



Food Security in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

Newsletter for DIPECHO / ECHO DRR Food Security Partners

Agro-forestry in South-eastern Madagascar

An effective System for Improved Natural Resources Management as part of FS DRR

The South-eastern region of Madagascar, where most families (80% of the population) depend on agriculture, is regularly affected by floods and cyclones, causing severe damages to crops, land degradation and loss of human lives and livelihoods. Repeated climatic shocks, such as floods and cyclones erode poor families' livelihoods and increase their level of vulnerability leading to chronic and acute food insecurity. One of the solutions to reduce the risk to disaster and to help reduce land degradation and increase agriculture productivity is the practice of agro-forestry techniques.

Agro-forestry, which is an association of perennial trees or shrubs with farming and/or pasture on a given land, is an innovative system introduced in this region through a technical partnership between FAO and FOFIFA (an applied research national center on rural development), in support to the ICCO/SAF FJKM project funded by ECHO (PATSA Project).

The technique was piloted in Mahela village, Soamanova community in Vaingaindrano District, which forms part of the project's intervention zone. Plot cultures were prepared along contour lines, with clove and coffee trees arranged in staggered rows and citrus trees planted in lines along with lines of beans and *Flemingia congesta*.

After a year of work, involved communities in Mahela village have three demonstration plots covering more than 2 ha where

they grow 434 clove trees, 145 citrus trees, half a hectare of beans, and 0.20 hectare of *Flemingia rows*. In addition, they have two coffee tree nurseries.

Nineteen (19) farmers stemming from four associations are fully involved in the adoption of the agro-forestry techniques, with eleven hectares of area planted. As they became aware of the benefits from agro-forestry in the long run (such as having improved bean seeds for their next farming season, generating additional and lasting income sources through coffee and clove trees, soil conservation with the system adopted, etc.), two new farmers' associations from neighboring villages were formed out of their own initiative to replicate this practice on a bigger piece of land. The new associations were trained by FAO's technician.

On November 14, FAO and FOFIFA in collaboration with ICCO/SAF organized a workshop in Soamanova to share the results on the agro-forestry activities, the challenges encountered, lessons learned, and to discuss the next steps in promoting this innovative approach with all stakeholders (farmers, the PATSA project, local authorities, governmental services at the local level, and other local structures such as the Agricultural Service Center). The workshop was an opportunity for farmers to discuss among themselves and share experiences on lessons learned, best practices, and perspectives for the future of agro-forestry in their area. Farmers expressed strong commitment to continue this activity.



Left to Right : Workshop participants visiting one of the coffee tree nurseries in Mahela Village, Vaingaindrano District, Madagascar; Tree seedlings sprouting; One of the farmers Mr Theodore, in front of his agro-forestry plot. FAO Madagascar, November 2011

Malawi DIPECHO Partners holds a National Consultative Meeting

Malawi DIPECHO Partners conducted a two-day National Consultative Meeting at the Capital Hotel in Lilongwe on 6 - 7 December, 2011. The meeting attracted a wide range of participants including government officials, DIPECHO partners (COOPI, EAM, GOAL, FAO and UN HABITAT) and other stakeholders. The meeting provided an opportunity to share experiences, lessons learnt and best practices among the DIPECHO partners and other stakeholders. These consultations also helped to inform the future programming of DRR work and Climate Change Adaption in Malawi, especially for flood and drought prone districts. Stakeholders identified activities that the partners could focus on during DIPECHO III.



Key recommendations from the meeting included the need for DIPECHO partners to:

- Document and compile best practices for wide dissemination to stakeholders at all levels in the country to enable scaling-up of these practices in Malawi;
- Develop a community led and people centered early warning system in partnership with government departments to be initiated through Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA);
- Scale-up Food Security in DRR interventions including Conservation Agriculture;
- Advocate for a comprehensive inventory of rivers that require river bank reinforcement in the country. The exercise should include cost estimates broken down by type of mitigation measure to assist government, civil society as well as the private sector to seek financial support from the donor community;
- Extensively lobby for wide spread use of GIS in risk assessment and inclusion of GIS in the University Curricula; and
- DoDMA should initiate and coordinate the harmonization of participatory vulnerability and risk assessment tools that are used by various development partners in the country for adoption by various stakeholders to simplify coordination and enhance cross project comparison of results.

Will Farmers be able to Purchase Seed after the Project Phases Out?

One of the strategies of addressing crop loss in the FS DRR ECHO project is provision of seed of early maturing crop varieties. The shorter time to maturity reduces the risk of floods and that destroys crops before reaching harvest time. Additionally early maturing crops can be grown twice a year, and can be multiplied by farmers ensuring availability for the following season. One challenge is that the seed requires replacement after three planting seasons to maintain productivity. A major concern is the question on the willingness and capability of farmers to repurchase foundation seed after the project phases out.

A study commissioned by FAO in August 2011, revealed that farmers are willing to repurchase foundation seed of early maturing varieties after three planting seasons, as they are convinced with the results of the project and have already started preparing for that. A good example is the project in Salima District in Malawi where project beneficiaries have opened a bank account after sale of proceeds from the project and can use those funds to purchase seed in future. In Malawi seed is available in the local market and there is a well established widespread retail network up to village level. In Mozambique seed is available in urban areas, but scarce at community level, while as in Madagascar there is no seed market.



For future programming it will be important to facilitate linkages between farmers and the seed market; continue monitoring farmer cultivation practices and provide training to overcome suboptimal practices (benefits of conservation agriculture); focus on consolidating beneficiary groups through soft skills training; and build capacity and structures for political sustainability.

Left: One of the female farmers who participated in the multiplication of pearl millet in Chikhwawa District in Malawi.

FAO REOSA, March 2011

Supporting Government in DRR Budget Analysis and Monitoring: The Malawi Experience

Malawi DIPECHO/ECHO partners led by Christian Aid, engaged in an advocacy campaign for increased Disaster Risk reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) resource allocation in the national budget. The Government of Malawi declared in its Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (2006-2011) that Climate Change and Natural Resource Management is a priority development and investment area. The objective of the DIPECHO/ECHO advocacy campaign was to strengthen government efforts on its path to making climate change a top priority. In addition partners managed to lobby for the unlocking of 'Forestry Development Fund' which had not been used despite government collecting the forestry levies for along time. Partners also lobbied for the creation of special 'Emergency Fund' for the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) to ensure effective and timely disaster response.

While the budget analysis focussed on increased allocation towards DRR and Climate Change Adaptation, the ultimate goal was to lobby the national and local governments to mainstream DRR in their local development planning. The process involved engagement and sensitization of the critical stakeholders including the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, Members of Parliament (MP) from disaster prone districts, and affected communities. The advocacy project resulted in increased political will in providing better leverage for more resources in DRR and CCA.



"Political commitment and allocation of adequate resources to Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation will ensure improvement of lives and livelihoods of vulnerable populations"

FAO REOSA, March 2011

CLaSP Project Develops a DRR Impact Evaluation Tool

Coordination, Learning and Sharing Platform (CLaSP) project commissioned CERED (member of PERIPERI University Network) to develop an impact evaluation tool. The tool aims to provide DIPECHO partners with an opportunity to measure the impact of DRR activities and to harmonize the impact assessment methodology at National and Regional level.

The tool is user friendly, secure and able to measure community resilience. It comes together with Results Instruction Manual (RIM) and a guide to be used in interpreting the results.

FAO REOSA releases a Gender, HIV and AIDS Training Manual

FAO REOSA developed a training manual for community workers and project beneficiaries on integration of gender, HIV and AIDS in disaster risk reduction and food security programmes. The manual is in three languages — English, French and Portuguese — to facilitate the roll out of the training at community level.

The **nine** modules in the training manual can be used to provide a five-day comprehensive Training of Trainers Course for community workers or a three-day community level training for project beneficiaries. Alternatively individual modules can be used to provide a half-day or one-day training depending on agency needs.

Printed copies will be available in January 2012

Upcoming Meetings

DIPECHO III planning meetings are ongoing. Contact the Country ECHO FS Project Coordinators (FAO) for dates and details on planned meetings in 2012:

Madagascar (FAO)

Hanitra Randrianarivelo
Hanitra.Randrianarivelo@fao.org

Malawi (FAO)

Samson Kankhande
Samson.Kankhande@fao.org

Mozambique (FAO)

Jose da Graca
Jose.Dagraca@fao.org

ECHO FS/DRR Regional Coordinator (FAO REOSA)

Erin OBrien
Erin.OBrien@fao.org

About this Newsletter

This monthly newsletter aims to share information on activities, lessons learnt and information of interest to ECHO/DIPHECO project partners and stakeholders.

FS/DRR Southern Africa Partners Website

This newsletter can be accessed on the partners website as well as more information on the projects. Visit:

[www.disasterriskreduction.net/southern africa](http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/southern%20africa)

For more Information please contact:

FAO Regional Emergency Office for Southern Africa (REOSA)
Tel: +27 (0)11 517 1500
Email: FAO-REOSA@fao.org