knowledge in basics of common plant disease and pest control practices.

LESSONS LEARNED

Collective marketing was faced some resistance in some communities. This was resulted by lack of trust in some households – between spouses – and in some groups – amongst group members. The issue of spouses being against collective marketing was evident in Yesu Kende Women's group in Erussi Sub-County, Nebbi District. A spouse who is a group member appreciates collective marketing, which is the reverse for those non-member spouses. There is need to invite both spouses to the trainings so as to be able to appreciate the benefits of collective marketing. Some group members of Guza foundation, a farmers' group in Logiri Sub-county, Arua District also shun collective marketing due to mistrust where they felt like some members might cheat them. More efforts need to be geared towards group strengthening activities with particular interest in building unity amongst group members.

There were low levels of adoption of vegetable growing in

some communities. Culturally, people view vegetables as naturally growing crops e.g. amarantus species (dodo), ladies' fingers (otigo) etc. As such, they do not value investing resources in them. This was observed in Obao farmers' group in Ajia sub-county, Arua District. Wild vegetables are exposed to unfavorable environmental conditions such as pests and diseases, uncontrolled soil erosion etc. That led to poor yields. More practical and evidence-based growing of vegetables needs to be undertaken so that communities acknowledge that deliberate growing of vegetables results into value-addition since environmental factors are controlled. Exotic species – with better and improved yields – need to be mixed with indigenous ones to promote adoption in the homes.

VISION: A MODEL COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES PROVIDER FOR HOLISTIC TRANSFORMATION

MISSION: TO ADVANCE AND PROMOTE HEALTHY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CORE VALUE: STRENGTH

SIMPLICITY

TEAMWORK

RESPECT

EXCELLENCE

NOVELTY

GUARDIANSHIP

TIME CONSCIOUSNESS

HONESTY



Website: www.riceuganda.org

Email: info@riceuganda.org/ ricearua@yahoo.com

FB: Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment West Nile

Twitter: @RICEWESTNILE

Mobile: +256772261176