

Report

Training of Trainers and Findings in
two Districts in Eastern Uganda

Organic Solutions and Gender Mainstreaming



Empower Women
Benefit for All



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Content

1 Introduction	5
2 The training	5
2.1 Participants' expectations	5
2.2 Content of the training	6
2.3 Training methods and the training process	7
2.4 Major learning points	8
3 Identified cases of gender inequality.....	10
- Coffee farming inequalities between women and men in Kapchorwa district	
- Family planning in Kapchorwa District	
- Social, economic and political inequalities between women and men in Sebei region	
- Female genital mutilation in Sebei region	
- Effect of current control over resources and decision making on implementation of agricultural activities for women and men	
4 Required changes in gender.....	11
5 Conclusions and recommendations	11

List of acronyms

AT Uganda – Appropriate Technology Uganda

CA – Conservation Agriculture

CBA – Community Based Facilitator

EWA – Empowerment of Women – Benefit for All

NOGAMU- National Organic Agricultural Movement of Uganda

WECF – Women in Europe for a Common Future

1 Introduction

The project partner AT Uganda is implementing a by WECF coordinated project entitled: **Empower Women - Benefit for all** (EWA), funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands. The duration of the EWA Programme is from 06/2012 – 12/2015.

The overall goal of the EWA programme is to contribute to economic and political empowerment of women from low-income rural and peri-urban regions in six developing countries (Afghanistan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, South Africa, Tajikistan, Uganda).

In Uganda the major objective of this project is to improve local livelihoods of women and men through more environmentally friendly agricultural production, carried out in a profitable and business-like manner that empowers and respects the contribution of women, men and youth in the family. In implementation of this project AT Uganda works with local organizations to promote the adoption of environmentally friendly agricultural production in a gender inclusive manner. In Uganda the target districts are Kween and Kapchorwa.

In an effort to strengthen the capacity of the local organizations, AT Uganda signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Organic Agricultural Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU) to provide training services to local project trainers on organic production best practices in conservation agriculture and gender empowerment strategies.

In springtime 2013, a 4-days training on organic agricultural solutions and gender mainstreaming was organised for 22 NGOs, community based organisations and community facilitators from the two target districts. In this report the method and content of the training and findings of the discussions are presented.

Objectives of the training

1. To facilitate the trainers' understanding of organic agriculture principles and best practices and their compatibility with conservation agriculture.
2. To raise awareness on conservation agriculture (CA) and its contribution to sustainability in agriculture.
3. To educate women and men on gender issues in agriculture, as well as the need and process for gender mainstreaming.

2 The training

2.1 Participants' expectations

The participants had many expectations, which ranged from acquiring new knowledge to training materials that would enable them train others. The detailed expectations were:

- 1) Acquire new knowledge
- 2) Obtain knowledge in order to train other farmers
- 3) Maximum facilitation
- 4) Get knowledge and obtain new friends
- 5) Expect members to keep time
- 6) Good feeding
- 7) Share new ideas and facilitate the community
- 8) Money
- 9) Transport refund
- 10) Obtain a certificate of training
- 11) Empowered with skills and be independent in various areas
- 12) God to be with us
- 13) Knowledge on conservation agriculture
- 14) Know how women have been empowered
- 15) Hand outs
- 16) Travelling bags; field wear like gum boots
- 17) Training materials like marker pens and newsprint
- 18) Means of transport to reach training areas/groups in time
- 19) Have personal practical knowledge on organic farming

2.2 Content of the training

The training content was tailored to suit the level of participants and sessions were organized to enable easy transformation from classroom presentations to real life situations in the participants' work situation. In general, the following topics were covered:

- Organic principles and practices
- Organic management strategies
- Organic pest management
- Weed management
- Organic disease management
- Examples of effective intercropping
- Herbal preparations
- Soil health and maintaining soil fertility
- How to make compost
- Soil fertility options in organic agriculture
- Tropical green manures
- Conservation agriculture
- Gender in agriculture

Each day of the training had a theme and the learning process was supported with a video clip or video show to help participants internalize the importance of the day's training topics.

The themes for the training days and the respective topics were as follows:

Day one: introduction to organic agriculture

- Organic Principles and Practices
- Group work – 4 groups – Typical organic farm
- Gallery presentation - Typical organic farm
- Organic management strategies
- Group work -4 groups – organic preventive/curative solutions used on crops/livestock
 - 1) List products used as preventive pest or disease solutions on crops in your area
 - 2) List products used as preventive parasite or disease solutions on livestock in your area
 - 3) List products used as curative pest or disease solutions on crops in your area
 - 4) List products used as curative parasite or disease solutions on livestock in your area
- The Tigray experience (Ethiopia), a success story in sustainable agriculture

Day two: pest management without chemicals

- Management of common pests in organic agriculture
- Weed management
- Organic disease management
- Example of effective intercropping
- Herbal preparations
- Practical preparation of herbal products
- How to make compost
- The changing climate

Day three: soil management and conservation agriculture

- Soil health
- Organic soil fertility management
- Group work (4 groups)
 - a) Describe 5 processes through which soils lose their fertility.
 - b) Describe 5 types of soil erosion, giving examples of how it takes place.
 - c) Describe 5 ways in which agroforestry trees contribute to good soil management on the farm
 - d) List 5 living organisms found in the soil. Describe how these organisms improve soil conditions.
- Organic Soil Fertility Management
- Soil erosion
- Soil fertility options
- Cover crop seeds

- Conservation Agriculture (CA)
- Conservation agriculture implementation work plans

Day four: conservation agriculture and gender

- Conservation agriculture implementation work plans
- Gender issues, gender awareness, gender sensitivity, gender equality
- Women empowerment versus women self-reliance
- Analysis of specific cases of gender issues
 - Identify a gender case that uplifts the status of women /undermines the status of women/men as far as decision-making is concerned.
 - What are the most interesting aspects of this case in terms of gender women?
 - What are the roles and positions of women and men in the case?
 - What are the benefits/challenges for women and men in the case?
 - What are the most interesting driving factors?
- Gender Inequality in agriculture - How do issues of gender manifest themselves in agriculture?
- Gender roles within a Household
- Group work
 - What are the roles and responsibilities of men and women in a farming household
 - How does the current control over resources and decision-making affect implementation of agricultural activities for women and men?
 - What do you think should be changed and why?
- Gender mainstreaming
- Transformation by mainstreaming
- Basic principles of gender mainstreaming
- Typical activities under gender mainstreaming

2.3 Training methods and the training process

The training included both theory and practical sessions to ensure clear understanding of the training topics and acquaint participants with appropriate skills and practices that they could pass on while training in their local organizations. The training lasted 4 days and involved 22 participants from Kapchorwa and Kween districts. The majority of the participants were women (women and men), but both gender participated actively.



Participants working in their groups

Participatory approaches were used to cover theory sessions to make the participants' learning experiences as practical as possible. During the practical sessions, the 22 participants worked in 4 groups of 5 to 6 participants per group to enable hands on experience. This was done to enable the participants to practice some of the

activities involved in conservation agriculture as part of their skills development, but also give a chance to the consultant to identify weaknesses and needs for technical support.



Some of the participants discussing in their group

To facilitate the learning process, each participant was provided with a personal logbook where he/she would note those most important learning points that he would like to refer to when he/she got back to his/her working station. At the end of each day of training, the participants would be allocated 15 minutes to reflect on that day's training and note down their learning points.

2.4 Major learning points

At the beginning of each day of training, the participants spent 30 minutes reflecting on the previous day and sharing learning points based on their personal logbooks. The learning points indicate that the participants understood the training topics and finished the training in a better position to go and train their local organizations. Listed below are some of the learning points shared by the participants:

- Soil and water conservation can take farmers to a better level
- We have to change the way we are doing things in farming e.g. digging in perennial crops during the dry season
- Pests and diseases in livestock and crops can be controlled using available natural resources in our area
- Farmers can make their own fertilizers using local materials
- Mulching reduces costs of labour
- Proper spacing of crops brings good yields
- Whatever is in our environment is important
- Mulching is important as far as conservation agriculture is concerned
- Weeds are beneficial on our farms e.g. for fertilizers, mulch, etc.
- Intercropping may act as a repellent and drive pests away from crops
- Every plant is important
- Watering crops first before spraying improves the efficiency of pesticides
- Learnt the principles of pest management
- Elephant grass is a good animal feed
- Grafting is a way of preventing plant diseases
- First choose the variety of the seed before planting
- Pests can be confused using push-pull method
- Chemicals create resistance to pests
- Methods of controlling weeds e.g. mulching, intercropping
- Patience is needed in organic chemicals
- People's unnecessary movements spread diseases and using same tools for dirty fields
- Fencing is important
- Timely planting can prevent pests and diseases

- Commercial does not mean the size of the land but the ability to market
- Go back and become role models
- Give knowledge to those who did not come
- Go mind your business, care less to what others will say about you
- Trainers have to be exemplary
- Hard work is needed
- Preparation of decomposed manure
- Materials are available in our communities that are used to make pesticides
- Before you spray crops identify the problem first
- Fencing your farmland is important
- Extracting herbal pesticides



Participants extracting herbal pesticide from the African Soap Berry (phytolacca spp.)

- Definition of a pest
- Intercropping can change pests and intercrops can feed some people
- It is beneficial to practice irrigation in dry areas
- Intercropping is good
- Wise use of natural resources conserves the environment
- Natural products are cheaper than the artificial ones
- It is good to plant trees on our gardens
- Planting cover crops e.g. jack bean is good for the soil
- Through organic farming what was lost from the soil can be replenished
- Seed selection, timely planting are good for better yields and disease or pest reduction
- Early planting prevents pests and diseases
- Artificial chemicals can lead to soil infertility
- CA protects the environment
- Urea can be got out of Tithonia leaves
- Soil is a living organism and saving resource
- Deposition of acidic materials destroys living organisms
- Burning leads to soil infertility
- Nutrient mining in farming is bad
- Many generations can benefit on the same piece of land
- Cover crops are good
- Improper use of soil leads to soil degradation
- CA improves soil formation of fertility
- Water conservation leads to soil fertility
- Living organisms in soil contribute to soil formation
- Agroforestry leads to soil formation

- Identification of soil health is important
- Timely planting is important
- Selection of good variety seeds is important
- Mono-cropping reduces soil fertility
- Terraces are important
- CA does not destroy organic matter in soil
- Intercropping is good
- Organic fertilizers reduce cost of production
- Proper planning is necessary in conservation agriculture
- Organic agriculture is cheaper than conventional agriculture
- Controlling soil erosion is important

3. Identified cases of gender inequality

During the session on gender, participants were requested to identify gender issues that are important in their communities and could have an effect on agricultural activities. Each group identified one case as elaborated below.

➤ **Coffee farming inequalities between women and men in Kapchorwa district**

The man undermines the woman. Labour in the garden is done by both, by the woman and the man. At the end of the season, the man sells all the coffee and spends the money alone without considering the interests of the woman. The woman works the whole year and gains nothing. The family can fail to pay for their necessities. The men fail to play their roles by wasting the resources.

The driving factor for this case is that men are regarded as superior to women. Men use their power to dictate to women. When a woman asks the man about the money, the man asks her why she wants to know.

Desired changes for this case include sharing of ideas after selling the coffee; men should also respect women's ideas.

➤ **Family planning in Kapchorwa district**

Only women are expected to take the responsibility for contraception, it can also be undertaken by men. Most men decide for their women the type of contraception to be used. After a man has stopped his woman from giving birth, he marries another woman who can have other children.

The position of the man is to make decisions, while the position of the woman is to take decisions. Challenges in this case include potential divorce, misunderstandings in the family mistrust. Major driving factors of this case include the high cost of living, poverty, high cost of education and culture (e.g. out-breeding to get more clever children).

➤ **Social, economic and political inequalities between women and men in Sebei region**

Inheritance of property in homes is mostly by boys. In case of decision making e.g. sale of farm produce, women are not considered.

In the Sabiny region, uncircumcised women are tortured and prohibited from climbing the granary, getting cow dung for smearing, etc. In a household, women do all the work including cooking and washing.

In the community, women are not considered for political positions e.g. Local Community and clan positions. When a woman produces single sex children, especially girls, she is the one blamed for that.

Uplifting factors for this case would include education for women and men, equal job opportunities, freedom of ownership, freedom of expression during public occasions, equal political positions, equal share of property in case of divorce.

➤ **Female genital mutilation in Sebei region**

Women are said, to be initiated into adulthood by circumcision. Women get more respect in society after circumcision. A circumcised woman is allowed to contribute and make decisions in a meeting, as well as do several other activities e.g. milking a cow, filling a pot with hot water when elders are drinking alcohol.

Challenges associated with this case include difficulties during childbirth and potential exposure to HIV/AIDS due to use of one cutting tool for different women.

Effect of current control over resources and decision making on implementation of agricultural activities for women and men

The groups identified following effects caused by current control over resources and decision making on implementation of agricultural activities for women and men:

- Family conflicts, which may result into divorce
- Women neglect implementation of agricultural activities leading to low production and poverty
- Theft of produce by women due to lack of trust in the household
- Women refuse to work with men
- Children's education is affected
- There is no common understanding and transparency in families.
- Poor attitude towards work
- Low incomes for women and shortage of food

4 Required changes in gender

- ❖ Both women and men should be involved in decision making for proper planning so as to increase production on the farm.
- ❖ Both women and men should share control of resources so as to create a sense of ownership by women and foster peace and unity.
- ❖ Budgeting at household level should be done by both: by women and men.
- ❖ Both women and men should be involved in marketing of agricultural produce, so that women too can appreciate farming.
- ❖ Women should be given less agricultural work, because they have other domestic work.
- ❖ More women should be involved in agriculture extension meetings, because women do much of the agricultural work.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The training was conducted successfully, but there is need for consistent follow up of the trainees to ensure practical implementation. There is need for motivating the trainees so that they start practicing what they learnt as well as train and support farmer groups in implementing conservation agriculture.

Recommendations

The topic of organic agriculture seemed to be new to some of the participants, although there were signs of implementation of some of the practices among the farming communities in both districts. This indicates a gap in sharing of information. AT Uganda should organize structured sharing sessions to assist the participants and local organizations to gain enough knowledge and skills through sharing of available information within the farming communities.

There is a need to facilitate a process of addressing the effects of current control over resources and decision-making on implementation of agricultural activities that were identified during the session on gender. This would help to motivate especially women to increase their input in implementation of agricultural activities, thereby leading to increased production, reduced poverty and improved food security.

Challenges experienced during the training

- Intermittent electric power failure: During the training, Kapchorwa town experienced electric power failures which sowed down the training program.
- Insufficient materials for practical session: The materials collected for the practical session on making compost were not enough for building a big pile that could generate enough heat for good decomposition. The reason for this was the dry season during which grasses are scarce.

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