



Dimitra Newsletter

RURAL WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT



- ◎ Rural radios and participatory communication
- ◎ ICTs and Web 2.0: towards improved access to information
- ◎ Gender, property rights and livelihoods
- ◎ Sexual and gender-based violence

Editorial

Table of content

- 3 | South Kivu: solar radios change the lives of women in rural areas
- 5 | Communication through participation: a new approach for effective action
- 7 | WOUGNET: Enhancing access to information by rural women
- 8 | Dimitra East Africa meeting and exchange visit
- 10 | Web2forDev 2007
- 11 | WEB 2.0 applications as enabling tool for development
- 13 | Gender, property rights and livelihoods in the era of AIDS
- 15 | Securing women's access to land: linking research and action - A research project in Eastern and Southern Africa
- 16 | The FXB Village Model Programmes
- 17 | Women receive information on reproductive rights through radio
- 18 | AMARC: First Arab-African conference of community radios in Africa, the Middle East and North Africa
- 19 | Sexual and gender-based violence: A social nightmare provoking action
- 20 | To serve and protect: police scale up violence unit to prevent abuse of women and children in Ghana
- 21 | Resources: Websites, events and publications – Dimitra workshop brochures and CD-ROM



Dear Friends

Six months have passed since the last Dimitra newsletter, and it is time for an update on the project's activities and on issues of interest to the project and its readers!

Among the experiences shared in this newsletter, we would like to focus on Dimitra and its partners' work in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the field of rural radio and participatory communication. A rural radio and listeners' club project, conducted in South Kivu province with SAMWAKI and GTZ-Santé, is getting well underway and is triggering a lot of interest. In particular the sharing of solar radios between women members of the listeners' clubs and their families and the development of information messages in cooperation with the rural population itself, are proving their worth in boosting the role of rural women and men as actors in their own development.

In Nigeria, WINET has successfully used the radio for the dissemination of information on reproductive rights issues. The organisation developed a specialised radio programme and supported the creation of radio listeners' clubs in Enugu State. It is estimated that as a result of the project, some one million women and men acquired increased knowledge and awareness of women's reproductive rights.

Dimitra also continued to show its interest in the work of AMARC, the World Association of Community Broadcasters, by attending its first Arab-African conference in Rabat in October 2007.

Dimitra is very interested in the connection between gender, property rights and livelihoods in the era of HIV/AIDS. FAO recently organised a consultation meeting on this topic which gathered various practitioners in this field. They debated implementation strategies and policies to link increased knowledge of these issues to a concrete improvement in the livelihoods of women and children. A new research project by the ILC (International Land Coalition) looks into linking research and action to secure women's rights in Eastern and

Southern Africa; the project is still in its starting phase, but it aims to provide a platform for change which will promote rural women's access and control over land in the region.

A sustainable way of helping people living with HIV/AIDS has been successfully implemented in several countries worldwide by FXB International, a Swiss organisation. The goal of the Village Model programmes is to strengthen the capacity and improve the life conditions of people and vulnerable children living in the context of HIV/AIDS.

Dimitra also remains committed to the use of new information and communication technologies (NICTs) for enhancing the access of rural populations – women and men alike – to information that is useful for their socio-economic development. Dimitra's partner WOUGNET works on enhancing access to information by rural women in Uganda, in particular through activities with women's groups in Apac District. BROSDI, another Ugandan organisation, describes the ways it uses Web2.0 applications both within the organisation and in its activities with rural populations. The NGO aims to reduce household poverty by improved information-sharing, knowledge management and effective use of NICTs in its different programmes. The phenomenon of Web2.0 and its potential for development is also described.

Finally, we are very pleased to send you the new Dimitra CD-ROM, which updates the one produced in 2004. The 2004 edition was very successful, especially among those who do not have easy Internet access. Like its predecessor, this new CD-ROM will provide you with the content available to date on the Dimitra website and database.

We hope that you will enjoy this newsletter and that the CD-ROM will be useful to you. As always, we welcome your feedback at any time!

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South Kivu: solar radios change the lives of women in rural areas

Communication equipment – more specifically solar-powered radios, recorders and digital receivers – was recently provided to listeners' clubs for men and women, women's networks in rural areas and community radio stations in the Province of South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The solar radios have been put in the care of women. This means that radios are no longer the exclusive possession of the men of the villages. Whole evenings can now be spent round the fire listening to the radio; the radio wave has entered people's kitchens and can even be listened to by farmers – both women and men – as they work their fields.

The use of solar radios

The equipment – provided by Dimitra, with the financial support of the King Baudouin Foundation – comprises 45 solar-powered radios, five recorders and five digital radio receivers. They were sent out to nine pilot listeners' clubs and four partner community radio stations. The aim is to promote communication so as to boost development in rural areas and facilitate access to information. The equipment will enable members of distant communities to share knowledge and experiences, in particular with respect to farming practice and the problem of HIV/AIDS.

The listeners' clubs and women's networks are based in eight rural districts within the province. Their members were delighted to receive the solar radios. The women, who are in charge of the radios, are particularly pleased that they will now be able to stay abreast of activities carried out by women in other areas. This in turn will better arm them to tackle their main concerns: safeguarding the daily survival of their families and promoting the development of their communities.

Roughly two months after handing out the equipment, SAMWAKI, Dimitra's partner organisation in South Kivu, visited the groups concerned to find out how the new devices were being used and how significant they are in promoting communication and enabling sharing of knowledge and experiences, in particular between the members of the listeners' clubs and their grassroots organisations. They found that providing this communication equipment to rural communities, and specifically women, is a truly innovative move in the overall process of boosting the local economy, sharing knowledge and facilitating development. Certainly, the radios are a real talking point amongst the groups themselves!

A simple and inexpensive device that is easy to use

The solar-power radios are striking initially by their shape. Many users thought at first



Solar radio equipment has been provided to rural grassroots organisations in which women play a crucial role. The radios have been put in the care of the women members, and are passed on to a different family each week.

glance that they were thermos flasks! One of the secrets to their success is the limited number of buttons, making them easier to operate for illiterate users. Demonstrations were held in family units and larger groups and were a great hit: even those who had never before used a receiver took to the radios easily. But the success of the solar-powered radio can be attributed primarily to the fact that its technology enables it to function miraculously without batteries or electricity. Solar energy and a mechanical crank are all it takes!

These characteristics make solar radios ideally suited to the social, economic and cultural situation of users in rural areas. So much so that all villages are keen to get their hands on one. "We should all have one at home," states Mrs Xavérine,

President of the Union of Mothers and Daughters of Kalehe and of the Tuungane Listeners' Club. She adds that, "we have already got together to collect contributions which will be passed on to SAMWAKI to buy us more solar radios".

Radio receivers: ownership for the community and the family

The equipment has been handed out to rural grassroots organisations in which women play a crucial role. This runs counter to the tendency to leave men in charge of everything. In this case, the solar-powered radios were given to the women members of the listeners' clubs, to be passed round the families of each member in turn. This means that both men and women get the benefit of the radios and there is no special privilege connected to gender.

Slowly but surely, the notion that a radio receiver could belong to an individual family or the community as a whole is gaining ground, to the detriment of the belief that such information and communication tools are the preserve of men. Indeed, in the past wives and children had very little or no access whatsoever to radios. One young girl from Ikoma (Walungu) confirms this: "We hardly ever listen to dad's radio. When he goes out, he takes his radio around with him. But then one evening my mum brought home the radio from her club. She put me in charge of turning the crank so that it would have enough energy". She goes on to explain that her mother is not allowed to use her husband's radio because he fears that she will damage it. He also often complains that his wife and children have not got him any new batteries for his set.

Sharing knowledge and experiences of development

Mrs M'Bisimwa is a member of the Mugogo Communication Axis¹. Together with the other members of her group she recently listened to a programme broadcast on Radio Maendeleo on breeding guinea pigs. She learnt a lot from it and within just two weeks' time she had started breeding them herself. For now she has only a few animals, but she already manages to feed her children with the meat at least once a week, which is good for their health.

Again thanks to a radio programme, the members of the Ruhinduke listeners' club in Mugogo learned of a twofold initiative undertaken by a group of women from Fizi. On the one hand they had created a mutual assistance fund for women and, on the other hand, had begun to manufacture corrugated tiles which they placed onto their kitchen roofs, without



Together with the local population, Radio Bubusa in Mugogo (Walungu) has developed a whole range of information messages on agriculture, HIV/AIDS, the fight against sexual violence, the status of women, etc.

any intervention by their husbands. The mutual assistance fund is capped at USD 100. The 150 women who are members of the fund keep it afloat by paying in USD 0.20 each week. Those who are most in need are then given an interest-free loan which they can pay back over time.

After discussing what they had heard during the programme, the members of the Mugogo listening club took the idea launched by their counterparts in Fizi one step further: they decided to create a savings and credit cooperative. They calculated that, without being overly ambitious, by breeding 20 rabbits they could earn

the group a sum of USD 1500 over a period of 12 months. They are already collecting the money to buy the first 20 rabbits, which will be distributed amongst the 20 members of the club, 15 of whom are women and 5 men.

Breaking the silence in families on HIV/AIDS

Many members of listeners' clubs and women's networks in rural areas report that those men and women who take part in activities to raise awareness of how to combat HIV/AIDS, very often tend to pass on and discuss the relevant information within their group only. A large majority is hesitant to broach the subject within the family unit, in front of their spouse and children.

One evening, when it was her turn to take the solar radio home, Mrs Iranga, who is a member of the Ciherano Communication Axis, took advantage of the opportunity to talk about HIV/AIDS with her family. Her husband, children and neighbours all listened to a programme on HIV/AIDS broadcast in Mashi, the local language. She had expected that everyone would leave, preferring not to be confronted with this sensitive issue, but was surprised to see how attentively they all followed the programme, even her husband. And before she could speak at the end of the broadcast, one of her neighbours had already set the tone. The entire group then chimed in, young and old alike. Ever since, Iranga has felt much freer to talk about HIV/AIDS within her family and with her neighbours. "My neighbours are impatiently awaiting my next turn for the radio. Once it has made its way round the 42 other members of my group, it will come



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back to me and we will listen to more programmes, particularly sketches. This has become my task and I feel responsible for it", she explains.

In Uvira, as in Kalehe, various listeners' clubs have discussed specific traditional practices that can favour the spread of HIV/AIDS in their area. These include tattooing, polygamy and discrimination against women and girls. Using illustrations, the facilitators of the Kalehe listeners' club analyse the transmission chain of HIV/AIDS and clearly demonstrate that if people do not become aware of the problem, the scourge can be passed on to an entire community in no time by one individual who may even be a stranger to them.

Equality in expression and in division of tasks

"This is the first time in the many years I've been a member of various associations that I have participated in a debate on gender awareness. I had always thought this was a topic that favoured women and went against men!" This observation was made by one of the members of the Kalehe listeners' club at the end of a debate on the roles of women and men in running the household. The dis-

cussion was held during a SAMWAKI training session for the members of the Kalehe listeners' club and women's networks in September 2007. At the end of the training session, in view of the many ambiguities and misunderstandings put forward by the participants on the notion of gender roles, a debate was held during which the men and women became quite entrenched in opposition to one another and were no longer really listening. In order to defuse the situation, the facilitator suggested that they make a table of the different activities carried out by the men and the women.

Once they had accounted for all 24 hours in the day, fresh momentum was given to the discussion and the participants recognised that the well-being of the family can only be attained through cooperation between men and women, specifically by fair distribution of tasks within the household.

Conclusion

Solar, crank-powered radios provide the people, and in particular the women, of the rural areas of South Kivu with access to information and enable them to share ideas and

practices. The members of the listeners' clubs now have at their disposal a tool that will enhance their knowledge in a host of areas related to community development. Combating HIV/AIDS, gender education, agriculture, animal husbandry and food security, protection of the environment, hygiene, habitat, human rights and women's rights are just some of the issues being debated within the listeners' clubs and grassroots organisations. As only a limited number of radios has been handed out so far, not all potential users have their own individual set. However, a partial solution to this situation is to listen to shows together then debate the issues discussed. It is also appreciated that the solar radios are being passed round different households and villages.

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1 A unit that brings together two or more women's groups so as to enable them to exchange information and share experiences.

Communication through participation: a new approach for effective action

Report from a Dimitra mission to the provinces of South Kivu and Katanga, Democratic Republic of Congo

On Sunday 4 February 2008 the Dimitra mission paid a visit to the pilot listeners' club "Rhyubake Eka" ("Let's build our village together") located in Bugobe, a small village that nestles amongst the hills of South Kivu in the territory of Kabare. A large part of the village population – 79 women and 38 men – were present to explain how their club makes use of the three solar-powered crank radios provided by Dimitra and the King Baudouin Foundation (see previous article). As in other areas of South Kivu, Dimitra's partner in the DRC, the NGO SAMWAKI, is working closely with GTZ Santé in this village.

All seats on the Management Committee, set up to oversee the listeners' club, are held in parity by one woman and one man. The listeners' club's facilitator – usually a woman leader – acts as a link between the club and SAMWAKI and the community radio stations. The participants in the meeting expressed great satisfaction and reported on the many positive changes that had taken place in their homes since the arrival of the solar radios. In particular, families are talking more and the taboos surrounding issues such as HIV/AIDS are being dismantled. Furthermore, all of the villagers are endeavouring to put into prac-

tice within their own families what they have learned from the information sessions. Husbands have become more willing to look after their children and to tend the goats.

A relevant and appropriate message from the people themselves

In Bugobe and in Kalehe (Tuungane Listeners' Club), GTZ Santé and SAMWAKI have worked intensively with the local people on their perceptions of HIV/AIDS. Together they



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The women of the Rhyubake listeners' club in Bugobe are very committed to their new role as actors of change.

have analysed different types of behaviour, attitudes and beliefs upheld by men and women. Following on from the discussions, a message of prevention is now being created by the villagers themselves. This is the best way to make sure the message is relevant and truly makes sense to the target audience. SAMWAKI and GTZ Santé will then ensure that all of the messages and information to be broadcast on air are both accurate and reliable.

Radio Bubusa ("The women's radio station"), was created by SAMWAKI and is located in Mugo in the territory of Walungu. Here once again a whole range of information messages have been developed together with the local population on agriculture, on the fight against sexual violence, the status of women, HIV/AIDS, and more. In fact, GTZ Santé intends to lend additional support to Radio Bubusa so as to enable SAMWAKI to strengthen its support to setting up new listeners' clubs and consolidating the knowledge of the people living in the rural areas through interaction and participation. The messages developed together with the local population are to be broadcast by Radio Bubusa and relayed to other community

radio stations in South Kivu. SAMWAKI also intends to look into the possibilities available for making use of more powerful emitters so as to extend the coverage of the local community radio antennae.

Encouraging future fathers to accompany their wives to prenatal consultations and take the AIDS screening test

In Kaziba and Kalehe, Radio Umojaa and Radio Bubusa have been broadcasting messages urging husbands to accompany their wives to prenatal medical consultations. During these appointments, health personnel explain that the HIV status of both the mother and the father can influence the health of the unborn child. So it is important for both parents to take a screening test in order to determine whether the child is at risk and, if so, take the necessary steps as soon as the baby is born. In other words, in order to protect the health of the unborn child, parents must be tested for HIV. Thanks to the messages broadcast, fathers-to-be have started accompanying their wives to their medical appointments. This was previously quite uncommon. They have also started to take the AIDS screening test and understand

that it is important, both for themselves, their wives and their unborn children. This initiative seems to be a success and is to be repeated in all of the health zones covered by GTZ Santé in South Kivu.

Upcoming initiatives in Katanga

A series of similar initiatives to distribute solar-powered, crank-operated radios to listeners' clubs and provide assistance to community radio broadcasters is planned in the province of Katanga involving Dimitra's partner organisations, REFED-Katanga and GTZ Santé, as well as other NGOs and community radio stations. Initial contact visits have already taken place in Kasumbalesa and Kapolowe.

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WOUGNET: Enhancing access to information by rural women

Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) is an NGO which was initiated in 2000 by several women's organisations in Uganda. Its mission is to promote and support the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) by women and women's organisations in Uganda, so that they can take advantage of the opportunities presented by ICTs in order to effectively address national and local problems of sustainable national development. WOUGNET's vision is of a society in which women are empowered through the use of ICTs for sustainable development. Presently, WOUGNET has over 90 women's organisations as members. At a regional level, WOUGNET is the Dimitra partner for Eastern Africa, covering Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Enhanced access to agricultural information

In 2005, a project on "Enhancing Access to Agricultural Information using ICTs in Apac District" (EAAI) was initiated to develop and improve information and communication systems so as to enable easy access to agricultural information for rural women farmers. Findings of a research study¹ undertaken in 2003 revealed lack of information as a key limiting factor to increased productivity in Apac, one of the poorest districts in Uganda. It showed



Local agricultural content has been produced and disseminated via radio and SMS messages as well as on audiotapes, video tapes, CD-ROMs and notice boards.

Access to accurate and timely information by rural women can result in enhanced economic and social development. But information is of limited use unless it is appropriately packaged and communicated. Indeed, there is still lack of adequate skills and knowledge by and for women in rural areas to use and apply ICTs to their full potential in their daily activities. This article highlights WOUGNET's activities in addressing the need to enhance access to information by rural women in Uganda with examples from its work in Apac District, Northern Uganda.

that rural farmers lacked information on how to improve quality of their products, improved seeds and crop varieties, source of inputs/implements, plant diseases, pests and their control, soil management and conservation, and improved skills. This lack has limited the production levels of the rural farmers, and hence has resulted in limited incomes and poverty.

The EAAI project is ongoing in twelve parishes/villages within Maruzi and Kole counties in Apac District. It was initiated with financial support from the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA), and targets 12 grassroots women farmers' groups as the main beneficiaries, while not excluding men or youth.

Located in Apac town, the Kubere Information Centre (KIC) was established to act both as an Information Resource Point as well as to support project implementation and two-way linkages with the women farmers. Local agricultural content has been produced and disseminated via radio and SMS messages as well as on audiotapes, video tapes, CD-ROMs and notice boards. The content is made available and exchanged in the local language, Luo.

Packaging of information is key

Low literacy rates among rural women seriously impacts the way the project packages and delivers information and services to the beneficiaries. Weekly radio shows and meetings with agricultural experts have been found particularly beneficial by the women's groups involved. Some group members also received training in the use of mobile phones, and they have been initiated in techniques of group dynamics and management. Some of the targeted women's groups have also been sharing experiences among themselves.

Importantly, the women farmers realise that the KIC's role is to provide information but that it is up to the individual groups themselves to develop strategies on how to best use this information. The women realise that no one will be coming to hand out money or other inputs, and that it is better to have group contribution schemes as a means of generating income to start up small projects.



Group members have received training in the use of mobile phones, which has enabled them to better communicate among themselves and with others.

We started working with KIC in 2005. Back then, we did not know about best practices in agriculture, but they started bringing us agricultural experts to explain better ways of growing crops. We learned a lot from them about other agricultural methods of crop growing, for instance how to plant sunflower, beans, sesame, etc. The use of ropes in digging up holes in lines has also helped us a lot, and we now know how to plant our crops, for example sunflowers, in line. We farm together as a group, but also learned a lot as individuals. Sometimes one of the group members can participate in a training workshop, after which she will train us. This has boosted group development and family crop production. Working with KIC has also made accessing markets easier, since we can bargain better as a group. KIC has provided us with ICT tools such as a radio and telephones. This has enabled us to communicate with other people, and to ask for advice on crop growing. We use the radio to jointly listen to the weekly agricultural radio show. Sometimes one of us participates in the radio show, and we will sit with our radio and listen to her."

Mary Olot,
Treasurer of the St. Luke Women's Group



Under the guidance of KIC, we have started a bee-keeping project, which has helped us not to depend on agriculture only. We learned a lot through radio programmes about bee-keeping. When we sell the honey, the money is for all of us. However, we still do not have very good markets and we also still lack better means of harvesting the honey. We started with traditional beehives but KIC helped us to acquire modern ones and we believe this will increase our production and benefits.”

A member of the St. Luke Women's Group

Real impact

To date, all the women's groups have at least one project. In some groups, members offered some of their land as a starting point for the group. In others, groups have contributed money in order to hire a piece of land in which they have planted crops of their own choice. Groups that had such projects prior to inception of the project have learnt better techniques or gained new ideas, for example, a piggery project in one group and a modern beehives project in another. In addition, all the groups have planted soya beans that were provided by the Apac District Agricultural Office.

Collaborative strategies

In order to ensure timely dissemination of relevant information to farmers, the EAAI project has applied a number of collaborative strategies. WOUNET has teamed up with a community radio in Apac (Radio Apac) to ensure delivery of information that is packaged, transcribed and formatted into a series of weekly radio programmes. In addition, WOUNET has partnered with existing sources of agricultural information including the Agency for Sus-

tainable Development Initiatives (ASDI)² and Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns (VEDCO) – both NGOs based in Apac, RANET of the Uganda Metrological Department³, and the Apac District Agricultural Office. A question and answer arrangement is also available in collaboration with the National Agriculture Research Organisation (NARO), the local coordinator of CTA's Question and Answer Service, and with the FAO/NARO Agricultural Research and Extension Network (ARENET) project that seeks to use the Internet to bring the gap between researchers, extension workers and farmers.

e-Governance

The KIC is also participating in an e-Society programme that seeks to foster collaboration between local government and civil society in Apac District through the use of ICTs. With financial and technical support from Hivos and IICD, it involves local government at the district and sub-county levels as well as civil society organisations active at district and community level. Through the e-Society programme, IICD and Hivos wish to explore and operationalise,



I didn't know how to properly dig the garden and plant seeds or grow crops well. But through the KIC radio talk shows, I was able to learn a lot about agricultural practices. This has really made me grow and advance in terms of producing good yields of crops. If we didn't have the radio, I couldn't access all this information. So as a farmer, I would encourage my fellow farmers to listen to the agricultural radio programmes, because without them I wouldn't be informed the way I am today.”

Lilly Opwonya, Member of the St. Luke Women's Group



together with government and civil society partners, the opportunities of improved governance and service delivery through the use of ICT.⁴

Conclusion

While many constraints remain in enhancing access to information by rural women, WOUNET remains committed to facilitating access and utilisation of ICTs for development by both rural and urban women in order to improve their status and livelihoods.

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- 1 “Participatory Research on Information and Communication Technologies for Poverty Reduction in Apac, Northern Uganda.” WOUNET report presented at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in December 2003.
- 2 ASDI, www.woungnet.org/Profiles/asdiug.html
- 3 Uganda Metrological Department, www.meteco-uganda.net
- 4 Apac e-Society Programme: www.iicd.org/articles/esociety-uganda

Dimitra East Africa meeting and exchange visit

Based on the importance that networks and partnerships play in the strategic use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), WOUNET and Dimitra organised a five-day working session in February 2008 to discuss Dimitra's work in Eastern Africa and to explore strategic direction and actions under which ICTs can be effectively used to address and improve the socio-economic status of rural women.

In Eastern Africa, Dimitra covers the five countries of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia and Ethiopia. To coordinate the Dimitra network and its activities in the region, Dimitra has established a partnership with Women of Uganda Network (WOUNET), which in its turn works with Focal Points in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Tanzania. To strengthen the links between these different partners to the Dimitra project, WOUNET invited the project's Focal Points to a five-day exchange visit in Uganda in February 2008.

Martha Nemera of the Women Support Association (WSA) in Ethiopia; Noah Lusaka of the Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN) in Kenya; Habiba Jimale of Kalsan Voluntary Organisation for Women in Somalia; and Amandus Chitopela of Dodoma Environmental Network (DONET) in Tanzania thus attended WOUNET's Annual Members Meeting (AMM), which was co-financed by Hivos, followed by a Dimitra Partners Meeting and a field trip to Lira and Apac Districts in Northern Uganda.

The objectives were to introduce the Dimitra partners in the region to each other and to establish networking between these partners and strengthen links between them and rural women's networks and organisations in their countries. Together, they also explored the various ways rural women can use ICTs to develop relevant local content.

The WOUNET AMM addressed the organisation's activities during 2007 and its future plans, as well as topics such as “Making our voices

heard: the changing landscape for NGOs in Uganda” by the Uganda National NGO Forum, and “Networking in Uganda: benefits, contributions and challenges”. The meeting also addressed the strategic use of ICTs and, during a particularly lively and intensive “speed-geek” session (inspired by the Western “speed-dating” concept), some participants shared their organisations’ experiences in using ICTs. During the one-hour session, nine speakers had five minutes only with nine different groups of three to four people. It was a fun and efficient way to getting up to speed with different organisations and their ICT initiatives!

The AMM was immediately followed by the Dimitra East Africa Partners Meeting, bringing together the different Dimitra partners in Eastern Africa, the Dimitra Brussels representative, as well as some interested Ugandan organisations. The meeting started off with a presentation and discussion on Dimitra and the importance of information, communication and networking for empowerment and development. Then WOUNET and each of the Focal Points summarised their achievements in their participation to Dimitra, as well as the challenges they faced. Several recommendations were formulated for better cooperation, which will be taken on board by the Dimitra team to improve further collaboration. The main challenges, and hence recommendations, were related to the enormous task of covering a large region with limited means. However, participants also felt that the meeting had been useful in getting a better understanding of what Dimitra is all about, and how it could be integrated better in the respective organisation’s other activities.



In Apac District, the Dimitra delegation visited two women’s groups. They explained about the activities and projects they have engaged in since linking up with WOUNET’s Kubere Information Centre.

Following the two-day meeting in Kampala, the Dimitra East Africa team and the Dimitra Brussels representative went on a field visit to Apac and Lira Districts.

In Apac District, the group visited two of the twelve women’s group supported by WOUNET’s Kubere Information Centre (KIC, see previous article), the Orib Can Women’s Group in Atana parish, Maruzi county, and the St Luke’s Women’s Group in Adyeda parish, Kole county. Despite their name, the women’s groups also have active male members, who participated in the meetings. The members of the women’s groups talked about the activities and projects they have engaged in since linking up with KIC, for example bee-keeping, poultry farming and planting crops such as soya beans, cassava and maize.

Through support of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP EU (CTA) to WOUNET/KIC, both groups have also received mobile phones (and training on how to use them) from KIC, which has markedly improved communication among group members and with the outside world. They also mentioned the useful agricultural information they receive through the KIC’s weekly radio shows, which they listen to on air or on recorded audiotapes, using a radio-cassette player they have obtained through KIC. They listen to and discuss the information, ideas and questions broadcast as a group – it has given them a lot of useful information and feedback as well as some ideas to try out new methods or tools.

The visitors in turn presented experiences from their countries in the field of agricultural tools and improvements, bee-keeping, women’s groups, the use of ICTs, access to land, etc. Both parties asked each other questions, which made it an enriching experience for all concerned.

In Lira, the delegation visited a team of the German NGO Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB – Workers’ Samaritan Federation) which implemented a pilot Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) project of FAO in Lira District. The JFFLS aim to train orphans and vulnerable children from 12-17 years of age for 12 months using a combination of traditional and modern agricultural techniques (for more information on the JFFLS, see Dimitra Newsletter 13 or contact jffls@fao.org). It was interesting to talk with the coordinator and facilitators of this project about both accomplishments and challenges related to the project, which is now under revision.

In conclusion, in the words of Noah from Kenya “The one week we were together was a very educative and enriching experience. It’s my hope we all move faster in implementing some of the suggestions for the way forward with Dimitra in our respective countries. I also gained further knowledge when we visited the staff at ASB as they narrated their pilot experience with the JFFLS and the visit to the two women’s groups. I was very touched by their hospitality and frankness in discussing development issues. This is a good start and congratulations to WOUNET for reaching out to the needy... I look forward to working more closely in advocating gender concerns.”

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Visit to the Orib Can Women’s Group in Atana parish, Apac District.

Web2forDev 2007

From 25-27 September 2007, FAO organised a conference in Rome devoted to exploring the ways in which international development actors can take advantage of the opportunities provided by Web 2.0 methods, approaches and applications in the field of networking, collaborating and exchanging knowledge.

This was the first conference about how development actors – Southern ones in particular – can get access to and use new tools. It aimed to improve the understanding of what difference these tools can make to the ways individuals and institutions communicate and apply knowledge to development problems, in particular in the field of agriculture, rural development and natural resources management.

What is Web 2.0?

Dozens of free or low-cost interactive Web tools continuously emerge that can enhance the ways we create and publish information and the ways we collaborate and share resources through the Internet. This new dimension of online services, where people collaborate and share information, and where the consumer becomes the producer, has been termed Web 2.0.

Web 2.0 offers an easy way to voice ideas, experiences and needs from which rural communities all over the world could benefit – directly or through support organisations – and hence to opportunities and challenges to enhance collaboration.

Key words for Web 2.0 are **user empowerment**, **collaboration** and **social networking**.

Examples of Web 2.0 tools

Examples of Web 2.0 tools are Podcasts, (Video) Blogs, Wikis, Instant messaging, RSS feeds, Social bookmarks and websites, tags, and much more (see adjacent glossary).

* **More information:**
www.web2fordev.net/

Glossary of some common Web 2.0 tools

Blog (abbreviation of Weblog): a term used to describe Websites that maintain an ongoing chronicle of information. A blog is a frequently updated, personal Website featuring diary-type commentary and links to articles or other Websites. Blogs range from the personal to the political and can focus on one narrow subject or on a whole range of topics.

Podcast: a media file that is distributed over the Internet for download to and playback on portable media players and personal computers.

Social bookmarking: a Web-based service to share Internet bookmarks. The social bookmarking sites are a popular way to store, classify, share and search links.

Social software: a type of software or Web service that allows people to communicate and collaborate while using the application. E-mail, blogs and instant messaging are examples.

A **tag** is a keyword or term associated with a piece of information, thus describing the item. Typically, an item will have more than one tag associated with it. Tags are chosen informally and personally by the author/creator or the consumer of the item.

A **wiki** is a Website that allows visitors to add, remove, edit and change content. It also allows for linking among any number of pages. This ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for mass collaborative authoring.

* **Source:**
www.web2fordev.net/glossary_of_web.html



MobileActive.org – A resource for activists using mobile technology worldwide

MobileActive is a global network of people (and their tools, projects, and resources) focused on the use of mobile phones in civil society. This Web 2.0 web site provides tools, news and a directory of projects related to the use of Mobile Technology to serve NGOs goals. MobileActive:

- expands access to knowledge, ideas and experience about the use of mobile technology;
- reduces learning costs for civil society organisations;

- accelerates the use of effective tactics in campaigns; and
- provides a comprehensive platform for data on mobile projects and mobile use around the world

According to MobileActive: “Mobile phones are proliferating at astounding rates across socio-economic and cultural boundaries, revolutionizing the way we organize ourselves and do business. With close to 3 billion mobile phones expected at the end of 2007, they

are found in every corner of the world, used by people to communicate with each other and access and deliver information and services. These trends are highly promising for NGOs and civil society organisations that can now engage people on issues that matter most through always-on, always-on-hand devices.”

* www.mobileactive.org

WEB 2.0 applications as enabling tool for development

BROSDI, Busoga Rural Open Source and Development Initiative, is an NGO which engages the rural community and especially farmers, youth and orphaned children in productive knowledge sharing. The aim is to reduce household poverty through embracing sustainable information sharing, knowledge management and effective use of ICTs in its youth, education and agriculture programmes. BROSDI has activities in 17 districts in Uganda and works closely with the government, the private sector and civil society.

BROSDI and Web 2.0

Serious involvement in the use of ICTs led BROSDI to the use of Web 2.0 tools for administration, information acquisition, repackaging, and dissemination and storage purposes.

Exchange within the organisation

BROSDI has two offices, an administrative office in Kampala and an implementation office in Mayuge (2.5 hours driving apart). Furthermore, as it has country-wide activities, it is common that all seven technical staff are in the field at the same time. Yet, collaboration and constant communication is paramount if the programmes are to be run effectively. BROSDI therefore resorts to holding its monthly meetings and sharing sessions by Web-conferencing, using Yahoo or Skype. It also uses a wiki (brosdi-uganda.wiki.zoho.com) for report development and an internal D-group (electronic discussion group) to communicate and share programme-related information. Use of these tools has enabled staff to keep informed of what is going on within the different, inter-linked programmes.

The use of Blogs & other online information

BROSDI also uses Web 2.0 tools for information acquisition, repackaging and dissemination. Sources of information are both online (Internet) and offline – materials from forums, world space radio, knowledge fairs, workshop and training materials, literature reviews, research papers and articles, etc. All this information is repackaged and disseminated using Blogs.

BROSDI currently has three textual Blogs: the CELAC (Collecting and Exchange of Local Agricultural) blog, providing articles that illustrate differing farming methods (celac.wordpress.com); a health blog, providing a platform for youths to share knowledge on issues pertaining to HIV/AIDS and reproductive health rights (yohaap.wordpress.com); and a children's blog, aiming to build the confidence and self-esteem of orphaned children through sharing (childrenclub.wordpress.com).

BROSDI recently started another blog (successtories.wordpress.com), where it will

post all its success stories. This was a result of the numerous questions received whenever BROSDI shared a story. On this blog, readers will be able to post comments and questions. The online responses will thus benefit others too.

At BROSDI's Mayuge Development Centre, many CELAC Farmers Network members (women and men farmers) learned how to surf for agricultural information. Mulopi, for example, was able to find a market for his cabbages, which he used to sell at a very low price using middle men. He is now able to sell directly to the main market. As a result, he doubled his acreage and encouraged two friends to also grow cabbages.

SMS

BROSDI also disseminates information using SMSs or text messages. Every Monday, an agricultural SMS is sent to the farmers and posted on the agricultural information website (www.celac.or.ug), with the aid of a web-to-phone tool. The same information is also disseminated through BROSDI's online journal (on www.celac.or.ug), and is also printed for monthly dissemination to the CELAC Farmers Network members.

Radio & audio CDs

BROSDI also used to disseminate information to farmers through the national radio, facilitating farmers' travel to Kampala to present their experiences in a radio programme. However, evaluation revealed that the targeted farmers do not tend to listen to national radio, but rather to local FM stations. To reach them, BROSDI would have had to pay for monthly airings in the 17 districts, which proved too expensive.

The organisation thus resorted to buying radios with CD readers for the farmers (one radio for each district covered). The 17 CELAC Farmers Networks now receive audio CDs containing learning materials, containing five topics

Agricultural information obtained through the CELAC Farmers Network allowed some of its members to find a direct market for their cabbages, rather than selling at a very low price using middle men. This encouraged some of the farmers to increase their cabbage production.



either on livestock or on crop farming issues, in Luganda. They listen to and discuss these topics during their monthly forums and try to put the knowledge acquired into practice. For example, as a result of the information disseminated on such a CD, the ASGN (Awareness Sharing Group Network), a male-child headed household farmers' group in Fort Portal Town (Western Uganda), decided to plant the orange-fleshed sweet potato. BROSDI also facilitated a woman farmer from Luwero district to conduct training of ASGN members on planting, harvest and post harvest of this farm product. The boys planted about 4 acres of the crop, and when harvested the income generated will be used to cater for their education, feed their household members and buy more vines for replanting.

☉ Tele-conferencing

Because of the wide field of action of BROSDI, it is very costly to attend the CELAC Farmers Network's monthly meetings. Therefore, the project staff opted to participate through tele-conferencing, using a Nokia 1100 mobile phone (because of its exceptionally loud conferencing facilities).

As a result of the tele-conferencing, the CELAC Farmers Network members in Masaka district were able to construct a local charcoal fridge. They had received an SMS on how to construct such a fridge but had several questions, which they were able to ask at the monthly teleconference meeting. Today, several farmers have constructed such a fridge, in which they keep drinking water and their farm's produce, especially vegetables for home consumption. In an anonymous entry on the CELAC Blog, a farmer indicated that he had used the instructions to make himself a perfectly working fridge.



A charcoal fridge made during a Training of Trainers Workshop for CELAC Farmers Network representatives. Other farmers also learned how to construct such a fridge through information received by SMS.

☉ Off-line consultation of information resources

BROSDI has collected an enormous amount of information, a lot of it in PDF and other electronic formats. These files are currently stored on an internal on-line account, which the public cannot access without a password. Providing a password, however, presents its own challenges and BROSDI is currently seeking other options to make these files available on its website. The files are also stored on the computer at the Mayuge office, and can be consulted there. This is mainly done for research by students of the neighbouring secondary school and Busoga University, the Buluba Hospital staff, Mayuge district staff and the community at large.

Challenges in using Web 2.0...

Appropriate use of Web 2.0 tools requires Internet access. In Uganda today, this is a major hindrance to ICT adoption, especially in rural areas. The high investments and low returns from investment in this sector do not encourage the private sector to join the cause. Those that do, charge exorbitant fees which are not sustainable to NGOs and rural communities. On top of that, their services are not constant and sometimes are off air. The result is dissatisfaction for both investors and service recipients. Buying the hardware is also costly, and so is maintenance. Therefore, many NGOs opt to implement their activities without using these tools.

Another problem is the high illiteracy levels among the rural population – a 2002 census reported that 40% of Uganda's rural population

was illiterate (in terms of reading and writing in English).

Also, rural people tend to look at these technological innovations as if they were for the learned, formally educated only. They therefore tend to shy away from trying to use them, even though a basic level of literacy, for example in the local language, may already be enough to use some of the new tools.

... But also gains

Despite the existing challenges, BROSDI finds that Web 2.0 tools are indeed efficient in encouraging collaboration and allow networking of people in differing locations, including in rural areas. The fact that there is limited Internet access in rural communities, their involvement at secondary level enables them to also benefit from these tools. Also, when combined with the use of telephone and computers, it has been shown that rural persons can have access to and share information in a productive manner.

It is important to note that when reaching out to the grassroots, no one tool can work independently. Many of them need to be integrated and used creatively for them to benefit the people. And this is the path BROSDI has chosen.

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BROSDI's YOHAAP (Youth and HIV/AIDS Awareness project) health blog provides a platform for youths to share knowledge on issues pertaining to HIV/AIDS and reproductive health rights.

Gender, property rights and livelihoods in the era of AIDS

In November 2007 FAO gathered more than 50 experts from UN agencies, NGOs and research institutions to discuss issues pertaining to gender, property rights and livelihoods in the era of AIDS. Participants debated key questions and came up with a number of recommendations and priority areas of intervention.

Property rights: an ongoing problem for women and children

Property rights to land, livestock and other agrarian resources are critical for the livelihoods of rural men, women and children. Insecure property rights perpetuate gender inequalities, livelihood insecurity and poverty. Thus, secure property rights are central to any effort to address gender inequalities, poverty, vulnerability and sustainable development in general.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has further weakened the land and property rights of women and children due to stigma attached to being affected, with stigmatized people more likely to be abused and less capable of defending their rights. Many HIV positive women who are stripped of their assets and evicted from rural homes, die before they reach places where emergency support is provided. There are very few shelters for destitute HIV positive women and children who need food aid, clean water, clothes and anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment.

In the past FAO has already been extensively involved in research and programming for property rights of women and children, but the

battle to secure these rights is far from being won. Although more is known about the problem today, linking this knowledge to a real improvement of the lives of women and children has remained problematic.

A need for reflection

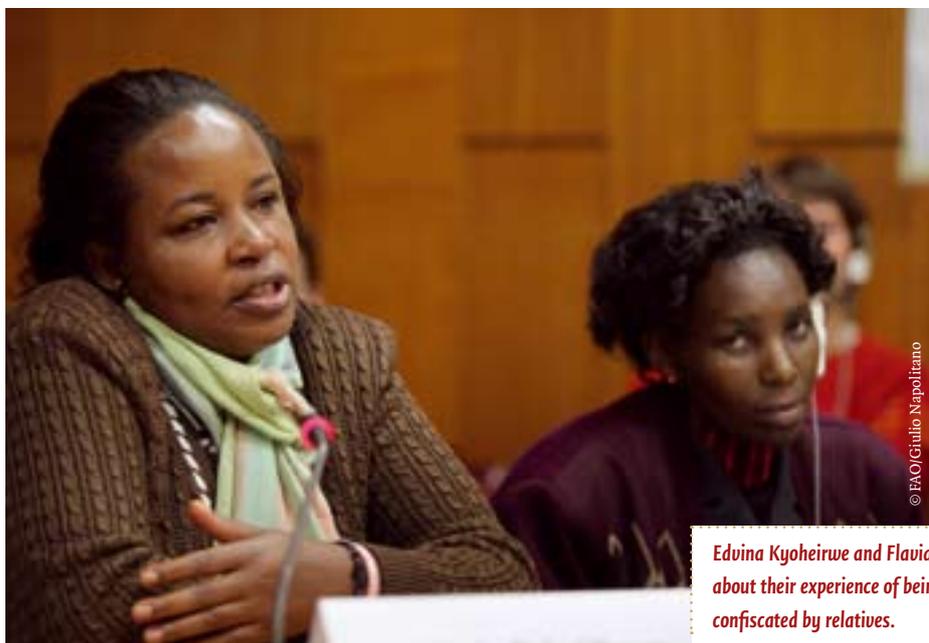
To address these issues, FAO organised a consultation meeting in Rome from 28-30 November 2007, inviting a small group of partners from UN agencies, NGOs and research institutions to discuss more fully issues pertaining to gender, property rights and livelihoods in the era of HIV/AIDS. Participants to the meeting represented various backgrounds, specialisations and disciplines, all intersecting on the issues of gender, women's property rights and HIV/AIDS.

The aim was to reach a better understanding of property rights issues in the context of HIV/AIDS, based on key research findings from regional and country case studies. Participants discussed different aspects related to the issues of gender, property rights and livelihoods; legislation, training of the judiciary and traditional leaders, and para-legal training programmes; advocacy, mobilisation of grassroots groups/networks; and political dialogue.

HIV/AIDS, ignorance and resistance to change hamper enjoyment of rights

The presentations and discussions clearly showed that:

- There is a close and proven relationship between **gender inequality, food insecurity and risky sexual behaviour** which reproduces and exacerbates the spread of HIV and AIDS. For example, a study in Botswana and Swaziland has shown that women who cannot find sufficient food have a 70% higher rate of having unprotected sex.
- **Secure land access and property rights and sustainable livelihoods are important conditions of food security and improved livelihoods** for women and children. There is a direct link between securing the land and property rights of women and children, and HIV and AIDS prevention. This implies that food security and gender equality, through promoting stronger and more secure property rights for women and children, could be an important measure for HIV prevention.
- **Behaviour change** is critical in order to achieve real progress at community level, but it is important to understand the complex issues of culture and tradition to identify appropriate messages for effective intervention. For example, legal education and advocacy at local level have to be implemented with care. Evidence has shown that when tradition and local culture are simply condemned, legal education and advocacy may not be effective as tools to stop the confiscation of property from women and children, as the difficulties they face in challenging or stepping outside tradition and culture are underestimated.
- Limited progress in securing women's land and property rights is the result of persisting unequal **gender relations**. However, gendered power relations have been and are difficult to change. There is a strong resistance from both men and women to challenging entrenched norms and values, especially when this places women – and those men who support them – outside mainstream society.



Edvina Kyoheirwe and Flavia Kyomukama, two HIV positive Ugandan women, talked about their experience of being evicted from their homes and having their possessions confiscated by relatives.



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- In order to defend the rights of women and children, the legislative challenge is to **blend the positive aspects of customary norms and practices and statutory laws** – which often appear to conflict – into **single, effective national strategies**. It is also important to address the lack of knowledge of communities, women and children in particular, about their legal and constitutional rights over land and property.
- **Emergency support** (shelter, food aid, clothes, ARVs, clean water, etc.) is urgently needed for women and children who have been stripped of their property and evicted from their homes. Many women die and many children end up on the street or as migrants before they can receive support.

Discussions also revealed the urgent need to better document gender, property rights and HIV/AIDS issues. Participants asserted, for example, that extensive research should be conducted on children’s property rights and livelihoods in the context of HIV/AIDS.

The importance of grassroots initiatives

Despite the somewhat disparaging picture, a number of inspiring initiatives in several local communities to prevent and mitigate confiscation of property from women and children have seen the light. Their impact has so far been limited, but they offer important new strategies for new programmes being implemented. To make a real impact, the scaling up of such initiatives undertaken by local communities and women’s groups – such as watchdog groups, memory books, will writing, paralegal training, community sensitisation, etc. – will be necessary.

Participants to the consultation meeting listened to the testimonies of two HIV positive Ugandan women, Edvina Kyoheirwe and Flavia Kyomukama, who were evicted from their homes and had their possessions confiscated by relatives. Grace Waithira, a young Kenyan orphan, testified about the risks young orphans face to be dispossessed or disinherited by their relatives. A watchdog system was established by a Kenyan women’s group to survey this type of practices and to help young orphans go to court.

The way ahead: priority areas of intervention:

Looking into the key findings and the recommendations advanced by the group of experts, a number of priority areas of intervention were formulated:

1. Develop a **field programme** on prevention and mitigation of property confiscation from women and children and the loss of their livelihoods, in the context of HIV/AIDS in southern and eastern Africa.
2. Establish a **database** on organisations, inspiring initiatives, training materials on prevention and mitigation of property grabbing from women and children.
3. Promote **quantitative research** and surveys on property confiscation from women and children in the context of HIV and AIDS in Southern and Eastern Africa and **qualitative research** on deeper understanding of culture/traditions that perpetuate property grabbing.
4. Develop measures to provide **joint UN emergency livelihoods support** to women and children who have lost property, evicted from homes and victims of gender based violence to start new lives.

Participants furthermore resolved to continue the exchange and collaboration initiated by this meeting.

✳ **For further information or feedback, please contact:**
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When my mother died of AIDS, me and my sisters and brothers were evicted from home by my grandfather. A ‘watchdog group’ of women advocating for women and orphans against property grabbing helped us to take the case to Court. The District Commissioner was able to call all the paternal relatives and ask why we had been evicted from our home. As a result, the keys of the house were returned to us though the case is still in court to ascertain that we get the succession rights and a property title. I hope that next year, the case will be closed. But I want to say that we orphans don’t know how to seek legal intervention and the Court is a scary place and experience to us kids.

We were supported by FAO to map property and disinheritance among orphans in Kenya. According to the mapping, 57% of orphans have never inherited what belonged to their parents.

Grace Waithira – an orphan from Kenya addressing the meeting in Rome

🕒 **Children’s Property and Inheritance Rights in the Context of HIV and AIDS – A documentation of children’s experiences in Zambia and Kenya**

This paper is based on field research conducted by two grassroots organisations – CINDI-Kitwe in Zambia and GROOTS Kenya in Kenya – to map out and document cases of property grabbing from children, in particular those who became orphans due to AIDS. It is intended to explore methods which grassroots organisations use or can use to document their work. The study adopted a creative and unique manner of investigating children’s issues that is to work directly with orphans and vulnerable children, not only to prepare the work plan but also to conduct the documentation exercise, i.e. by engaging the children who had lost their properties as data collectors. This study contributes to evidence building on children’s rights, HIV and AIDS, children’s livelihoods and ultimately improved interventions and responses to the crisis.

FAO, HIV/AIDS Programme Working Paper 3, 2008
www.fao.org

Securing women's access to land: linking research and action

An International Land Coalition (ILC) research project in Eastern and Southern Africa

A need for improving women's access to and control over land

Access to and control of land and other natural resources is crucial for sustainable livelihoods, resource management and overall rural development. However, major social, political, and institutional challenges prevent the rural poor from gaining secure tenure rights – and such challenges are more pronounced for women. Unequal access to land, inputs such as seeds and fertiliser, and information and training, constrain women's productivity. Women also have limited decision-making power and depend on men for use rights, which are easily lost if they are widowed or divorced.

The debate on women's land rights has reached a critical point, at which there is sufficient understanding of the need for improving women's access to and control over land, but obstacles persist in practise due to their roots in the gendered power relations governing society. Though advances have been made, links between research and advocacy need to be improved to promote an agenda of change.

A new research initiative

The International Land Coalition (ILC) has therefore initiated a new project to secure women's access to land in Eastern and Southern Africa. The project is supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC - www.idrc.ca) and is conducted in collaboration with two African partner institu-

tions, the Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR) of Makerere University in Uganda and the Programme of Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) of the University of the Western Cape in South Africa.

The 30-month research project, which began in Autumn 2007, aims to learn from women and respond to their needs through applied research. It has three overarching objectives:

1. Support action-oriented research and advocacy projects to produce reliable data on women's access to and control over land in Eastern and Southern Africa through a small grants programme.
2. Influence the formulation and implementation of policies relevant to women's access to and control over land in Sub-Saharan Africa, through national and regional advocacy based on the research results.
3. Refine the research & action agendas on women's access to and control over land by strengthening multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnerships at the regional and global level.

Expected results

The research carried out under this project will focus on:

- legal frameworks/policy & implementation gaps;
- women's agency (action or intervention by women to improve their access and control over land);
- linkages between land and other resources;
- gendered implications of social/economic changes (especially HIV/AIDS, conflict, migration).

It is expected that it will not only provide evidence but also a platform to promote and advocate for an agenda for change that supports poor rural women to improve their access to and control over land and other natural (and productive) resources. The results of the action-oriented research undertaken by project partners will be integrated with the wider advocacy relationships and programmes of ILC.

Overall, it is expected that the research will provide an enhanced understanding of complex power relations and how they continue



© Sabine Pallas / ILC

to hinder women's access to land. By learning from women and using this knowledge in trying to influence the formulation and implementation of relevant policies, women's role as change agents is strengthened.

Small grants programme

MISR and PLAAS will be coordinating the small grants programme aimed at supporting action-oriented research and advocacy projects in producing reliable research data. To enhance ownership of the research and action agendas and define the details of the programme, MISR and PLAAS are currently liaising with potential partner organisations and interested individuals in their sub-regions.

Interested organisations are invited to contact the ILC Secretariat or the focal points in their respective sub-regions – MISR for Eastern Africa, PLAAS for Southern Africa – for more details on eligibility criteria, procedures and timelines.

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ILC's new project aims to provide evidence and a platform to promote and advocate for an agenda for change that supports poor rural women to improve their access to and control over land and other natural resources.

The FXB Village Model Programmes

Providing comprehensive support to orphans, vulnerable children and impoverished families affected by HIV and AIDS

When their parents die, orphans are cared for by their extended families or by the community. Unfortunately, with the spread of AIDS and the pauperization of populations, the capacity to take in more children has already been exceeded. In countries that are deeply affected, more and more eldest children become heads of households. Since 1995, the Swiss Association François-Xavier Bagnoud (FXB International) has conducted projects consisting of sustainable community development models. Their goal is to strengthen the capacity and improve the life conditions of HIV-positive people and to reintegrate orphans and vulnerable children who were affected by or infected with HIV and AIDS in their communities.



The FXB Village Model: an economic and social development programme

The FXB Village Model is a low-cost, sustainable, community-based (bottom-up) programme which operates to help families and communities respond to poverty, HIV/AIDS, and the rising number of vulnerable children. The programme aims to strengthen their capacity to improve their living conditions and lift themselves out of poverty through income generating activities.

As of the end of 2007, 27 FXB Model Villages were underway in Burundi, China, India, Uganda, Rwanda and Thailand. One of the model villages in Burundi receives the financial support of the King Baudouin Foundation, which is also a partner of the Dimitra Project. Five will be launched in the first half of 2008 (two in Thailand, one in Rwanda, one in Burundi and one in Uganda).

The FXB Village Model has a major impact on the living conditions of beneficiary families: after three years, approximately 85% of participating families achieve self-sufficiency. And a recent external evaluation of the programme's long-term socio-economic impact showed that 86% of beneficiaries still live above the poverty line four years after finishing the programme.

How the FXB Village Model programme operates

The goal of an FXB Village Model programme is to work through a light structure, with multiple components.

An FXB Village Model is a network of around

one hundred families devastated by poverty and AIDS. It gives them the possibility of attaining economic and social autonomy over a three-year period. Income generating activities (IGAs) are the core component of the programme, and are given to each head of household at the start of the programme. Thanks to this initiative, these heads of household gradually gain the ability to meet their families' needs.

At the same time, FXB provides beneficiaries with comprehensive support (nutritional, medical and psychosocial support, education and professional training, HIV prevention, legal support, savings and access to micro-credit). FXB thus fosters the reinsertion and care of orphans by their communities.

This global methodology is both effective and inexpensive. Only 125,000 Euros (US\$) are needed to free these families from their poverty over a three-year period, with most of the financial investment made in the first year. Each programme is designed to support, advise and accompany the beneficiaries during the programme, with scaled down costs on an annual basis. Since the basic material for the IGAs, health care and education is provided at the start of the programme, families become increasingly self-sufficient and, over time, acquire the capacity to manage their own medical and schooling costs.

In addition, by financing locally initiated small-scale projects designed to generate a continuous income flow, FXB is investing in the development of a thriving and diverse local economy.

How beneficiaries are selected

In order to target impoverished families and avoid duplication of assistance, FXB works closely with basic administrative authorities, heads of PLWHA (people living with HIV/AIDS) associations, heads of community groups, anti-AIDS clubs for young people and organisations that provide care for AIDS victims. The selection process takes into account the degree of vulnerability (health status) of the beneficiaries; the situation and integrity of the family hosting AIDS orphans; the number of children receiving care; and the capacity and willingness shown by beneficiaries to achieve the programme objectives.

Once the families have been selected, FXB

identifies heads of family by creating a file that includes their identity, names of people in their care, children's ages and schools, physical address, and socio-economic situation. FXB then records all beneficiaries in a healthcare centre where they go to receive the appropriate treatment.

Components of the FXB Village Model programme

Although taking into account the specificities of each country and region, the FXB Village Model programmes generally implement the following strategies:

- Develop IGAs for all families (such as agriculture, farming, vegetable gardens, raising cattle, trade in foodstuffs or basic necessity products, second-hand clothing)
- Provide beneficiaries with nutritional supplements and access to comprehensive healthcare.
- Provide educational support by reintegrating children into schools and covering school fees and supplies.
- Provide vocational training to youth and adults.
- Provide beneficiaries with HIV prevention and psychosocial support.
- Create groups of beneficiaries that encourage them to help each other and manage collective activities.
- Provide legal support and protection of children's rights.
- Provide access to and training on savings and microcredit.

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Women receive information on reproductive rights through radio

The Women Information Network (WINET) promotes reproductive rights awareness among women in Enugu State, Nigeria through the production of a specialised radio programme and the setting up of Radio Listening Clubs in six rural and urban communities of the State.

Raised awareness leads to empowerment

Women's lack of information on issues that affect their life in general, and their lack of awareness about their reproductive rights in particular, are obvious barriers to increased knowledge and application of their rights.

The Women Information Network (WINET) identified an urgent need in Enugu State, Nigeria to increase the level of women's awareness on their reproductive rights. WINET is a media-focused NGO with a vision of an informed society in which people know their rights, duties and obligations. It thus strives to ensure that women have access to information. WINET believes that when women have an increased knowledge of their reproductive rights, this will impact positively on their socio-economic condition and their life.

A radio programme on reproductive rights

WINET therefore initiated a project to reach women in Enugu State through a weekly radio programme broadcasting information on women's reproductive rights in Igbo, the local language. Radio was selected as an appropriate tool because of its accessibility – even during power cuts, radios can function on batteries – but also because of its proven worth in reaching rural and urban communities alike: in a previous project, WINET successfully targeted people in rural and urban areas of Enugu State with a radio diary programme on persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWH). In this project, radio and radio listening clubs were used to disseminate information on HIV/AIDS and to reduce stigmatization against PLWH.

The "Ikike Umunwanyi Na Omumu" ("The Reproductive Rights of Women" in Igbo) radio programme, funded by the European Union, ran for nine months (March-December 2007) and was part of a three-year project entitled

"Media Advocacy on Women's Reproductive Rights in Enugu State, Nigeria". It was a weekly radio talk show in which resource persons from the health sector gave information on women's reproductive rights. Topics included the meaning of reproductive rights, cultural practices that adversely affect women's reproductive rights, rape and female genital cutting as infringements of a woman's reproductive rights, safe motherhood and maternal mortality, family planning, sexually transmitted infections, reproductive tract infections, menopause, etc. At the end of each programme, the presenter provided a phone number for feedback from listeners and a postal address for letters. The programme was broadcast on Radio Nigeria Coal City FM Enugu, a national radio, as community radio stations are not yet operational in Nigeria.

“

I now know my reproductive rights and I can discuss them with my husband. The women of our Radio Listening Club have learned how to take care of themselves. We have learned that we should go to hospital when sick and that female genital cutting is not good for us.”

Mrs. Susan Ugwuja, member of the Obimo-Ikwoka Women Reproductive Rights (WRR) Radio Listening Club

Use of Radio Listening Clubs for discussion and feedback

Before the radio programme made its on-air debut, WINET identified six communities in Enugu State – Amokwu-Affa, Obimo-Ikwoka, Umungwutowo-Obe, Awukunanaw, Abakpanike and Ogui-Urban – where it organised Women's Reproductive Rights forums to mobilise women who would listen to the radio programme. During the forums, the reproductive rights concerns of the women were discussed and topics for the programme agreed upon. The forums were the starting point for the establishment of Radio Listening Clubs (RLCs)

in these six communities. Each RLC started off with ten women members, but other interested women from the community were also accepted into the clubs.

The RLCs were provided with radio sets and batteries with which to power them. They also received writing materials, as well as cassette tapes, to be able to record the programme off transmission and to play back episodes when desired. The RLC members met and sat together to listen to the programme's broadcast every Friday evening at 7.30pm, discuss its content and write a joint report. The RLC team leader led the discussions, and once a month the WINET project officer visited the communities to give them a stipend for refreshments, batteries for their sets, and to collect their questions

“

I have learned that it is not good to practice female genital cutting because it adversely affects a girl's reproductive rights. Out of ignorance, we used to do it in our community, but through the radio programme about women's reproductive rights, I now know that it is harmful. I also learned to communicate with my husband, because communication between husband and wife is good for family planning, in order to have the number of children that we can cater for.”

Mrs. Benedette Ojukwu, member of the Amokwu-Affa WRR Radio Listening Club



and comments. The women were encouraged to share information from the programme with their family and community members, and to invite them to also listen to the programme.

In the question and answer sessions of the radio programme, resource persons responded to the questions and issues raised by members of the RLCs and by other listeners. Feedback from the programme through phone calls, text messages and letters showed that the pro-



gramme enjoyed high listenership not only in Enugu State but also in the Igbo-speaking neighbouring States of Ebonyi, Anambra and Abia, where the programme could also be captured. At the end of each episode WINET received at least five phone calls. The feedback came from men and women, youth in particular. Some of the youths requested for youth reproductive rights programme that would specifically meet their needs. And members of Umungwutowo-Obe RLC appealed to WINET to design a programme on reproductive rights for men, so that they also can understand the issues – according to the women, the men refuse to acknowledge and respect the reproductive rights of women.

Follow-up

At the end of the programme, it is expected that some one million women and other radio listeners in Enugu State and beyond have acquired an increased knowledge and awareness of women's reproductive rights, representing a first step towards actually realising these rights. The RLCs continue to exist, as the cul-



The Radio Listening Club has met the needs of our women. We have learned a lot, especially about our reproductive rights. No one can violate our rights now."

Anwuli Okeke, member of the Awkunanaw WRR Radio Listening Club

ture of listening to and interacting with the radio has been built and the women were trained to access information through the radio, and WINET continues to stay in touch with the women to ensure sustainability of the RLCs.

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First Arab-African conference of community radios in Africa, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) Africa, the UNESCO Office in Rabat and the UNESCO Chair in Public and Community Communication, jointly organised a conference in Rabat, Morocco from 22-24 October 2007, entitled: "Community radio in Africa-Middle East and North Africa: Sharing experiences for development and democracy building from the grassroots."

This gathering of community radio stakeholders was an opportunity for more than a hundred broadcasters from the two regions to improve their skills, and reflect on ways to increase the social impact of community radio where it exists and to develop an enabling environment for community radio in countries where community radio is not yet established – particularly in the MENA region – by benefiting from the best experiences in Africa.

The conference reflected on how AMARC can most effectively contribute to increase the impact of community radio in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as how to transfer its rich African experience to the MENA region in order to strengthen community media as an important factor for democracy building.

The participants exchanged on the situation of community radio in their respective countries and on the contribution of community radio concerning key issues such as the democratisation of societies, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and the resolution of conflict situations. Dimitra gave a presentation on the role of community radios and the MDGs.

The main objectives of the AMARC Africa and MENA Conference were to:

- Review and evaluate the existing legislation, financing and content framework for community media, and define strategies to remove barriers to community radio development in Africa and the MENA region;
- Share experiences and define lines of action on how the AMARC network, NGO partners and multi-lateral institutions can best contribute to increasing the social impact of community radio in achieving development goals;
- Explore mechanisms leading to increased networking among community radio operators, NGOs and institutions to support civil society development and democracy building in Africa and the MENA region;
- Explore how best practices in Africa and elsewhere can be replicated or adapted for use in the MENA Region; and



- Define the best experiences and mechanisms to develop the Women's International Network (WIN) across the Africa and MENA regions.

The Conference ended with the adoption of the "Rabat Declaration".

* For further information:

www.africa.amarc.org

Sexual and gender-based violence: A social nightmare provoking action

The Gender Development Institute (GDI) in Ghana held its fourth annual International Gender Conference in Elmina, Ghana from 17 to 21 September 2007 on the theme of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

The theme of the conference was chosen because it is a major global public health, economic development and human rights problem throughout the world. Approximately one in three of the world's women will experience SGBV in her lifetime, with rates reaching as high as 70% in some countries. However, the exact magnitude of SGBV is difficult to determine due to an under-reporting of cases by the victims for a variety of reasons, including threats by the perpetrator, shyness or fear of parents or relatives, or plain ignorance.

SGBV comprises a wide array of practices – rape is the most widely known form but is only one example. Other forms are domestic violence, incest, involuntary prostitution, female genital mutilation, widowhood rites, etc. The victims are often women, but can also be men.

Throughout the world, violence against women and girls has been perpetrated mostly within marriages and families by husbands, intimate partners and relatives; within communities by strangers and traditional leaders; in the workplace; across international borders as women are trafficked for sex and labour; and as a tool of war by military forces. In wartime and in post-conflict settings, women and girls are often victims of exploitation and assault.

Violence against women and girls is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace. It violates, impairs and nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. The long-standing failure, in the case of violence against women, to protect and promote those rights and freedoms is a matter of priority and urgency to many nations and needs to be addressed.

In recent years, there has been some progress in the struggle to prevent and combat SGBV: international standards and norms have been agreed upon and gender-based violence resolutions have been passed condemning the practice; governments have adopted working definition strategies and passed laws; and part-

nerships between governments and women's groups have also been strengthened. But much more needs to be done...

In organising this conference, GDI wanted to show its concern about SGBV issues in Ghana and worldwide and its commitment to remedying the situation by increasing international advocacy and trying to find collective responses without discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion or culture.

Different backgrounds, same goals

The **main objectives** of the conference were to:

- Create a forum to deliberate and share experiences on human rights issues from a gender perspective, in order to bring out country experiences of SGBV and provide recommendations for their eradication.
- Increase awareness among men about the gender dynamics of SGBV and initiate a process of collaboration and networking between gender equity advocates and human rights promoters.

The delegates to the conference represented various interests and groups from across the world, including from Botswana, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, UK, USA, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, with a common interest in controlling and eradicating SGBV. They came from different cultures and experiences and with a determination to make a change for the better. The specific country experiences they shared sought to bring more than mere stories to the fore. They cast a deeper reflection on the intensity of SGBV and its effects on human beings.

The conference consisted of a mix of presentation of papers during plenary sessions and group discussions as well as field visits. Among the **main topics** discussed during the conference were: SGBV and its implications on health; involvement of men in the eradication of SGBV; using the law to deal with SGBV; encouraging victims of SGBV to use the official reporting systems; appropriate medical,



psycho-social and legal responses to victims of SGBV; guidelines for establishing information, education and communication campaigns against SGBV.

Need for concerted and concrete action

The conference was a call for governments and all stakeholders, in particular in the health, education and criminal justice sectors of society, to take the problem seriously and to take concerted action.

The following concrete **recommendations** were formulated by participants to the conference:

- It is important to create special, victim-friendly and human rights-based courts with trained judges who understand issues related to SGBV;
- Emergency contraceptive pills/condoms should be readily available, especially when sexual violence is used as a tool for political violence;
- More effort should be put in education on SGBV in local languages and aimed at the grassroots level, women in particular;
- Particular attention should go to the education of religious leaders on SGBV, as they have an important position in communities and have the power to promote or prevent people from accessing the normal health care processes;
- Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms should not be used in SGBV cases, since these mechanisms are also not used in any other criminal cases;
- Encourage the compilation of newspaper reports and pictures on SGBV as an effective tool for advocacy.

Some quotes from the discussions:

- * "I feel dirty, I have had my bath twelve times today. I change my clothes several times a day yet I still feel unclean..."
The testimony of a victim of sexual abuse
- * Whose Right is right? The Right to be protected? Or the Right to confidentiality?
- * Take Action to Make it Happen!!! Let's all fight against SGBV.
- * Violence against women – raise a family not a fist!!!
- * Healthy women can participate better in national issues.
- * Let us all help to eliminate violence against women and create safer, more stable communities and improve the quality of life for women and their families worldwide!

* For more information on the conference, contact Gender Development Institute
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Tel: +233 21 223031
achd@africaonline.com.gh

To serve and protect: police scale up violence unit to prevent abuse of women and children in Ghana

Assistant Commissioner of Police, Beatrice Vib-Sanzire, head of the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), wants all children and women in Ghana who suffer in silence to know that they can come to the police to get the support they need to end their abuse. "Gender-based violence is not a family, private matter, but a violation of human rights," she asserts passionately.

As in countries throughout Africa and around the world, the abuse of women and children continues to be a challenge for authorities in Ghana. Recognizing traditional police forces were ill equipped to deal with such cases, the Ghana Police Services established the national DOVVSU unit more than a decade ago.

A special unit for women and children

"We knew there was a need for a special unit for women and children because of the poor handling of cases at traditional police stations," Ms Vib-Sanzire says. "We protect the rights of the vulnerable, especially women and children, against abuse and arrest and prosecute as necessary."

Under her leadership, the number of reported cases to the unit almost doubled between 2002-2006, from 7,852 to 13,589. With the success of the national programme, UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, decided to lend its financial and technical support to scaling up the project in the country's rural districts. "We wanted to build on an existing institution. It's efficient, and more and more clients are coming out," said Makane Kane, UNFPA Representative in Ghana.

DOVVSU has 63 sites around the country but would like to establish a centre in each of Ghana's 138 districts. As of last year, all police recruits were trained in basic counselling skills and the proper handling of victims of violence, including on how to collect data about the crime. "Victims report to our unit as a last resort.

They first try to handle it at home. When they can not, they come to us," the assistant police commissioner says. "Most report to us psychologically devastated and demoralized."

Taking a multi-faceted approach

In the rural Volta Region, the Unit is tackling a variety of different types of violence, from child abuse to trafficking to domestic violence, using radio programmes produced in local languages.

The police station in Ho is festooned with posters decrying violence against women and children: "Female genital mutilation is dangerous and punishable," says one. "Say no to child prostitution – It's illegal," says another. And the more tongue-in-cheek: "You may not like your wife ... But you have no right to beat her up."

A total of 35 police officers in the Volta Region have been trained on gender-based violence (GBV), gender issues, legal and rights frameworks and basic counselling. UNFPA has donated computers, printers and other office equipment to assist the regional police in their monitoring and documentation of GBV cases. In 2006, a two-day sensitization campaign was conducted for more than 900 participants, including traditional and civil society leaders. Churches, schools and markets in the region serve as venues to spread the anti-violence messages.



Assistant Superintendent of Police Rita Narh counsels a visitor to the DOVVSU.

Ending impunity

As a result of the advocacy campaign, more and more women are reporting domestic violence cases and seeking counselling from the police. However, with no shelter available, they often go back to their husbands. Talking to the husbands can help, says Police Corporal Amott. "I advise if he beats her again, we will send him to court."

"People need to know if they don't follow the rules, they will be in trouble," agrees Mr. Kane. "We also want to empower the victims so they can speak up and know their rights."

Community pressure is a highly effective means of changing behaviour. Often the intervention of police counselling is sufficient to stop the violence. "People hate to be ostracized (by the community). It is worse than being put in jail," Mr. Kane says. "You fear to be abandoned by your social group. This is something very positive that can be built upon to bring about social change."

* Summary from an article by Angela Walker, UNFPA 20 November 2007 www.unfpa.org/news/news.cfm?ID=946

Documenting the details of a complaint at the police station.





© Dimitra

FUNDRAISING

© KIOS – Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights

KIOS supports local and national human rights projects organised and carried out by local NGOs in developing countries. The geographical priorities are in East Africa and South Asia, and the thematic priorities cover democratic rights, right to education and gender equality. KIOS pays special attention to the promotion of the rights of women, children, minorities and the poor. In addition to project support, KIOS supports the institutional development of human rights NGOs.

www.kios.fi

© Mama Cash

Mama Cash wants to change the world and therefore invests in women who, in spite of the dangers, believe in ideals and struggle for justice and change. Mama Cash supports women's rights groups and organisations in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the CIS, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East and North Africa. Mama Cash financially supports groups and organisations that through their work strengthen women's rights in their country or region through providing general support grants, project grants, and travel grants.

www.mamacash.nl

© WFN, Women's Funding Network

WFN is a worldwide membership of over 100 women's and girls' funds. Its members support the solutions of women and girls through local, national and international grants. WFN advances this movement by supporting these funds through innovative programmes and capacity-building expertise. Together, they are creating a safer and more secure world by investing in women and girls.

www.wfnet.org

EVENTS

© International Forum on Women's Rights and Development – The Power of Movements

14-17 November 2008

Cape Town, South Africa

This 11th AWID Forum is both a conference and a call to action. The largest recurring event of its kind, the Forum brings together women's rights leaders and activists from around the world every three years to strategize, network, celebrate, and learn in a highly charged atmosphere that fosters deep discussions and sustained personal and professional growth.

www.awid.org/forum08

© XVII International AIDS Conference – AIDS 2008

3-8 August 2008

Mexico City, Mexico

AIDS 2008 will be the first International AIDS Conference ever held in Latin America. It will provide many opportunities for the presentation of important new scientific research and for productive, structured dialogue on the major challenges facing the global response to AIDS. Conference organisers are developing a wide variety of session types that meet the needs of various participants and support collective efforts to expand delivery of HIV prevention and treatment to communities worldwide. Central to many of these sessions will be the transfer of knowledge and sharing of best practices. In addition to the conference sessions there are a number of activities, including satellite meetings, exhibitions, the Global Village and the Cultural Programme, that are integral to delegates' experience at the conference.

www.aids2008.org

WEBSITES

© Huairou Commission

The Huairou Commission is a global coalition of networks, institutions and individual professionals that links grassroots women's community development organisations to partners. The networks seek access to resources, information sharing and political space. At the same time, it links development professionals to on-the-ground practice. Currently, the network focuses its joint efforts on five campaigns: Governance, AIDS, Disaster, Land and Housing, and Peace Building.

www.huairou.org

© SSII – Scouting and Sharing Innovations Initiative in Western and Central Africa

IFAD's Western and Central Africa Division is launching an initiative to scout and share innovations in Western and Central Africa. This initiative aims to identify, share and disseminate innovations, which can deliver solutions to the problems faced by producers and the rural poor in the region, especially women, youth and vulnerable groups.

www.fidafrique.net

© Terres et Vie (Land and Life)

Terres et Vie drafts, publishes and distributes books and other texts on rural life in Africa. The language used is accessible to population groups living in rural areas, students of secondary and technical education, rural leaders and all other parties interested in the development of the rural world and the fight against hunger. (In French but including an English book catalogue.)

www.terresetvie.com

© UNIFEM – Web Portal on Gender and HIV/AIDS

UNIFEM, in collaboration with UNAIDS, has developed a comprehensive gender and HIV/AIDS web portal to provide up-to-date information on the gender dimensions of the epidemic. The site aims to promote understanding, knowledge sharing, and action on HIV/AIDS as a gender and human rights issues.

www.genderandaids.org

© UNESCO Literacy Portal

In support of its efforts to achieve global literacy, UNESCO has launched this new Portal, which consolidates its literacy programme and serves as a gateway to sharing information on projects and activities all around the world. The Portal aims to enhance UNESCO's coordination of Education for All (EFA), the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), a 10-year global strategic framework for achieving UNLD goals.

portal.unesco.org/education/en (themes ► literacy)

New Dimitra CD-ROM



Following on from the successful 2004 edition, Dimitra has produced a new CD-ROM which contains all of the information to be found on the Dimitra website and on-line database as of 15 February

2008. This database lists detailed information on organisations based in Africa and the Near East together with descriptions of those development projects and initiatives they are involved in which actively concern rural populations – and more particularly women – and use a gender or women-specific approach. The aim of the database is to provide a set of best practices and first-hand experiences that may give inspiration to others working in the same field and strengthen possibilities for mutual exchange and cooperation.

The new CD-ROM is enclosed with this newsletter. If it is missing or you would like to receive additional copies, please contact the Dimitra team.

The Dimitra database can also be consulted on-line:
www.fao.org/dimitra (► Dimitra Database)

We are interested in your organisation!

If your organisation is based in Africa and works in the field of rural development promoting women's issues or with a gender approach, please contact Dimitra and we will send you a questionnaire. Fill it in, send it back and we will include you in our database.

The next updated CD-ROM is scheduled for early 2010.

* To contact the Dimitra team:

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PUBLICATIONS

⊙ *Addressing Food Insecurity in Fragile States: Case Studies from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Sudan*

Drawing on case studies from the DRC, Somalia and Sudan, this paper focuses on policy, programming and institutional issues related to addressing food insecurity in protracted crises and fragile states, with a focus on areas afflicted by conflicts. The case studies illustrate how dysfunctional institutions are at the root of structural food insecurity and show how local people and institutions have been able, to a certain extent, to adapt and cope with the crises.

FAO, ESA Working Paper 07-21, July 2007
www.fao.org/es/esa

⊙ *Agriculture tropicale et exploitations familiales d'Afrique*

(*Tropical Agriculture and Family Farming in Africa*)

This book is intended for use by teachers, technicians, rural leaders and staff working for agricultural initiatives, whether in the countryside or in towns, and who are interested in African tropical agriculture such as it is practised on family-run farms. It gives priority to passing on basic knowledge which then enables the reader to interpret and experiment with different production methods and farming practices. The explanations given are clear and concrete and are accompanied throughout by photographic illustrations, diagrams and tables. Great store was set by ensuring this book is ideal for use as a teaching tool.

Diobass, CTA/Terres et Vie, 2007 – €42
(discounts available for African rural organisations)
www.terresetvie.com

⊙ *At the heart of change: the role of communication in sustainable development*

One of the reasons many countries will almost certainly fail to reach the Millennium Development Goals is that policymakers are neglecting the central role of information, communication and the media for successful development. This report shows that open, transparent and participatory information and communication processes form the lifeblood of politics and good governance; are central to the creation of healthy, vibrant civil societies; and are an essential part of efficient, more equitable economic growth.

Panos London, 2007
www.panos.org.uk/heartofchange

⊙ *'Because I am a Girl': The State of the World's Girls 2007*

This report is the first in a series of annual reports examining the rights of girls throughout their childhood, adolescence and as young women. The report provides a comprehensive examination of the situation of the world's girls. Subsequent reports in the series will focus on specific violations of girls' rights and the mechanisms for securing them.

Plan International, 2007
www.becauseiamagirl.org

⊙ *Bringing HIV Prevention to Scale: An Urgent Global Priority*

This report discusses the importance of greatly expanding coverage of evidence-based HIV prevention, provides examples of successful scale up of prevention programs, and offers recommendations for action.

Global HIV Prevention Working Group, June 2007
www.globalhiuprevention.org

⊙ *Des moulins pas comme les autres (A unique kind of mill)*

This book looks at how multifunctional platforms are being used to generate energy, create wealth and liberate women in the villages of eastern Burkina Faso. The title fits perfectly with the very unusual machines it describes and which are used to do pretty much everything from milling grain to generating electricity, powering various types of equipment, boosting the income of individual women and their communities and more. The energy produced by these platforms in the east and centre-east of Burkina Faso has helped push back the limits of poverty amongst women and contributed to spectacular progress in terms of literacy and improving women's social status.

UNPD, December 2007
www.ptfm.net (ressources ► médiathèque)

⊙ *Gender and law. Women's rights in agriculture (Revised)*

This study analyses the gender dimension of agriculture-related legislation in a selection of different countries around the world, examining the legal status of women in three key areas: rights to land and other natural resources; rights of women agricultural workers; and rights concerning women's agricultural self-employment activities, ranging from women's status in rural cooperatives to their access to credit, training and extension services.

FAO Legislative Studies 76, 2006 – 28 US\$
www.fao.org

⊙ *Dreams of Change*

This DVD documentary presents an example of the interactive forum theatre method used for creating debate and dialogue on HIV/AIDS themes such as stigmatization, domestic violence, HIV testing and sexual abuse. The theatre production filmed for the DVD was a collaboration between Danish actor and director Peter Sloth Madsen and the Mozambican theatre group Hopangalatana in Maputo in early 2005.

Peter Sloth Madsen, 2007
web.mac.com/scenekunst/INTERACTIVE-THEATRE

⊙ *Epidemic of Inequality: Women's rights and HIV/AIDS in Botswana and Swaziland – An evidence-based report on the effects of gender inequality, stigma and discrimination*

Deeply entrenched gender inequities perpetuate the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Botswana and Swaziland, the two countries with the highest HIV prevalence in the world. The legal systems in both countries grant women lesser status than men, restricting property, inheritance and other rights. Social, economic and

cultural practices create, enforce and perpetuate legalized gender inequalities and discrimination in all aspects of women's lives. Neither country has met its obligations under international human rights law. As a result, women continue to be disproportionately vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

Physicians for Human Rights, May 2007
www.physiciansforhumanrights.org
(resources ► PHR library)

Family nutrition guide

This is a practical CD-ROM that aims to improve the feeding and nutrition of families in developing countries. It was primarily developed for health workers, nutritionists, agricultural extension workers or other development workers who design nutrition education materials and activities and work with people at community level. It should also be useful to mothers or other caregivers who want to know more about family feeding, as well as anyone training health staff and other community-level workers. The CD includes three language versions (English, French and Spanish).

FAO, 2007 – 26 US\$
www.fao.org

Gender & Development: Media

Gender & Development is a journal published to focus specifically on international gender and development issues, and to explore the connections between gender and development initiatives, and feminist perspectives. Volume 15, Number 3 of the journal includes 10 chapters by experts on Gender and the Media.

Oxfam, November 2007
www.oxfam.org.uk/gadjournal

Gender and Indicators, 2007

What does a world without gender inequality look like? Realising this vision requires inspiring and mobilising social change. But what would indicate we are on the right track – and how will we know when we get there? Gender-sensitive indicators and other measurements of change are critical – for building the case for taking gender (in)equality seriously, for enabling better planning and actions, and for holding institutions accountable for their commitments on gender.

Bridge Cutting Edge Pack, July 2007
www.bridge.ids.ac.uk (► Cutting Edge Packs)

Gender justice, citizenship and development

In this book, studies from Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are prefaced by an introductory chapter that links current thinking on gender justice to debates on citizenship, entitlements, and law and development. A concluding chapter situates the discussion of gender justice, citizenship, and entitlements in current development debates on poverty alleviation and social exclusion. The book brings together multidisciplinary perspectives from leading feminist scholars of sociology, political science and legal studies, among others, and in doing so, provides new insights for both advocacy and research.

IDRC, 2007
www.idrc.ca

Gender Mainstreaming in Practice: A Toolkit

The integration of a gender perspective into programming and policy-making (gender mainstreaming) has become a key priority of UNDP. This publication integrates a gender perspective into the analysis of work, home, and public life in order to improve policy-making and programming. It reflects the work of more than a 100 specialists, who have contributed their expertise to this collection of practical tools and guidelines, examples and illustrations. The toolkit targets public policy and development practitioners with varying levels of experience in this area; it also serves as a useful resource for NGOs and advocacy groups, students, project staff, gender specialists, and consultants.

UNDP, May 2007
europeandcis.undp.org (► publications)

Gender policies for responsible fisheries – Policies to gender equity and livelihoods in small-scale fisheries

The aim of this policy brief is to: encourage policy-makers to address gender issues in fisheries; present experiences dealing with gender issues in fisheries to guide the development of gender policies; highlight strategies to improve the delivery of

gender policies in small-scale and industrial fisheries and aquaculture. A holistic approach to gender analysis, focusing on gender relations throughout the fish supply chain is recommended. Some suggestions for the development of effective gender policy are provided in the final section of the report.

FAO, *New directions in fisheries* n° 06, 2007
www.fao.org

Healthier farmers, better products

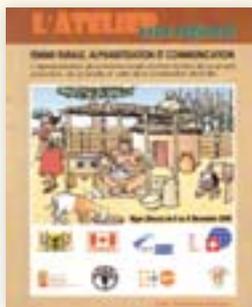
In recent years there has been a growing interest in the links between food, food production and health. This issue of LEISA Magazine presents examples of how such links between health issues and agriculture have been addressed in practical ways. There are articles about the use of traditional crops and food gardens for fighting AIDS in South Africa, the use of medicinal plants and local health traditions for primary health care in India, and how health concerns are driving safer vegetable production in Vietnam.

LEISA Magazine, Vol. 23, No. 3, September 2007
www.leisa.info

Dimitra workshop brochures

Together with its partner organisations, Dimitra has produced two brochures which set out the key ideas contained in the presentations, discussions and recommendations presented during two workshops held in Niger and the DRC. The aim of the brochures is to pass this valuable information on to as large a target audience as possible.

The first brochure focuses on the sub-regional workshop entitled “Rural women, literacy and communication – Literacy training for rural women to enable them to improve their lives and those of their families and promote the schooling of girls”. This workshop was held in Dosso, Niger, in December 2006. The brochure was published by the NGO VIE Kande Ni Bayra with the support of Dimitra. The brochure was drafted in French, but has also been translated into local languages so that it can be more widely distributed across the country.



For further information on the workshops surf to the Dimitra website – www.fao.org/dimitra (News and Events ► Dimitra Workshops).

The second brochure looks at the topics discussed during the workshop held in Lubumbashi (DRC) in June 2007, headed “Strengthening the capacity of rural organisations and community-based



radio stations in the Province of Katanga in the field of information, communication and gender issues”. It is available in five languages, French, Kiswahili, Lingala, Tshiluba and Kikongo.

To obtain copies of the brochures contact the NGO Vie Kande Ni Bayra in Niger (viebayra@intnet.ne) or the Dimitra team (dimitra@dimitra.org)

☉ **Keep the best, change the rest – Participatory tools for working with communities on gender and sexuality**

Gender and sexuality are cross cutting factors in the transmission of HIV and the care and support of those infected and affected. Without addressing these issues the response to the epidemic is limited. This toolkit provides a resource aimed at enabling individuals and organisations working on HIV and AIDS issues to address gender and sexuality effectively. The toolkit gives guidance on how to build relations and trust with key community stakeholders in order to support this work; prepare facilitation teams and train them. It was inspired, developed and produced with the support and expertise of a large number of individuals, groups and organisations through workshops, seminars and field experience in Zambia.

International HIV/AIDS Alliance, June 2007
www.aidsalliance.org

☉ **Keeping the Promise: An Agenda for Action on Women and AIDS**

The Agenda urges leaders to tackle the social, cultural and economic factors that intensify the impact of AIDS on women and girls. In particular it calls for laws and policies that protect women's rights – and their enforcement; more funds for AIDS programmes that work for women; and more seats at the table for women's organisations.

UNAIDS - The Global Coalition on Women and Aids (GCWA), 2007
womenandaids.unaids.org

☉ **Microfinance and forest-based small-scale enterprises**

This publication examines microfinance needs and constraints of small-scale enterprises. It analyses the different types of microfinance institutions, the role that they can play in the forest sector given the characteristics of small enterprises and forest communities, and their impact on local livelihoods and environment.

FAO Forestry Paper 146, 2005
www.fao.org

☉ **Radio Journalism Toolkit**

This toolkit aims to offer detailed and practical advice for radio journalists. It covers topics such as how to hold a microphone, writing for the ear, compiling bulletins, handling difficult interviews and digital editing. It includes a particular focus on the needs of community radio journalists, who have to report on a shoestring. Practical exercises are supported by a CD-ROM with raw sound to work on, examples of great radio reports and other material.

Institute for the Advancement of Journalism / STE Publishers, 2006 - R184
Obtain a copy from STE Publishers:
bksales@ste.co.za



☉ **Story Guide: Building bridges using narrative techniques**

Stories are an easy way of addressing the emotions and analytical understanding at the same time, thus promoting awareness. This Guide is designed to create story-telling skills and confidence. It contains instruments and model approaches for recalling and conjuring up mental images of experiences, it suggests ways of structuring stories to make them interesting and intelligible, and it provides ideas about development cooperation contexts in which stories can be an effective communication tool.

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), May 2007
www.sdc.admin.ch (► documentation)

☉ **For her it's the big issue – Putting women at the centre of water supply, sanitation and hygiene**

This report is a collection of evidence, brief examples highlighting the effect and benefits of placing women at the core of planning, implementation and operations of WASH programmes. The experiences also show how women's empowerment and the improvement of water supply, sanitation facilities and hygiene practice are inextricably linked. One cannot be successfully achieved without the other.

Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, March 2006
www.wsscc.org (resources ► publications)

☉ **Why Women Count**

Launched in 2007, this initiative centres around a series of 41 short films focusing on women's empowerment – and what it means in the lives of ordinary women and men around the world. The series is an effort to increase awareness of, and stimulate debate about, the key role that women's rights and gender equality play in the social, economic and political development of their countries, communities and families. A key strategy is the sharing of

personal stories to make a potentially abstract issue concrete. Available in Spanish and English from TVE for non-broadcast use, on Beta, VHS and DVD compilation tapes.

To order, contact tve@tve.org.uk

☉ **The women empowerment approach – A methodological guide**

At the Belgian Development Cooperation's request, the "Gender and Indicators" working group of the Commission on Women and Development has drawn up a dynamic methodology to create specific empowerment indicators in the context of development programmes. The empowerment process is at once individual – the acquisition of greater independence and capacity for self-determination, as well as means to allow individuals to broaden their opportunities – and collective – the capacity of a group to influence social change and move towards a fair and equal society, in particular in its relations between men and women. With an initial presentation of the theoretical approach of the empowerment concept, this methodological guide is intended first and foremost as a practical tool that will help the various development players along with local populations to construct a host of indicators capable of measuring development in the empowerment process, in accordance with local experience and context. Indeed, it will enable these players to present the realities of women and men and to take a closer look at the challenges of empowering women. The document illustrates how the approach works, by referring to contextualised versions used in Bolivia, the Congo, Guinea and Niger.

Commission on Women and Development, 2007
Available upon request: cwo-cfd@diplobel.fed.be
www.dgcbd.be