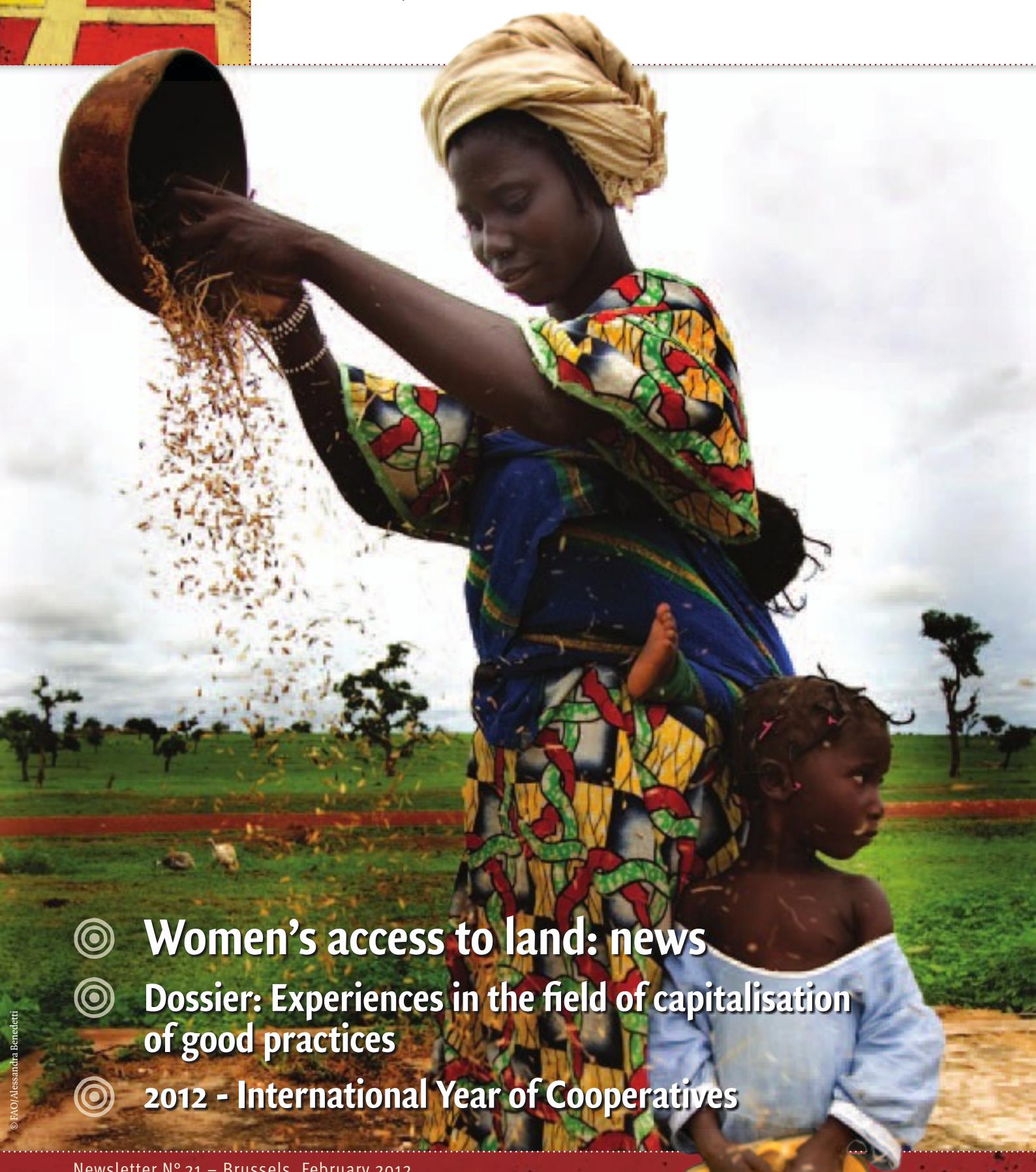




Dimitra Newsletter

RURAL WOMEN, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT



- **Women's access to land: news**
- **Dossier: Experiences in the field of capitalisation of good practices**
- **2012 - International Year of Cooperatives**

Editorial

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Dear readers,

Welcome to the latest issue of the FAO-Dimitra newsletter.

This issue focuses on particularly innovative activities that enable women to have better access to land in several African countries. In Niger, thanks to the debates that began in their listeners' club, the women of Banizoumbou now have secure access to a large plot of land for 99 years. This initiative has attracted other investors who will stimulate further activities. Hopefully, all forms of discrimination against women in land matters will have disappeared by the time the lease expires! In Mali, the Groupe de Recherche et de Réalisations pour le Développement rural (GRDR – Research and Action Group for Rural Development) has taken a great step forward as regards involving women in its surface water management programme by protecting their right to land access, demanding that they participate in decision-making, and giving them access to the training they need to perform an economic activity. In Madagascar, custom still takes precedence over land reform laws which give men and women equal access to land. An action research in the Central Highlands has shown that there is a need for widespread awareness-raising campaigns.

For sustainable agriculture to develop, people must have access to information and share knowledge. This issue showcases several examples of initiatives aiming to build on experiences and good practices, ranging from the Global AgriKnowledge Share Fair and a training course to find the meaning behind the jargon on capitalisation to an online platform for sharing indigenous agricultural knowledge (FarmAfriPedia) and knowledge-sharing projects by organisations like IED Afrique.

CAFOB, Dimitra's partner in Burundi, is contributing to FAO's urban and peri-urban horticulture (UPH) programme by involving its organisations of women market gardeners. These organisations and the UPH project act in line with FAO's Farmer Field School approach, especially since they build the agricultural and

nutritional capacities of vulnerable populations and encourage sharing of good practices among small farmers to help them increase their agricultural production.

The 2010-2011 King Baudouin Foundation Prize for International Development has been awarded to Dr Denis Mukwege, gynaecologist and director of Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Dr Mukwege received the prize in recognition of his work to restore dignity to thousands of women victims of sexual violence. On the same issue, we also feature an inventive campaign on bicycles to combat sexual violence in Katanga Province.

This issue's Women's Portraits section presents Françoise Yoda from Burkina Faso. Ms Yoda is in charge of communication and advocacy at Réseau Femmes en Action (RFA – Women in Action) and she has considerable experience in leading and supporting rural women.

The Italian Programme for Food Security (FCSA) has trained the women of Toubacouta, Senegal in new techniques for processing fishery products, which has helped them to guarantee food security for their families. Use of a communication for development strategy was vital for this project.

2012 has been made the International Year of Cooperatives. Cooperatives will be put in the spotlight thanks to a series of UN initiatives aiming to encourage the establishment and growth of these special enterprises, which are invaluable for a sustainable economic development that respects their members.

We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and look forward to hearing from you.

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Niger | Land for a century for Banizoumbou's women

It all started with a debate organised by the women of the Banizoumbou community listeners' club... now an amazing initiative will make a dream come true. Eight of the village's landowners have agreed to lend a plot of land to the village women's group for agriculture, and the agreements have been formalised in a contract. Below is the story of this innovative experience which will secure land for a women's group.

Zara Issa, president of the Gomni Mate women's group ("May good deeds be done") proudly displays two sheets of paper to the 40 members of the group in the village of Banizoumbou. These two sheets contain what is needed to make a dream come true: the official seal of the canton, the authorities' signatures, the signatures of the women's group representatives and the fingerprints used as signatures by the eight landowners of this village in the municipality of Dantiandou (Tillabéry region), 72 km from Niamey.

These two simple sheets of paper are a lease contract providing the Gomni Mate group with a large plot of land for a period of 99 years! The women members of the group – and maybe, one day, their daughters and granddaughters – will finally be able to plant fruit trees and vegetables on their own plot of land, for consumption or for sale on the market of Niamey.

The women's group is fairly new. It ensued from the village community listeners' club,

which will soon be two years old. The leaders of the listeners' club founded the women's group, and all of the group's members also belong to the listeners' club.

It is the first time that the village's women have secure, legal access to land. Besides, this long-lease contract sets out real guarantees for sustainable, environmentally-friendly use of the land. It was signed in July 2011 and concerns 2.75 ha of dune land at the edge of Banizoumbou village.

This land is very desirable because of its quality and its proximity to amenities. The contract entitles the women's group to plant trees as well as winter and off-season crops. The only thing they are not allowed to do is rent out the land. Not only is the land of high quality, it is also located near an artesian well. With the assistance of ONG-VIE Kande Ni Bayra, the women of the group wrote a letter to the government asking for permission to use the water point for their crops, and the government agreed.

The role of listeners' clubs

Two years ago, the women of this village would never have imagined that the water from the artesian well would be used to irrigate land that will be theirs to use for almost a century.

At that time, Dimitra and its Nigerien partner ONG-VIE had just begun supporting the first community listeners' clubs in the region, based on ONG-VIE's network. The creation of the listeners' club in Banizoumbou was facilitated by the existence of a literacy centre and a bridge school ("école passerelle") for boys and girls who had dropped out of regular schools.

The listeners' club was soon a great success, attracting the participation of many of the village's inhabitants. The club, with its membership of 108 women and 33 men, meets three times a week. It sometimes takes part in the debates organised by Radio Famay, a community radio station broadcasting from Dantiandou. The club discusses a variety of topics, such as food security, health, sanitation, access to water and land, improving nutrition, market gardening and early marriage. After each discussion, the group decides on joint actions.

Land access: a key issue

Less than a year ago, a discussion was organised in the listeners' clubs around Dantiandou. This discussion looked at a key issue for everyone: local strategies to give women access to land. The debate on the community radio station enabled the women of listeners' clubs and radio listeners to exchange their views and suggest solutions: simply giving women land, with a legal document; purchasing land; the confiscation of land by the local authorities for community purposes



Two years ago, the women of this village would never have imagined that the water from the well would be used to irrigate land that will be theirs to use for almost a century.



and its allocation to beneficiaries; or lending land to individuals or groups on a long-term basis. The last idea was viewed as the easiest to implement and the least restrictive. The idea of simply donating the land was rejected due to the massive difficulties that would be encountered if the group to which the land was given ceased to exist.

It could be said that the listeners' club played a crucial role in securing the lease contract. After all, the idea emerged from within the club, and the feasibility of such an agreement was proven there too. Moreover, the club was vital for building its members' confidence and for organising debates and a strategy in the village. Most importantly, the club helped the women to become effective at voicing their opinions and presenting arguments.

Why the men agreed to lend out the land

The region's men listened to the radio debate too, and they called in to express their views on strategies that they considered acceptable for giving women access to their land. The chief of Banizoumbou village greatly influenced the discussions. The women had lobbied him before, and he brought together the village's landowners to discuss matters and move towards the final decision: a 99-year lease for the women.

We may well wonder what made these landowners decide to the long-term lending of part of their land. First of all, ONG-VIE Kande Ni Bayra promised to help the women of the listeners' club to improve their land if they became landowners, so the possible gains were considerable in view of the planned investment. Besides, the State (through the Ministry of Hydraulics) had given its agreement in principle for use of the water point near the village. Finally, the village chief and various prominent villagers, including one of the religious leaders, supported the women's cause and helped them to approach the landowners.

The negotiation process lasted more than eight months: given that each parcel of land belongs to an entire family, each of the families had to convince all of the heirs to support the initiative. This was a major challenge for the heads of some families! In some cases, they had to make a decision without the consent of all the heirs, for the sake of the family's honour. After all, sharing one's wealth with the community is a traditional value.



This will be the first time that the village's women have secure, legal access to land. The long-lease contract sets out real guarantees for a sustainable and environmentally-friendly use of the land.

What next?

The group's women have every reason to be proud of themselves now. Since signing the contract, they have – under the watchful eye of ONG-VIE – negotiated funding from ADF, America's Development Foundation, so that they can build a fence, reservoirs, a shop, a new literacy centre (lit by solar power) for the group's meetings, and pipelines for drip irrigation (with the support of ICRISAT, the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics), and begin market gardening activities.

The group is to be provided with vegetable seeds, fruit trees and other agricultural inputs so they can get started, and the group's internal organisation will ensure that there are seeds for subsequent seasons. The crops produced are to be consumed and sold. As regards selling the crops, there are plans to run a training course in marketing and group sales in Niamey.

Zara Issa is right to cherish these two pieces of paper: the landowners or their heirs will not be allowed to take the land back, unless the group breaks up or its business fails and

it decides to give all the land back to the owners along with legal documents to support the action.

In the meantime, the group's women have no time to lose – 99 years go by fast!

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Mali | Women's cooperatives and land agreements

Building dams and supplying villages with water is all well and good, but ensuring they are optimally used is even better! That is what the Groupe de Recherche et de Réalisations pour le Développement rural (GRDR – Research and Action Group for Rural Development) has tried to do as part of a surface water management programme that has been underway in Mali since 2007. Women, often organised into cooperatives, are the main stakeholders in this development work, particularly where market gardening activities are concerned. By protecting women's right to land access, demanding that they be involved in decision-making and giving them access to the training they need to perform an economic activity, GRDR is restoring women to their place at the centre of everything.

The village of Moussala, in Koussané (Kayes region, Mali), has 1,400 inhabitants who mainly make their living from rain-fed agriculture, livestock farming and gathering. Many people from the area migrate to France, and migrants make a significant contribution to the subsistence of family members who still live in the village. GRDR, a development partner in Kayes region since 1982, is helping Koussané municipality to implement local development activities within the framework of decentralisation.

In response to the needs expressed by the relevant stakeholders during dialogue meetings in the field, GRDR implemented a pilot programme for surface water management in three Malian municipalities (Koussané, Marintoumania and Sandaré) between 2007 and 2011, with the financial support of the European Union, the Fondation Ensemble (Together Foundation), the Artois-Picardy Water Agency and the Intermunicipal Consortium for the Management and Rehabilitation of Essonne's Rivers.

The TKLM project (Integrated Management of Surface Waters in the Térékolé, Kolombiné and Magui Lake Drainage Basin) aimed to ensure sustainable, cooperative management of natural resources, emphasising the promotion of environmentally-friendly practices, the development of management rules (for resources, projects and land) to strengthen local governance, and food security. The role of women was strengthened through their systematic participation in project management committees, but also through sessions to train cooperatives in market gardening.

Things are changing in Moussala...

The village of Moussala has benefited from the construction of a dam, and the whole village rallied round the project. The dam was built in four months and a management committee was set up. It has 11 members – eight men and three women. The dam has made a significant contribution to changing life in the village. Market gardening, which is mainly practiced by women, has really taken off and issues of water supply for agricultural activities have been resolved. Thanks to the infiltration of the water held back by the dam, villagers can now find water just one metre below the ground during the dry season (January to June).

The Moussala women's cooperative has seen great improvements to its market gardening activities. The cooperative's 100 women members work a field with an area of one hectare and now swear by market gardening: "Before, sweet potatoes and other market gardening produce was brought here from Kayes, drinking water came

from neighbouring villages and there was no fresh maize during the dry season," says Djaba Soumaré, the cooperative's president. "Now, vegetables are produced locally and are available all year round. The village's diet has changed: meals now include more vegetables and our cereal harvests are large enough to keep us supplied in the lean season. Daily expenditure has fallen because the introduction of vegetables into meals has reduced cereal consumption."

Securing land access for women

In order to fight injustice in land access, of which women are the main victims, the latter were allocated a plot of land in each area for the collective management of market gardening production. A clause to this effect was inserted in each of the 'land agreements' signed by the land owners in the project implementation zones, the village chief and the president of the village committee managing the project. The land agreements were then approved by the mayor and the prefect.



Thanks to the dam, issues of water supply for agricultural activities have been resolved and the market gardening activities of the women have developed. In order to fight injustice in land access, women were allocated a plot of land in each area for the collective management of market gardening production.

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Rural women: the keystone of African development

Thanks to these agreements, women's cooperatives will have access to 10.5 ha of land. To boost their chances of success in the production activities, these women's groups were trained in optimising irrigation schemes through market gardening, with the introduction of onions and potatoes. The training course covered both technical and organisational aspects. In total, almost 1,200 women were trained and supported in market gardening activities (growing tomatoes, onions, shallots, sweet potatoes, cabbages, and so on).

The cooperative's produce is sold to fund the operating costs of the cooperative and the surplus is shared out among the cooperative's women members. Aside from the group plot, each woman is free to farm vegetable beds for her own use. The women often dry vegetables to conserve them, especially if they are difficult to keep, as is the case with tomatoes and African aubergines, for instance. The population of Moussala now consumes market garden produce for four months each year (from January to April), with many people consuming produce that they have grown themselves.

Other household tasks are simpler now that the women have easier access to water for washing clothes, which they do downstream of the dam. In fact, the entire village has undergone a transformation. The women say that nowadays, "the older people look after the dam while the younger ones take care of the winter crops. This project has enabled younger people to settle down in the village, and they are involved in farming work for longer."

The difficulties the women currently face are caused by pests and a lack of drainage equipment. Their crops are often attacked by rats and squirrels and manual watering techniques mean that the area for sowing is limited. GRDR and its partners are continuing to provide support with regard to these issues.

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Rural women are all too often separated from their husbands, who migrate in the hope of finding a better future. When this happens, they suddenly find themselves at the heads of their families, in patriarchal systems where their rights are ignored on a daily basis and little value is attached to their roles. The whole world pays tribute to these exceptionally brave women every year on 15 October, the International Day of Rural Women, and GRDR decided to do the same...

Although women currently account for 70% of the agricultural workforce in the countries of the South, many of them have no means of subsistence and no support to help feed their families. Many of them are illiterate, they seldom own land, they cannot access credit and they have no say in public decisions. Excluding women from so many areas of life has serious consequences for countries' sustainable development.

In Kayes region (Mali), for example, only 7.6% of local councillors are women, which means that women's specific needs are rarely taken into account in local policies and their basic rights are often disregarded. There is an increasing trend towards the feminisa-

tion of poverty. Against this backdrop, GRDR launched the project *Promotion de la représentation et de la participation des femmes rurales à la prise de décision locale* (Promotion of rural women's representation and participation in local decision-making), with the support of the European Union.

This project, which targets 200 women leaders from 12 municipalities in Kayes region, aims to defend women's rights and promote political pluralism in the region. Through a partnership with the Association Professionnelle des Femmes Rurales de la région de Kayes (ASPROFER – Professional Organisation of Rural Women in Kayes Region) and the Association des Communes du Guidimakha Kafo (ACGK – Organisation of the Municipalities of Guidimakha Kafo), the region's women will be given support and training in political advocacy and local governance. Local authorities will be taught about women's involvement in decision-making processes and capitalisation tools will be produced so that this innovative initiative can be spread to other Malian municipalities. In time, this pilot project could be expanded to all of GRDR's intervention zones in West Africa.



Madagascar | Land reform and women's access to land

The history of land tenure in Madagascar has been rather turbulent. Since the country became independent in 1960, the legal framework has been based on the principle of land as State property and on land ownership justified by an individual registration system involving the issuance of land titles. However, the Malagasy people have rarely used this procedure for registering land rights. Ignorance of land laws, the complexity and excessive cost of the registration procedure, the land administration's lack of resources and the centralisation of land services and domains have led to a national land tenure crisis in the country.

For the Malagasy people, land is more than just property. It has a social value, especially as it is considered to be a connection between the living and the dead, which is why the concept of "the land of our ancestors" is held to be so important. Land is also viewed as a means of social and cultural identification. This social recognition of land is supplemented by the fact that land ownership is a sign of wealth in some parts of the island. Besides, land is an important production factor given that 80% of Madagascar's rural population make their living from agriculture.

Many land titles were registered in 1896 and the documents have scarcely been updated. At present, a considerable proportion of titled land is registered in the names of deceased people. These plots of land are occupied by the descendants of the farmers who were based there during the colonial period, leading to the argument that, from a legal viewpoint, these descendants are squatters.

Land reform – decentralisation and a community-based approach

To resolve this crisis, the government, in cooperation with various technical and financial partners, decided to draw up the Land Policy Document in 2005. The land reform, as implemented by the National Land Programme, is based on four key principles:

- modernisation and restructuring of the land administration system;
- decentralisation of land management;
- revision of texts on land tenure;
- training and communication.

The decentralisation process aims to provide users with a community-based service for securing land tenure in rural areas. This has resulted in the establishment of municipal land offices. However, customary practices still exist and are developing in parallel to statutory laws. At local level, communities still tend to refer to traditional land management systems

and in many cases, customs hold more sway and command greater respect than the law. Because of this, traditional authorities have an important role in land management.

The decentralisation process endeavoured to integrate customary land management by recognising land occupation as proof of land ownership, thus according significance to the social recognition of property rights. Local Recognition Committees – land office bodies involved in issuing land titles – are generally composed of the local traditional authorities or elders. However, legal texts stipulate that they must be elected by the community. By implementing the decentralisation of land tenure, the State has shown its commitment to democratising land tenure, which was previously only available to a handful of people.

Discrimination against women in practice

The current legislative framework does not discriminate between men and women in terms of land access. Yet women's rights with regard to land access and control are not given proper consideration at local level, among other reasons because of the lack of female representation on the Local Recognition Committees.

According to customary practices, land tenure is the preserve of men. It is men who are responsible for performing social obligations such as building or restoring family tombs or fulfilling various duties during funeral rites and the "turning of the bones" ceremony. Such social obligations are very important to the Malagasy people, who spend over 30% of their household budgets on them. Men, as heads of



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their families, therefore receive plots of land so that they can meet their families' needs. Land ownership also gives them a significant social identity.

In the inheritance process, the women traditionally follow their husbands. They leave their home villages to live with their husbands and the land that they can access has often been inherited from their husbands' families. Land access rights in rural areas are closely linked to women's marital status, which increases women's potential vulnerability.

Moreover, communities' – and especially women's – ignorance of the legal framework and the land reform reduces the impact that the reform could have. There is a clear contrast between what is decided at national level and what is actually implemented at local level. Communities often use local practices to manage their land rights and are rarely aware of political changes.

The situation in the Central Highlands

The existence of multiple legal systems for land access can also work in favour of women. For example, in some parts of the Central Highlands (Hauts-Plateaux), in the region of Analamanga and especially in Manjakandriana district, the evolution of customary practices, which have been influenced by the district's proximity to large towns, has enabled women to inherit and have access to land, even though they still have little control over this land.

An action research project on the promotion of women's access to land in the island's Central Highlands was conducted by several members of a national civil society platform working on land issues (SIF, Solidarité des Intervenants sur le Foncier) which included the Fédération nationale des Femmes rurales malgaches (FVTM – National Federation of Rural Malagasy Women). It showed that the land most women can access is land inherited by their husbands. So what is the position of separated, divorced and widowed women? How can she bring up her children if her in-laws do not recognise her rights to her former husband's land? Women are even more vulnerable when they find themselves in one of these situations, since losing their position as wives may result in them losing access to the land, their primary production factor and therefore a part of their income.

The action research also showed that depending on the level of wealth and (in direct correlation) education of the family, women are involved or not in decision-making about what crops to grow or about post-production. The poorer the family the less control women have over land.

Decentralised land management is supposed to benefit everyone, at least in the areas where it exists. However, in a context where traditional practices have an important place and where land issues are considered to be of no concern to women, how can we guarantee that women will be included, on an equal basis, in the process for accessing land titles? What

impact could the decentralisation process have on women's access to land?

Comprehensive awareness-raising is needed

If women are familiar with the basics of the legislative framework governing land, this could help them to secure their own land rights. The National Land Programme should therefore include more awareness-raising activities that target women in particular, with a view to informing them of how important it is for them to have secure access to land.

This awareness-raising campaign should aim to correct the following problems:

- lack of awareness of women's land rights and its consequences for livelihoods;
- lack of knowledge of the legal framework governing land;
- inequality in the inheritance process;
- lack of involvement of women in local decision-making processes on the issuing of land deeds.

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FarmAfriPedia :

A collaborative platform for sharing indigenous agricultural knowledge

Africa has a rich indigenous agricultural knowledge base. From time immemorial, the elderly have been the custodians of this knowledge and have passed it on to younger generations. Sadly, with each successive generation this information is fading away, leading to a loss of farming communities, languages and indigenous cultures. We need to extract and collect the information from our “libraries” of indigenous agricultural knowledge before we lose it completely.

The loss of indigenous agricultural knowledge can in part be attributed to the preference of young people to relocate to cities and engage in business related activities. Those who opt to stay in rural areas are increasingly engaging in “modern” but more expensive farming methods, even though traditional farming is known for its low cost of farm inputs and a better contribution to environmental conservation and protection.

In October 2010, an AgKnowledge Africa Share Fair took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, hosted by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). This three-day event brought together stakeholders from the agricultural sector to learn, advise and share best practices and challenges in using indigenous farming knowledge. Everyone agreed that the agricultural sector benefits from indigenous knowledge, but that this knowledge is rapidly getting lost. The challenge: how do we capture this disappearing “library” of indigenous agricultural knowledge?

Indigenous agricultural knowledge on-line

The idea grew to use a social media tool to capture this knowledge. With a few enthusiasts, including IKM Emergent, the collaborative platform **FarmAfriPedia** was created. The site is still a prototype (pilot), but the aim is to develop it into a growing online platform which will be a one-stop shop for agricultural local content where different stakeholders and communities in the agricultural sector all over Africa collectively learn and share from each other on issues pertaining to best farming practices, using local content. Its simplicity will enable even grassroots people to use the system both to upload and learn more, through mobile phones or computers.

Wikipedia was used as a model, using the open source software and replicating the simplicity and openness that makes it so powerful, but adding several features. These include user-



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Gwiko Gereshome, a farmer from the Budaka District Farmers Network shares farming information with a fellow farmer.

friendly forms allowing users to add, edit and query data, a search engine that enables one to find desired content, a database of crop and livestock pages depicting the farming cycle as well as additional farming practices. Each of the pages has a Discussion Area. Also, those who cannot post their content can send it by email and it will be uploaded on their behalf. The issue of intellectual property rights has been addressed by accrediting the source of the content.

It is our strong desire that all join hands in making this platform richer. Information is

a right for all and a necessity for the development of our households!

★ To visit the platform:

Currently at: <http://farmafripedia.ikmemergent.net> but it will be migrated to a permanent platform: www.farmafripedia.org

★ For more information, contact the

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AgriKnowledge

Second Global Share Fair

The Second Global AgriKnowledge Share Fair took place at the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) headquarters in Rome from 26 to 29 September 2011. It was jointly organised by Bioversity International, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the World Food Programme (WFP) and IFAD.

The Share Fair was an engaging and “out-of-the-box” opportunity to learn and share knowledge, discuss and explore experience and innovations to improve rural and agricultural development activities. Over 160 presenters shared good practices by applying a number of knowledge sharing methods such as world café, chat shows, peer assist, fish bowls, open space, etc. (see a link to these methods at the end of the article).

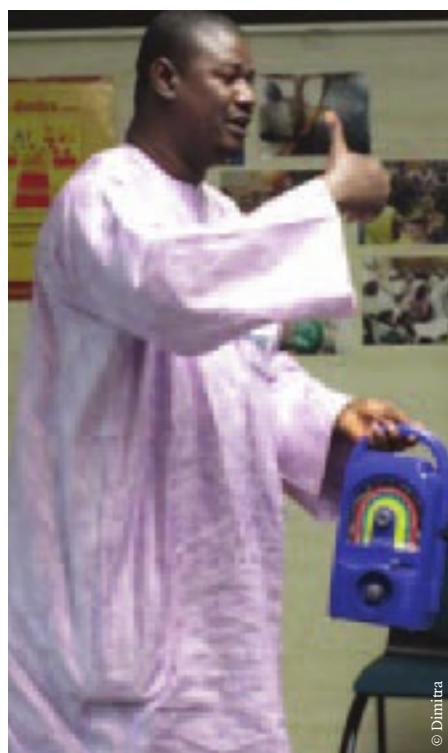
The sessions addressed emerging trends related to agriculture, food security, climate change and green innovations, new technologies and innovative agricultural and farming practices, markets and private sector, mobile technology and social media in the agriculture sector, young people and other rural development related issues.

With relation to gender equality, several sessions exposed participants to inspiring stories on creative ways of empowering and building women’s capacity and the promotion of gender-sensitive financial services.

Women in rural development

A session on “promoting women’s participation in rural development activities” provided concrete examples on the exchange of experiences between and among rural women from different parts of the world. Two videos (available on the Internet), joint initiatives between IFAD and FAO, were shown on the methodology of the Learning Route in Uganda on gender and rural microfinance and on Regional capacity building and knowledge management on gender, agriculture and rural livelihoods in Guatemala and El Salvador.

Another session was facilitated by FAO’s Capitalisation of good practices project (part of the Belgium-funded Knowledge Management and Gender Programme) and discussed how inventory credit (warrantage) can be made equally accessible to both women and men, especially the most vulnerable. Experiences in Burkina Faso and Niger were illustrated. And a session on savings as a springboard to market readiness showed the dynamic force of rural women’s savings groups in Central America for moving women from ‘market-limited’ to



Dimitra organised a talk show at the Fair to present its community listeners' clubs in Niger and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

‘market-ready’ and for empowering participants.

The FAO-Dimitra project was also present at the Share Fair and organised a talk show to present its community listeners’ clubs in Niger and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The speakers on the talk show were Ali Abdoulaye, Coordinator of the ONG-VIE Kande Ni Bayra and Dimitra’s partner in the Sahel, as well as Eliane Najros, Coordinator, and Yannick De Mol, Communication Expert, of the Dimitra project.

They explained how the listeners’ clubs have proved to be an effective way for isolated rural communities – women in particular – to become involved in their own development, to gain self-confidence, to exchange experiences and practices and to have more power in their communities. The talk show methodology was very efficient to discuss this experience

in a non-conventional but attractive way and explain how the listeners’ clubs function in the two countries. There are currently about 8500 members, half of them women, in the DRC and over 8000 members, 75% of them women, in Niger.

From listeners’ clubs to ICTs

Many sessions of the Share Fair addressed the issue of the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) in rural development. Mobile phones, for example, are no longer a luxury item and have become an essential part of people’s lives. Several sessions highlighted the innovative use of mobile telephony in agriculture, how ICTs have helped improve the bargaining power of smallholders and provided a more direct link to markets and how social media tools can create conducive learning and sharing environments across geographical and language boundaries.

Special sessions were also dedicated to debating issues of interest such as communities of practice, public-private partnerships, or connecting men and women farmers through social media. A keynote speech on how to make agriculture more attractive to young people in Africa presented Well Told Story, a Kenyan communications company which pulls together comic books, syndicated FM radio, SMS, social media, web, video animation, strategy and science to support change in East Africa.

This second AgriKnowledge Share Fair was certainly a great opportunity for development workers to showcase information and for networking, brainstorming, and collaborating across sectors. It drew attention to best practices and helped people benefit from each other’s experience, hopefully stimulating interest in future collaboration and the development of new programmes.

For more information:

- Share fair: <http://www.sharefair.net>
- Knowledge Sharing Toolkit Wiki: www.kstoolkit.org/KS+Methods
- Dimitra’s publication on Community Listeners’ Clubs: www.fao.org/dimitra/dimitra-publications/publications/en

Action learning workshop on the capitalisation of good practices

Or finding the meaning behind the jargon

Within the framework of FAO's Knowledge Management and Gender Programme, the Capitalisation of good practices in support of agricultural production and food security project organised an action learning workshop on the capitalisation of good practices in Niamey (Niger) from 5 to 9 December 2011.

We capitalise when we take the time to think about the reasons for our successes or failures, which enables us to learn lessons and improve our activities. However, we can systematise our efforts to make them more effective. This is what the action learning workshop organised recently in Niamey aimed to encourage, by clarifying the various stages involved in the capitalisation of good practices. The participants analysed the activities associated with this process, which include systematisation, organisation, documentation, repackaging and dissemination, sharing and taking ownership. The workshop also allowed the demystification of some jargon words like "knowledge management", "capitalisation" and "good practice".

The capitalisation of good practices is not a simple, linear process. Rather, it is repetitive and participatory and involves the following stages: being involved in the action – evaluating experiences and deriving lessons from them – gathering and documenting good practices – sharing and dissemination of the good practices – adopting, adapting and applying the good practices. Gender issues are taken into account throughout the process, at each stage of the capitalisation process.

The action learning workshop in Niamey was attended by 21 people, a third of whom were women. It brought together the Capitalisation project team, several members of the IARBIC project (Intensifying agriculture by strengthening cooperative input shops), of the Emergency Rehabilitation and Coordination Unit (ERCU), ONG-VIE (Dimitra's partner), as well as representatives of three producers' organisations: Mooriben, the Réseau national

Some useful resources shared during the training course:

- ✿ Communicating gender for rural development: Integrating gender in communication for development (FAO-Dimitra) www.fao.org/dimitra/dimitra-publications/publications/en/
- ✿ Knowledge management and gender: clarifying the concepts ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/ak159e/ak159e30.pdf
- ✿ Knowledge sharing for development – e-learning module www.imarkgroup.org/moduledescription_en.asp?id=138#content
- ✿ Du terrain au partage (Sharing experiences from the field) – handbook on building on experiences (in French) www.iedafrique.org/du-terrain-au-partage.html

des chambres d'agriculture du Niger (RECA – National Network of Nigerien Chambers of Agriculture) and the Fédération des Coopératives Maraîchères du Niger (FCMN-Niya – Federation of Nigerien Market Gardening Cooperatives).

The participants went away with an action plan and a promise to meet again in three months to exchange their good practice

sheets. A handbook on the capitalisation of good practices with a gender dimension is due for publication in 2012.

- ✿ For more information: www.fao.org/oek/knowledge-info-dev/km-gender/news/en



IED Afrique focuses on the capitalisation of experiences

From publishing a magazine to managing knowledge

Access to knowledge and information is fundamental in the development of sustainable agriculture. It contributes both to the promotion of environmentally-friendly technological innovations and to the formulation and implementation of inclusive agricultural policies. IED Afrique - Innovation, Environnement, Développement therefore launched the AGRIDAPE Programme ten years ago, publishing a magazine on agricultural innovations. Since 2005, IED Afrique has set itself the challenge to "regionalise" the content of the magazine and to tackle the capitalisation of experiences in Africa.

Sharing information and exchanging experiences are vital factors for the promotion and recognition of local knowledge in order to achieve efficient agriculture that preserves natural resources. However, the dissemination of relevant agricultural information remains a major obstacle for farmers' organisations and other stakeholders in Africa's agricultural sector. The available information is often tinged with stereotypes and prejudices that defend the adoption of models based on vertical technology transfer and the intensification of agriculture. Besides, agricultural information is usually produced by or based on conventional research and rarely includes farmers' knowledge. Thus, the wealth and potential of family farms are little known or used in addressing the challenges of food security and environmental conservation.

From spreading information to capitalisation

Almost 10 years ago, IED Afrique (Innovation, Environment, Development Africa) committed to promoting sustainable agriculture by

highlighting and connecting the knowledge of farming communities, researchers and decision-makers. After joining the AgriCultures international network, IED Afrique launched the AGRIDAPE programme.

For the first few years, the programme focused on producing a quarterly, French-language magazine that was also called AGRIDAPE. The magazine's guiding principle was the presentation of local responses, drawn from farmers' experiences, linked to various subjects such as market access, livestock farming and water. Most of the articles featured in the magazine were translations of articles from the international English-language magazine LEISA (now called Farming Matters).

AGRIDAPE soon became known throughout the region. However, since LEISA was the main source for the articles, most of the information came from other parts of the world – as if Africa's farmers had come up with few or no innovations of their own! Yet through its other programmes, IED Afrique was well aware that

the region had plenty of interesting experiences and major innovations to share, but that they were little known.

With this in mind, in 2005 the organisation set itself the challenge to "regionalise" at least 50% of the magazine's content. This was the beginning of a process whereby the challenge of identifying experiences and getting the institutions behind them to put them into shareable format was concretely experienced.

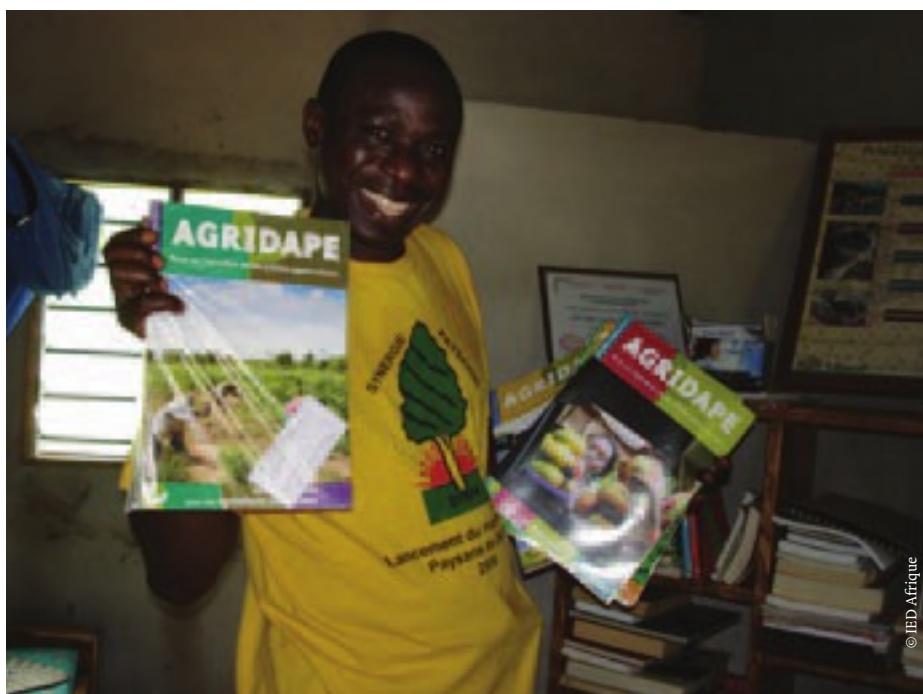
Although it cannot be denied that NGOs, farmers' organisations, research institutes and other stakeholders have experience and knowledge, it is also true that few of them have systems for collecting and developing it. So while it was relatively simple to find experiences connected with the subjects addressed in the magazine, turning the actors into authors turned out to be something of an obstacle course. These problems can be explained by the combined effect of a lack of time, resources, and often, the necessary skills.

The issue of capitalisation and documentation thus emerged as a major obstacle in the dissemination of local experiences and sharing knowledge. In light of this, the AGRIDAPE programme was reorganised to include a component focusing on capitalisation of experiences. The process began with a participatory action research involving local stakeholders from Senegal and Burkina Faso. A methodological workshop in 2007 enabled producers, researchers and development workers to draw on their own experiences to define capitalisation concepts, challenges and processes in a French-speaking context and to critically evaluate the various tools available.

From capitalisation to sharing knowledge

Following this workshop, IED Afrique produced a handbook on the capitalisation of experiences entitled "Du terrain au partage" (sharing experiences from the field). This simple tool proved to be just as useful for producers as for researchers and NGOs. The





Capitalisation methodology in five steps

This tool is a methodological basis that aims to support stakeholders in the collection, organisation and analysis of their practices. Capitalisation emphasises the creation of structured, analysed content that can be used as a basis for sharing knowledge. This content contributes to meeting the challenges of building shareable knowledge, replicating good practices, and, to some extent, institutional recognition and sustainability.

1 Defining the prerequisites. This is crucial for managing and planning the process. It covers the aim and purpose of the process, the ways and forms of stakeholder participation, process facilitation, resources to be mobilised, and evaluation of the available information base.

2 Identifying the experience that will be the subject of capitalisation and **determining the fundamental elements** that characterise it.

3 Further explaining the experience by providing a **detailed description** of the activities performed. This stage covers all of the actions that are part of the experience.

4 Moving from mere description to identifying the learning elements. This stage summarises and critically examines the experience by evaluating the relevant practices and assessing the objectives that were achieved. It is based on analysis criteria such as replicability, sustainability and quality of participation, etc.

5 Pinpointing the main conclusion(s) from the whole process and **drawing up the capitalisation document**. This stage involves describing the experience again and highlights the lessons learned and the recommendations with a view to replication.

handbook has become a reference work on the subject and has generated considerable demand for assistance in capitalisation from its readers. Later, another methodological special issue was published on the capitalisation of farming innovations.

In response to these requests, the programme organised a series of capitalisation training workshops in the sub-region. A networking strategy was used for this, with workshops being organised in the countries with the largest number of AGRIDAPE magazine subscribers. These workshops encourage participants from the same country to form networks to promote learning through sharing information and experiences. The experiences are documented and sent to AGRIDAPE as contributions. Thanks to this strategy, AGRIDAPE networks have been set up in Cameroon, Mali, Niger and Senegal, facilitated by IED Afrique.

A second series of workshops to train facilitators in capitalisation enabled network members' to build their skills for supporting the capitalisation processes. Alongside the methodological components, the networks lead and take part in public debates on current topics. While the main focus is on building skills in description and analysis of experiences, fostering informed debate at national level is also an aim.

Regional contributions now account for 80% of the content of the magazine, which has a print run of 3,500 and is distributed in 55 French-speaking countries. Most of these contributions are submitted by network members, both individuals and institutions. There are

also some completely independent movements for capitalisation and sharing of experiences in several countries, including Mali and Cameroon.

By publishing these handbooks and organising training sessions, IED Afrique has gained recognition as a reference organisation in the field of capitalisation and dissemination of experiences. The institution is increasingly called upon to train and support teams or facilitate capitalisation processes. The action research on capitalisation also has had an impact on IED Afrique's organisational culture. Indeed, capitalisation, information and communication are now an integral part of the knowledge management strategy of the organisation. Taking account of the context has also led to the diversification of media for sharing experiences on sustainable agriculture: audio-visual and electronic media is now used in addition to the magazine.

It is increasingly clear that knowledge and experiences must be mutually exchanged if the relevance and efficiency of development actions are to be increased. This means that stakeholders and institutions must pay attention to the use and production of knowledge: interpretation, structuring, capitalisation and knowledge-sharing. Much of this will require further learning, for which open minds and integration of the issue into strategic planning are a prerequisite. There are already tools that can be perfected, tested and reinvented, all of which brings us back to the overall vision of development: namely, that the most important thing is to learn to build a better future together.

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“There can be no development when half of the population is excluded”

FRANÇOISE BIBIANE YODA | COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY OFFICER AT RÉSEAU FEMMES EN ACTION

Françoise Bibiane Yoda, a graduate in information and communication technologies (ICT), is in charge of communication and advocacy at Réseau Femmes en Action (RFA - Women in Action Network), an organisation involved in agricultural and livestock projects in rural regions of Burkina Faso. Over the last ten years, she has built up considerable experience in leading and supporting women, particularly in rural areas.

When did you first become interested in socio-cultural extension work?

Well, given that my father was a teacher and my mother was an extension worker in various women's groups and both of them worked in agriculture, I have to say that education, extension work and communication were subjects I heard about from a very young age. Did that influence my choice? Without a doubt. By the time I was at secondary school, I was already involved in extension work in various youth groups and organisations.

Could you describe your background in gender promotion?

I studied information and communication technologies. When I graduated, I began working for a literacy organisation where I was responsible for managing a document centre and some village libraries. Among other tasks, I had to develop a database for the computerisation of the documentation centre.

Following this initial experience, I worked as a United Nations volunteer for one year. I worked

for organisations and groups and my activities again focused on issues to do with information access. It was at this point that I truly began to realise that there was a gap between men and women in terms of access to information technologies, especially computer tools.

In 2003, I was recruited by the NGO RECIF (Réseau de Communication, d'Information et de Formation des Femmes dans les ONG au Burkina Faso), which put me in charge of computerising its Document Resource Centre, mainly by creating a record of the internal and external competences of the people in the network. I was also in charge of its newsletter and organising a theatre forum for public awareness-raising activities. I joined RFA in 2009, and this new role enabled me to build up more experience in issues linked to communication with the rural and farming community.

When Burkina Faso adopted its gender promotion policy in 2009, RFA stepped up its work to support men and women producers in rural areas, in order to eliminate the gender

constraints that hamper agricultural activities. Since 2010, RFA has provided support at all stages, from production right up to income management, including processing and marketing. Our activities are backed by the Fonds de Solidarité prioritaire (FSP – Priority Solidarity Fund) for gender equality and women's empowerment, which was set up by the French development cooperation.

Have these actions had tangible results?

The FSP has helped to break some taboos in family farms, especially those around gender issues, household tasks and the division of responsibilities. There now is an increasing trend towards families consulting to determine each family member's roles and responsibilities.

As far as women are concerned, we are pleased to report that there is a greater awareness of their role, but they need to persevere to assert themselves more. There are no foregone conclusions and they must not be discouraged when faced with obstacles.

I would like to mention as an example, a group of women who grow sesame despite not owning or controlling any land. After receiving training and support, they decided to invite their husbands to discussion sessions where the exchanges enabled them to stress the importance of giving women access to land. The men were very receptive to the idea and agreed to support the initiative. In the end, almost 75% of the women were given access to land so that they could grow crops. Anyone who is familiar with the situation in Burkina Faso, where land access is an uphill struggle for women, will see that this was a positive result. It is through small victories like this that we will bring about real change.

Have you often encountered obstacles or resistance to gender issues?

There is still resistance, and it primarily affects women farmers. In rural areas, women often have difficulties related to the management of farming equipment, since the equipment very often belongs to men and they decide unilater-



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“An important point to bear in mind is education. In developing countries, one of the biggest gender-related challenges is the education of girls, especially in rural areas.”

ally how it is to be used. That is not a problem as long as the women are working in collective fields, but conflicts start as soon as women want to use the equipment to work their own fields.

In almost every family, the husband manages the household budget while the wife spends all her time in the family field, while still maintaining sole responsibility for the household tasks. She is not paid for her work and does not even have access to inputs. In short, she is heavily dependent on men.

With this context in mind, our approach is based on grassroots research and a participatory diagnosis with the target population. This method enables us to work out the socio-cultural realities and gender problems, but also the strengths that can be exploited to alter the situation of gender inequality.

One important point to bear in mind is education. In developing countries, one of the biggest gender-related challenges is the education of girls, especially in rural areas. Academic knowledge is simply not enough for us people who support women. If we want to identify and meet their expectations, we have to make use of other values, like solidarity, listening and patience.

What do the political authorities think of your work on gender issues?

In Burkina Faso, as in many other African countries, civil society is often viewed as a political opponent rather than an element that is both close to the people and able to make positive proposals for the country's development. It was difficult to work with the authorities in the 1990s. Some improvements have been made

since then, such as the creation of forums for dialogue between the political authorities and civil society. The authorities take civil society's contribution into account and use its proposals as a basis for orienting policies and adapting government actions on gender issues. Since the adoption of the national gender policy in 2009, Burkina Faso's government has expected a lot from civil society, and the Ministry for the promotion of women regularly requests reports on work at the grassroots.

But what I really want to stress is the need to work with the local authorities, which are often closer to the people than the central government. A few years ago, the decentralisation policy enabled the creation of urban and rural municipalities. If municipality development plans are to be implemented, gender and development resource persons will need to be appointed. These resource persons would both support women's groups and monitor and evaluate actions, and could identify any obstacles that should be addressed by future actions.

What advice would you give to women who want to become involved in promoting gender?

It has to be acknowledged that progress has been made in terms of gender sensitivity in a number of areas, although much remains to be done as regards promoting women. For instance, in Burkina Faso demands have led to an agreement for a 30% quota of women in the local elections. That is not absolute gender equality, but it is a step in the right direction. However, the greatest challenge will be in actually reaching this quota in this year's elections. It is important to achieve this because it could have a positive impact on women's leadership, which is so badly lacking.

Around twenty of Burkina Faso's municipalities are currently led by women, and they could serve as examples to inspire and spur on other women who would like to become involved in politics. There are a lot of motivated and committed women out there – they have the capacity and the skills, but they lack self-confidence. Whatever their area of activity and skills, I would advise these women to get involved without being afraid and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Have you anything to say to the readers of the Dimitra newsletter?

There is just one thing I would like to say. Promoting gender does not mean favouring one group to the detriment of another. Gender promotion affects the whole population: men, women, children, minorities, and so on. There can be no development when half of the population is excluded from the process, so everyone needs to get behind actions to promote gender.

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✳ RFA is the partner organisation of Dimitra in Burkina Faso. The network ensures the information collection for the project's database in this country.

A sustainable alternative for rural Burundi

A new view of the future for young people and adults thanks to farmer field and life schools

Burundi, where 90% of the population live from agriculture, is currently facing a severe food crisis.

Many factors contribute to this situation, including extremely high population growth and the fragmentation of farm lands, which goes hand in hand with soil degradation and a steady decline in agricultural productivity. This situation has serious consequences: over 60% of the population suffer from chronic malnutrition. There are few opportunities to earn income in rural areas, which only exacerbates the problems faced by the most vulnerable populations.

One of the strategies implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock to tackle this situation concerns the improvement of farming practices, while taking the environment and the experiences of the men and women farmers into account. Thus, since 2008 it has adopted the Farmer Field School (FFS) approach – sometimes called ‘school without walls’ – so as to enable transfer and ownership of agricultural innovations. This participatory training method, which was developed by FAO in the late 1980s, makes it possible for men and women farmers to learn, discuss and test agricultural strategies with a view to improving their food security and their livelihoods.

In Burundi, FAO is providing support for the implementation of this approach, with a special focus on efforts to build the agricultural and nutritional skills of vulnerable populations. FAO also encourages men and women smallholders to share good practices that could help them increase their agricultural production.

The Farmer Field School approach has evolved in recent years and has expanded to include aspects relating to nutrition, HIV/AIDS and gender, primarily through Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) and Farmer Field and Life Schools (FFLS) in difficult or urgent health situations.

What makes the FFLS truly unique is the fact that participants ‘learn by doing’ and that the subject matter goes beyond agriculture to cover diverse aspects of community life, such as reproductive health, legal issues, women’s empowerment, and so on.

The JFFLS also tackle the issue of youth unemployment, which is a very serious problem in Burundi. They mainly target girls and boys that are school drop-outs, orphans or affected by HIV. They use an innovative methodology that encourages young people to participate fully in agricultural life. They also offer cultural activities, such as song and dance, so the young people can feel reassured by this process that safeguards their traditions and culture.

“The farmer field schools inspired us to resume our agricultural activities after a long period of displacement,” says Adidja Niyuhure, a member of Muzubirimya farmer field and life school in Rumonge. “We started out with tomatoes, but now we also grow cassava and other vegetables in our gardens. We managed to buy some laying hens and FAO gave us some goats. We spread the animals’ manure on our fields, which has really boosted production. We would like to learn more about nutrition too, especially about how we can provide better nutrition for our children.”

FAO also uses this approach to assist the social cohesion and long-term integration of returnees. Adidja is a returnee belonging to a group of 60 beneficiaries who were trained by FAO as FFS facilitators. The 60 new facilitators will support the establishment of FFS in the “integrated rural villages” in southern Burundi. These villages host refugees and people who were displaced by war and who have returned to the country but have nowhere to go. Through this training, more than 18 FFS will have been set up by the end of 2011, giving over 630 returnees the opportunity to exchange good farming practices.

Over the first quarter of 2012, FAO will support the establishment of 138 farmer field schools, of which 24 will be FFLS and 8 JFFLS. Each of these FFS will have 25 to 35 members, bringing the total membership of FFS set up by FAO in Burundi, through various projects, to around 4,120 people. The sustainability of the FFS system is encouraged by the networking of existing FFS and by the creation of new ones by men and women farmers who already participated in an FAO-supported FFS.

The chief advantage of farmer field schools is that they are participatory. Local knowledge and techniques are used to ensure collaborative and sustainable learning, with the beneficiaries themselves finding solutions to their problems. The socio-political skills, of women in particular, are strengthened alongside their farming and nutritional capacities and knowledge.



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The FFS have a significant multiplier effect since their activities are often imitated by other villagers, thus exponentially increasing the positive effects of this original approach. For their part, the JFFLS are a powerful tool for empowering smallholders, both men and women, and an essential means of support for these farmers to set up groups, cooperatives and organisations.

The focus now is on the consolidation and networking of the existing farmer field schools, which have served as an excellent basis for running multiple innovative and participatory initiatives.

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Urban and peri-urban horticulture in Burundi

The Collectif des Associations et ONG Féminines du Burundi (CAFOB – Collective of Burundian Women’s Organisations and NGOs) brings together 87 women’s organisations involved in various areas of life. Many of these organisations are engaged in market gardening as part of the FAO’s urban and peri-urban horticulture (UPH) project, in which CAFOB is involved through its partnership with Dimitra.

The FAO’s UPH project supports the development of urban and peri-urban horticulture and is being implemented in cooperation with the Burundian Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. The project kicked off with a field visit to take stock of the situation: the sizes of the plots of farmland available to each organisation, the number of active members, the crops grown and each organisation’s involvement in market gardening.

Training

After assessing the situation, the project organised five training courses to prepare the urban and peri-urban market gardening organisations for enhancing their capacities in the domain. The training courses addressed several issues:

- participatory diagnosis;
- management and restructuring of market gardening organisations;
- the Integrated Production and Pest Management (IPPM) method;
- horticultural techniques for the farmer field schools;
- growth and production of mushroom spores.

Sixty urban and twenty peri-urban organisations (representing 3,328 market gardeners, 2,318 of whom are women) benefited from a training course on the management and restructuring of organisations, which enabled them to organise themselves better and manage their production.

A training course on the Integrated Production and Pest Management (IPPM) method targeted local agronomists and organisation leaders. It gave participants a better understanding of the role of agronomists and allowed them to look together into the kind of cooperation that could be developed between agronomists and market gardening organisations.

At the course on horticultural techniques, the women participants were able to see the importance of training and information for improving their market gardening activities. Most of them carry out agricultural activities on a daily basis and thought that they were well-equipped to do this. However, the training course opened their eyes to the fact that the methods they were using were often outdated and that they could revitalise their fields.

Ongoing support

The market gardening organisations who are members of CAFOB have been identified

and analysed through participatory diagnosis, a method that enables organisations to understand their problems, constraints and potential and the importance of natural resources in their production environment, according to field size, crops grown and their experience in market gardening.

The UPH project supports them in a professionalisation process based on the IPPM approach (which is used in the farmer field schools), the use of foundation seeds and training that covers aspects ranging from the preparation of nurseries and fields, sowing and seed care, to harvesting. A second cycle of training courses – involving 25 organisations this time – is currently underway and will give the organisations concerned access to microcredit so that they can improve their production and income.

The organisations are now asking the project to train them in marketing and small-scale processing of their harvests.

National Horticulture Day

Burundi’s first-ever National Horticulture Day took place on 11 November 2011. A great many of the market gardening organisations who are members of CAFOB and other urban and peri-urban organisations that grow vegetables, fruit and flowers took up the UPH project’s invitation and met in the public garden of Bujumbura city hall.

The organisers of National Horticulture Day offered organisations the opportunity to present and sell their products. Once more, it was clear to see that it is women who are the most heavily involved in market gardening.

The official speeches made at the event made the women from the market gardening organisations realise that this Day had been organised to raise the status of their activity, which made them proud. This was demonstrated by a woman market gardener who made a speech on behalf of all the market gardeners – she could hardly believe that she was standing beside the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock to talk about what she does!

Exchanges and cooperation

In December 2011, CAFOB organised a networking workshop for 70 urban and peri-urban market gardening organisations that are partners of the UPH project. Networking will enable these organisations to share all kinds of information about their activities, from sowing right up to selling. Organisations will no longer be isolated – instead, they will work in close cooperation with one another to perform even better, increase their production and create sales markets in a spirit of cooperation and exchange.

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Senegal | Improved techniques for processing fishery products by the women of Toubacouta

The Italian Programme for Food Security or FSCA (Food Security through Commercialisation of Agriculture) has trained women in new techniques for processing fishery products, which helps them to guarantee food security for their families.

Having left the tranquillity of their village and travelled more than 250 kilometres, Yandé Ndaw, a fishery product processor and chairwoman of Soucouta local women's union, and her friends finally arrive in Dakar. They are exhausted but happy because they are preparing for a new and exciting experience. They have come to Dakar carrying several hundred kilograms of processed fishery products – dried fish, shells and dried prawns and oysters.

To mark World Fisheries Day (celebrated on 21 November), the Fédération Nationale des Groupements d'Intérêt Economique de Pêcheurs (FENAGIE PECHE – National Federation of Fishers' Economic Interest Groups) organised a small trade fair for fishery products in Dakar. Yandé, Marème, Fatou and three of their colleagues – a total of six women representing six unions of women's groups from Toubacouta – made the most of this opportunity and sold almost all of the products they had brought with them. The secret of their success? The high quality of the products they process.

Better techniques thanks to FSCA

Yandé and her friends seize any opportunity to praise the Italian Programme for Food Security, which enabled them to learn the techniques for processing fishery products. These



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women are the main beneficiaries of FSCA's activities in Toubacouta, which seeks to help disadvantaged households to guarantee their own food security by enhancing products for the market.

Training women in new processing techniques has been identified as an efficient way to enhance fishery products while ensuring the sustainability of resources. Several training sessions were held, and 20 women from each union took part. The initial training course was attended by 80 women from four unions. These women then organised extension sessions for the other members of their unions.

Communication for development strategy

To support FSCA in finding solutions to the communication problems faced by the programme's staff and beneficiaries, a communication for development strategy was developed based on a comprehensive evaluation. The following objectives were determined:

- identify and create mechanisms to facilitate exchanges between all stakeholders and promote interaction at all levels, with a significant increase in information flow;
- create content that takes account of the beneficiaries' needs and that will help them to make the desired changes, and disseminate this content using informa-

- tion channels that are chosen for their suitability to those targeted by the strategy;
- boost the project's visibility to encourage involvement and support among the target populations and also reach other populations as the new knowledge is disseminated;
- establish follow-up/feedback mechanisms so that there is a constant flow of information about the stakeholders regarding the progress and perception of the project's activities, including communication activities (Focus Group, individual in-depth interviews, forms, and so on).

In order to produce the highest-quality products, special emphasis was placed on rules of health and hygiene, choice of raw materials, the fermentation process, salting and drying. As part of the training sessions, the women received several types of material to help them to improve their activities. They now have four motorised canoes so they can gather shells without having to depend on men, as well as some handling and processing equipment. Management of this equipment by the group has enabled them to build up a capital of 7200 USD. A nominal fee is paid for the use of material. This fund has provided support to 239 women in the form of individual loans, the maintenance of the boats and the purchase of small equipment.



The ongoing construction of suitable processing sites will round off the fishery product processing business in the rural community of Toubacouta. The processing sites will not just promote quality assurance of the products, they will also enable the women to strengthen their leadership in the sector, make their work considerably easier and shorten production times.

Spreading the word

An imitation effect is beginning to emerge among the women processors who did not receive FSCA assistance: they are copying the principles of the training that was provided.

FSCA's communication for development strategy (see box p. 18) aims to multiply this phenomenon by disseminating good practices among beneficiaries and the wider community, the goal being to encourage the beneficiaries to make the desired changes through a participatory process.

"Consumers prefer clean products that meet quality standards for health, taste and nutritional value." "Good-quality fishery products can be kept for longer." "You need to look after your equipment and keep it in good working order if you want to keep performing your activities in the long term." These are just some of the messages for the beneficiaries. Different media will be used to make sure that the messages reach their target audience – these will include videos, radio, TV, posters, exchange visits, songs, drama, and so on.

A TV programme starring the women processors is currently being filmed. Yandé and her friends, who were already filmed when they went to Dakar, will be back in the spotlight explaining the new processing techniques they use and describing the positive results. The film will be shown on national television and film screenings will be held in isolated villages, like the island village of Bossinkang. Each screening will be followed by discussions that will enable exchanges between women processors and technicians with a view to facilitating the adoption of the new method for processing fish products.



FSCA – the Italian Programme for Food Security in West Africa

In Senegal, more than half of the population is employed in the agricultural and fishery sectors, which account for almost 17% of the country's GDP. There is great potential and it is far from being fully exploited – the rural populations working in these two sectors are among the most disadvantaged in the country. There is arable land and surface and underground water for irrigation, there are rainy winters again, and Senegal's 718 km coastline is said to have one of the highest fish populations in the world, yet food insecurity remains widespread in rural areas. To support these populations, the Senegalese government, the Italian development cooperation and FAO have decided to set up a programme to help organisations of men and women producers to exploit new growth areas in order to reduce poverty and guarantee food security.

FSCA is a regional programme run by the Italian government in seven West African

countries, namely Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone. It aims to help the people of the sub-region to overcome the food insecurity situation they are facing.

The national project in Senegal was launched in July 2008. It targets the men and women producers marketing high-quality onions in Léona, the diversification of market gardening and cereal produce in Wack Gouna, and the processing of fishery products in Toubacouta.

In its activities, FSCA prefers not to provide production equipment or distribute inputs that will boost the productivity of fields that are already being worked on by the target populations. Instead, it consciously chooses to support its partners in enhancing what is already being produced, in diversifying crops so that farmers are not dependent on a single crop, and in marketing products under optimal conditions so as to increase incomes.

For more information, please contact:

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Dr Denis Mukwege wins the King Baudouin International Development Prize

In May 2011, the King Baudouin Foundation (KBF) awarded the 2010-2011 King Baudouin Prize for International Development to Dr Denis Mukwege, gynaecologist and Director of Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The Prize was awarded to Dr Denis Mukwege for restoring dignity to thousands of women victims of sexual violence by providing medical care and social support; for his dedication to building an integrated healthcare system in eastern Congo; and for his profound commitment to his native country, as he tirelessly advocates a return to peace in a region where terror and fear are destroying the very fabric of society.

Beyond his work at Panzi Hospital, Dr Mukwege has gained international recognition for advocating tirelessly on behalf of the victims of sexual violence in the DRC. At risk to his own life, he persistently appeals to policymakers for increased protection of the region's women.

Dr Mukwege has also championed the implementation of an integrated healthcare system in eastern Congo that meets the unique challenges of violence and chaos. This work, along with his activities in the medical field, makes him a true actor for development.

Dr Peter Piot, then Chairman of the KBF, said: "Dr Mukwege is one of Africa's greatest humanitarians, whose work is a source of hope and inspiration for people across the African continent. He is shining a spotlight on one of the most pernicious and deplorable human rights abuses in the world – violence against women."

"It is a privilege and an honour for me to receive the King Baudouin International Development Prize. Most importantly, I am grateful for the opportunity to reiterate the critical need for all of us to take action for women in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We cannot risk being silent on this grave injustice – destroying women means destroying life," said Dr Mukwege. He often says "I would rather be just another doctor than be recognised because of a situation to which the world does not want to put an end, recognised because of my efforts to remedy the terrible consequences of human folly and fight such tragedy."

Dr Mukwege's background and activities

Denis Mukwege was born in South Kivu in 1955. He studied medicine in Burundi and specialised in gynaecology and obstetrics in France. When he returned to the DRC, he set up a gynaecology ward in his native region, but it was destroyed during the first civil war that ravaged eastern Congo. Dr Mukwege had to flee the region and went to live in Bukavu, where again he observed the suffering of women who had no access to appropriate care at childbirth. He decided to set up a maternity unit at Panzi, in the southern suburbs of Bukavu.

Panzi Hospital was established in 1999. While its primary aim was to provide free medical care to the people of Bukavu, it quickly became a reference centre for victims of sexual violence.



© Wouter Rawoens

In this war-torn region, hundreds of thousands of women have been raped or savagely mutilated over the past 16 years. At Panzi Hospital, where healthcare is provided free of charge, victims of sexual violence regain the will to live. Patients are offered comprehensive care: treatment of their physical and emotional injuries is coupled with a socio-economic reintegration process.

For more information:
www.panzihospital.org



The King Baudouin African Development Prize (formerly the King Baudouin Prize for International Development) rewards outstanding contributions of individuals or organisations in the development field in Africa.

The Prize spotlights innovative initiatives which improve quality-of-life and empower local communities to take development into their own hands.

You can find all the information you need about the Prize, its past winners and the selection procedures at:
www.kbprize.org

DRC | On bikes to fight rape in Katanga

Readers following the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) will know that the country is severely affected by a scourge of sexual violence. People are aware of the gravity of the situation in the east of the country, but they often do not know that the people living around Upemba Park in northern Katanga also suffered a lot during the war.

Although it is difficult to find reliable statistics on the current situation, reports and field visits indicate that despite the significant impact of awareness-raising and support campaigns, the security, legal, socio-economic and, above all, socio-cultural and customary context allows this scourge to persist and continue destroying thousands of lives each year.

Rape is still a taboo subject

The taboo that surrounds sexual violence is one of the reasons for the continued existence of this dreadful situation, which is further exacerbated by the impunity that is a consequence of the taboo. Women rarely report rapes because they are afraid of being stigmatised and rejected by their family and their community. If they talk about rape, they can lose their security and their future. The community often turns its back on them at a time when they most need its support, help and understanding.

Against this backdrop, a team of volunteers from the NGO Kanyandu and the Réseau Femmes et Développement-Katanga (REFED-Katanga – Women and Development Network Katanga) organised an awareness-raising campaign in the Luena area (Bukama territory, Haut-Lomami district, Katanga province). The target communities were chosen primarily because of their central geographic location, their relatively large populations and the intensity of the problem of sexual violence there.

On their bikes to fight rape

Given the poor condition of the roads in Luena and the lack of a telephone network, radio and television, its communities are completely isolated, especially during the rainy

season. Bicycles are the main means of transport for people and goods... and also for the volunteers' awareness-raising campaign. "With bicycles, it was fairly easy for us to reach communities that do not usually receive any information," said one of the volunteers.

Inspired by the Mobile Cinema project, the team organised a series of screenings of the film "Fighting the Silence". In the film, rape victims and their families publicly describe their experiences and the consequences they suffered. By talking about what happened to them, these women give a voice to the thousands of others – both men and women – who decided to remain silent rather than risk their own families and communities turning their backs on them. The accounts given in the film show that it is possible to report rape and explain how to go about it.

The film was screened in six villages, and after each screening, the members of the audience were given the opportunity to react, express their feelings, ask questions, voice opinions, and so on. In this way, the communities were encouraged to break down the wall of silence for the first time and exchange their ideas. At the end of the discussions, the participants were told what actions to take in cases of sexual violence to ensure that the victims receive the right medical, psycho-social and legal support.

Around 2,500 people attended the screenings and took part in the community discussions. In Bukama and Kintobongo, the team also organised training workshops for some 120 community leaders, who were supplied with information materials such as leaflets and rape



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case recording sheets. In these workshops, the team spoke out against impunity and stressed the importance of good basic education for children who do not currently have access to it.

Combining screenings with discussions made it possible to spread the message to many people at once. Some screenings were attended by up to 700 people! The team's use of bicycles did not just attract a lot of attention wherever the team went, it also brought the team much closer to the local people.

Since rural populations have no information whatsoever about sexual violence, this awareness-raising campaign was a much-needed first step. However, it is clear that much more needs to be done for people to begin changing their attitudes and behaviour.

For more information about the project:

Guy Capals – guy.capals@gmail.com
<http://velovsviolfr.blogspot.com>

For more information about the film:

www.fightingthesilence.com
www.mobilecinemafoundation.com



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2012 | International Year of Cooperatives: Cooperative enterprises build a better world



The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC), highlighting their contribution to socio-economic development, particularly their impact on poverty reduction, employment generation and social integration.

With the theme of "Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World", the 2012 IYC seeks to encourage the establishment and growth of cooperatives. Concretely, the IYC's objectives are to increase awareness of individuals, communities and governments on the contribution of cooperatives to socio-economic development, highlight their diversity and resourcefulness and encourage governments to establish policies, laws and regulations conducive to their formation and growth.

Cooperatives are business enterprises owned and controlled by the very members that they serve. This means that decisions made in these enterprises are balanced by the pursuit of profit and the needs and interests of members and their communities. They can make invaluable contributions to poverty reduction, employment generation and social integration and are an alternative means of doing business and furthering socioeconomic development.

They play a crucial role in the sector of agriculture and rural development. It is estimated

that 30% of the 300 largest cooperatives are in the food and agriculture sector, most of them in developed economies (France, Japan, the USA) and that they market up to 50% of global agricultural output. But also in emerging and developing countries their contribution to the economy is important.

“Cooperatives are a reminder to the international community that it is possible to pursue both economic viability and social responsibility.”

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON

In Brazil, for example, in 2009 cooperatives were responsible for 37.2% of agricultural GDP and 5.4% of overall GDP, with 1 million members in agro cooperatives. In India, 16.5 million litres of milk are collected daily from 12 million farmers in dairy cooperatives and women's income from these cooperatives represents an important share of household income.

In Kenya, the assets of savings and credit of this type of enterprises account for 31% of gross national savings. In Egypt, 4 million farmers earn an income through membership of agricultural cooperatives and in Ethiopia about 900,000 people in the agricultural sector generate part of their income through them.

FAO recognizes and reaffirms the importance of cooperative enterprises for improving food security. The organisation actively participates in the IYC, mainly by supporting governments in the development of an enabling environment in which these enterprises can thrive and are strengthened, and by developing capacities of producers' organisations to be more equitable and inclusive. Importantly, men and women members of cooperatives need to have equitable access to productive inputs, output markets, natural resources and voice in decision-making.

For more information:
<http://social.un.org/coopsyear>

NEW FAO GENDER ACTIVITIES

◎ SOFA website

A website dedicated to the State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2010-2011 "Women in Agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development" is now available, offering links to the SOFA and access to a range of information products featuring facts and in-depths analyses about the individual topics examined in the report, including rural employment, financial services and technologies. The site also offers related policy recommendations, videos, and a "did you know" section.

In parallel, an animation video underlining the main messages of the SOFA has been developed and is also available on the website. The 2-minute video boldly emphasizes the key topics of the report in a way that is entertaining and easy to understand, offering a convenient platform for anyone wishing for an overview of the report and a valuable tool for development practitioners to present the SOFA in a succinct way.

www.fao.org/sofa/gender

◎ Gender and Rural Employment Policy Brief #7 *Breaking the rural poverty cycle: Getting girls and boys out of work and into school*

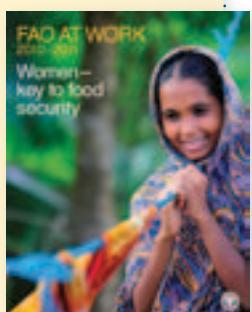
Instead of attending school, millions of girls and boys in rural areas worldwide are child labourers. They are everywhere, but often hidden, on farms, on fishing boats, in plantations, in mountain areas, herding livestock or toiling as domestic servants. Child labour perpetuates a cycle of poverty for the children involved, their families and communities. Without education, these rural boys and girls are likely to be the poor of tomorrow. Policies must address the root causes of child labour and promote decent work for adults in rural areas. This new policy brief on gender and rural employment published by FAO, IFAD and ILO examines gender-sensitive policy options to get girls and boys out of work and into school. Taking into consideration the distinct aspects of rural girls' and boys' labour in rural areas, the brief puts forward a set of policy recommendations pertaining to employment, vulnerability, laws, education, rural policies, programmes and research, and to social dialogue to eliminate child labour and break the poverty cycle.

www.fao.org/docrep/014/i2008f/i2008foo.htm

◎ FAO at work 2010-2011: *Women – key to food security*

This edition of FAO at work looks at the findings of the SOFA report and the huge boost to food production that would occur if women farmers were given the same access as men to productive resources such as land and credit – enough to lift 100-150 million people out of hunger. The publication also reviews the evolution of the US\$1.5 billion FAO field programme and highlights key events and achievements during the time period.

www.fao.org/docrep/014/am719e/am719e00.pdf



Resources

WEBSITES

◎ Gender in Ag

This is an online forum of The World Bank, FAO and IFAD which is designed to provide access to resources, tools and information which can help practitioners and other stakeholders to mainstream gender into agricultural development. The site is dedicated to raising gender awareness and improving gender mainstreaming to promote improved gender equality and gender equity in development.

www.genderinag.org

◎ eAtlas of Gender

The World Bank eAtlas of Gender is an interactive electronic atlas which allows users to map and graph dozens of gender-related indicators – including wages and earnings, mean age at first marriage, maternal leave benefits, school enrolment rates, violence against women and more – over time and across countries. It allows users to see how a country fares on several dimensions of well-being and empowerment. Click on an indicator after a keyword search and a world map appears, showing the latest data for more than 200 economies.

www.app.collinsindicate.com/worldbankatlas-gender/en

◎ Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA)

The GGCA was launched at the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali in December 2007. Its membership includes over 50 UN agencies and civil society organisations. Working together, the GGCA continues to be recognized as a unique and effective partnership that brings a human face to climate change decision-making and initiatives.

www.gender-climate.org

PUBLICATIONS

◎ Because I am a Girl: The State of the World's Girls 2011 - So, what about boys?

This report shows that far from being an issue just for women and girls, gender is also about boys and men, and that this needs to be better understood if we are going to have a positive impact on societies and economies. Drawing on research and case studies, it argues that working for equality must involve men and boys both as holders of power and as a group that is also suffering the consequences of negative gender stereotypes. It also makes recommendations for action, showing policy makers and planners what can make a real difference to girls' lives all over the world.

Plan International, 2011
<http://plan-international.org/girls>

Note: Most of the publications mentioned here are available on-line for free (unless otherwise specified). Most web links are too long to provide in their entirety. If the publications are hard to find on the organisations' websites, it usually suffices to do a google search.

◎ Commercial pressures on land

Seven new reports, including case studies from Latin America, Asia and Africa, shed light on the implications for small-scale producers and communities of land concentration and large-scale acquisitions of land driven by factors such as rising food consumption, increasing commodity prices, demand for feedstock for agrofuels, carbon-trading mechanisms, and rent seeking and speculation. Along with the new studies are 11 new policy briefs with key findings and recommendations on the broad challenges posed by commercial pressures on land. The global research project on commercial pressures on land brought together over 30 civil society organisations and research institutions to provide a broad set of perspectives and insights on many aspects of the issue.

ILC, 2011

www.landcoalition.org/cplstudies

◎ Strategies to get gender onto the agenda of the "land grab" debate

The International Land Coalition's Commercial Pressures on Land (CPL) initiative aims to support the efforts of ILC members and other stakeholders to influence global, regional, and national processes to enable secure and equitable access to land for poor women and men in the face of increasing commercial demand. Its global research contains a careful and focused analysis of the gendered impacts of CPL, and especially the impacts on women. This concludes that:

1. Women (and women's NGOs and CSOs) need to actively and strategically organise at all levels to get gender issues around CPL on the table of current and forthcoming processes on regulatory responses;
2. The gendered impacts of CPL need to be seriously addressed within this process in relation to all four aspects of women's vulnerability (systemic discrimination related to land access, ownership, and control; systemic discrimination related to decision-making; relative income poverty; and general physical vulnerability);
3. Gender issues must not be subsumed within the broader debate on CPL.

ILC, Policy Brief, March 2011

www.landcoalition.org

◎ Cutting Edge Pack on Gender and Climate Change

This Pack sets out why it is vital to address the gender dimensions of climate change. It maps pathways for making climate change responses more gender aware and – potentially – transformative. It includes inspiring examples of innovations and good practice at local, national and global levels. Climate change is increasingly being recognised as a global crisis, but responses to it have so far been overly focused on scientific and economic solutions. How then do we move towards more people-centred, gender-aware climate change policies and processes? How do we respond to the different needs of women and men, while also challenging the gender inequalities that mean women are more likely to lose out than men in the face of climate change?

BRIDGE, 2011

www.bridge.ids.ac.uk

◎ Engendering the climate for change.

Policies and practices for gender-just adaptation

This research report explicitly highlights the causes and concerns of women due to a changing climate. It points out that climate change will put extra pressure on women's activities ranging from agriculture, fetching water to fodder collection, and critically analyses the implications for women's livelihood generation. It asserts that most of India's responses to climate change and its adaptation policies at best are "gender blind" or "gender neutral". Even though the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) of India explicitly and implicitly recognizes gender concerns, it largely ignores any gender specific measures in the climate change adaptation mechanism and proactive gender agenda.

Alternative Futures and Heinrich Böll Foundation,

2011

<http://alternativefutures.org.in>

◎ Gender & climate change: 3 things you should know

Gender analysis helps find ways to mitigate possible risks that may exacerbate gender inequality, and highlights opportunities to enhance positive outcomes. In the context of climate change, this has three key implications: (i) women are disproportionately vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters and climate change where their rights and socio-economic status are not equal to those of men, (ii) empowerment of women is an important ingredient in building climate resilience, and (iii) low-emissions development pathways can be more effective and more equitable where they are designed using a gender-informed approach.

The World Bank, 2011

www.worldbank.org

◎ Girls Grow: A Vital Force in Rural Economies

This publication identifies opportunities to empower rural girls to spur economic and social change in their families and communities. Adolescent girls must be a key part of successful agricultural and rural economic development strategies, as they are many of the world's future farmers, rural leaders, decision-makers, and mothers. Rural adolescent girls face a triple challenge due to their location, gender, and age. The report calls on national governments and bilateral donors to provide services and opportunities that both improve girls' lives and equip them to be successful economic contributors. Recommended actions include ensuring girls complete secondary school, increasing access to vocational training, eliminating barriers girls face in the work place, building girls' capacity as decision makers, enhancing health services information and delivery to girls in rural areas, and keeping girls safe.

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2011

www.thechicagocouncil.org



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◎ **How do community-based legal programs work. Understanding the process and benefits of a pilot program to advance women's property rights in Uganda**

Women's property rights, especially access to land, are increasingly recognized as critical to achieving poverty reduction and gender equality. Research shows that community-based legal aid programmes are a viable approach to improving legal knowledge and women's access to legal resources to address property issues. From 2009-2010, the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and the Uganda Land Alliance (ULA) implemented and evaluated a pilot programme to strengthen women's property rights. This report describes the pilot programme's implementation, outcomes and lessons. It details the programme design, methodologies for monitoring and evaluation, and the context in which it was implemented. Findings include a discussion of challenges encountered by the rights workers and overall programme achievements. And recommendations for community rights work as an approach to promoting women's property rights also are included.

ICRW, 2011

www.icrw.org/publications

◎ **ICT in Agriculture Sourcebook**

The 15 modules of this e-Sourcebook touch on a wide spectrum of sub-fields in agriculture, including risk management, gender, forest governance, and farmers' organisations. The Introduction (Module 1) introduces users to the 'ICT in agriculture' topic, offering key themes throughout the sourcebook as well as more details on how to use it. Each module is stand-alone in format, providing users with the advantage of selecting the module or modules closest to their interest or work.

Section 1: Overview of ICT in Agriculture

Section 2: Enhancing Productivity on the Farm

Section 3: Assessing Markets and Value Chains

Section 4: Improving Public Service Provision

The World Bank, ARD and infoDev, 2011

www.ictinagriculture.org

◎ **Overcoming the barriers: How to ensure future food production under climate change in Southern Africa**

For this report, Oxfam and Kulima Integrated Development Solutions interviewed farmers in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi and South Africa about their experiences of changes in climate. Farmers are already actively experimenting with changing agricultural practices, and looking for ways to diversify their livelihoods in response to climate and other stresses, within their resource constraints. But where large-scale farmers, in the main, can access the resources needed to adapt, small-scale farmers face major obstacles. Policy makers need to identify the barriers for farmers, particularly smallholder farmers, as they attempt to adapt to the new climate and other environmental, economic and political pressures.

Oxfam, November 2011

<http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications>

◎ **Progress of the World's Women 2011-2012: In Pursuit of Justice**

This report shows that where laws and justice systems work well, they can provide an essential mechanism for women to realize their human rights. However, it also underscores the fact that, despite widespread guarantees of equality, the reality for many millions of women is that justice remains out of reach. The report highlights the practical barriers that women – particularly the poorest and most excluded – face in negotiating justice systems and the innovative approaches that governments and civil society are pioneering to overcome them. It explores the ways in which women are reconciling guarantees of their rights with the realities of living within plural legal systems. And it highlights the severe challenges that women face in accessing justice in the aftermath of conflict, as well as the enormous opportunities for change that can emerge in these most difficult times.

UN Women, 2011

<http://progress.unwomen.org>

◎ **Smart water solutions. Examples of innovative, low-cost technologies for wells, pumps, storage, irrigation and water treatment**

This booklet on water gives examples of innovations such as the use of sunlight to purify water, effective low-cost water filters, low-cost drip irrigation and locally produced hand pumps that are five

times cheaper than imported pumps. By using these technologies, poor rural families can double and even triple their annual income. The technologies described are sources of inspiration.

CTA/KIT, 2010

www.cta.int

◎ **The Struggle over Land in Africa - Conflicts, Politics & Change**

This book analyses the role of land as a place and source of conflict, especially with regard to policy development, crisis management and post-war/post-conflict reconstruction. The authors' main aim is to gain insight into the nature of policy-making concerning land and to delve into the underlying causes of these land issues, not only at national level but also in terms of broader Africa. The book covers land issues in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, northern Cameroon, Namibia, Mozambique, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Some of the themes explored include: ethnic and indigenous land conflicts, traditionalism versus modernity, renewed land interests, land use and conflict, state building, politics and land (for example agricultural land reform); land policy development, planning, inclusiveness/non-inclusiveness; regional scopes of land conflicts and changing norms.

HSRC, 2010 - €30

www.hsrcpress.ac.za

◎ **Women and Land. Securing Rights for Better Lives**

Land is an important source of security against poverty across the developing world, but, in many places, unequal rights to land put women at a disadvantage, perpetuates poverty, and entrenches gender inequality. Surprisingly little detailed information exists on women's relationship to land, and even less is informed by women themselves. This book focuses on recent findings from sub-Saharan Africa, where researchers in 14 countries explored the topic from many angles – legal, customary, political, and economic. Researchers from NGOs, academics and grassroots activists worked together with communities on the research, exploring the experiences of women in specific contexts.

IDRC, 2011

www.idrc.ca

◎ **World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development**

The lives of girls and women have changed dramatically over the past quarter century. The pace of change has been astonishing in some areas, but in others, progress toward gender equality has been limited – even in developed countries. The 2012 WDR argues that gender equality is a core development objective in its own right. It is also smart economics. Greater gender equality can enhance productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions more representative. The report also focuses on four priority areas for policy going forward: (i) reducing excess female mortality and closing education gaps where they remain, (ii) improving access to economic opportunities for women (iii) increasing women's voice and agency in the household and in society and (iv) limiting the reproduction of gender inequality across generations.

The World Bank, September 2011 - US\$26

www.worldbank.org/wdr2012