



October 16, 2024

**COMMUNIQUE CALLING ON THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ANIMAL  
INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES TO SCALE UP AGROECOLOGY PRACTICES  
ACROSS THE COUNTRY.**

**A. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

From 10-14 October 2024, Center for Environmental Research and Agricultural Innovations (CERAI) organized community engagements for small-scale farmers on Agroecology practices in communities affected by oil and gas activities in Albertine Graben Uganda.

The objective of the community engagements was to train small-scale farmers on Environmental agricultural practices including agroecology for farmers to produce healthy and nutritious foods amidst the ongoing oil activities. The training happened in two districts of Hoima and Kikuube in four villages including Buhirigi, Budaka, Kiziramfumbi, and Kijumba Villages.

The training equipped 93 small-scale holder farmers with practical knowledge of the production of organic manures using the available biomass. Farmers were trained on the production of herbicides and their application, compost manure, and agroforestry practices.

During training, farmers discussed the issues they are facing during agricultural production. They said the ongoing oil and gas activities have increased climate changes that have come along with floods, deforestation, pollution, and increased theft that have affected their social and economic well-being.

The participants appreciated the government's efforts towards supporting smallholder farmers across the country including the parish Development model among others among other programs.

However much effort, farmers complained of the little attention given to them to solve farming challenges faced. From the engagements, communities discussed several challenges and recommendations to drive sustainable environmental agriculture practices in Uganda to produce healthy and nutritious foods.

**B. Training Observations and Challenges shared by Farmers**

- **Pests and diseases:** Mr Steven from Budaka Village informed participants that there are increased pests and diseases that have made farmers lose their produce. He said the Banana bacteria wilt, coffee wilt disease, banana xanthomonas wilt (BXW), cassava brown streak virus, fruit flies and citrus canker are some of the most common

diseases that have affected their production. Steven said the extension services are not available and this makes some of the diseases go viral due to improper management.

- **Policy gaps:** Farmers from Kijumba village said that the policy gaps have made them continue to suffer losses due to fake seeds that are in the market. Farmers say that seed suppliers are not regulated and the policies there are never enforced. They said the seeds they plant have a low germination rate and this makes them make losses. Further farmers said that there is a need to have policies that promote agroecology to relieve farmers from expensive agrochemicals that are expensive and toxic not only to humans but also to soil.
- **Limited media coverage for the agriculture sector:** Mr James from Kiziramfumbi said that agriculture is one of the sectors that the media have not reported about. He said that many issues have happened in the sector but unfortunately, little is reported pagein the National media. He said that small-scale farmers have many issues unfortunately; the media does not reach their rural areas to cover their success stories and challenges.
- **Agriculture vs Nature:** Farmers expressed their concerns about seasonality of the agriculture production. They said that if there is no rain, there is no agriculture that can take place. This has increased food insecurity in their communities. They want the government of Uganda to extend solar-powered irrigation schemes in their communities such that they can carry out production throughout the year.
- **Expensive Fertilizers and less knowledge of application:** Mrs Jane from Budaka Village informed the meeting that the fertilizers are very expensive and if they don't apply, they can't get any harvest. Recently, I went to the market to buy NPK, they told me sac at 200,000UGX, which is very expensive for me, a farmer narrated a story during the meeting. They want the price of fertilizers reduced and more training done on organic manures that are cheap and sustainable.
- **Limited extension services:** Uganda has a staggering gap of about 5335 extension workers with a low ratio of agricultural extension workers to farmers standing at 1:1,800. Small-scale farmers confirmed that there is limited extension service offered to them during agriculture production. Ms. Getrude Bikomaho who is a farmer from Kiziramfumbi village said that she has never seen an agriculture extension worker holding a meeting in their community. The Lack of extension services has also contributed to food loss farmers face due to poor pre- and post-handling harvest harvests. Globally, over 931 million tonnes of food, accounting for 17% of the total food produced globally, is wasted each year in households, retail outlets, restaurants, or other food services. Food loss and waste greatly increase food insecurity and are major contributors to the climate change crisis, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution
- **Overdependence on Agrichemicals:** Of the 80 farmers that were engaged in the training, almost 70% have applied agrochemicals during production. They say the chemicals and fertilizers being used are very expensive toxic to soils and require technical knowledge during application. This calls for more training on agroecology practices that are environmentally friendly and cheap to produce organic foods.

### C. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **From the trainings, Farmers made the following recommendations**

- The government should increase the number of agriculture extension workers, especially in rural communities for small-scale farmers to access extension services.
- The government should put in place laws and policies that promote agroecology and other environmental agriculture practices. There is a need to fast-track the National Agroecology strategy plan for Uganda.
- The government should further increase funding to the agriculture sector and programs that are committed to helping achieve safer food in Uganda.
- The government of Uganda should further strengthen the implementation of food and agricultural policies, laws, and regulations to build compliance among consumers on food safety and quality
- The Government of Uganda to strengthen extension services on post-harvest handling and storage management
- There is a need for all stakeholders to engage in awareness creation and community sensitization on quality food preservation, meal planning, food recycling, and the use of packaging labels to reduce food waste

#### **Signed by training participants**

No	Name	Institution /Village
1	Aganyira Comfort	Hoima
2	Tugume Recheal	Hoima
3	Flavia kyamulesire	Kikuube
4	Muhairwe Peninah	Kikuube
5	Kunihira Saidat	kikuube
6	Nayebare Abbey	Kikuube
7	Ayesiga Rosemary	kikuube
8	Tusiime Juliet	kikuube
9	Kugonza Phiona	Kikuube
10	Asiimwe Christine	kikuube
11	Alice Bachondooza	Kikuube
12	Nambi Mastulla	kikuube
13	Komukama Mary	Kkuube
14	Mbabazi Harriet	kikuube
15	Katusabe Margret	kikuube
16	Birungu Evelyne	Kikuube
17	Tibaleka Janiffer	Kikuube
18	Kabajulizi Shakirah	Kikuube
19	Mbabazi Hajarah	Kikuube
20	Bikorwa Clinton	Kikuube
21	Akama Gloria	Kikuube
22	Ayebare Jackline	Kikuube
23	Kyaligonza Sunny	Budaka
24	Tumusiima Obity	Budaka

25	Ayesiga Stephen	Budaka
26	Baligonzaki David	Budaka
27	Alituha Caraine	Budaka
28	Tumusiime Robert	Budaka
29	Atuhairwe Juliet	Budaka
30	Murungi Denis	Budaka
31	Katusiime Naume	Budaka
32	Kabasinguzi Grace	Budaka
33	Karuhanga Langton	Budaka
34	Alituha Vivian	Budaka
35	Kyosaba Gloria	Budaka
36	Kyosaba Aidah	Budaka
37	Atulinda Yedida	Budaka
38	Twesigye Fred	Budaka
39	Domitar Tibakunirwa	Budaka
40	Ahumuza Praise	Budaka
41	Aliguma Sayuni	Budaka
42	Mukonyezi Enoch	Budaka
43	Komugisa Juliet	Budaka
44	Kanyabazana Getridah	Budaka
45	Asimwe Chrispus	Budaka
46	Isingoma Yoab	Budaka
47	Arinaitwe Precious	Budaka
48	Kusiima Jolly	Budaka
49	Alinaitwe Rester	Kijumba
50	Tusingwire Ambrose	Kijumba
51	Niwagaba Tomas	Kijumba
52	Mugabirwe Tomas	Kijumba
53	Muhumuza Peace	Kijumba
54	Akankwasa Gideon	Kijumba
55	Asimire Pamellah	Kijumba
56	Byamukama Jastus	Kijumba
57	Turimuremba Aneti	Kijumba
58	Kyomukama Hope	Kijumba
59	Niwagaba Roger	Kijumba
60	Nakachwa Mery	Kijumba
61	Tusiime Harriet	Kijumba
62	Bwetungye Graham	Kijumba
63	Akankwasa Enid	Kijumba
64	Abedilembe Samuel	Kijumba
67	Ahimbisibwe Immaculate	Kijumba
68	Mugisa Jackson	Kijumba
69	Businge Boneconsira	Kijumba
70	Kwalikanda Samson	Kijumba
71	Roja Bagyerusya	Kijumba
72	Adoko Sarah	Buhirigi
73	Pachutho Athuwa	Buhirigi
74	Onyangu Benjamin	Buhirigi

75	Kunindo Samwel	Buhirigi
76	Okello Godfrey	Buhirigi
77	Jaryekonga Jackson	Buhirigi
78	Obenju Paula	Bugirigi
79	Akumu Paula	Buhirigi
80	Asenzerina Thoola	Buhirigi
	Macuru Robert	Buhirigi
81	Iwuting Joyces	Buhirigi
82	Kyamanywa Bashir	Buhirigi
83	Owonda	Buhirigi
84	Andubango topista	Buhirigi
85	Kiiza John	Buhirigi
86	Nyamungu Esta	Buhirigi
87	Nyan Grace	Buhirigi
88	Achen Beatrace	Buhirigi
89	Buliji steven	Buhirigi
90	Omirambe Buhirigi	Buhirigi
91	Gerald Barekye	CERAI
92	Kembabazi Barbra	IGEN-EA
93.	Birungi Oliver	CERAI

END.