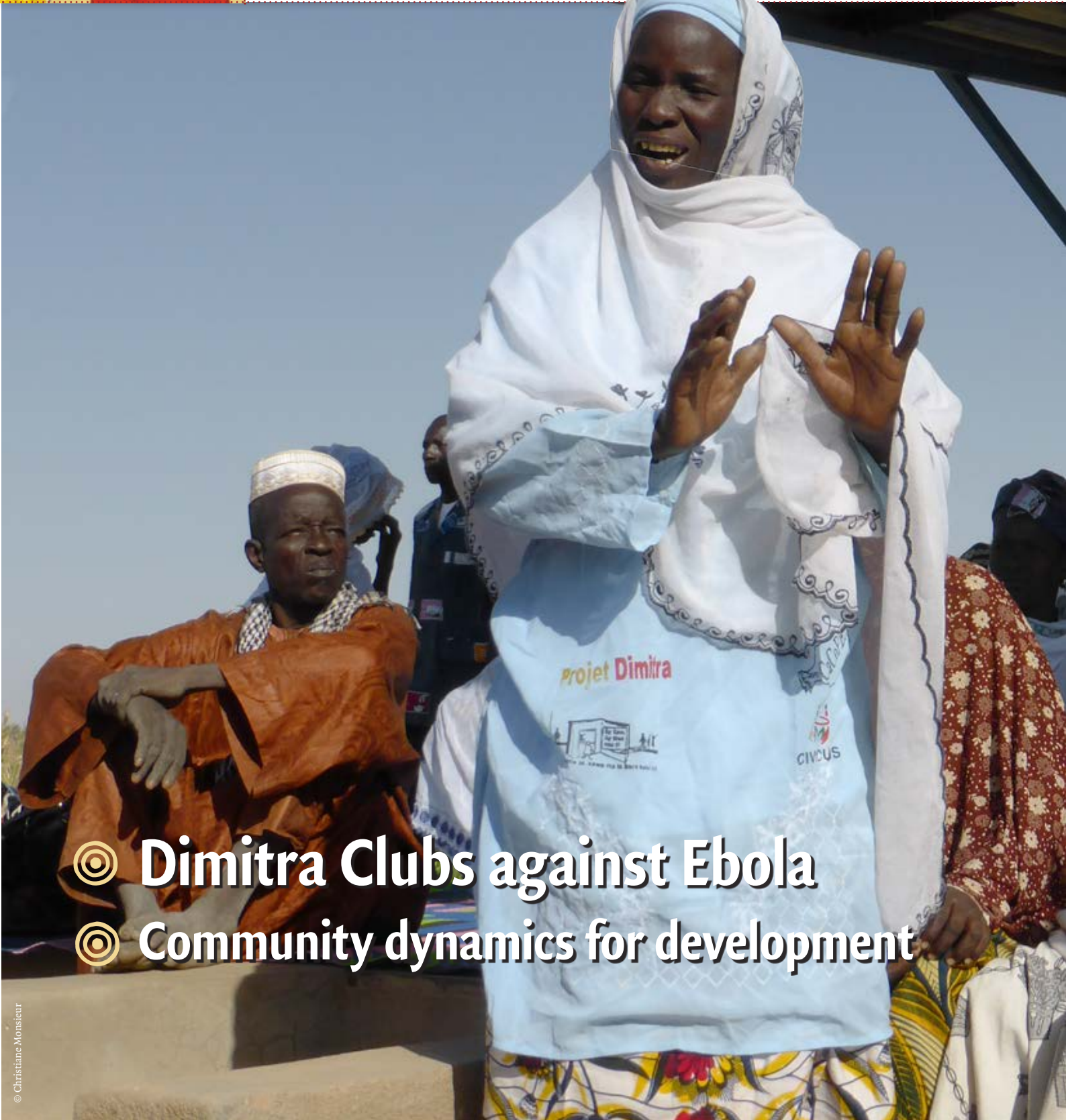




Dimitra Newsletter

GENDER, RURAL WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT



© Dimitra Clubs against Ebola

© Community dynamics for development

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

We welcome 2015 with number 26 of the Dimitra Newsletter. This edition opens with a critical issue: the Ebola crisis and how Dimitra clubs are helping contain the threat of the epidemic in Senegal. The Dimitra approach not only allows to inform and raise awareness in rural communities, but above all ensures a space for communication, where everyone can express their concerns and strengthen their capacities to respond to crises or harness themselves against threats, like a possible outbreak of Ebola. The Dimitra approach proved also effective this way in Niger, for example, where 240 new clubs were put in place as part of the struggle against the effects of climate change.

Other articles also highlight the role of the Dimitra clubs in responding to threats and crises, as linked to strengthening capacities of rural communities, especially women and youth. They give account of results achieved in varying contexts, ranging from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi to Ghana and Niger. In each case, foundations were laid for social change and improved livelihoods. In the Orientale Province in DR Congo, for instance, the approach unleashed new energies among rural dwellers and helped them get better organized.

In Burundi and Ghana, the Dimitra Clubs created a platform for local communities to engage in discussions and action on various themes, such as health, agriculture, and gender. This helped foster social change as identified during the first Dimitra Clubs Forum, held in September 2014 in Northern Ghana.

As usual, this issue also offers examples of innovative projects and approaches. One of these is the FAO Farmer Forest Facility (FFF), which aims to strengthen links between forestry and agricultural producer organizations and facilitate participatory communication. Empowerment of rural women and creating conditions for greater gender equality plays a

central role. The IGETI approach is another. This approach seeks to reduce gender gaps in access to resources and decision-making in a framework of territorial development. The beekeeping initiative in Somalia is another example of innovative ways to empower rural women. Our “Portraits Series” presents a joint interview with H el ene Ryckmans and Elise Muhimuzi, two women – one from Belgium and the other from DR Congo – who have made similar journeys, moving from civil society organizations to politics, with gender equality at the heart of their activities.

A number of important international events were held at the end of 2014. This issue reports on several of them, including the share fair on rural women's technologies held in Nairobi; the XIII UN Inter-Agency Roundtable on Communication for Development, and the Forum on Communication for Development & Community Media for Family Farming, held in Rome as part of the International Year of Family Farming.

Another event on “Family farming interventions to close the gender gap: lessons from Africa” was organized at FAO headquarters on 17 October 2014, during the 41st Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

All of these events set the stage for an intensive year of activities to promote gender equality in agriculture in 2015. It is also the year in which discussions regarding the Post-2015 development agenda will be concluded and expectations are that gender equality will remain high also on the new agenda. That will also bring challenges for FAO in ensuring adequate resource availability to step up our efforts. Such challenges are examined in the closing article of this edition of the Dimitra Newsletter.

We look forward to reading your reactions.

Rob Vos

Director Social Protection Division, FAO

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Senegal/Dimitra Clubs In the frontline against Ebola

After setting up 24 Dimitra listeners' clubs in the Senegal River Valley, since 2013, it is in Vélingara, Casamance, that 40 new Dimitra clubs were launched. Situated close to the border with Guinea Conakry, these clubs have been successfully mobilized to fight the Ebola epidemic.

The 40 Dimitra listeners' clubs are located about 60 km from the border with Guinea, a country badly affected by the Ebola epidemic. They were launched several months ago in the department of Vélingara (Kolda Region), coupled with Farmer Field Schools as part of the Integrated Production and Pest Management (IPPM) programme.

Although the World Health Organization (WHO) has officially declared the end of the Ebola epidemic in Senegal (only a single case was confirmed), the geographical position makes the country vulnerable and people need to know how to react if a new outbreak emerges.

In Senegal, FAO has offered support to the country from the outset of the epidemic, by helping it to draw up a national response plan through various projects, including the Dimitra clubs and the Farmer Field Schools.

Informing and mobilizing communities against Ebola

Good access to information is clearly crucial for informing rural communities and helping them to avoid high-risk behaviour, especially since most people know very little about the disease and its modes of transmission. In Vélingara, an awareness-raising campaign was conducted by the radio station "Bamtaare Dowri", local partner to the 40 Dimitra clubs launched this year, in close collaboration with the Farmer Field Schools.

At the end of September 2014, the 40 leaders of the new clubs, together with 10 facilitators

and the manager of the local community radio station, all had received training from FAO-Dimitra on gender issues, participatory communication and the approach of Dimitra clubs. The Ebola epidemic was one of the themes dealt with during the training sessions, especially from the perspective of addressing the disease in club discussions.

Aside from actors from Vélingara, officials from other projects active in the Senegal River Valley region, where 24 other Dimitra clubs are operating, also took part in this training initiative, together with the head of the Vélingara health district. His presence proved to be crucial for the expertise and information brought on this delicate issue.

It is important to underline that the Dimitra club approach does not simply improve access to information, but it also, and above all, offers communities a space for exchanges, where each person can speak openly about his or her fears and where concrete measures can be taken. The aim is to improve people's capacity to react swiftly when faced with the threat of crises, as has been the case with the Ebola epidemic.

The clubs discuss symptoms, precautions and treatment

The training has enabled clubs to better organize discussions on the Ebola disease, in particular helping with identification of symptoms (how do we know that somebody has Ebola? What are the outward signs?), the precautions to be taken (how to avoid the dis-

ease?) and aspects linked to treatment (what should be done if someone falls sick?).

Vincent Martin, FAO Representative in Senegal, highlights the importance of this type of innovation in promoting development: Dimitra clubs are "spaces for discussion, getting messages across at local level, which is essential if we are to contain the epidemic". "These clubs operate as networks, so they can help to serve as alert systems, by disseminating information and experiences" he said and he concluded: "In this period of high risk, they enable us to quickly mobilize community actors in prevention activities."

The Dimitra clubs go beyond the issue of the Ebola epidemic: it is up to the clubs themselves to identify the subjects that they want to handle and together they can search for solutions to problems they face. Ibrahima Balde, village chief of Saré Mollo, says: "In the space of just a few months, the clubs have strengthened cohesion and dialogue in the village and brought forward the expression of leadership in young people and women. The involvement of women and young people in discussions and decision-making is a very important aspect for the development of our village."

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DR Congo/Dimitra Clubs

New community dynamics

In the District of Tshopo, in Orientale Province, the Dimitra Clubs have shown how effective they can be at fostering endogenous development. Introducing technical innovations, setting up collective fields to multiply varieties of improved seeds, strengthening women's and youth participation in community life, promoting changes in gender roles and new entrepreneurial behaviour by groups and individuals – these are just some of the results achieved by the Dimitra clubs at community level.

Something totally innovative and extraordinary is taking place in 78 extremely isolated Congolese villages, which are hidden in the middle of the equatorial forest, in the District of Tshopo (Orientale Province), more than 1 200 km from the capital, Kinshasa. Following the launch in 2012 of Dimitra community listeners' clubs by FAO, profound changes have occurred.

Since the introduction of this gender sensitive participatory communication approach, one can witness social realities, very different from those you might imagine in such remote areas of the world: rural communities where things are moving, changes in individual and collective behaviour, villagers – women, men and youth – who speak out, set common goals and work together to implement solutions to their problems and those of their communities.

We are a long way from the attitudes of withdrawal, resignation and even the wait-and-see mind-set that is sometimes associated with marginalized communities in isolated rural areas.

In the District of Tshopo, we now see new community dynamics, the result of powerful social mobilization around discussion and action groups – the Dimitra clubs, in which men and women members engage to take charge of their own destinies and influence their own environment. These community dynamics are linked with the community radios and other community members, administrative, traditional and religious authorities, and other associations, such as farmers' organizations. This burgeoning of energy spreads through entire communities and reflects in concrete collective actions that address social or economic issues and which benefit the whole community or smaller social groups – groups of young people or women, local associations or agricultural organizations. Activities result in community work, for example to repair or maintain access roads to villages, to repair public buildings – schools, clinics – to maintain drinking water infrastructures, as well as agricultural development initiatives, such as

multiplying and distributing improved seeds. In the space of two years, the Dimitra clubs have shown how effective they can be in releasing local potential for real endogenous development, which influences positively existing rural organizations and promotes synergies between local actors – both men and women.

There are a number of striking examples: through the clubs, women and young people have started to participate and make their voices heard, not just within the clubs, but also within producers' organizations (POs). Women farmers, in particular, are becoming increasingly involved in the process of decision-making and financial management, assuming leader-

ship roles. They now express their opinions in club debates and dare to speak out in public. This is another example of behavioural change brought about by the Dimitra clubs.

Spaces of collaboration

The new dynamics have also encouraged collaboration between the Dimitra clubs and unions of producers' organizations. The latter have made a number of agricultural innovations available to clubs and villages, or have provided support to collective fields set up by the clubs to multiply seeds of improved varieties of rice (Nerica 4 and 7), maize (yellow Plata and Samarou), groundnuts, cowpeas and soya.



© Christiane Monsieur



When the POs supply seeds to clubs, repayment is made in kind, at a rate of 2kg for every 1 kg received. In cases where Dimitra clubs purchase seeds from the unions, their members all contribute. This type of collaboration establishes healthy, responsible and long-lasting relationships between actors.

The new dynamics at community level have led to new entrepreneurial behaviour among both groups and individuals, such as use of savings and credit. The launch of a savings and credit cooperative is a good example of concrete action (see article on the Yanonge Cooperative at page 6).

The search for outlets by POs looking to sell agricultural surplus is another form of innovative behaviour, also a result of close collaboration between the Dimitra clubs and the unions of producers' organizations.

Thinking and strategizing

How did the Dimitra listeners' clubs manage to trigger social change, within communities, agricultural professional organizations and individuals?

The approach helps to develop a culture of social change through practice, in a cycle of reflection, experimentation and social adaptation. The Dimitra clubs support rural com-

munities, especially people who are often side-lined from this type of process (women, youth) to reflect on how things work and how they could be improved. The club members learn to find solutions and develop strategies to adapt to changes. In pursuing a common goal by focusing on problem solving and action, communities acquire a new sense of what they can achieve and control of their future; they gain self-confidence.

Ultimately, this approach, focused on problem solving, determines to what extent producers are able to take advantage of the possibilities offered to them and is the first step towards organizational development. It allows small-scale producers to gain confidence and believe in their capacity to be in charge of their own development.

The Dimitra club approach brings along a radical change in the roles, responsibilities and mentalities of rural communities on the one hand and of development actors on the other. For rural communities, taking part in collective action means, taking risks. They will have to sacrifice some of their scarce resources in favour of medium and long-term results, with no guarantee for success. This is a significant change compared with short-term survival strategies.

Rethink local development

For such an approach to be truly successful, it should be accompanied by a change in the practices of the development actors in the field. In fact, these should no longer be agents implementing development programmes, but they should become facilitators of processes. By encouraging group dynamics, improving access to information for communities and by restoring confidence in people, the development actors can support villagers, help them to reach consensual agreements, guide their thinking and promote the sharing of experiences.

This kind of approach gives priority to development processes in which rural communities can strengthen their own capacities for organizational and collective action. It enables the most vulnerable actors, including women, to overcome their isolation and to strengthen the development of the rural environment and social cohesion, as well as better fight poverty.

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DR Congo/Dimitra Clubs From “Bosasele” to a savings and credit cooperative

In Isangi Territory (Orientale Province), members of the women only Dimitra Club in Yanonge have joined forces to fight against “Bosasele”, an economic practice that has trapped a number of families in a spiral of debt. By achieving significant results, the listeners’ club attracted the attention of the Yanonge Producers’ Union and this led to the start-up of a savings and credit cooperative.

The practice of “Bosasele” consists in buying items, considered to be “luxury” goods, on credit from travelling salesmen. These may include mattresses, cooking utensils, cutlery, clothes, etc. The credit period covers 3 to 4 months, the length of a cropping season.

One of the negative consequences of this practice is that the salesmen – now creditors – often return to collect their debt only several months later, causing interest rates to be much higher than those agreed upon. A number of families have had to sell their entire harvest to repay a loan, while others have been forced to go even further in debt because they were not able to pay back the original loan.

Fight against “Bosasele”

To cope with this situation, the forty women members of the Basi Liboso listeners’ club (Women forward for your development, in Lingala) have decided to fight this practice, which causes poverty for households and families and traps them in a permanent state of economic

dependency. The Basi Liboso Club, which only has women members, was launched in 2012 as part of the project to tackle poverty, gender and food security issues, implemented by FAO and funded by IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) and the Government of DR Congo. Since the club was launched, its members met each Sunday to discuss community problems, find solutions and work together to put them into practice.

During these meetings, they decided that each member should contribute 500 Congolese francs (US\$0.50) to set up a common fund. At the end of the month, after discussions and deliberations, they would take stock and use the collected money to help members or to buy utensils or other useful materials. Previously, the only means that women had for buying such items was through “Bosasele”.

The launch of this tontine system meant that not only members with outstanding debts were able to repay them, but the women of the Basi

Liboso Club have also been able to buy basic materials, without having to worry about the future and having to pay high rates of interest. Less than a year after the introduction of this new strategy, the listeners’ club moderator presented the results during a producers’ organizations meeting from the Union of Agricultural Producers’ Organizations (UOPA). The other participants understood right away that this was an excellent opportunity. After some discussion, they decided to set up a permanent body for the distribution of loans to people applying for them. The Yanonge Savings and Credit Cooperative (COOPECYA) was born with the specific goal of contributing to the empowerment of rural communities.

A new entrepreneurial momentum

Five producers’ organizations (PO), seven Dimitra clubs (out of the nine clubs operating in the Yanonge Eastern Production Basin), four grassroots community associations (NGOs) and the Yanonge UOPA were the first to sign up. Each of the cooperative members (legal



Representatives of Dimitra Clubs around the President of the Union of Yanonge

persons) contributed at least with US\$300, so the cooperative was able to start with a capital of US\$8 000.

Several awareness-raising sessions were organized to inform people about this new structure, which had been set up by the community itself, through the Dimitra Clubs and the UOPA, as a way of helping to combat poverty.

The Yanonge Cooperative currently has 91 members, of whom 20 are legal persons (POs and Farmer Field Schools) and 71 are natural persons (29 women and 42 men). In January 2014, the natural persons were authorized to open accounts at this new cooperative. They all paid a membership fee of 2 700 Congolese francs (US\$3). For the legal persons, such as religious bodies, associations, schools etc., the fee is of US\$5 (4 500 Congolese francs). At the end of January 2014, the cooperative had about US\$375 in its fund.

Since February 2014, the first loans have been distributed to the benefit of five members. The Cooperative members meet on the 13th of each month, using a range of criteria to determine

which people have a right to credit, and also to collect repayments and evaluate the progress made by the cooperative.

The criteria are simple: you have to have been a member of the cooperative for at least 1 month; the account to be used as collateral must contain 10% of the amount requested as a loan; the person (natural or legal) must sign a written pledge; the loan must be repaid after two months at a rate of 97%. Failure to do so will involve paying penalties.

The Yanonge Savings and Credit Cooperative is pleased to note that its capital had increased to US\$14 850 by December 12, 2014. In addition, the Cooperative's statutes were notarized in October 2014.

Jean-Pierre, the manager and financial officer of the cooperative, recognizes the importance of the tontine initiative launched by the listeners' club and the fact that the Union has been inspired by it and has adopted this initiative, after evaluating its success and reliability. It is with some pride that he declares that the Cooperative now has 75 members (29% are

also members of the producers' organizations).

Widespread socio economic effects

The dynamics of the listeners' clubs in the Yanonge Eastern Production Basin in Isangi Territory have enabled communities to shake free of the practice of "Bosasele" and launch a development process based on shared decisions and collective action. The proof lies in the fact that the Dimitra clubs are also behind other development initiatives in Yanonge, in particular improved town planning, the building of a market 5 km away, in a village called Romain and the setting up of a social welfare centre, with support from the Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom.

Once again, the Dimitra club approach has proved to be a powerful catalyst for developing the energy of rural communities, including that of local organizations and associations.

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The floor to the Dimitra Clubs...

"From time immemorial, the woman was considered as nothing. We are happy because with the Dimitra Clubs, women are given a value."

Bosukulu Village
Vijana Club (the youth)

"Here we live in clans. In both joys and sorrows, the clan organizes itself to respond to its needs. With the Dimitra Clubs, there is no clan, but unity, mutual aid and peace."

Botike Village,
Litomba ya Mosala Club
(the importance of working)

"Before there were food taboos, the tortoise for example, and now everyone eats it."

Botike Village,
Litomba ya Mosala Club
(the importance of working)

"Today, we even find men who collect water from the river!"

Yafunge Village,
Espérance Club

"Thank you to the Clubs because before I had no voice. Today men and women sell fish together."

Yanfol Village,
Yalibande Club

The floor to the partners...

"Ownership and responsibility come with the Dimitra Clubs. Populations have understood that they must take charge of their own future. They have realized they are responsible for their own development."

François Bassay,
Agriculture District Inspector, Tshopo

"Today we know that the radio is for the whole community. Thanks to a Dimitra Clubs' radio programme on groundnut production, some buyers came to us. The Union has provided seeds to the clubs, which have adopted new varieties and techniques. As a result, some members of the clubs became part of the Union."

Turumbu Union of POs - Lilanda,
Yakpondi, Yayoli

"I saw the Dimitra Clubs and communities committed to bringing a change in their environment, in their clubs, in their household, in gender relations. There have been changes in one year!"

Julie Nyolo Love
Gender and Rural Youth Advisor,
Ministry of Agriculture

DR Congo/Dimitra Clubs

The clubs reaching autonomy

Twenty-four months after the creation of Dimitra Clubs in Orientale Province, a particularly isolated rural area of DR Congo, some exceptional results have been achieved by the 78 clubs set up.



Two years after the launch of the first Dimitra community listeners' clubs in Tshopo District (Orientale Province), the FAO-Dimitra office in Yangambi is closing its doors, but its activities are continuing. Close support for the Dimitra community listeners' clubs will be given from 2015 onwards through regular visits by the six facilitators. The Inspectorate for Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, Tshopo District, recommended them among various focal points for the service in the different sectors and chiefdoms.

A new chapter starts

The Dimitra clubs were set up as part of the gender sensitive participatory communication project using listeners' clubs to tackle poverty, gender and food security issues. This approach has been implemented by FAO, with funding from IFAD and the Government of DR Congo, through its Agricultural Rehabilitation Programme (PRAPO).

Today, a new chapter starts, increasing the empowerment of the Dimitra clubs, still guided by the same principles that are their strength: the participation of women, men and youth, reflection and collective action. The Dimitra clubs function in collaboration with other organizations and local government institutions, as well as with other development actors.

The concrete results, highlighted by various evaluations, point towards a future full of initiatives. At the heart of the Dimitra club approach is the conviction that it is possible to restore communities' confidence and make

people believe in their extraordinary capacity to take charge of their own lives and become protagonists of change that leads to local development. And that is exactly what happened in Tshopo District, where the presence of clubs has enabled people to identify and express their common needs and action to be taken.

One of the most remarkable results has been the new energy in the villages where the Dimitra community listeners' clubs have been set up. In places where resourcefulness was previously largely an individual survival skill, an innovative collective drive has emerged, through the mobilization of men and women. As a result, people are able to reflect both together and individually, working, planning, dreaming and taking action to make their dreams come true. This general enthusiasm is reflected in very concrete achievements that improve the environment and livelihoods of local people. Nowadays, development is everybody's business: that of men, women, children and the elderly. Everyone can make a contribution and, most importantly, all members of the community are keen to do so.

Social and economic go together

After two years, the project has ended. And, as with every project that draws to a close we wonder about its sustainability. Everything that was possible has been done to ensure that the momentum will continue, in particular through support offered to clubs by local facilitators, the commitment of community radio stations and the involvement of the local authorities, which have understood that everyone has something to gain from this process of empowerment. The setting up of concrete partnerships with producers' organizations and unions is another strength to ensure continuity.

In the villages of Tshopo District, social and economic actors are now ready to move forward together, hand in hand, to fight rural poverty and gender inequality.

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A gift for radios

When a colleague retires, it is common practice for other staff members to show their thanks with a gift, but sometimes things take a different turn...

After a long career at FAO, Hilda Niggemann asked her colleagues to replace the gift they were planning to give her with a contribution... to the community radio stations involved in the listeners' clubs project in Orientale Province!

In recognition of the quality of Hilda's work and the concrete results obtained by the Dimitra clubs, including their impact on livelihoods and gender equality, the request was widely accepted.

The funds collected enabled reporting kits to be purchased for six community radio stations involved in the Dimitra clubs project, so that they can continue transmitting the concerns of rural communities, especially women.

In December 2014, the reporting kits were distributed in Yangambi to the following radio stations: Lokutu - Basoko Community Radio (RTCB), Boboto Community Radio in Yangambi, Radio RTBI Isangi, Radio Mabele in Tolaw, Community Radio in Yanonge and Kulokoko Community Radio in Yangambi. All of them would like to express their heartfelt thanks for this gift to Hilda Niggemann and her colleagues at FAO.



Burundi/Dimitra Clubs

Concrete support in the fight against malnutrition

With the setting up, in late 2014, of fifteen new clubs in the province of Ngozi, the Dimitra approach in Burundi is increasingly effective in tackling food insecurity. Today, around 1000 women and men, in five provinces, are regularly taking part in club discussions, with significant results in the socio-economic and agricultural sector, as well as in gender relations.

With chronic malnutrition, whose levels reach 58%, Burundi is one of the world's most food insecure countries. Within the country, the Ngozi province is the most affected (71%). It was against this background that, in August 2014, the FAO Dimitra project chose to make a contribution by launching Dimitra club activities in the municipalities of Kiremba, Tangara and Marangara, in that province. At the end of 2014, 15 Dimitra clubs were set up, alongside the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) already in place, as part of the joint project Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN). The clubs have a total of 482 members, two-thirds of whom are women.

After seeing a presentation on the Dimitra club approach, the rural communities of the targeted municipalities were eager to adopt the idea. "We have just had a forum for exchange and action on various themes," says Anne-Marie Ntamwishimiro of the Dukundane Dimitra Club, which is based in the municipality of Tangara (Ngozi Province). She adds that for the first time, women in her community have the chance to express themselves through a public media channel. The Burundi National Radio and Television (RTNB) produced the Sangira Ijambo programme, which broadcast the discussions of the Dimitra clubs, with support from FAO.

Engaging against vulnerability

It has already been decided that during exchanges within the Dimitra clubs, special attention will be paid to themes related to nutrition, health and different agricultural practices. Kitchen gardens, which serve as a source of horticultural products and micronutrients, will be promoted by new Dimitra club members in Ngozi Province. "In our club, we are going to try to fight kwashiorkor (a disease caused by malnutrition), by promoting kitchen gardens within the households of vulnerable people," says Anésie Ntukamazina, from the Dukomeze Ibikorwa Dimitra Club, in the municipality of Kiremba.

Training sessions for the 15 new Dimitra clubs will be organized next year to strengthen the knowledge of club officials, and by doing so, empower them in terms of gender and participatory communication.



Dimitra Club Tuzamuke, in the village of Tangara (Ngozi Province)

The family of Dimitra clubs in Burundi is growing. There are now 30 clubs spread over 5 of the country's provinces, namely Bubanza, Bujumbura Rural, Bujumbura Mairie, Muramvya and Ngozi. A total of 864 women (who are in the majority) and men are now members of Dimitra clubs in Burundi.

Successful models

Gradually, the first Dimitra clubs are becoming more empowered. Based in the Bugarama area in the province of Muramvya, the club Tuyage Twongere is a model for the surrounding rural communities. Club discussions resulted in sharing of opinions and interventions at social and economic level. Rural community members of the Tuyage Twongere Dimitra Club are earning the equivalent of 240 000 BIF (US\$155) per month by selling Japanese plum trees, made possible by renting a plot of land for 150 000 BIF over a period of 3 years. The total revenue is expected to exceed 8 000 000 BIF (slightly over US\$5 000) during this period. It should be added that the lessons learned are now being applied in households, thereby helping to increase people's income. Already,

a number of women have acknowledged that participating in Dimitra club activities increased their social standing.

Finally, the Dimitra clubs serve as support to the Farmer Field Schools, as a gender-sensitive method of participatory communication for rural areas. The clubs usually have between 15 and 30 people, most of them drawn from Farmer Field Schools. This approach, promoted by FAO, aims to improve access to information and communication for rural communities, especially women, and in so doing helping them to achieve greater socio-economic and political empowerment and food security.

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Ghana/Dimitra Clubs

Time to take stock of the Dimitra Clubs

The Forum of the Dimitra listeners' clubs of Ghana took place in Damongo, West Gonja District, from the 1st to the 3rd September 2014. After almost one year of existence, the representatives of the 36 Dimitra Clubs set up in 18 communities of the District had the opportunity to get to know each other, discuss successes and difficulties, learn lessons and revitalize the whole process to pursue the activities. Dimitra Clubs in the West Gonja District were created as part of the FAO Programmatic Regional Initiative for poverty reduction.

One woman member of the Dimitra Club of the village of Larabanga gets up from her chair and exclaims: "We will educate our communities about women's rights and gender equality!" Another one from the community of Sori echoes her from the back of the meeting room: "The Listeners' Clubs came to liberate us, since before our husbands were ignorant about women's conditions!"

Nothing, better than these statements, can illustrate the impact of the Dimitra project in the region, after not even one year of activities. At the same time, they perfectly summarize the content of the discussions that took place during the first Forum of the FAO-Dimitra Community listeners' clubs (CLC) in Ghana.

The forum, hosted by the Catholic Guesthouse, brought together almost 90 participants, including representatives of the CLCs, the local facilitators and the coordinator, as well as specialists from the FAO Representation in Ghana and FAO-Dimitra.

Identify changes

Since the end of 2013, FAO has supported, together with a local NGO, the Association of Church Development Projects in Northern Ghana (ACDEP), the creation of 36 Dimi-

tra listeners' clubs in 18 communities of the West Gonja District. After almost one year of implementation, it was considered important to take stock of the experience, learn lessons and revitalize the whole process to pursue the activities.

The purpose of the Forum was primarily to stimulate discussions among the participants to exchange experiences, but also to identify and debate the main achievements and issues of the Dimitra Clubs over the last months. In particular, the discussions focused on the main changes induced by the clubs in the region, at individual, household and community levels and the main challenges encountered in the implementation process of the clubs.

The Forum was also organised to share knowledge, establish links and explore interests related to the forthcoming three Community Service Centres that are being established in the region by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoFA) and FAO.

Participants worked enthusiastically for two days, both in plenary and working groups. The results are encouraging and indicate that the path taken is the right one and that it begins to bear fruit in the region.

Some of the social changes identified by the participants themselves during the forum are definitely noteworthy. Among them, people underlined the improved unity and dialogue within communities and in the families and consequently increased social cohesion and participation at community level. They also underlined the better awareness on the importance of education, especially for children and young girls and on women's conditions and gender inequalities. They also felt that thanks to the clubs women have gained self-esteem and self-confidence and are now able to speak up in public.

Better access to information and communication was also mentioned as a key benefit, thanks to the solar and hand crank radios delivered by the project to each Dimitra club.

Better living conditions

Other changes that the forum participants identified are related to other dimensions, such as the economic benefits derived from the reactivation of the existing sou-sou groups (local saving groups), from new income-generating activities launched, such as soap making, etc. They also noted that their farming and processing skills of agricultural products (especially cassava) have improved.

One of the very first effects was in the area of sanitation. Today, cleaning sessions of the villages are organized on a regular basis. It is important to note that for many villages this is the first time that women and men work together. This shows in a concrete manner that the dynamics has produced changes in gender roles and relations.

In this respect, even more extraordinary are the statements made by some of the men present at the workshop and that perfectly convey the idea of the dynamics triggered at community level. A man from the community of Sori



Women and men identify together the changes occurred in their communities



During the forum, the participants show the fleet of mobile phones

declared “Thanks to the Listeners’ Clubs I learnt how to help my wife in the household”. Another man echoed him: “before my wife was only allowed to eat wings and neck of the chicken, because it is a tradition of our region. But, thanks to the Dimitra Club I realized that this is only a taboo. My wife now can also eat other parts of the chicken, just like anyone else in the family”.

New enthusiasm

Furthermore, right after the Forum in Damongo, engagements at community level, in the whole region, begun to rekindle enthusiasm among the clubs. Just a few examples:

- Women of Busunu club, who identified a market potential for bread baking within their zonal council, have now given impetus to build an oven and assemble the necessary logistics to commence business;
- Men’s clubs in the villages of Mempesam, Boyanto, Sori 1 and Sori 3 have become more committed to their cassava farms;
- Women’s clubs of Bidima have also organized their logistics and are ready to learn from other clubs that received training on soap making. As a result of the soap making, training for the first batch of the Dimitra clubs, women of Sori 3 started soap production and currently have about Ghc 1,520.00 (around 500 USD) in their bank account and are planning to invest their savings in ‘grain banking business’ for higher returns.
- Radio programs have received a big boost from the presence of the clubs. One of these programs, identified by the communities for broader discussions, focuses on the role of community leaders in the Dimitra Clubs activities, with community-wide impact.

This shows that the Forum, beyond stimulating the exchange of experiences and discussions about the most important changes triggered by the Clubs, was also an important factor of community mobilization.

Some cross-fertilization innovative activities took place during the forum, such as video shows illustrating the activities from a Dimitra Club in the region and a picture show from the Dimitra clubs in Niger. Such initiatives illustrate the creativity and special dynamics of development, at community level and hopefully will soon inspire other similar initiatives in the concerned areas and even abroad.

Finally, another widely discussed topic at the Forum was the setting up of the Community Service Centres (CSC). This discussion was meant to explore the interest of the members of Community listeners’ clubs in these Centres that will be established in the region by MoFA, in collaboration with FAO.

The Forum participants have expressed much interest in the establishment of such Community Service Centres. The links between the Dimitra clubs and the CSC will be further explored, in particular in terms of gender-sensitive community governance of the centres. These links should contribute to create a virtuous cycle for the socio-economic development of rural women and men in the region.

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Community Service Centers: equitable governance

FAO is implementing in West Gonja (Northern Ghana) the Programmatic Regional Initiative using an integrated and gender-sensitive approach to rural poverty reduction. A series of interventions have already been executed in this cassava-growing district in a coordinated fashion. They have included setting-up Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS), 38 Dimitra community listeners’ clubs as well as strengthening governance and equity through the CoOPequity approach within the Farmer-Based Organizations (FBOs).

In addition, three Community Service Centers (CSCs) to be managed by the communities themselves should be opened soon in the Council Area of Busunu, Larabanga and Sori. They will be multifunctional centres for the provision of services to the local farmers, including advisory services, collection and storage points of crops, processing (peeling and drying) centres, as well as important hubs for the distribution and commercialization of agricultural products in local and national markets.

The CSCs are conceived as farmer-owned and governed institutions and as such, they will be registered and operated as a farmer’s cooperative to be managed on a cost recovery basis. They will be governed through a Management Committee while an intermediary body, the Oversight and Dialogue Platform, will bring together at the district level representatives from the CSCs Management Committees and the District authorities and provide a space for farmers to engage in policy dialogue.

In this respect, the CoOPequity Programme is facilitating dialogue between POs and governments and supporting the process related to establishing the governance structure of the CSCs in view of the integration of governance and equity issues. The support includes facilitating the election of members of the CSCs governance structure and of the District Oversight and Dialogue Platform, in collaboration with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and District Assembly.

In 2015, the Programme will facilitate a training workshop on CSC governance and management. A statute spelling out rules, procedures, roles and responsibilities, coordination and management structures, communication and information sharing, as well as reporting and accountability mechanisms is expected to be developed as one of the workshop outcomes.

Niger/Dimitra Clubs

How to deal with the consequences of climate change

Since July 2014, about 240 new Dimitra listeners' clubs have been set up in Niger as part of a regional FAO project that aims to strengthen the resilience of rural communities to withstand disasters. The main goal : to reduce the vulnerability of communities in areas affected by climate change, while helping them to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon and to prepare themselves for coping with it.

"The Dimitra clubs are a real tool to promote the effective and efficient voluntary participation of rural communities in the life of our municipalities" declared Daouda Nouhou, mayor of the rural municipality of Mehanna, during a meeting of the Dimitra clubs on climate change held in October 2014. The leaders of 60 new clubs had gathered for the occasion, together with staff from community radio stations and the mayors of the municipalities of the department of Tera. The meeting was based on the experience and activities of the Dimitra clubs already operating in 15 villages in the municipalities of Gorouol and Mehanna.

The mayors welcomed the opportunity offered by the FAO project to mobilize their commu-

nities through the Dimitra listeners' clubs on crucial issues such as preparing for disaster risks and identifying means for adapting to climate change.

The 240 Dimitra listeners' clubs have been launched and supported in eight municipalities in the departments of Tera, Mirriah and Keita, covering a total of sixty villages and with an overall membership of 7 200 people (of whom almost half are women). Support is offered by FAO-Dimitra through two local NGOs- Action éducative pour le développement local (AEDL) and Association pour la promotion et l'éducation de base (APEBA).

Take action for the climate

The first stage in setting up a club involved raising awareness among community members, the municipal and traditional authorities and community radio stations. They were informed of the FAO-Dimitra listeners' club approach and the objectives of activities planned in Niger as part of the regional humanitarian programme for disaster preparedness, implemented by FAO with funding from Belgium. During these first exchanges, many community members already signed up to participate in Dimitra clubs.

Listeners' clubs provide a powerful tool for rural communities, helping them to participate in development and strengthen their capacities to take action on their own socio-economic environment, through improved access to information, better capacities to become organized, analyze common problems, seek solutions and take conscious and collective action.

The targeted villages are already severely affected by climate change. So what better way than through a listeners' club to reflect and act together on this issue? Since the launch of the clubs and the first village meetings, (often held in the evening since people have to work in the fields during the day), the word has spread to community members and the first observations have emerged: ponds are drying up and there is no longer any off-season cropping; the

forests are gradually disappearing; soil erosion is becoming more widespread; grazing is becoming more scarce; household production is declining while the number of household members is increasing.

Rural communities identify solutions

Working through Dimitra listeners' clubs, the project aims to give a voice to communities by providing them with information and strengthening their capacity for action. Club members have started to draw up a list of the themes they consider important: early warning for crop pests, market price movement, varieties adapted to agro-ecological conditions, essential family practices and nutritional education.

The project also focuses on improving the knowledge of all actors on climate change and its consequences, and on creating close links between the Dimitra clubs and the Community Early Warning System and Rapid Response (SCAP/RU) network.

The Dimitra clubs can play an important role in strengthening the SCAP-RU – grassroots community organizations in their search to strengthen the roles and responsibilities of communities in forecasting and managing crises or disasters that will affect their livelihoods.

Although the clubs have autonomy in choosing the themes they would like to discuss and the actions they will carry out, the issue of climate change has been chosen as a common topic to be explored by asking the following questions: what major change do you see in the environment of our village? What might be the causes, the consequences and the solutions within the reach of our community?

The project is still in its early stages, but club members are already highlighting the importance of learning and using agricultural production techniques which are effective against climate change and which can help to meet the challenge of land scarcity for crop cultivation, exacerbated by demographic pressure.





Women club leaders from the villages of Mamassey, Satoni and Saba (Region of Tillabéry) during a training session

Climate change from a gender perspective

In Gorouol and Mehanna in particular, the authorities are proposing that each municipality adopts the listeners' club approach to build its municipal development plan and to enable them to fully respond to the expectations of the community. Civil society organizations have echoed this approach, inviting the municipal authorities to inform all development actors of the Dimitra clubs, so as to increase the adoption of development activities, gender equality and prospects for sustainability.

In municipalities where the project is relying on existing clubs, changes in gender relations have enabled the project to become swiftly operational and to tackle issues linked to climate change directly, in an inclusive and participatory manner. In Dolbel and Kourki for example, the Dimitra clubs are helping to ensure that recognition is given, especially by leadership, to the relevance of ideas proposed by women. In contrast with other communities without clubs, the women here no longer hesitate to speak out and to develop convincing arguments, assuming a strong leadership role to improve living standards in their villages.

One early example of progress made is found in the community of Borobon, which has reflected carefully on the consequences of climate change, putting forward improved access to information and the recovery of degraded soils as suitable responses. Youth clubs are proposing regular exchanges on these matters by mobilizing appropriate resource people, emphasizing that special attention should be paid to young people as vectors of positive change.

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Two women, two journeys

HÉLÈNE RYCKMANS and **ELISE MUHIMUZI** know each other well, having worked together to promote gender equality. For many years, they were both involved in civil society organizations and women's rights, before they took up political posts. Ryckmans worked in Belgium for the NGO *Le monde selon les femmes*, before being elected as a Member of the regional Parliament for Ecolo (Belgian political party whose manifesto is based on an ecological transition for society). Muhimuzi, based in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), served as Secretary General to the *Comité National Femme et Développement (CONAFED)*, a women's association network, for several years. In 2010, she joined the *Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI)* for one year and now she continues her career in civil society. The following is a joint interview.



HÉLÈNE RYCKMANS

“The big challenge will be getting policies passed on the principles that I have been fighting for.”

How did you become involved in civil society?

Hélène Ryckmans: I became actively engaged very early, and that explains my political commitment today. First, I was involved in pacifist movements and ones supporting developing countries. When I was about 15 or 16, I started to take part in demonstrations here in Belgium, against the overthrow of Allende in Chile, for example. Later, I campaigned actively in the student's movement. In fact, wherever I worked I have always been part of networks and committees. Even when my children were at nursery I became involved in a committee for the parents'.

Elise Muhimuzi: For me too, engagement was always a common thread. When I came to Belgium to study, at Louvain-La-Neuve, I also became involved in women's movement for developing countries, and that's where I met Hélène. I was impressed by other women, especially from Brazil, who shared their experiences of involvement in civil society organizations. They had achieved so much in their communities. I decided to reproduce those experiences in DRC.

In 1991, when I returned to Kinshasa, the situation was very tense. A number of private enterprises had been looted by insurgency movements which were struggling against the Mobutu dictatorship. Foreign business owners left, the factories closed and many people in DRC lost their jobs, plunging large numbers of them into poverty. The poorest people were hit very hard. We worked with women in the poorest neighbourhoods, to help them take up income generating activities to support their families, especially by giving them access to credit in a spirit of solidarity. These activities changed women's status in their households.

It was during this period that I learned the importance of being organized at provincial and national level. So we decided to launch a

major women's movement to advocate and lobby against the dictatorship. That was the beginning of CONAFED, the *Comité National Femme et Développement*. The idea was to build a network of capable women throughout the whole country.

Did your commitment develop as it moved towards politics?

EM: Of course. In civil society you are more committed, you are more radical and more free. In 2010, I joined the *Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI)*, with the task of organizing elections. I was appointed as a representative of civil society, following, I suspect, the success of the World March of Women that I had organized just before that in Bukavu (Sud-Kivu), and the extent of the field work that had been achieved.

At the Commission, I didn't have the same attitude. There, you had to show you were impartial, because there are many political influences. You have to be far more diplomatic.

I brought my knowledge of the country, that had been accumulated through grassroots work with civil society and relayed problems of communities.

HR: Yes, this field knowledge is really important when you come from civil society. I think you can keep the radical aspect, but it has to be expressed in a different way. As a member of the Walloon Parliament (regional parliamentarian), I want to remain in touch with the network of civil society organizations. I can serve as a go-between for organizations in the field. It means participating in meetings with the civil society sector and enabling observatories on equality to be set up and/or listened to.

Going back to the question of commitment, I would say that I will not change. I will stay involved in the same way, and with the same

energy and intensity. Until now, my main commitment has been on behalf of *Monde selon les femmes*. Having been elected for a full-time job, I left this NGO just when it celebrated its 20th birthday! These days I dedicate all my energy to my job as a member of parliament. It is a great deal healthier.

I should point out that I am on political leave: my organization considers it very important to have women in politics and, as a result, it releases me for the duration of my mandate. That way there can be no conflict of interests. There are naturally some issues which are off-limits, so as to avoid being both judge and jury. So after my mandate, I will be able to go back to *Monde selon les femmes*. At that point I will be able to compare my work in politics with my work in a civil organization.

Hélène, what areas are you going to be working on, now that you have been elected?

HR: The big challenge will be getting policies passed on the principles that I have been fighting for. I also have to see how I can advance gender equality in my work as a legislator. I will surely call upon my colleagues, to ensure that political decisions don't go against equality.

EM: I'm also counting on you to carry on contributing, so that women in DRC can find themselves in a position like yours! (laughs) Hélène, you have always been committed to development. Won't you be less active in this field with your new responsibilities?

HR: I sincerely hope that I can continue the work of acting as a contact and advocate for organizations and women parliamentarians from countries in the South.

In a general sense, I want to carry on using the skills and talents that I have acquired, which are linked to integrating issues of equality into public policy.

And in that area, there are plenty of things to be done in the Walloon region, in a very concrete manner. And there are also questions linked to international solidarity, which I have every intention of following up, in every possible way.

Do you see any common features between your respective journeys?

HR: Yes, despite our different backgrounds, there are similarities. For example, we were both keen on – and have been successful in – entering decision-making arenas. Clearly, we have the same desire to make things happen for women's rights.

We share a feminist commitment. There is a need for women in politics, who demand rep-

resentation. But it should also be said that I take fewer risks in becoming a member of parliament than Elise did when she joined CENI!

Lastly, do you think the issue of transmission is important? How do you plan to pass on the torch?

EM: Yes, I would say it is essential. At a personal level, I have begun writing a book about my experiences, in politics and in the civil society sector.

HR: Hey, great news! I'm sure it will be very interesting! That really is a case of building on experience. It's very important. On my side, I haven't really had enough time to do so but it's important to look back and share your past experiences.

EM: And in a general manner, in our professional activities, we need to make sure that we involve young people in building the future. Often, young people who hear us speak can't believe that we have done all that. All the time that I spent in civil society was a learning process, for all the things that you don't learn at school or university: a way of doing, organizing and thinking that is geared towards a hands-on approach. It's very exciting.

It was with this in mind that I left CONAFED. I had been re-elected a number of times, and I am very proud of that, but it was important that this phase came to an end, precisely to allow a handover. Other perfectly capable women were reluctant to put themselves forward. They had the impression that I was the only person who could mobilize resources and activate networks. I am happy now that others have taken up the torch.

HR: Absolutely. It is crucial to prepare for transmission and ensure that the work of your organization can continue. In this sense, an institution must involve young people over a sufficiently long period, so that the handover can take place gradually, from the older ones to the younger people. It is even more important that forms of engagement and feminism develop. At *Monde selon les femmes*, we are giving this subject serious thought. The organization's 20th anniversary is a chance to put young people at the centre of this debate, and especially include men. That is a point that young feminists feel is essential.

✳ **For more information, visit:**
<http://conafed.org/>
<http://www.mondefemmes.org/>



ELISE MUHIMUZI

“ At CENI, I brought my knowledge of the country, that had been accumulated through grassroots work with civil society (...) and relayed the problems of communities. ”

Gambia

Community radio reinforces links between forestry, agriculture and livestock

Reinforcing the links among forest and farm producer organizations is key for improving rural communities' livelihoods. In the Gambia, with the support from the Farmer Forest Facility (FFF), participatory communication and community radios are being used successfully for that purpose.



Villagers listening to Brikamaba Radio

illegal forest product exploitations. In these programmes, listeners are invited into the show or can call from a public or mobile phone to ask questions or to make comments about Agriculture and Natural Resource/forestry related issues.

Discussions through community radio stations are a good example of participatory communication on rural development, but other possibilities could be explored. These could include individual radio programmes made with the direct involvement of rural people, or interviews and other events recorded and relayed on community radios. Involving the audience to fully participate, building up local content drawing from capacity building activities, and enhancing the relevance of programmes are not just good developmental practices - it can make for better radio as well.

In the Gambia, radio reaches a wider audience than any other medium. There are an estimated 94 radios per thousand people, ten times the number of televisions. The rural community radio appears as the most suitable medium to targeting specific and hard to reach population groups.

Lessons learnt from the local community radio experiences

Preparing media products and gathering opinions and priorities from institutions and producer organizations about the use of community radio are considered as an important step in the country. Any media approach using radio should be multi-focused and integrate a variety of elements such as soil, agriculture, water, forest, climate etc. The links between forestry, agriculture and livestock should be emphasized.

The fight against desertification, climate change impacts and poverty alleviation are the overall goal. Governmental institutions and local communities have to work together, to manage forests and wildlife resources in partnership, in the interest of the population. And all these issues should be integrated in communication approaches on natural resources.

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Would you like to assess your knowledge on forestry issues by participating in a quiz show on a community radio? Then, you might need to go to the Gambia! In this country, there is a quiz show hosted by popular radio presenters in which contestants are pitted against each other in a general knowledge and seasonally quiz on forestry and agriculture and natural resources issues.

This is only one of the forestry-related programmes to be aired on community radios in the framework of the Gambia Communication Strategy 2014- 2017, spearheaded by the National Environment Agency (NEA) and the National Farmers Platform of the Gambia (NFPG). The Communication Strategy was supported by the Forest and Farm Facility (FFF), a

partnership between FAO, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) that assists producer organizations for business, improved livelihoods and policy engagement in ten countries. The Facility aims at strengthening the local capacity of smallholder, women, community and indigenous peoples' producer organizations and partners to better express their needs, defend their interests and exchange experiences.

Successful community radio programmes

The Community Strategy also highlights other sample scenario programmes to be aired on community radios, such as a soap operas focusing on the lives of individuals living in a multi-ethnic Community Forest village and public service announcements to sensitize on important seasonal forest- and farm-related issues (Forest Management Campaign Launch, Bush Fires, Planting and Award Schemes, etc.).

Similarly, a series of radio live discussions and phone-in programmes focusing on Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), sub-sector policies and regulatory frameworks were broadcasted on the National Radio and re-broadcasted on Community Radio Stations nation-wide. These shows highlighted particular issues such as the roles and responsibilities of Farmer-Based Organizations on policy implementation, the needs of forest adjacent communities and Producer Organizations and burning issues affecting the farming community (human and wildlife conflicts) and

Forest and Farm Facility (FFF)

The Forest and Farm Facility develops and funds partnerships at local, national, regional and international levels, and offers small grants to enable smallholder, women, community and indigenous people's producer organizations improve their livelihoods and participation in the decision-making processes over forest and farm landscapes. It also offers grants to governments to establish and develop cross-sectoral platforms to stimulate cooperation and dialogue. www.fao.org/partnerships/forest-farm-facility

IGETI, improve gender equality in territorial issues

Natural resources are shrinking. However, land remains a primary source of livelihoods in rural settings. Improving both men and women's access to land not only contributes to sustainable livelihoods but also enhances socio-economic growth. The Improving Gender Equality in Territorial Issues (IGETI) approach aims at promoting gender equality in access and management of land and other natural resources.

New and more accessible data, satellite imagery and direct field observations, have increased the capacity of UN to provide a more detailed picture of natural resources availability and quality.

In 2011 FAO published the State of the World's Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture¹ that showed how natural resources are shrinking and confirmed the little efforts made by public and private stakeholders to tackle the situation of degraded natural resources. This scenario is likely to continue, particularly when considering the increasing demographic dynamics, since the world population is expected to grow to 9.3 billion by 2050².

Moreover, there are still many gender inequalities worldwide in terms of access to land and other natural resources, due to local traditions and socio-cultural factors that cause social inequalities.

As stated in the 2010-2011 State of Food and Agriculture dedicated to Women in Agriculture³, the agricultural sector is underperforming in many developing countries, also because women do not have equal access to productive resources, services and opportunities.

In many cultures, women's access to land and natural resources is limited because they are not even considered as agricultural producers or because of inheritance and customary laws, and community norms. Often, rural women have no access to land markets and don't participate in decision-making processes at community level and within rural organizations.

In this context, the need to improve approaches and methodologies related to natural resources planning and management is a given. Two major dimensions must assume a central role in this new conception: natural resources and people.

In recent years there has been a growing appreciation of holistic approaches. However, efforts to move towards integrated methods still remain confined in the field of "technical" skills driven by "experts". The missing dimension is quite often the one related to "people" and their needs, interests, rights and cultures. Attempts to introduce "participatory" approaches remain inadequate and a decreasing capacity of public institutions dealing with natural resources goes hand in hand with the increasing request by a variety of stakeholders to be actively involved in the process.

The result is a fragmentation of decision-making processes. This opens new windows of opportunity for marginalized groups, especially women, in order for them to actively influence programmes and participate in policy-making.

The territory as an "entry point" for promoting gender equality

"Improving Gender Equality in Territorial Issues (IGETI)⁴" represents a new methodological approach where the territory is considered as an "entry point" to promote gender equality in land access and territorial development. It allows an improved understanding of different values, visions and interests of men and women related to access, use and management of land and other resources.



Women workers in the tea plantations in Kericho, Kenya

The IGETI guidelines propose a series of interventions to reduce the gender gap in land rights, without necessarily involving land redistribution. The main objective is to help people become more aware of power asymmetries and improve participation in decision-making to promote gender-responsive territorial development. The idea is to promote negotiation tables where different stakeholders, with adequate representation of rural men and women, can sit together and agree on the development of their territory in terms of available resources and services.

Training sessions on the IGETI approach have already been conducted in Angola, Kenya and Somaliland to provide participants with principles and tools for territorial negotiation, using participatory and gender approaches.

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The IGETI Approach:

1. Gender-sensitive Territorial Diagnosis (Stakeholders, management/ access/ use of natural resources)
2. Dialogue among the stakeholders on the development of their territory and gender-responsive proposals
3. Negotiation process and consensus building (Establishment of participatory local partnerships)
4. External monitoring and evaluation (Territorial Facilitation Team)

Territory & territorial

The terms "territory" and "territorial" are used to indicate a space where individuals, groups and communities live and organise themselves, and where multiple stakeholders claim different types of rights (legal, economic, environmental, social and cultural). The territory has therefore to be seen as the physical environment where women and men have access to and use natural resources, but also as an arena for dialogue and negotiations.

- 1 SOLAW, <http://www.fao.org/nt/solaw/solaw-home/en/>
- 2 United Nations Population Division .2012. World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision.
- 3 FAO. 2011. The State of food and agriculture. Women in agriculture. Closing the gender gap for development <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf>
- 4 FAO. 2012. Improving Gender Equality in Territorial Issues <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/me282e/me282e.pdf>

Kenya

A share fair on rural women's technologies in Africa

Labour-saving agricultural technologies and innovations that support rural women and men family farmers were displayed and presented during the share fair on “Rural women’s technologies to improve food security, nutrition and productive family farming”. This inspiring event took place in Nairobi, from 15 to 17 October 2014.

“The hoe must go!” With this hope, repeated aloud by over 100 voices of rural women and men innovators, the share fair on “Rural women’s technologies to improve food security, nutrition and productive family farming” was launched in Nairobi on the 15th of October. The first of its kind in Eastern and Southern Africa, the three-day event coincided with the International Day for Rural Women, the International World Food Day and the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

With the support of the African Union (AU), the share fair was the result of a collaborative effort between the UN Women Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), World Food Programme (WFP), International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) and the UN Women’s Knowledge Gateway for Women’s Economic Empowerment.

New technologies with a gender dimension

The main objectives of the share fair were to showcase labour-saving agricultural technologies and innovations that support rural women and men family farmers and identify new existing innovations to be scaled up by linking women and men farmers to researchers, entrepreneurs, investors and policymakers.

The event represented a platform for rural women innovators from around the region to learn from each other and get the opportunity to interact with policymakers, academics, food producers, investors, technology innovators, etc. As part of the share fair, high-level panels were held with the participation of regional and national government officials and other sector leaders. These panels aimed to show efforts in engendering agricultural and nutrition policies, and in introducing promising technologies.

“This share fair is testament of the transformative power of agricultural technologies. Importantly, it underlines the huge potential to be realized from bringing women, who are the vanguard of rural economies across Africa, on board,” said Ms Christine Musisi,



Adeline Nsimire presents the Dimitra approach to visitors

UN Women Regional Director for East and Southern Africa.

The clubs in the foreground

Participants also had the opportunity to attend a series of practical, interactive skill-building sessions facilitated by specialists from various fields, such as patent rights, knowledge management and networking and sustainable agribusiness practices.

This was also a unique opportunity for young innovators. One of the main components of the share fair was the Young Innovators Award. This Award targeted students/young scientists (aged 35 and below) who have designed technologies that take into consideration gender dimensions in rural agriculture, food security and nutrition.

The approach of FAO-Dimitra listeners’ clubs in DR Congo was selected as a good practice to be showcased during the share fair. Adeline Nsimire, the Coordinator of NGO Samwaki and Dimitra’s partner in South-Kivu (DR Congo) was invited to the event.

“I am very happy to be here, representing the voices of rural women and sharing the Dimitra experience in my country where the dynamics

of the Dimitra Community listeners’ clubs have significantly contributed to women’s empowerment and social cohesion”, said Adeline Nsimire during the fair. She is also the director of Radio Bubusa FM, the first community radio to have been set up by women in the province of South Kivu.

Adeline explained that “the partnership between the Dimitra clubs and Radio Bubusa is special: the clubs allow the radio to be more effective in fulfilling its role as a participatory media, and the radio allows the clubs – which represent the voices of the community – to have access to the information they need and to exchange stories and experiences among different villages, thus contributing to collective action and community governance.”

✳ For further information on the share fair:
<http://www.empowerwomen.org/sharefair2014>
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Farming for the future: working towards integrated rural communication services

In the framework of the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF), FAO and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) hosted a series of virtual consultations and a face-to-face “Forum on Communication for Development and Community Media for Family Farming” (FCCM). The aim was to draw policy recommendations concerning the enabling environment for rural communication services, investments and partnerships and capacity development for rural actors. The recommendations were presented at the Global Dialogue on Family Farming, held in FAO in October 2014.

Regional consultations

Three regional virtual consultations were organized from 25th of August to 12th of September on the joint FAO-AMARC regional platforms: Onda Rural in Latin America, Yen-kasa Africa and ComDevAsia. Some 327 contributions were gathered during these regional consultations and about 2300 website visits registered. The exercise culminated in a global virtual consultation, organized in collaboration with e-Agriculture, from 22nd of September to 6th October and to which about 160 people contributed. Over 5800 website visits were also registered. The virtual consultations gave the opportunity to share opinions, ideas and experiences and contributed to the findings that were presented at the face-to-face forum.

Forum on Communication for Development and Community Media for Family Farming

The face-to-face Forum on Communication for Development and Community Media for Family Farming took place at FAO, Rome, on 23rd and 24th of October. The forum brought together various stakeholders including farmer networks, research centers, universities, radio networks and UN organizations.

Different panels were organized on various aspects of Communication for Development and Community Media. Adeline Nsimire from NGO SAMWAKI, presented the methodology of Dimitra Clubs in South Kivu and highlighted their importance in bringing the radio closer to the community. The second day focused on the policy recommendations.

Francesco Diasio, the Secretary General of AMARC emphasized the two foundational elements that should be considered when discussing community media, notably the respect of a fundamental right to information and access to a public resource, in this case frequency. He also recommended the need for regulatory bodies to manage this public resource.

The forum participants committed to act on some crucial recommendations such as: build cross-sectoral alliances to promote policy reforms on communication and family farming; advocate for independent and pluralistic community radios (simple licensing processes,

equitable reservation of frequencies and funding possibilities); engage in multi-stakeholder partnerships to build evidence base for rural communication services and their embedment in development initiatives/programmes; develop collaborative learning strategies, with special attention to gender, class, age and socio-cultural issues; and develop mechanisms and tools for coordination and partnerships ensuring that communication for development principles are evident and operational, and that there is support for independent and pluralistic media.

Contributions and recommendations collected during the forum were presented at the Global Dialogue on Family Farming, held in FAO headquarters on 27th and 28th of October by Maria Pia Matta, AMARC's president.

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XIII UN Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development

What is the role of Communication for Development (C4D) within the UN system? How can C4D principles and strategies contribute to maximize the impact of development programmes? Why should the collaboration among UN agencies and their partners be strengthened? All these issues were discussed from 16 to 18 September 2014 by C4D specialists from 13 UN Agencies and Funds during the XIII edition of the UN Round Table on Communication for Development. The Round Table was hosted and organized this year by FAO under the title: “Mainstreaming Communication for Development in Policies and Programmes. Enabling social inclusion to support food and nutrition security, resilient livelihoods and family farming.”

This edition focussed on how C4D can improve the quality of policy processes in food and nutrition security, family farming and resilient rural livelihoods. In this respect, public and private partnerships, wider access to information, and knowledge sharing can provide answers. As main outcome, it was agreed that an interim Secretariat led by FAO, UNESCO and UNICEF, in collaboration with the UN Development Group and the recently formed UN Communication and Advocacy Working Group, will facilitate the establishment of a Technical Working Group. This entity will work towards the development of an effective model for UN coordination and leadership in Communication for development.

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Somalia

“Beekeeping has really changed our lives”

This is the successful story of a beekeeping group from Beer village, in Somaliland, north-western Somalia. The group benefited from an initiative aimed at strengthening the resilience of women and men to economic shocks. This beekeeping initiative was implemented under the Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Programme (SEED), under the patronage of the Ministry of Livestock of Somalia, the British Department for International Development (DFID), the FAO and private suppliers for inputs and hives.



Preparing honey body creams

“Through the SEED Programme, FAO has really changed our lives. The sky is the limit for our group!” says Hodan Jama Hindi, one of the women members of the Radin Beekeeping Group of Beer, with a membership of 28 men and 30 women, that have benefitted from the SEED programme in Somalia. This Programme is geared towards the creation of sustainable livelihoods for women, men, boys and girls, by providing significant alternative income and employment sources.

The project started in July 2013 with the introduction of modern hives (Kenya Top-Bar Hives - KTBH and Langstroth), honey and wax processors (extractors), honey harvesting kits and other tools, as well as training of the group members.

Empowered women

According to Nasra Ali Mohamed, the overjoyed woman leader of the group, the project has made impressive impacts. “Our capacity to increase production was limited due to inaccessibility to modern hives; we also lacked the knowledge to manage hives for more produc-

tion. We have now acquired improved technologies and technical skills in bee husbandry practices and hive products processing thanks to the support provided by the SEED Programme. We now have the capacity to increase honey production and diversify to other products such as soap, body creams and candles”, she says.

Both women and men have greatly benefited from this project. However, Nasra insists that the beekeeping project has particularly empowered women economically so that they can generate income from the project and feed their families. Besides, the group has provided a platform for women to make decisions freely and on an equal footing as men, since the leadership of the group encourages both women and men to equally participate and contribute to decisions that touch on the project, their lives, and improved nutrition and food security.

The project has enabled them to increase the amount of honey per hive from dismal 5 kg or less to an average of 31 kg annually (from 2 harvests). A benefit that both women and men beekeepers attest to have experienced. Hussein Omar, a man co-leader of the group, says “We estimate to harvest over 1050 kg from our 23 hives this year. Recently (May 2014), we harvested 155 and sold 70 kg to traders as far as Berbera Port earning the group \$840. We are now working to improve the standards of the products through better packaging and labelling, creating better business, product prices, improving marketing and the community welfare”.

One of the greatest challenges has been the weak technical capacity of the group members to work with modern beekeeping equipment, coupled with high illiteracy level of women and men. Hussein Omar Muuse recalls that “the group was formed in 2010 with a membership of 58 farmers who fabricated few simple traditional log hives that gave a very low honey harvesting. The ten “modern” hives provided by a local NGO did not prove better than the traditional hives. According to the group, members

had very limited technical knowledge on beekeeping and mainly sold the little honey harvested as crude semi-processed honey.”

A collective entrepreneurial spirit

After the project started in July 2013, the group managed to increase knowledge transfer and improve market linkages far and wide. The group leader Omar Hassan was contracted by a beekeeping group in Berbera port (Somalia) to train its members at a fee (US\$490). Furthermore, the group networked with local pastoralists to harvest bee colonies in the wilderness on their behalf for a fee of USD 1,200. Business opportunities have improved in the entire beekeeping value chain. The group also seems interested in using the acquired profits to buy more hives and scale-up their business.

The conditions of the honey market are encouraging and promise business continuity and sustainability. The products from the beekeeping project seem to meet customer needs and expectations. This is attested by Nasra Ali who stated that “there is not much difference between our products and those in the mainstream markets; ours are even better, they have fewer chemicals, they are more natural, which is good to our skins”.

Now, FAO is considering scaling up this project by recruiting more women and men into beekeeping. Success of the current project is an indicator that it could be replicated successfully in other parts of Somalia, considering that Somali people share similar culture, land terrain and vegetation for bee forage. They also consume honey products and there is undoubted demand for the product against a limited supply. Technical support and provision of equipment to beekeepers could provide significant alternative income and employment sources for rural households and improve their livelihoods.

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A major turning point for FAO in mobilizing resources

Q & A with Nadine Valat, Senior Programme Officer for the Donor Liaison and Resource Mobilization Team, on the challenges FAO is facing in terms of resource mobilization.

What is the current situation of FAO resources?

FAO's integrated programme of work is funded by obligatory and voluntary contributions. Some 41 per cent of the FAO budget is funded by assessed contributions from member countries (obligatory contributions or quotas of Member countries) and 59 per cent by voluntary contributions from member countries and other partners.

What challenges does FAO face when it comes to mobilizing resources?

For several years now, FAO, like all the other United Nations agencies, has seen its ordinary budget stagnate or even decline. This is largely due to the economic and financial crisis affecting a large number of industrialized countries, leading to a reduction in budgets allocated to development aid, especially multilateral aid.

This decline in the budget is not paired with a decline in tasks for FAO. On the contrary! In an increasingly complex world, facing crises of every kind, including shifts brought about by climate change and a growing population, questions of food security and nutrition are increasingly at the centre stage and of critical importance.

FAO becomes more and more dependent on the voluntary contributions that it manages to mobilize through its partners and must therefore invest efforts to attract more voluntary contributions, expand its base for mobilizing resources and diversify its funding sources.

Finally, FAO is facing the need of having greater flexibility in terms of how the organization can use its resources. FAO wants to favour a programme-based approach over a project-based approach, adopted in the past.

What are the priorities for resource mobilization?

As mentioned earlier, FAO constantly has to do more with less. The new Strategic Framework focuses on five strategic objectives. This enables FAO to highlight priorities, rationalize resource allocation and improve its results.

FAO is seeking to engage partners in a strategic dialogue, so as to attract both more unearmarked resources for high level results and more earmarked resources for specific technical themes and/or geographical priorities.



Community mobilization in Nyagiraba, Burundi.

This resource mobilization revolves around (i) 11 global priorities for resource mobilization; (ii) 15 regional initiatives; (iii) 141 country programme frameworks, which identify priorities agreed between a national government and FAO. Country programme frameworks guarantee that FAO's work at country level contributes to the national objectives of food security and agricultural development. The chances of achieving concrete results, at global, regional and national level, are therefore multiplied.

As requested by its member countries, FAO is strengthening its presence in the field to be able to better answer the needs of beneficiaries and encourage resource mobilization at local level.

Since 2010, FAO has developed several mechanisms to mobilize unearmarked resources. That is the case, for example, of the FAO Multi Partner Programme Support Mechanism (FMM). This mechanism, which allows substantial flexibility and plays an important role as a catalyst, makes contributions available to FAO that have been allocated (in agreement with partners) at the level of the strategic objectives, so as to achieve the results identified in the organization's programme of work. The Netherlands and Sweden were the first to

finance through this innovative mechanism. The Flemish International Cooperation Agency and the Kingdom of Belgium followed. Among others, the FMM has made it possible to fund Dimitra activities and improve the access of rural communities to participatory communication, information, resources and services, thereby increasing their capacities to mobilize, organize, exchange and become actors of their own development.

The new FAO guidelines mark a major turning point in its policy for resource mobilization. It is no longer the case of a simple transfer of funds from a donor to FAO and a beneficiary country, but of partnerships between parties with a common objective. We are convinced that FAO can meet the ambitious goals that it has set itself, together with the member countries, through solid and innovative partnerships, based on a relationship of trust and accountability, as well as on bringing together the comparative advantages of each and every partner.

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Niger

Alternatives to child labour in agriculture

In July 2014, a workshop was held in Niger on child labour in agriculture (rice and horticulture sectors) with the aim of identifying possible solutions and alternatives, without harming agricultural production.

Legislation in Niger sets the minimum age for employment at 14. However, children aged between 12 and 14 can carry out what is described as, light work (for a few hours a day, outside school hours, tasks suited to their age and only by daytime), while children under 12 cannot work under any circumstances.

It is nevertheless estimated that children spend between one and six hours every day doing agricultural work. Often, from as early as 5 years-old, they travel long distances each day to work in the fields, including work in rice production, and collecting water and firewood for their households. This situation makes school and work incompatible for most children.

This worrying situation was the focus of a brainstorming workshop organized by FAO on 23 and 24 July 2014 in Niamey, the capital of Niger. The results of a study on child labour carried out in the regions of Tillabery, Dosso and the municipality of Niamey were presented.

According to this study, at least one-third of the children interviewed were engaged in agricultural activities (collecting water, sowing, transplanting, weeding, tilling, grazing livestock, harvesting, etc.). Representatives of various ministries (Agriculture, Labour, Youth, Justice

and Health), regional technical services, the private sector, civil society and development partners participated in the workshop.

Possible solutions

The participants in the workshop agreed that the involvement of children in non-dangerous productive activities can be positive. Such participation can, for example, contribute to inter-generational knowledge transfer and food security for children, especially in the context of family farming.

It was also noted that different ministries within the country are working on the prevention and reduction of child labour in agriculture, in particular the Ministry of Employment, Labour, Social Security and the 3N Initiative (Nigeriens nourish Nigeriens). Participants stressed the need for multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder responses in order to achieve the best possible results.

At the end of the workshop, participants drew up recommendations regarding institutional and socio-economic sectors and the field of information and training, in keeping with policy and national strategy documents in force. Key measures identified by participants include the need to enact, at the legislative level, a list identifying and prohibiting potentially hazardous work for children in the area of agriculture, as well as extension services to farmers concerning existing texts and international conventions ratified by Niger on child labour in agriculture.

In addition, other crucial recommendations were made, such as the involvement and mobilization of actors, including opinion leaders, relief measures for the work rural women, promote rural credit and expand the base of social protection to the informal and rural sectors. In the field of agriculture, it is important to intervene at the spinnerets of certain agricultural products to increase production (access to inputs and appropriate technology) and to improve agricultural marketing (update processing).



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For more information, visit:
<http://www.fao.org/childlabouragriculture/en/>

Child labour is:

Any kind of work that may compromise the health, safety or morals of children (defined as any person under the age of eighteen. The minimum age for employment should not be lower than the age of compulsory education in the country (14 in Niger), and in any case, it should be no lower than 14. A distinction is made between “acceptable” work (for example age-appropriate, light work that contributes to a child’s education and does not compromise his or her schooling) and “unacceptable” work (tasks that are too long or too heavy for the age of the child, or that endanger the child’s life and health in the short and long term).

Lessons from Africa to reduce gender inequalities in family farming

Closing the gender gap is not only the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do for improved agriculture and food security for all. This was the key message at the recent High Level Side Event on “Family farming interventions to close the gender gap: lessons from Africa”.

The event was held at FAO headquarters on 17 October 2014, during the 41st Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

In his opening remarks, FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva noted that the unprecedented economic growth that Africa is experiencing is not equal for everyone. He also highlighted that a serious program of rural poverty reduction should focus on women that are the backbone of rural societies.

Many important names among the panelists: Amadou Allahoury Diallo, High Commissioner of the 3N Initiative in Niger – Nigeriens nourish Nigeriens; Haladou

Salha, AU-NEPAD Senior Technical Advisor; Thelma Awori, Founding Chair and President of the Sirleaf Market Women’s Fund, Liberia; Jonathan Jacobs, Joint Founder and Managing Director of Malawi Mangoes; Beatrice Gakuba, Founder and CEO of Rwanda Flora; Ibrahim Coulibaly, President of the National Confederation of Farmers’ Organizations of Mali and International Year of Family Farming Special Ambassador for Africa.

Moderated by Ndisale Brave, Deputy Director of FAO’s Social Protection Division, the discussions among panellists focused on effective interventions in family farming that empowered women and address gender inequalities in Africa, offering specific recommendations for policies and actions to close the gender gap and strengthen family farming.

Participants also called on FAO to act as an “objective broker between the private sector and the public sector” and enable strong partnership between the two. Other issues that were touched on have been land govern-

ance (for both men and women), the need for improved technologies that are gender specific or “gender-friendly”; the need for better access to land, credit and markets for young rural boys and girls; the need to involve and engage women and young people in policy and decision making processes. Finally, all academic institutions have been encouraged to have “schools of gender” to define gender policies for mainstreaming gender.

Marcela Villarreal, Director of FAO’s Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC), provided closing remarks that echoed many of the key messages and points discussed, reiterating above all the importance of working together: “Let us not work alone; it is not alone that we can solve the problem of food insecurity”.

✿ **For more information:**

<http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-news/gender-newsdet/en/c/263700/>

FAO Publications

☉ **State of Food and Agriculture 2014. SOFA. Innovation in family farming**

The State of Food and Agriculture 2014: Innovation in family farming analyses family farms and the role of innovation in ensuring global food security, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. It argues that family farms must be supported to innovate in ways that promote sustainable intensification of production and improvements in rural livelihoods. Innovation is a process through which farmers improve their production and farm management practices.

FAO, 2014

<http://www.fao.org/publications/sofa/en/>

☉ **The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014**

The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014 presents updated estimates of undernourishment and progress towards the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) and World Food Summit (WFS) hunger targets. A stock-taking of where we stand on reducing hunger and malnutrition shows that progress in hunger reduction at the global level and in many countries has continued but that substantial additional effort is needed in others.

<http://www.fao.org/index.php?id=52735>

☉ **Running Farmer Field Schools A Facilitator’s Guide**

The Farmer Field Schools (FFS) set up by FAO and partners are helping to equip millions of small-scale producers with the knowledge and skills to

put this approach into practice and improve their livelihoods. The Farmer Field Schools offer a group of producers a framework for meeting and training – a school “without walls”, which is held in a field, throughout the growing season.

FAO, 2014

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3948f.pdf>

☉ **Youth and Agriculture Key Challenges and Concrete Solutions**

This publication provides real life examples on how to re-engage youth in agriculture. It shows how tailor-made educational programmes can provide rural youth with the skills and insights needed to engage in farming and adopt environmentally friendly production methods. Many of the initiatives and approaches reported in this study originate from the youth themselves. The following study was a joint undertaking of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA).

FAO, 2014

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3947e.pdf>

☉ **Women in Forestry: Challenges and opportunities**

Men and women play different roles in forestry and agroforestry systems in developing countries. Compared with men, women are frequently disadvantaged in their access to and control over forest



resources, and in the economic opportunities available to them. Policies and practices empowering women in the forest sector can yield significant benefits to food security and nutrition, to the sustainable management of forests, and to the livelihoods of forest-dependent people and their societies.

FAO, 2014

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3924e.pdf>

Resources

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.

Global status report on violence prevention 2014

This is the first report of its kind to assess in 133 countries efforts to address interpersonal violence, namely child maltreatment, youth violence, intimate partner and sexual violence, and elder abuse. Jointly published by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the report calls for a scaling-up of violence prevention programmes; stronger legislation and enforcement of laws relevant for violence prevention; and enhanced services for victims of violence.

WHO, 2014

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/status_report/2014/report/report/en/

Women & Climate change – Negotiations – Existing mandates and entry points for gender equality

This technical guide was developed to support decision-makers, negotiators and advocates in mapping current climate change policy decisions that contain specific references to gender equality across all main areas of the negotiations. This mapping supports users in conducting more effective monitoring of the implementation of gender-sensitive climate change policies and actions at all levels.

WEDO, 2014

www.wedo.org

Report: The Gender Advantage: Women on the front line of climate change

This publication illustrates IFAD's experience in closing the gender gap and mobilizing the 'gender advantage' in climate change adaptation through ten case studies from across the world. The case studies show that gender-sensitive adaptation results in better livelihood options and incomes, improved yields, more food security and reduced workloads for women and their families.

IFAD, 2014

<http://www.ifad.org/gender>

Masculinities, conflict and peacebuilding: perspectives on men through a gender lens

This publication aims to advance discussions about integrating a masculinities perspective into peacebuilding policy and practice. It examines existing programmes that promote non-violent and gender equitable masculinities and poses key questions about how these can be further developed to challenge the gender norms which drive conflict and insecurity.

SAFERWORLD, Oct 2014

<http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/862-masculinities-conflict-and-peacebuilding-perspectives-on-men-through-a-gender-lens>

The State of the World's Children 2014 In Numbers: Every Child Counts Revealing disparities, advancing children's rights

Thirty years have passed since The State of the World's Children began to publish tables of standardized global and national statistics aimed at providing a detailed picture of children's circumstances. Much has changed in the decades since the first indicators of child well-being were presented. But the basic idea has not: credible data about children's situation are critical to the improvement of their lives – and indispensable to realizing the rights of every child.

UNICEF, 2014

<http://www.unicef.org>

Women agricultural workers and the right to adequate food and nutrition

This publication by the Food First Information and Action Network (FIAN) discusses the discriminatory working conditions women agricultural workers endure, as well as how women and girls play an essential role towards the food and nutrition security of their families and communities. Food First Information and Action Network

FIAN, 2014

<http://www.fian.org/what-we-do/issues/gender/>

The Global Gender Gap Report 2014

The Global Gender Gap Report 2014 emphasizes persisting gender gap divides across and within regions. Based on the nine years of data available for the 111 countries that have been part of the report since its inception, the world has seen only a small improvement in equality for women in the workplace. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2014, the gender gap for economic participation and opportunity now stands at 60% worldwide, having closed by 4% from 56% in 2006.

WEF, 2014

http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR14/GGGR_CompleteReport_2014.pdf

<http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap>

Ebola Communication Network (ECN)

The Ebola Communication Network (ECN) is a collection of health communication materials designed to help address the spread of the Ebola virus in West Africa. ECN collects Ebola communication resources from a variety of sources including USAID, UNICEF, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization.

<http://ebolacommunicationnetwork.org>

Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity

This report identifies promising opportunities and entry points for lasting transformation, such as interventions that reach across sectors and include life-skills training, sexual and reproductive health education, conditional cash transfers, and mentoring. It underlines the vital role information and communication technologies can play in amplifying women's voices, expanding their economic and learning opportunities, and broadening their views and aspirations.

World Bank Group, 2014 http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTWBP/Resources/VA_web.html

Rethinking Resilience: Prioritizing Gender Integration to Enhance Household and Community Resilience to Food Insecurity in the Sahel

Mercy Corps conducted a research between June 2013 and January 2014 to explore the relationship of gender dynamics and resilience building, in particular in the Sahel region of Mali, Niger and Nigeria. This area is beset by chronic poverty, food shortage, drought, degradation of its ecosystem and conflict.

Mercy Corps, 2014

<https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/Mercy%20Corps%20Gender%20and%20Resilience%20September%202014.pdf>

Measuring progress toward empowerment. women's empowerment in agriculture index: baseline report

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) baseline survey results, summarizing both findings from the WEAI survey and the relationships between the WEAI and various outcomes of interest to the US Government's Feed the Future initiative. These poverty, health, and nutrition outcomes include both factors that might affect empowerment and outcomes that might result from empowerment.

IFPRI, 2014

<http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/weaireport2013.pdf>



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