

INCLUSIVE FARMER CAPACITY BUILDING AND MARKET ACCESS

Rationale

PRELNOR is employing an inclusive approach to farmer capacity building to ensure that communities are empowered to identify their own context-specific production and environmental challenges affecting agricultural production. A number of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques and tools are being used to understand the context within which farmers operate. This translates into the identification of existing farmer structures (groups or individual households), major production and marketing constraints, natural resources management and environment management issues.

Inclusive Capacity Building Steps

- First, identification and selection of Farmer Groups engaged in active agricultural activities and not receiving support from any other development initiatives is done.
- Farmer Groups then identify and prioritize crop enterprises that have the capacity to

thrive in their environment and address the Food and Income Security needs of its members.

- Households that have undergone mentoring prioritize productive activities that they intend to engage in and, clearly detail these in their Vision Journeys (specialization allows farmers to devote their efforts to what pays them the most).
- Major constraints to production and marketing of the enterprises are prioritized and clearly documented in a Group Action Plan and a Household Plan.
- Action plans detail what the gaps are, actions that need to be undertaken to address the gaps and the responsibility centers.
- Extension services to each farmer group or mentored household is guided by the issues identified by the group or household.

- This approach allows extension services to be tailored to the immediate needs of the smallholder farmers.

Key Production and Marketing Challenges being faced by smallholder farmers

- Limited access to improved crop varieties.
- Limited access to quality seeds.
- Unreliable rainfall.
- High post-harvest losses.
- Pests and diseases.
- Soil fertility losses.
- Labour constraints.
- Limited/poor storage facilities;
- Limited access to profitable markets.

HOLISTIC EXTENSION APPROACH BEING ADOPTED BY THE PRELNOR

Participatory adaptive trials through Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institutes (Abi and Ngetta ZARDIs) to introduce improved crop varieties and management practices to the farming communities



(Left) Rice seed field in Nwoya District (Right) A bean foundation seed production field at Ngetta ZARDI

Community level seed production through training farmer groups in Local Seed Business (LSBs) methodology and linking the LSBs to the ZARDIs being supported by the project to produce foundation seeds. These are intended to improve local availability of quality improved seeds.



'Loyo Kwoo' LSB representatives with members of a new LSB in their seed field in Nwoya district

"Mak kweri" LSB in Paimol sub county, Agago District threshing their harvested beans.



Foundation seeds being packaged by ZARDI ready to enhance locally available quality seeds

Agro-input trade fairs to enhance timely access to quality seeds and other agro-inputs, where farmers purchase agro-inputs of their choice and make linkages with agro-input dealers at sub-county level.



Beneficiaries purchases inputs using vouchers in Orom sub-county, Kitgum District

An exit interview with beneficiaries in Orom sub county, Kitgum District

Training on post-harvest handling, value addition for effective linkages to the market and linkages of farmers to providers of post-harvest handling equipment is being done to reduce post-harvest handling losses & increase the value of commodities.



Farmers demonstrate the use of motorized cassava chipper

Use of manual cassava chipper enhances post-harvest handling in palabek gem sub county, Lamwo District

Frequent weather information and seasonal forecasts are accessed from Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA) and shared with farming community to aid decision making on farming activities. The project is supporting installation and repair of weather stations to improve coverage and generation of more location-specific forecast.



Constructed fences for automatic weather stations in Latanya sub-county (Right) in Pader District

Dissemination of climate information through use of radios



Some of the rehabilitated weather stations to enhance climate information services under the project.

Mobile plant clinics are being conducted at community level to support pests and diseases diagnosis, test soils and provide recommendations on management options to farmers.



(Left) Plant clinic sessions in Paicho Sub-county, Gulu District and (Right) Lungulu Sub-county in Nwoya District

Use of appropriate mechanization options:

Through NARO, the project, is supporting promotion of the use of animal draught power, 2 wheel tractors for land preparation, planting, weeding, harvesting and use of other value addition equipment such as Cassava Chippers, Rice Shellers, Maize Shellers, to address the challenge of labor constraints and post-harvest handling



Ploughing with a 2WT

Planting beans using ox-planter- Lamin-too Village, Paicho Sub-county - Gulu

Access to profitable markets is being promoted through supporting farming as a business, guided by clear business plans. The Community Access Roads facilitate transportation of commodities from production areas to the markets or to the nearest trunk road leading to the market, while the markets temporarily do storage, commodity aggregation and marketing



Rehabilitation of Cwero-Wilul-Paibona road (16.9km) Climate Resilient Community Access Road in Paicho sub-county, Gulu District.



(Left) excavated area for construction of a box culvert foundation. (Right) Ongoing construction of a box culvert along Arut central - Laminto (13.8km) Climate Resilient Community Access Road in Paicho sub county, Gulu District.



(Left) Labilo A-Labilo B before the construction and (Right) Constructed Labilo A-Labilo B Climate Resilient Community Access Road in Lagoro sub county, Kitgum



Cross section of some of the constructed Community Access Roads in the project area to enhance transportation of commodities from production areas to the market