

MINUTES
NURI
IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING
COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD IN ARUA
3 - 4 NOV 2022

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Lists of Acronyms

ABBREVIATION	FULL TEXT
AEO	Agricultural Extension Officer
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CAR	Community Access Road
CDO	Community Development Officer
CF	Coordination Function
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
DCB	District Capacity Building
DEC	District Executive Committee
DLG	District Local Government
DPO	District Production Officer
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
FG	Farmer group
FPO	Focal Point Officer
GAP	Good Agronomic Practices
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GR4W	Green Road for Water
HH	House Hold
IMC	Implementation Monitoring Committee
LLG	Lower Local Government
LSB	Local Seed Business
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment
MWT	Ministry of Works and Transport
NOSP	National Oil Seed Programme
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PDM	Parish Development Model
RAU	Resilience Agricultural Unit
RDE	Royal Danish Embassy
RI	Rural Infrastructure
SDA	Safari Day Allowance
SEC	Sub county Executive Committee
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health Rights
UNWMZ	Upper Nile Water Management Zone
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WAY	Women Adolescent and Youth
WRM	Water Resources Management

1. Introduction

The Implementation Monitoring Committee meeting 2022 was organized by NURI-CF and divided into two venues; one in Acholi sub-region covering the districts of implementation in Acholi and North West Nile and a second sitting in Arua covering the districts in South West Nile. The meeting in Arua was held from 3rd – 4th November 2022 at Desert Breeze Hotel in Arua City. The meeting in Arua was honoured by her Excellency the Ambassador of Denmark in Uganda.

1.1 Purpose of the meeting

To monitor the extent of achievement of NURI planned implementation activities in Northern Uganda including for refugees with focus on the key results areas.

1.2 Objectives of the meeting

1. To provide updates on planned activities completed from January 2019 to date
2. To validate results of implemented activities through programme site/beneficiary visits
3. To make recommendations for improvement of programme implementation (and/or for the future)

2. Welcome and introduction of participants

The meeting was opened with a word of prayer. An introduction and welcome notes were made to the participants by the NURI National Programme Coordinator and the Human Resources Coordinator who were facilitators of the sessions and the event. Introductions were then made by recognizing the different stakeholders in attendance who introduced themselves in groups through their organizations and the line ministries present (MoFPED, MAAIF, MoLG, MWT, MWE, and OPM) UNWMZ- Lira, representatives from the DLGs technical and political wings (Arua, Koboko, Terego, Madi okollo, Nebbi, Pakwach and Zombo), representatives from the IPs (DRC, UNFPA/CARE, AFARD, PICOT and ARUDIFA) representatives from NURI CF. The Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development were not represented.

3. Official welcome to the host district

The official welcome to the host district was done by the LC5 chairperson Arua district local government who welcomed participants to the district and extended a warm welcome to the

Ambassador of Denmark for honoring the meeting. The chairman said NURI has done a lot in West Nile sub region and they rate NURI as the best partner in West Nile sub region within the respective districts of implementation.

He continued that NURI program complement the government programs within the districts and prioritized sector and areas that are not easily reached by government. The presence of NURI has bridged the gap in extension services within the region and NURI staffs are highly experience with very good conduct within the community.

He said Arua district in particular has benefitted from CSA, RI, WRM water ponds, food forests, community access roads leading to market centres, health centers he reported that so far NURI has done 65 CARs in greater Arua, 45 food forests and 4 water springs. Therefore NURI is contributing directly to the National Development programme III of the government of Uganda

The chairman appreciated the District Capacity Building granted to the districts that it will act as sustainability strategy. He lamented that as the sub region they were shocked when they learned that NURI was phasing out however, they are glad that there is one year extension which will usher in NURI phase 2. He stressed that West Nile districts should not be forgotten in NURI 2 and pleaded that NURI 2 should be awarded to DRC he said they are open to give recommendations when needed.

Finally, he requested for the resources like NURI cars, motorcycles and staff to be retained and he invited the Ambassador to address the participants.

4. Remarks by the Ambassador of Denmark

Her Excellency the Ambassador of Denmark in Uganda welcomed all the participants for the IMC 2022. She said she assumed office on the 1st of September 2022 and the IMC meeting was her first time in Arua district.

NURI has created good achievements within the region therefore the IMC meeting should help participants to reflect on the achievements. She continued that the NURI program matched the priority of Uganda and Denmark governments especially on refugees, Agricultural infrastructures and the host communities. NURI has good collaborations with other stakeholders the government, District Local Governments and other partners; she thanked the government of Uganda and the DLGs for embracing the programme for the good of our community.

NURI has incorporated Resilience designs, VSLA into the programme, collaborated well with CARE on the WAY programme SRHR for example while she was in Kitgum the farmers spoke so well about SRHR.

She said the year 2023 is going to be a year of focus on green aspects and consolidating on the achievements so far gained. She added that she can't yet speak with authority on NURI Phase 2 since it is still being developed and discussed however; she said she cannot imagine Denmark in Uganda without supporting the North.

Feasibility studies are being done in Western and Northern Uganda which will inform decision making, she continued that more will be divulged when information on NURI 2 is out and available.

The Ambassador urged the DLGs to make the resources last for example the 4000 farmer groups and the 700 kilometers of Community Access Roads which requires maintenance, and finally extended gratitude to the NURI team for the good work within the region and declared the meeting officially opened.

5. Review of action points from IMC meeting 2021 minutes

Action points from previous IMC meeting were presented by the NURI National Programme Coordinator he said the action points were not much and pointed out the key recommendations that were implemented or acted upon as below:

1. There was issue of synergy among the three outputs of CSA, RI and WRM which he reported that this was harmonized for example there were joint sensitizations to the districts and the beneficiaries among the three outputs
2. Recommendation was made for on-farm training on soil and water management. This was implemented by conducting refresher trainings across the units on resilience designs which was then up scaled to the grassroots by the extension staff and now being adopted by individual farmers
3. Farmer groups losing interest in their strategic crops. He reported that the program was flexible to allow farmer groups select an extra crop of their own to supplement the strategic crop. Extension staffs were also able to support the households in other crosscutting issues for example sanitation.

4. Farmers wanted to do local seed business. The NPC reported that some farmer groups have already been identified for LSB but this will be in the NURI extension 2023 they are already working with ISSD and research organizations to get all the requirement for this activity
5. Extension staff concentrating on areas of work only he said on this some farmer groups hosted and participated in RD refresher trainings
6. CSA training areas to strengthen appropriate use of soil and water resources management. He said selected staff were trained on Farmer market school and mindset change which they came back and cascaded to their colleagues who then disseminated the trainings to the farmer groups
7. Translating challenges to CSA, issues were on late procurement, quality of the inputs the NPC reported that these were rectified by engaging the stakeholders involve, mentoring of staff which emanated to timely procurement and subsequently timely planting. On quality assurance suppliers were invited for pre bidding meetings
8. On the poor mindset of farmer group members, he reported that mindset training is being disseminated to the farmer groups and this will go a long way in changing the perception and the ways group members do their things.

6. Presentations on implementation progress

The presentations included achievements under the three strategic interventions from on-set of NURI to date, challenges encountered, recommendations and lessons learnt. Consolidated presentations were made on CSA, RI and Water Resources Management for the seven districts. The DLGs as key stakeholders also made presentations on findings and recommendations informed by their quarterly monitoring visits conducted. The breakdown of the different presentations is listed below;

1. CSA updates (Executive Director- PICOT): Consolidated presentation of progress in South West Nile districts of Arua, Nebbi, Zombo, Pakwach, Madi-Okollo, Terego and Koboko districts)
2. Rural Infrastructure and Water Resources Management updates (Project Manager-Project Support – DRC West Nile South) covering all the 07 districts listed above. The WRM presentation submitted by DRC was inclusive of updates from the Upper Nile Water Management Zone (UNWMZ).

3. DLG updates (FPO Terego) – Presentation on findings of quarterly DLG monitoring visits in all the 07 districts of West Nile South.

6.1 Key achievements in the different presentations

6.1.1 Climate Smart Agriculture (Output 1)

The implementation context was characterized by:

- Weather variability (2019, 2020 bad with unreliable rains, rising water levels/floods, pest and diseases-fall armyworms, 2021 good year of production, 2022 fair with season A affected by dry spell)
- Flourishing economic activities (trade in Agricultural commodities much as prices were fluctuating especially for essential goods and services)
- COVID-19 Pandemic and its impact on activity implementation, Refugee influx in Imvepi, Rhino camp & Zombo district
- Good collaboration with DLG & LLG leaders and development partners

Key highlights:

- Total 1,877 farmer groups across the seven districts (929 New nationals, 408 old national groups and; 328 mixed groups, 212 Refugee women groups) reaching 47,713 households. Disaggregation: Females-63%, Males- 37%, Youths- 33%, Refugees-23%
- Average membership is 26 per group
- Strategic crops selected include beans, cassava, sesame, soybean, potato, groundnuts, onions and maize while field crops grown by refugee groups include; groundnuts, maize, cassava, beans, sweet potatoes and sesame
- All the 1877 groups underwent training in the 10 sessions of the Climate Smart Agriculture model
- Overall average attendance was 16 members per session, more female members 67% attended the trainings compared to the male 33% due to the high numbers of women in most of the groups under NURI programme.
- Land size for cultivating the different strategic crops have been increasing since the base year 2019. Average increase of land size per producer is 0.75 acres from baseline to 2021. Over the years as land size increases production has increased

- Productivity (yield per acre) has continued to improve over the years as compared to the baseline year
- The increased productivity is attributed to the CSA practices the farmers have adopted
- 816 groups in 2nd cycle with 22,935 members (71% female): 49% in greater Arua (Madi-Okollo, Arua and Terego), 41% in greater Nebbi (Pakwach, Zombo and Nebbi) 10% in Koboko.
- 26% refugee groups, 55% have graduated (completed 1 cycle and started second cycle), 45% in first cycle of saving (ongoing)
- The total savings for the 7 districts is Ugx 3,013,036,400 Ugx (Men 32%, Women 68%, Youths 25%, Refugee 11%, and Return on investment 24.20% Fund utilization rate 59%
- Total loans Ugx 5,097,423,350 Ugx (Loans for Agric. purpose 27%,
- No. of groups linked to financial services are 75.
- 1st cycle share out; 3,900,154,550 shared out among 21,900 members
- Average amount received per member Ugx, 178,089
- Average Loan per individual Ugx 101,296
- Average saving per member for groups who completed 1st cycle is Ugx 123,273.
- Saving per member for groups in the 2nd cycle is Ugx 91,128

6.1.2 Rural Infrastructures (output 2)

Key highlights:

- Conducted 7 inception meetings in the 7 districts in South West Nile
- Facilitated 56 sub county meetings
- Formed 327 Parish development committees
- Revalidated 327 Parish Development Plans
- 9 investment plans where approved by the DTTC
- 3220 Project management committees were trained
- 805 projects worth 19,209,746,687 were approved and 792 98.4% were completed by the meeting time
- 3609 Project User Committees were formed and trained

6.1.3 Water resources management (output 3)

- 4 micro catchments of Yelulu, Ora, Nyarwodho and Ayila Abongo were implemented
- 240 infrastructures were planned 229 representing 95.4% were completed by the meeting time.
- 89 user management agreements were developed and implemented

6.1.4 Presentation from UNFPA/CARE WAY results

The goal of the WAY program is to empower women and young people in northern Uganda, including refugees, to contribute to their own and their communities' development through an integrated approach to gender equality, SRHR and GBV services, and socio-economic empowerment.

The outcome of the WAY program is enhanced utilization of SRHR and GBV services among young people and women in northern Uganda, including refugees, for healthy and productive lives where;

- Women and young people are empowered to demand their SRHR and gender rights and to access socio-economic asset building opportunities
- Duty bearers provide integrated and quality SRHR and GBV information and services, which are responsive to the needs of women and young people
- Young leaders are identified and nurtured to develop and implement break-through solutions for the improvement of SRHR and GBV outcomes

Thus;

The mainstreaming of SRHR/GBV into farmer groups has been ongoing since 2019.

Integration is reaching a larger population group with basic knowledge of SRHR/GBV and strengthening access to and demand of SRHR/GBV information and services.

Integration of SRHR/GBV increasingly changed the perceptions among beneficiaries on family planning, gender roles, safe motherhood and joint decision making.

AEOs have demonstrated improved knowledge on SRHR/GBV & its benefits to agriculture.

FG members anecdotally reported reduced cases of GBV in their households on ways to prevent GBV along agriculture value chain activities

Women FG members reported using various family planning methods to enable them to space their children and provide more time for them to engage in agricultural activities.

FGs reported receiving support from the local government actors e.g. CDOs in crosscutting areas involving GBV, linkage to other opportunities which increases potential for sustainability of the groups when the NURI and WAY projects end

7. Discussion on the presentations

There were discussions after the presentations from the three outputs Climate Smart Agriculture, Rural infrastructure and Water Resources Management as highlighted below:

7.1 Discussion on CSA

The Assistant Commissioner for Extension from MAAIF recommended more research on the use of white sand to control fall army worm and the use of crashed variegated grasshoppers as pest repellent in soybean. The two methods according to presentations was already being used by the farmers in Arua.

There was a concern that the impact from the proceeds from CSA did not come out clearly for example how the farmers were using the income to change their lives.

That some of the storage facilities constructed through the cofunding are not being utilized or if they are being utilized its very minimal which requires concerted sensitization to the farmer groups to make good use of the stores if more are to be built.

There was concern on the radio program that the station being used has limited coverage and the languages used. It was recommended that in future the number of radio stations be increased and where possible use the stations within that particular district.

Post-harvest handling facilities for sesame should be enhanced and value addition in sesame to improve on households' income.

That the VSLA groups should be guided during share out so that members can build on household assets instead of spending all the money during festivities towards the end of the year

Farmers in Zombo have complained of deteriorating yields in potatoes because of recycling of seeds year in year out. MAAIF was tasked to look into the issue of quality of inputs especially seeds.

From the presentation the yields in rice and onions were good compared to the other strategic crops the question was what the success factors were.

There was recommendation that the new phase of NURI should look at the entire value chain of the strategic crops being promoted.

7.2 Discussion on RI and WRM

There was concern that DRC should engage the community earlier at the program inception for them to understand the issue of land for projects like Community Access Roads

A question was asked if NURI always foresee the traffic and axle loads within a particular CAR before construction it was however clarified that these are community access roads and not such studies are done.

Concern was raised on the delay in cash for work payments which sometimes escalate up to radios through calls and concern by the community. That DRC needs to improve on that even the mode of payment and the time for payments since there were instances when payments were done at night.

7.3 Discussion on CARE way program

The leaders requested that Pakwach, Nebbi and Zombo be included in the WAY program

8. Updates from District Local Governments

This presentation covers the performance updates of DLG monitoring Programme implementation under the NURI Programme. It covers the Districts of South West Nile

comprising of Nebbi, Pakwach, Zombo, Arua, Koboko, Terego and Madi-Okollo. It focuses on the core components of the NURI Programme (CSA, RI, WRM and DLG CB)

The update points out to what has worked well, bottlenecks/what has not worked well, lessons learnt and Recommendations

Updates on CSA

- All FGs being supported under CSA confirmed having received agric. Inputs, agro chemicals, tarpaulins among others.
- Compensation seeds offered to groups whose harvest did not do well in the previous seasons
- At least every group visited set up demon plots according to the trainings they received on GAPs.
- All FGs received training on IGA selection, planning and management, savings kit and financial literacy under VSLA, and Business planning.
- Integration of VSLA component is a good mechanism for promoting financial inclusion which is one of the pillars under PDM of Government.
- Most of the groups visited have developed the Vision road Journey as a group with some cascading it to individual families.
- Gender composition is nearly at 50/50 across the districts with women taking over 1/3 of leadership position in almost all the farmer groups.
- High level of commitment and political will by DEC and SEC members to meaningfully engage in project monitoring.
- There is generally high level of collaboration and coordination especially with the DLGs and LLGs.

Negative feedback

- Some poor-quality seeds delivered to the farmers that affected harvest
- Low prices for agric. produce in the market especially during the Covid 19 lockdown.
- Restriction on movements during the lockdown limited the market base for agric produce.
- Poor adoption of GAPs by Farmers on individual farms.
- Duplication of services e.g VSLA cited between AFARD and WENIPS in the South WN Districts.

- Over reliance on short term crops by farmers which are prone to weather vagaries.
- Water and soil conservation methods still very poor among FGs
- Unpredictable weather patterns that affected planting
- Emerging social issues such as GBV, Alcoholism, illiteracy, gambling, child abuse, poor parenting is hampering group performance.
- Distribution of savings during festive seasons usually goes to a waste.
- Land fragmentation a hindrance to large scale farming

Recommendations

- Train farmer groups on identification of pests and diseases and timely reporting
- Introduce and roll out local seed production of Quality Declared Seeds (QDS) by farmers to increase access to quality seeds
- There is need to periodically, review the group's vision road journey jointly.
- Bulking and collective Marketing activities and engagement need to be scaled up with value addition for better prices.
- Introduce farmers to both online and offline business strategies to widen the market base especially for agric. produce.
- Develop tools for tracking livelihood progress among beneficiary groups.
- Integrate perennial and high value crops like matooke, macademia, cashew nuts, coffee and livestock for diary with seasonal crops to strengthen HH vulnerability to cope up with climate changes
- AEOs to extend advisory services to individual fields to assess the level of adoption.
- Empower existing groups to promote cooperatives.
- Integrate Adult learning into the different programme components to shape the mind set and attitude of beneficiary groups and communities
- Train farmer groups on identification/ early signs of pests and diseases.
- Water for production (irrigation) techniques is introduced to farmers so that they can begin to appreciate how to avert dry spells.
- Excellent coordination and collaboration with both the district and sub county stakeholders

Rural Infrastructure

- Water and soil conservation methods provided and implemented across all districts except some few projects
- Work tools were procured and supplied to all groups across the districts
- Site dialogue meetings were successfully conducted with full and active participation of both the District and Sub county stakeholders with some times involvement of the police PRO/LO.
- Some of the community access roads (CAR) planned in 2021 to date were opened, monitored by SEC and DEC and partly commissioned.
- Box culverts completed and handed over under various DLGs
- Payments was made to groups that completed their works well
- Formation and training of PUC was successfully conducted for completed projects for springs and road links.
- Inadequate fill material provided for culverts and other related structures hence creating unnecessary humps on some road sections.
- Trees planted for the green roads been too young that cannot withstand the other greens, hence very low survival rates.
- Food forests established at institutional (schools) and individual farmers level with varied performance due to poor timing and tree species/variety compatibility to locality and lack of care by beneficiaries
- Slippery and sandy sections that needed gravel material not adequately handled for the critical road sections especially lower Terego, Zombo, Nebbi , Madi-Okollo etc
- Some project user committees (PUCs) not trained in some of the districts especially Arua DLG
- Some springs and CARs were not handed since they did not meet the criteria for handover (Functionality aspect)
- Some bottlenecks/streams were not addressed with structures as they needed box culverts in Terego and others DLGs hence leaving the roads hanging
- Some CARs have dead ends not connected to existing roads

Recommendations

- Project user communities be formed and trained to address the issue of O&M of the established facilities.

- Provide additional funds for murrum to raise valleys, adequately cover the culverts and their approaches.
- Non-functioning springs across DLGs be improved before they are commissioned as required
- All the projects be labelled for easy identifications
- Need for regular backstopping for the food forests by both the NURI and DLG staffs
- The Bench Terracing demonstrations should be scaled up in all hilly areas of Erussi and Ndhew to avert soil degradation due to soil erosion in such areas.
- Additional funding be lobbied for construction of structures on streams without structures especially in Terego DLG
- Need for community mobilization & mindset change by all key stakeholders at LLGs and DLGs on the misuse of the facilities put in place under the Programme e.g. vandalism, miss-use, lack of care etc.
- Food forests should strictly be established in first season of the year and tree species that fit the agro-ecology of the area be planted
- Need to support capacity building in WRM & Micro Catchment Development for DLGs

9. NURI extension (proposed activities)

The current NURI programme has been granted an extension of one year the year 2023. The NURI extension will focus on three themes:

Greening – piloting climate smart, nature-based solutions

Sustaining – sustaining and building on NURI achievements

Sharing lessons and achievements – expanding knowledge gained during NURI implementation

NURI activities achieved except long-term training in DCB – which will be allowed to continue.

Activities to further green NURI, both ongoing pilots and new green activities will be implemented and documented. Activities to strengthen operational sustainability of NURI will be included. The programme will adjust and downsize existing implementation arrangements to the requirements of the extension. Lessons learnt will be documented to inform a likely future programme.

10. Signing of MOU for NURI extension

NURI program is phasing out in December 2022 as designed, however an extension of 1 year has been granted and this necessitated the signing of an addendum to supplement the already existing MoUs signed by the district local governments.

All the seven districts from South West Nile sub region namely; (Arua, Terego, Madi-okollo, Koboko, Pakwach, Nebbi and zombo) signed the addendum. The signing were done by the CAOs of the respective district witnessed by the LC5 chairpersons on the part of the DLGs and the Programme Management Advisor on the side of the NURI Coordination Function

11. Feedback from field excursions

The second day of the meeting was for field visits. Participants were divided into groups to form six teams and each team visited different sub-county or sub counties including Rhino camp and Imvepi refugee settlements. During the visits, the teams made observations and interacted with NURI beneficiaries that had participated in CSA and local communities that had participated in rural infrastructure and water resource management projects. The interaction included a discussion on their activities, challenges and ways forward. The teams gave reports or observations from their field visits which are summarized below;

Group 1

This group visited 3 different projects in Vurra Sub County as highlighted below;

1. NAFA Farmer Group in Yapi village, Ayavu parish, Vurra sub county

The group started in 2010; it was absorbed in DAR 3 in 2015 and joined NURI in 2019 the group is composed of 42 members (10 Males and 32 females) they are producing Groundnuts supplemented with cassava as their enterprises

Field Observations/Findings

Store constructed for the group with co-funding by NURI in 2021, established erosion protection facilities, limited monitoring visit by the technical team either from the district or sub county, high cost of hiring land. Land is hired for two seasons at cost of 480,000 per acre

Challenges

Unpredictable weather, inadequate land for the group to plant in large quantities, inaccessibility to Market for their produce, lack of Value additions on their products, pests and diseases still persistent affecting yields.

Recommendations

- Need to deposit saved funds in group bank accounts with Bank of Africa
- Need for engagement of technical personnel from the District and LLG to support the group especially in extension services.
- The group needs to be trained in value addition and knowledge enhancement
- Group cohesion encouraged to achieve their target

2. Logiri- Ejirikombeni Community Access Road

Findings/Observations

The road connects two villages of Logiri-Ejirikombeni two groups worked on the road each group comprised of 30 members from the two villages

Community are maintaining the road with tools given to PUC and all the two groups PUC are on ground, the road was already commissioned and handed over to the sub county authority.

Better road access to the pupils going to schools compared to before

Challenges

Culvert bottleneck still on the road that need to be fixed

Future maintenance strategy needs to be developed

Tools for future maintenance if the current gets old

Recommendations

- There is need to encourage the communities to continue maintaining the road by slashing, opening of offshoots etc to extend the life of the road
- LLG should plan for long term maintenance strategy on the road

3. WAY PROJECT –SRHR KETEKELE PRIMARY SCHOOL

This is a health & sanitation club formed in 2018 It has 30 members with 12 boys and 18 girls from various classes (P.4- P7), two teachers were trained by CARE under this project to support the pupils implement the project

Findings/observations

Activities like sensitization on GBV, Health parade being done, making of re-usable pads by the group, peer to peer supports offered by the members, staff enriched with knowledge through trainings and general guidance and counseling activities with a sample on Team leader

Challenges

Inadequate materials for making the re-usable pads

Lack of personal protective equipment's to carry on some of their activities like cleaning the latrines

Inadequate funds to support in providing materials for making compound talks

Lack of WASH facilities in the school (VIP Latrines, bath shelters etc)

Recommendations

- There is need to expand the project to other schools to support the vulnerable girls in those schools
- Encouraged pupils to be bold on what they have learnt that is to speak with confidence
- Parents should be encouraged to support their children with the materials for the projects as a long-term strategy.
- Advised pupils to work hard and engage in activities that can generate them money to support their educations

Group 2

This group visited only one women mentors' group in Uleppi Sub County under the WAY programme

These are group of women who have been trained by CARE in SRHR and sexual reproductive health.

They were trained in topics such as family planning; Gender based violence, guidance and counseling, menstrual hygiene management among others.

The women mentors then cascaded the trainings within the communities where they come from and were able to register some achievements for examples after the family planning training and mentorship;

- A number of families are now thinking of having a manageable number of children

- So far 200 households registered and mentored of which they are showing positive attitude
- Men are supporting their wives to have family planning methods and even go together for antenatal and postnatal care
- Women are able to do their business freely and fulfill their husbands needs very well since they have spaced children

Under gender-based violence;

- There is a remarkable reduction in cases being reported because of the intervention
- The women are now able to speak up and report GBV to police without fear of reprimand from their spouses
- The children are now able to enjoy parental love
- Children get parental protection which helps them to avoid early marriages

Under guidance and counseling;

Individuals were able to report their problems so that they are helped for example 10 girls went back to school after counseling them with their parents 1 girl from Logiri girls married before finishing senior four but after counseling she went back to school.

There has been reduction in the number of girls aborting within the communities

Counseling has brought back many broken families and now staying happily.

They are able to solve their own problems, the mentors testified of changing over 300 women and girls to mentees in more than 100 families.

Group 3

This group visited three projects in Imvepi refugee settlement

1. Siripi women safe space

The centre started in 2018; two groups were merged together with 60 members (40 girls and 20 women) they were supported by CARE/UNFPA to access reproductive health services and after Care constructed for them the safe space centre which center is now used for income generating activities like sewing, knitting, petty trade among others Care also trained the women

in making reusable pads which has since been an inspiration to the women and the young girls to stay in school.

Achievements

Since the intervention cases of sexual gender-based violence has reduced significantly, the women have become self-reliance and able to support their households because they are economically empowered

The parents are able to take their children to school and provide well balanced diet at their households. The group members have accumulated assets and they are living in harmony since 13 different tribes from South Sudan are part of this group.

Issues; the safe space has no pit latrine, there is no lighting system to enable them work at night they are saving but without a cash box and they lack business skills.

2. Joint hand farmer group, point E village 15 zone 2

The group was formed in 2021 and both in CSA, VSLA with 35 members 31 females, 4 males

The group selected groundnuts, maize and cassava as their enter enterprises and produced intercrop of Groundnut and maize on Demo plot of 0.7 acre they were trained in GAP and received seeds and tarpaulins for post-harvest handling.

Achievements

Members are able to pay fees for their children, peaceful co-existence with host communities, plan their resources well and members are reporting remarkable reduction in cases of GBV

Challenges

Inadequate tarpaulins for post-harvest, lack of produce store and high cost of land hires

General recommendations

- Incorporate more nationals to reduce the cost of land hire
- Support for produce store continuous training for knowledge and skills
- CARE should consider constructing VIP latrine at the center
- Increase number of sewing machine
- Supported with Embroidery machine

3. Point J Market Imvepi

Project started in 2020; the market sits on 100m x100m and properly fenced using chain link, breast-feeding shade for mothers, slaughter slab, 4 stance drainable latrine, bio gas system, lighting system. Market has 621 vendors some of whom spend the night in the market mostly the refugees. Market tenderer remits 600,000 monthly to Odupi Sub County. Difficult to control revenue collection as the big entrance gate does not have a small gate. Daily due of 200 standards for all, biogas system serves two hotels.

Challenges

- The fence height is low hence thieves can jump over
- Lack of lighting system in the hotels to facilitate preparation of super
- The slaughter slabs require floor hooks for ease of skinning the animals

Group 4

1. Good Shephard Primary School Food Forest - Bileaffe Sub County, Terego District

Observations/ findings

The food forest sits on 2 acres of land; the project was implemented in the year 2020 by 30 community members through cash for work. The Food forest was intercropped with sesame that kept the garden clean. Group was happy about the project and requested more projects of tree planting to be brought to their community, the Land was offered by the community for the school

Project improved the livelihood of group members (members bought goats, solar systems, clothes, and paid school fees from money received)

High survival rate of above 90% and the trees are well established, some group members continued maintaining the FF after handing over

Challenges

Some group members stopped participating in the maintenance of the FF when payments stopped

Recommendations

- School should allocate plots to staff members and PTA members for maintenance
- Need to create Fire line to prevent wild fire
- District to provide additional technical support to the community/school

2. Jaura Central Farmers Group - Ogoko Subcounty, Madi Okollo District

Observations/findings

The group was formed in 2019 with 30 members, they established demo plot of 2 acres of Narocas 1 cassava variety on the land which was offered freely by a group member

Members have replicated what they learnt from the demo plots in their own fields- each member planted 2 acres of Narocas 1

Communal approach of land opening (Amuti/Oyii)

Group is engaged in VSLA which has improved on their livelihood in terms of paying school fees, acquiring other production assets

Improved social relationship among group members hence reduced GBV

Evidence of adoption of the resilience design

Group is already planning to construct a bulking store

Group 5

This group visited 3 sites in Ayivuni sub county as highlighted below;

1. GBULAGBULA SPRING, in Ayivuni Sub- County, 15 members, 7 male and 8 female

Positive findings

- Catchment area of the spring fenced
- Grass planted
- The spring box well-constructed, drainage channel well opened
- The discharge of water is good from the three spouts
- Water borne diseases are no longer a threat
- The community is supportive in maintaining the water source
- About 700 HHs benefit from the water source

Negative findings

- Poor access to the water source
- No engraving and a sign post
- Many people were not involved in commissioning
- Water User Committee formed and trained but inactive
- Part of catchment area has fields of beans and cassava

Recommendations

- Need for culverts and stone parking
- WUCs to be active and encourage HHs to make contributions for O& M
- There should be future plan to motorize the spring to pipe water system
- Communities should protect the water source. i.e. ownership issues

- The catchment area should be free of economic activities, they should be down stream

2. CSA, Aliodrozu VSLA FG, in Bira village, Ocopi Parish (30 members, 24 females, 4 male)

- NURI supported in CSA and VSLA through training and introduced 4 crops, they chose beans since it is for both food and business
- They were also supported with VSLA KITS, turplins for post-harvest handling, land preparation skills and planting skills
- The group planned to open 10 acres but opened 10 acres and 2 quarters
- They planned 25 bags and got 26 bags which was divided for food, income and seeds
- They also do marketing especially at the nearby secondary schools
- They work in partnership with other groups

VSLA Activities

- Started in 2020 and raised funds in terms of savings, fines and interest on loans, in total they raised 7,846,200 in the first cycle and 6,888,900 in the second cycle.
- In 2 years, they raised 14,735,100 and increased the star value from 1,000 to 2,000

Recommendations

- Enroll the entire community within their area of vicinity.

3. Sexual reproductive health, under CARE, through mentors, role model men and SASA

Mentored people on sexual reproductive health and rights, reached to over 360 women and girls. Encouraging people on family planning, voluntary counseling and testing for HIV, safe male circumcision

- Awareness creation on GBV, fighting against early pregnancies, early marriages, more than 20 girls modeled and rejoined school.
- Positive parenting through community dialogue.
- Health education, community awareness on GBV and family planning.

SRHR-CARE

- Few Role model men
- No transport means
- Inadequate facilitation (lunch, airtime)

Group 6

Aiva/Rhino Camp Refugee settlement

1. AKINIO Site characteristics

Valley tank:

- a. Design capacity 61,000 m³ and 5000m³ water pond
- b. Multipurpose in nature
- c. Flood control in the flood plane
- d. Flood control over the main road to Rhino camp

Small scale Irrigation:

- e. 10acres
- f. CSA (40 farmers)-Onoa Ever Green Farmers Association
- g. Mixed CSA (28 national; 12 refugees)
- h. Rice, the main crop

Observations

- Valley tank has eroded embankments
- Area has had very little rainfall therefore little water in the tank
- Absence of latrine facilities
- Water source protection measures in place
- Management committee in place
- Flooding of the road section has reduced
- Functional sprinkler irrigation scheme
- Rice growing for the first season
- Water enhancement structures present on the farm

Challenges

- Loose soils at the valley tank site leading to sediment load
- Opening of the land is manually done at the irrigation scheme leading to loss of valuable time
- Very limited rainfall
- Pests and disease
- CSA members mind set still on being supported

Recommendation

- Stabilisation of the valley tank embankments
- Construction of the latrine
- Sustainability plan should be put in place by the LGs
- Mind-set change towards self-sustaining
- Group constitution to guide operations

2 ARIWA site Characteristics

- Safe space for South Sudan refugee community
- 80 women (2groups of 40) inclusive of young girls under 24 (30No.)
- Loketa women group
- Part of the WAY program supported by DANIDA
- UNFPA and CARE implementing the support

Activities

- PPsycho social support
- IGAs
- VSLA
- Drama activities

Sharing

- Touching stories of trauma
- Women have been able to overcome some of the trauma
- SRH was lacking within the women but have been able to overcome through sharing and training.
- Skilled in some areas e.g tailoring
- Savings of 3,610,000 with a profit of 700,000/=

Challenges

- Health care services and facilities are very far
- Fear of taking contraceptives
- Few equipment for production of garments
- Toll of the economy on the group
- Reusable pads require a lot of soap for washing yet soap is very expensive

12. Challenges encountered during implementation

- Free distribution of tree seedlings by some development partners affecting uptake of tree growing initiatives by the benefiting farmers
- Slow remittance of 30% co-fund for tree growing by farmers affecting planned transplanting
- Increase in fuel price affecting the cost of implementations.
- COVID-19 Pandemic
- Scarcity of and high prices of quality agricultural inputs affecting Access
- Unreliable rainfall affected the implementation of activities especially demo and individual field opening and planting
- Limited land sizes and difficulty in securing land for demos eg in the Refugee Settlement (Siripi, Eden and Ocea Zones)
- Political campaigns & social events interrupted activities
- Destruction of farmers' crops by stray animals
- Global fuel prices increased prices of essential commodities which increased the cost of project implementation.

- Unwillingness of some community members to donate their land delayed and or halted implementation of some projects mostly in peri-urban areas.
- The unprecedented weather conditions in 2021 and 2022 affected the survival of established food forests and the yield of springs. Rains affected the excavation of water ponds making equipment not perform as planned and as per the construction period.
- Reluctance by institutions (schools, churches, mosques, LLGs) and communities to maintain created infrastructures.
- Changes in the design of structures as a result of reassessment due to unforeseen circumstances which led to delays and increased cost of implementation.
- Number of projects expected to be delivered by Output 2 (RI) Visa vie expected priorities and quality of projects to be implemented by districts.
- Delayed supervision and submission of reports by district technical staff due to competing priorities led to delayed payment of masons, vendors, and commissioning of completed projects.
- Variation between DRC cash for work rate of UGX 6,000 and that of other INGOs ranging from UGX 10,000 – UGX 15,000 affected retention and participation of group members.
- Government of Uganda imposed lockdowns and SOPs by the ministry of health especially limitations on the number of people in gatherings affected planning, training of PMC, and implementation of public works activities.
- Destruction of food forests by termites and pests including grasshoppers and roaming animals which was experienced in all districts.

13. Recommendations

- ❖ Co-fund amount (for tree seedlings) to be revised to a manageable level.
- ❖ Cooperatives to be supported in terms of logistics and training.
- ❖ Program to give inputs to individual HH in the first year of implementation
- ❖ Intervention in climate change adaptation should be scaled-up
- ❖ Farmers to embark on local seeds business for easy and affordable access to inputs
- ❖ Continuous community engagement through site dialogue meetings and signing of Voluntary Land Donation forms to resolve land-related conflicts
- ❖ Thorough screening of projects to be done to minimize changes in the design of structures and costs

- ❖ Carry out an assessment of cash-for-work rates being used by different organizations to review the NURI cash-for-work rate
- ❖ Continuous sensitization and engagement of beneficiaries to foster ownership and maintenance of created assets.

14. Official closure

The IMC meeting in South West Nile was closed by the LC5 chairperson of Nebbi district standing in for the LC5 of Pakwach. He thanked for the active participation and extended his appreciation to the Royal Danish Embassy for their generous support to the region. He promised on behalf of all chairpersons to take up NURI projects to ensure sustainability.

He thanked DRC for the initiative of food forest which they are will to cascade within the community. He said in the past they were used to just planting trees in woodlots without the aspects of food in mind.

He appreciated NURI for the good coordination and team work with the district local governments and other partners. He thanked NURI staff for having information at all times, saying the NURI staffing made DLG work easy because NURI staff have always given information easily when required. He apologized to NURI on behalf of the district local governments especially where they did not do well for example on land issues for projects he said in northern Uganda and west Nile the issue of land.

He requested that were possible all the districts within the sub region should be included in the second phase of NURI

He ended his remarks by talking about the commissioning which was done by DRC. He said the community are still wondering whether DRC commissioned those projects or not because there was no cooking and eating as is the tradition he said next time NURI/DRC should learn the culture of commissioning projects so that the community can appreciate.

Finally, he declared the two days engagement closed which was followed by a closing prayer by the Regional Coordinator for NURI Acholi sub region.

15. Annexes

15.1 Program for the IMC South West Nile

IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING PROGRAMME – South West Nile

Venue: Desert Breeze Hotel, Arua

Date: 3 – 4/11/2022

Purpose:

To monitor the extent of achievement of NURI planned implementation activities in Northern Uganda including for refugees with focus on key result areas.

Objectives:

1. To provide updates on planned activities completed from January 2019 to date)
 2. To validate results of implemented activities through programme site/beneficiary visits
 3. To make recommendations for improvement of programme implementation (and/or for the future)
-

DAY	TIME	ACTIVITY	Lead person
2/11/2022	9:00am – 6:00pm	Travel to Arua from Kitgum	NURI Senior Driver
DAY 1 3/11/2022	8:00 –8:30am	Registration of participants	NURI FAO/FAA
	8:30 –8:50am	Welcome introduction of participants	NURI M&E
	8:50–9:00am	Official welcome to the host district	LC 5 Arua DLG (will invite the Ambassador)
	9:00 – 9:15am	Official opening of the meeting RDE	Her excellency the Ambassador
	9:15–9:30am	Review of last IMC meeting minutes	NURI NPC
	9:30 – 10:30am	NURI CSA results South West Nile (2019 - 2022)	ED PICOT
	10:30– 11:00am	TEA BREAK	NURI FAO/FAA
	11:00 – 11:30am	Reactions to CSA results	NURI NPC/M&E
	11:30 – 12:00 noon	WAY results + reactions	UNFPA/CARE
	12:00 – 1:00 pm	NURI RI/WRM results South West Nile including Koboko	SSPM- South West Nile DRC
	1:00–2:00pm	LUNCH BREAK	NURI FAO/FAA
	2:00 – 2:30pm	Reactions to RI/WRM results	NURI NPC/M&E

	2:30 – 3:30pm	DLG updates greater South + reaction (Arua, Madi-Okollo, Terego)	FPO – Koboko
	3:30 – 4:00pm	NURI Extension (proposed activities)	PMA NURI
	4:00 – 4:30pm	Remarks from the RDE (NURI future)	Ambassador RDE
	4:30 – 5:00pm	Signing of MoUs for NURI extension	RDE/NURI CF/DLGs
	5:00 – 5:30pm	Closure of day 1 (handling logistics)	NURI FAO, NURI Admin
	5:30 - 6.00pm	Evening tea	NURI FAO/FAA
	6:30 – 9:00pm	Cocktail (at Desert Breeze)	NURI CF
DAY 2 4/11/2022	8.00 - 8.30am	Participant's registration & reporting	NURI FAO/FAA
	8:30 – 9:00am	Early break tea & organizing for field trip	NURI NPC/RCs/M&E/IPs
	9:00 – 9:30am	Travel to the field	NURI NPC/RCs/M&E/IPs
	9:30 – 1:00pm	Field excursion	NURI NPC/RCs/M&E/IPs
	1:00 – 2:00pm	Travel back from field	NURI NPC/RCs/M&E/IPs
	2:00 – 3:00pm	LUNCH BREAK	NURI FAO/FAA
	3:00 – 4:45pm	Feedback from the field excursion	NURI NPC & M&E
	4:45 – 5:10pm	Official closure	LC5 Pakwach DLG
	5:10 – 5:40pm	Evening tea and closure	NURI FAO/FAA

15.2 List of participants for the meeting

S/N	Participant category	Number	Comments
1	RDE	4	Officials from RDE
2	Representatives from Line ministries	7	MoFPED, OPM, MoWT, MoLG, MWE, MAAIF, MGLSD
3	CRRF Secretariat	1	CRRF
4	UNFPA/Care	4	
5	RDO- Rhinocamp & Imveppi settlements	1	1 covering South West Nile
6	UNWMZ– Lira	3	
7	District Local Council Chairpersons	7	Arua, Madi-Okollo, Nebbi, Pakwach, Zombo, Terego, Koboko
8	Chief Administrative Officers	7	Arua, Madi-Okollo, Nebbi, Pakwach, Zombo, Terego, Koboko
9	District Production Officers	7	Arua, Madi-Okollo, Nebbi, Pakwach, Zombo, Terego, Koboko
10	District Engineers	7	Arua, Madi-Okollo, Nebbi, Pakwach, Zombo, Terego, Koboko
11	District Focal Point Officers	7	Arua, Madi-Okollo, Nebbi, Pakwach, Zombo, Koboko
12	DRC Management	7	CD, Project Manager NURI, SSPM, MEAL Coordinator, SE/WE, Resilience Coordinator
13	IP Management	6	ED PICOT, CSACs, ARUDIFA Coordinator, DP AFARD
14	NURI CF	12	All
	Total	80	

Support Teams: Drivers All (26), Security DLGs (6), Others (4): **Total 115**

Photo Gallery



Figure 1. Her excellence the Ambassador making a presentation



Figure 2. Delegates attending IMC meeting



Figure 3. Delegates visiting a Community Access Road project