

MINUTES
NURI
IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING
COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD IN KITGUM
31 OCT-1 NOV 2022

PREPARED BY NURI COORDINATION FUNCTION

Table of Contents

Lists of Acronyms.....	4
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Welcome and introduction of participants.....	5
3. Official welcome to the host district – LC5 Kitgum.....	5
4. Official opening of the meeting by the head of RDE.....	6
5. Review of previous action points from 2021 IMC.....	6
6. Presentations of implementation progress.....	7
Key achievements from the presentations of the 3 outputs.....	8
Climate Smart Agriculture.....	8
Rural Infrastructures.....	9
Water Resources Management.....	10
Presentation on WAY program by UNFPA/CARE.....	10
Discussions on the presentations.....	11
Discussion on CSA.....	11
Discussions on RI/WRM.....	12
Discussion on NURI extension 2023.....	13
7. Updates from DLG Acholi and North West Nile - DPO Moyo.....	13
Key observations.....	14
8. NURI extension (proposed activities).....	15
9. Signing of MOUs for NURI extension 2023.....	15
10. Feedback from the field excursion.....	16
Group 1.....	16
Group 2.....	17
Group 3.....	18
Group 4.....	19
Group 5.....	20
Group 6.....	21
11. Summary: Challenges encountered during implementation.....	23
Climate Smart Agriculture.....	23
Rural infrastructure/Water resource management.....	23
12. Summary: Lessons learnt during implementation.....	23
13. Success factors.....	24

14.	Recommendations/action points.....	25
15.	Closure of the meeting	26
16.	Annexes	27
	Program for IMC 2022 meeting in Kitgum.....	27
	List of participants for NURI IMC meeting 2022	29

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 (IMC) was planned by NURI Coordination Function in collaboration with RDE, NURI IPs and RAUs. The meeting was divided into two sittings, one in Acholi sub-region covering the districts of implementation in Acholi sub-region (Kitgum/Lamwo and Agago) and North West Nile (Adjumani and Moyo/Obongi) and a second sitting in Arua covering the districts in South West Nile (Arua, Koboko, Terego, Madi-Okollo, Nebbi, Pakwach and Zombo)

The meeting was held 31st Oct.-1st Nov. 2022 at Kitgum District Local Government council hall.

The Kitgum meeting attended by the representative of the Ambassador of Denmark in Uganda who doubled as the head of RDE team during the meeting.

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.

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 improving future programme implementation

2. Welcome and introduction of participants

The meeting was opened with a word of prayer at 9:10 am. An introduction was made to the participants by the NURI National Programme Coordinator and the Human Resources Coordinator who were facilitators of the sessions. Introductions were made, recognizing all stakeholders in attendance, notably the line ministries present (MoFPED, MAAIF, MoLG, MWT, MWE, and OPM) UNWZMZ- Lira, representatives from the DLGs technical and political wings (Kitgum, Lamwo, Agago, Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi), representatives from the IPs (DRC, UNFPA/CARE International), representatives from RAUs (Kitgum/Lawmo, Adjumani and Moyo/Obongi), representatives from NURI CF. The Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development did not attend.

3. Official welcome to the host district – LC5 Kitgum

Official welcome was done by the host, LC 5 Chairperson Kitgum district. He recognized invited guests present in their various capacities and welcomed them to his district. He thanked NURI for choosing Kitgum district to host this IMC meeting.

He thanked the Royal Danish Embassy for the massive support for Northern Uganda which has caused great impact within the communities as well as the settlements. He extended his appreciation to the NURI team on ground for their hard work which has bridged gaps in extension services within the area of operations.

He noted that this being the last IMC meeting it should take account of what transpired and share the lessons learnt so that members take notes of the lessons for further discussion. He wished participants good deliberations.

4. Official opening of the meeting by the head of RDE

The Danish Ambassador was represented by the Head of the RDE Green Growth Team, Ole Dahl Rasmussen, who welcomed everyone at the meeting. He stated that although this is the last IMC, it doesn't mean NURI is ending as activities will continue in 2023. The IMC 2022 is an opportunity for celebration, when we focus on what we have done well and what lessons. He mentioned the positive results of the monitoring survey with most objectives achieved.

He appreciated the good collaboration between RDE and the DLGs and applauded the government of Uganda for partnering with the Danish government. He reiterated that because of the good working relationship Uganda was closed during COVID 19 but NURI continued to work to serve the community amidst the challenges.

He thanked NURI for adapting to challenges and context, including introducing resilience structures and food forest. He mentioned that RDE team had earlier visited farmer groups in Kitgum with the Ambassador of Denmark and implementation is going on well.

On the future of NURI, the program has been extended to the end of 2023. Future strategies are still being discussed to explore the continuity to refugees affected areas. He therefore urged the district leaderships to ensure sustainability of the impact NURI has created within the communities, emphasizing that NURI has supported 4000 farmer groups and opened 700 km of community access roads, which districts need to take up and maintain. He appreciated the active participation of the districts, the guidance and inputs that they were giving to the program.

He extended a special thanks to the NURI team in particular Rilla and Joseph and the others for steering the program well and declared the meeting officially opened

5. Review of previous action points from 2021 IMC

Action points from previous IMC meeting were presented by the NURI National Programme Coordinator who presented key recommendations implemented or acted upon as below:

1. There was an issue of synergy among the three outputs of CSA, RI and WRM which he reported has been harmonized, with 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 rolled out by extension staff and is 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 additional crop. Extension staffs were also able to support the households in other crosscutting issues for example sanitation.
4. Farmers interested in local seed business. The NPC reported that some farmer groups have already been identified for LSB in the NURI extension, and NURI CF is working with ISSD and research organizations to get all the requirements ready for this activity
5. 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
6. Translating challenges to CSA, issues were on late procurement, quality of the inputs the NPC reported that these were rectified by engaging stakeholders, mentoring of staff which emanated to timely procurement and subsequently timely planting. On quality assurance suppliers were invited for pre-bidding meetings
7. 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 of implementation progress

Presentations of achievements, challenges encountered and proposed recommendations were made by the implementing partners for the 3 outputs, while District Local Governments presented update reports of their monitoring and observations. UNFPA also made a short brief on the WAY program. All the presentations were later shared to participants in memory sticks. Details of the presentations are below:

1. CSA presentation- (Coordinator RAU Kitgum/Lamwo): Presentation of progress for Acholi Sub Region and North West Nile covering Kitgum, Lamwo, Agago, Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi districts and the settlements.
2. RI and WRM presentation - (DRC Project Manager): Presentation of progress for above six districts on the two outputs.
3. WAY program- (UNFPA) - Brief presentation on integration of WAY and NURI programs by UNFPA staff by name Cinderella Anena.
4. DLG updates (DPO Moyo) - Presentation on the field findings during the quarterly monitoring by the DLGs for Acholi sub region DLGs for North West Nile.

Key achievements from the presentations of the 3 outputs

Climate Smart Agriculture

Identify and select or form farmer groups.

- 2,508 Farmer groups across the six districts reaching 77,481 households were selected or formed.
- 36% are refugees in Lamwo, Adjumani and Obongi
- 64% are new nationals in the six districts (38% in Adjumani & Moyo/Obongi)
- Gender representation: 68% females, 32% males 35% youths

Overall, the average member/group is 27, with refugees groups having average of 30.

Select strategic crops through participatory processes

- 4 strategic crops were selected by 600 national farmer groups in North West Nile namely; cassava (87), groundnuts (126), sesame (230), maize (13) and soybeans (144)
- While 6 strategic crops were selected by 1005 national farmer groups in Acholi sub region namely; cassava (31), sesame (377), maize (6), soybean (345), beans (13) and sunflower (233)
- The refugee groups selected field crops and vegetables for two key reasons: Income and food security (mixed FGs), supplement food ratios and nutrition (refugee women)
- The field crops included groundnuts, maize, cassava, Beans, pigeon peas, cow peas, sesame etc.
- Vegetables include: kales, okra, tomatoes, cowpeas, eggplant, and fruits – mangoes, citrus, pawpaw and Passion fruits etc.

Training in CSA and good agricultural practices and follow ups

- 48,153 Farmer group members have attended CSA training across the six districts:
- Attendance by female participants was 68% and males 32%
- Attendance by refugee group members was 35%
- Average attendance per group per session was 17

Groups selected among strategic crops, and prepared production and marketing plans.

- A simple business plan for farmers focusing on production and marketing.
- All farmer groups as new nationals and mixed groups are guided to prepare the plans.
- The plans are captured in the CSA database,
- To date, all the groups made plans which were implemented.
- Farmer groups that started in 2019 completed 3 cycles, groups that started in 2020 completed 2 cycles while in North West Nile the groups completed 1 cycle
- This model has enabled FGs to have a guided production of the strategic crops selected and be able to locate markets.

Generally, average land size for cultivation of strategic crops by individual household in Acholi sub region has been increasing since program roll out from 1.2 acres per HH at baseline to 1.5 acres per HH by 2021. In North West Nile increase from 0.6 in 2020 to of 0.8 acres in 2022

In Acholi sub region average yield for all the strategic crops compared to baseline has slightly increased however in terms FGs being able to achieve their plans; this has not been possible due to many factors: such as weather, inaccessibility to improved seeds, post-harvest losses.

Overall, sunflower and soybean performed better than the other enterprises. Cassava data was incomplete, hence not analyzed. There is indication of increase in yield per acre of all strategic crops except maize in 2022. An increase of 8-12% has been achieved on average.

Average income per HH compared to baseline: some achievement was made however targets were not met. Average income of 300,000Ugx at baseline to 388,693Ugx in 2021 an increase of 8 % realized from baseline to 2022. In North West Nile income from production of the strategic crops at baseline was low because some enterprises were new like soybean average income per household at baseline 2020 was 197,048Ugx with increase in target 2022 at 511,223Ugx per HH an increase in income by 16% from baseline.

Groups trained in VSLA and financial literacy.

1,864 (75% of farmer groups supported under VSLA): 54% in North West Nile, 46% in Acholi sub region, 36% refugee groups, 71% have graduated (completed 1 cycle and started second cycle), 27% still in their first cycle of saving (mainly in North West Nile)

The total savings for the 6 districts is 5,493,885,700Ugx Men 32%, Women 68%, Youths 27%, and Refugees 13% with Return on investment of 19% Fund utilization rate at 54%. Total loans 6,183,622,400Ugx, Loans for Agric. purpose at 47% No. of groups linked to financial services are 112.

Average saving per member is Ugx 127,845; average loan per individual is Ugx 96,080, average agric. loans per member is Ugx76, 500, average saving per member for groups who completed 1st cycle is Ugx 176,887

Average saving per group members in the 2nd cycle is Ugx 134,361 (cycle only 75% complete)

Rural Infrastructures

Each of the six districts underwent six months of planning activities including; District inception meetings, Sub-county sensitization meetings, Settlement sensitization meetings, formation of Parish Development Committees (PDCs), Revalidation of Parish Development Plans (PDPs), selection and prioritization of projects at the sub-county level, technical screening of projects, approval of Investment Plans by the DTPC and blessing by the DEC.

Planned projects were 699 (428 CARs, 226 food forests, 4 markets, 20 protected springs, and 21 water ponds) 625 projects (356 km CAR, 226 food forests, 4 markets, 18 protected springs and 21 water ponds representing 89.4% were achieved by the time of the IMC meeting.

Achievement under cash for work 20,779 beneficiaries (9812 males, 10,966 females) participated in cash for work and the program paid out over 3.3 billion Ugx after the completion of their projects this has contributed money within the communities and the economy as a whole hence improving on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries.

Project user committees were formed and trained to support in the maintenance and in the long run sustenance of the projects a total of 3555 (2096 males, 1459 females) within the six districts

74 projects were ongoing from November to December. These include; 2 springs and 9 CARs in Adjumani, 3 CARs in Agago, 36 CARs in Obongi, 9 CARs in Kitgum, 4 CARs in Lamwo and 11 CARs in Moyo.

Water Resources Management

In enhancing the management of Water Resources to create enabling environment for smallholder farming by: Increasing water availability, reducing the impact of climate change and extreme weather events and countering environmental degradation.

Four investment plans were approved for water resources management; Awic in Lamwo, Ogwapoke in Kitgum, Iboa in Adjumani and Nyivura in Obongi with a total budget of over 9.9 billion Ugx.

The number of beneficiaries who participated in implementing the projects was 7641 (3753 males, 3888 females) the beneficiaries received over 1 billion Ugx in cash for work payments.

Presentation on WAY program by UNFPA/CARE

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 famer 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

Discussions on the presentations

The presentations about implementation progress of CSA, rural infrastructure and water resource management WAY program as well as reports from DLGs was followed by discussions and reactions from the participants.

Discussion on CSA

The DLGs expressed appreciation for the NURI programme, they said there is need to integrate all the NURI projects into the local government plans for ease of monitoring and sustainability.

There was call to strengthen the relationship between the refugees and the host communities especially when it comes to issue of land acquisition a case in point in Adjumani where the refugees are more than the host communities as reported by the LC5 chairperson Adjumani.

As NURI winds up the program there is need to allocate the NURI assets for example motorcycles to the local government to further monitoring of the programs once NURI phase out however, this should be well handled to avoid conflict that may arise.

There was request by the DLGs for the extension of the NURI program to consolidated the gains so far achieved within the past years. The LC5 chairman Adjumani appreciated the implementation monitoring model that brings together all the different stakeholders to deliberate on the progress of the program.

NURI CF to share a clear road map about the one-year extension to the stakeholders so that they are able to track the process. The Chairperson Moyo DLG urged the RDE to do another phase of the program as the extension will not be sufficient to address the many challenges.

West Nile is currently developing a horticulture plan where NURI will be invited to give their inputs as one of the major partners within the sub region. They said their survey indicated that 71% of tomatoes consumed in West Nile are imported from outside the region which accounts for over 1 billion spent out of the region, majorly to Tanzania.

The LC5 Moyo appealed to the local governments to adopt the practical concept of production and marketing plan and integrate into the district planning program.

There was call for improvement in the participation of men in the program however it was also noted the women are more than the men because of their interest as groups are self-selecting.

DLGs emphasized the importance of data and statistics in reporting to be supplemented by information on activities.

The DLGs appreciated the farmers open day model as this has shown success in the strategic crops and acquisitions of other assets among the farmers

There was appeal to MAAIF to look into recruitment of more extension staff at the district levels to bridge the gap in extension services within the districts

There was request that the next phase of NURI should consider value addition if the farmers are to reduce on the level of poverty.

Discussions on RI/WRM

Ownership of the projects are still lacking especially during maintenance phase of the projects like the CARs, the LC1s should be involve during acquisition of land for CAR so that they provide leadership role

There was concern on valley dams, an example was given around Laropi, which caused flooding of the areas surrounding it when its full. This was coupled with concern on the quality of some culvert installation, e.g. in Obongi. DLGs emphasized the involvement of the district engineers during the DRC work.

The women around Ogwapoke water catchment have appreciated the program and this has motivated them to acquire animals since they will no longer move long distance in search of water for the animals, however modifications should be done to involve simple irrigation for vegetables. Hydrological design to be properly done so that water drains away to avoid silting.

On the issue of SDA and cash for work the DLGs responded that levels are based on policy however clear communication should be given to participants during project implementation.

Community have continued to complain about the cash for work rate, however the CAO Agago, stated the rate is a matter of policy which has to be discussed with ministries of labour and gender. Important to harmonize since different NGOs are paying different rates.

That DRC should reduce on the scope of the road networks since it is costly and affects the quality of work yet the same resources can be concentrated on a smaller coverage but with better quality. There was emphasis to gravel the entire road length for sustainability.

Road safety signs to be incorporated in the designs of the community access roads.

Discussion on NURI extension 2023

The NURI extension has been approved to bridge the gaps and consolidate on the NURI achievements over the years.

The CAO Agago emphasized that the NURI extension should include trade and industry department at the district levels as key stakeholders especially on value addition.

The FPO Agago raised a concern that the MOU has a clause on issues of refugees that requires clarification as they sign the MOU for the extension. And requested that the MOU should be flexible for example on institutional support.

There was request that the community tree nursery operators should be supported in terms of capacity building if possible under the new extension to be able to raise tree seedlings that will be required for planting locally.

The RDC Kitgum reiterated that NURI should look at the grey areas in the addendum to address the issues raised by the leaders before they could sign. He testified that within the short period that he has been in the district he has heard testimonies of reduction in GBV within the community due to NURI intervention.

The RDC wished the NURI extension well and urged that the successor program to use the lessons learnt from NURI implementation to make it better.

7. Updates from DLG Acholi and North West Nile - DPO Moyo

The updates from the DLGs was a consolidated report from North West Nile (Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi) and Acholi (Agago, Lamwo and Kitgum) sub-regions based on routine activity implementation monitoring and farmer field days from 2021-2022.

As part of stakeholder's involvement in program activities, coordination and monitoring exercises were conducted at different levels to provide feedback that inform the project implementers and NURI Coordination Function.

Key observations

- Relevant district authorities were involved in inspection and certification of inputs supplied to NURI farmer groups
- Demonstration set up were timely and management greatly improved
- Good network of CARs which connects farmlands to the markets
- Farmers Open days organized and prizes awarded to best performers
- Market linkages were created for the marketing of farmers produce at a better price, for example 5 groups were linked to Gopele millers and Amatura Cooperative in North West Nile, worth 15 tonnes of maize grain
- Provision of extension for adoption of GAP and CSA demonstrated during the period
- Monitoring of project activities by key district stakeholders namely DEC, Production Department for CSA, Engineering Department for RI, NRD for compliance issues in RI/WRM, Food Forest, Land acquisition related issues in RI, SWC in CSA, LLG, Production committee and FPO at the District.
- NURI staff trained in CSA and are transferring the knowledge to farmers
- Implementation of approved DCB plans and adjusted plan ongoing
- Farmers are greatly adopting the CSA practices
- Diversification of enterprises at group level including micro catchment area development with support from Natural Resources department
- Food forests were established at institutional (schools) and individual farmer's level with varied performance due to poor timing and tree species/variety compatibility to locality
- All the community access roads (CAR) planned in 2021 to date were opened, monitored by SEC and DEC and commissioned.
- The Ogowpoke micro-catchment project commenced and some water points (Dams) are under use for watering livestock
- All planned water points in other sub counties outside the Ogowpoke micro-catchment area were worked on and community members are accessing and using the clean water for watering animals and crop
- The community project user committees for the different water points and food forests have been selected and trained on best practices for water point management.
- Average yields have greatly improved especially in groundnuts and cassava (from the farmer Field days in October 2022)
- Good coordination between the RAUs/DRC/CF with the DLGs, LLGs & other livelihood partners
- Farmer groups have production records and visitors' books
- There still exists capacity gaps (Equipment) in Districts that NURI is urged to consider under District Capacity Building (DCB).
- DCB support did not cover natural resources department which actively supports NURI
- Most of planned equipment delivered to the districts except 2 motor cycles for Moyo remained unresolved since the previous IMC
- Districts have been supported with Gadgets under DCB
- The construction of four produce stores completed in Kitgum Matidi, Akwang and Layamo

- The Districts and subcounty stakeholders meeting on collective marketing and linkages held
- Some groups were able to do bulking and collective marketing of about 6,111kg of sesame from 4 groups in Layamo Sub County
- Groups were trained and are engaged in VSLA activities

8. 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 implementation of NURI

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

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.

9. Signing of MOUs for NURI extension 2023

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 six districts from Acholi and North West Nile sub region namely; (Kitgum, Lamwo Agago, Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi) signed the addendum. The signings were done by the CAOs of the respective district witnessed by the LC5 chairpersons on the part of the DLGs and Ambassador for RDE with the Programme Management Advisor witnessing on the side of the NURI Coordination Function

10. Feedback from the field excursion

Day two of the meeting was for field visits. Participants were divided into six groups, moving to different sub-county. During the visits, the teams made observations and interacted with NURI beneficiaries that had participated in NURI activities. The interaction included a discussion on their activities, challenges and way forward. The teams gave reports or observations from their field visits which are summarized below;

Group 1

The team visited three different groups as highlighted below:

1. Gum pe rom Farmer Group – Lalano Subcounty

The group has a membership of 30 (19 females & 11 males) the group selected Soybeans as their enterprise diversified with sunflower and Apiary. Out of the 30 members 3 have constructed semi-permanent houses, 2 have laid bricks ready for construction, and 2 members bought cattle, 4 members paid fees at secondary level, 2 members each bought a plot of land at the trading center and planning to develop the plots

The members appreciated the integration of family planning because it has boosted on the output of Agriculture. There is reduced GBV among members house hold which has improved on household planning.

Challenges

The weather changes affected the first season harvest, price fluctuation for soya beans, lack of storage for their products, bad roads leading to poor market accessibility.

Future plan

All the 30 members plan to have semi-permanent structures by 2026, each household to have ten beehives, planned to be the local seed producers for Kitgum district and build their own store to bulk their produce when prices are not favorable.

2. Wamedo pit group- Located in Kitgum Matidi Sub County Pagwa Parish the group is made up of 24 members 13 female and 11 males.

The members are engaged in sesame production, members bought iron sheets, bulls, piglets, and goats others have constructed semi-permanent houses

FUTURE PLAN

Buy more oxen to boost production, construct their own storage facility and venture into local seed business.

3. **Lanyambira Lalano CAR 6KM road** location in Lumule Centre Kitgum Matidi Sub County

The 6 km road connects 2 highways, the road was opened 20 years ago but due to poor or no maintenance, the road was impassable. Three local groups helped in the road work each taking care of 2 kms the road had already been handed over to the Sub County to help in maintenance. Members of the community thanked NURI for giving them work.

Local councils one and community members to carry out road maintenance since the road has been handed over to them. The two sub counties (Lalano and Kitgum Matidi) should share in the road maintenance.

Group 2

1. **Green road for water- Mucwini Sub County**

Twon-okun – Pakuba road (6.8 km) 7 projects involving 7 groups with 30 participants per group, road already commissioned and trees planted along the road for greening

Benefits: Improved access to schools, health centers and market for produce, exposure of the community to outside world enhanced household income perma-garden used to produce vegetables all-year round

Challenges; Pests and diseases affecting road side trees and crops in perma-garden (e.g. termites), Pay-for-work rate of Ugx.6000/= in not sufficient and late delivery of tools and seedlings which affects survival during dry season

Community request for water pond project, permanent cattle crush and a primary school

Community Sustainability Plan

Willingness to maintain and protect the road and greening trees. Community has set up committees with by-laws to manage misuse to the road e.g. pulling ox-ploughs on the road

2. **Can kwero nga farmer group (CSA)**

Started as IDP returnee group in 2009, taken up by NURI in 2020, selected Sesame diversified with sunflower. Winner of Open Day contest in 2021 (Ugx. 100,000/= prize). Trained in VSLA, collective marketing and planning by RAU team

Trained in GBV/SRHS management by CARE WAY. (Testimony of health improvement from one member upon referral)

Benefits; Learned documenting production and marketing plans which simplified follow-through. Collective marketing fetches good prices and earning lump-sum which eases planning and improved SRHR and GBV management within the community.

There was testimony from one couple whose relationship has been improved through WAY program. No more GBV

Challenges; Price fluctuation affected marketing of produce and disrupts planning for income, flooding from heavy rains destroyed crops, inadequate storage facilities and insufficient road connectivity e.g. one road leading to a school needs stream crossing

Group members requested for support with ox-ploughs

3. Water resource management lagota dam

Constructed in February 2022 to retain surface run-off water for livestock a combination of mechanized and labour-based approaches were used. Previously animals travelled over 30km to look for water and some would get lost however after the construction the animals now drinks from the dam. Bio-swell will also be used to grow crops all-year round

Challenges; Contamination of water by strayed animals and people washing in the dam, weak fencing which animals can break, Soil erosion observed on dam sides and use of dam water for other domestic activities (bathing, cooking etc)

4. Water resource management Ongee Christopher food forest

The food forest was established in 202, the project comprised of 30 participants

Water retention techniques (trenches, mulching and bio-swells) used and different tree species planted with beautiful intercrop of sesame, pumpkin, and passion fruits in the mixed

Benefits; Income from cash for work improved community livelihood. Members were able to pay School fees acquired livestock and other productive assets, Soil fertility have been enhanced and the techniques from the project have been adopted by community members.

Issues raised by the groups

Request Ox-ploughs to increase output, request increment in cash-for-work rate (from Ugx. 6,000/= to Ugx. 12,000), future projects to include tree planting initiatives

Group 3

The third group visited two sites as highlighted below:

1. Palubolo-Namokora 9KM Community Access Road in Namokora Town Council.

There was overall appreciation of the intervention by the leaders and community members. Communities testified that the access road is enabling pupils to access schools, community to access healthcare services and markets. The positioning of the culvert requires re assessment by the Engineering Officer (DRC). There is loose murrum/gravel at the top of the culvert which requires compaction.

Communities confirmed receipt of their payment, although proposed consideration for an increment. The leadership expressed commitment to maintain the road with active participation of the entire community.

Request for extension of the road to reach the farmland and enhance linkage to markets and other social services. Request for graveling of the road, and they would provide gravel.

2. Neno and Mar Lawoti Farmer Group in Omiya -Anyima West

Overall appreciation of the intervention through CSA and VSLA training by NURI

Key challenges: Climate change, lack of equipment for value addition, limited access to clean water for consumption, price fluctuation.

The leadership view grouping of farmers as a huge potential to enhance food security, and wealth creation. VSLA has enabled farmers acquire livestock, educate their children etc. 1 group didn't have VSLA but have a plan to initiate.

Exchange visit to Lamwo motivated the group to vegetable growing through resilience design.

Request for support for processing equipment for soya bean, construction of a storage facility and ox plough to expand on their production

Integration of SRHR/GBV is contributing to reduction in GBV, increased food security and gender empowerment.

Both FG requested for access road to ease access to markets

Group 4

The group visited three groups as highlighted below and came up with a general observation

1. Bed ki niye group, Padibe West sub county, the group comprised of 27 members (13 males and 14 females) they are producing soybean as their enterprise
2. Pur jwii farmer group, Padibe West Sub county the group have 27 members (9 males and 18 females) they are producing sunflower as their strategic crop
3. Can kwiya goro, Padibe East sub county the group comprised of 35 members (5 males and 30 females) they have selected sesame as their enterprise.

General Observations

There is a high contact rate between the AEO and the farmers resulting in to increased acquisition of knowledge and skills both in CSA and VSLA (1AEO:18 farmer groups).

Farmers practicing simple value addition on the different strategic crops selected e.g. sunflower paste, soybean paste, sesame oil, soy milk.

High crop yield registered at group demonstration gardens compared to yield at individual level which is very low e.g. in Pur Jwii, an acre of sunflower registered 876kg while 390kg at an individual level.

Low adoption/replication level between group and non-group members especially in sesame which is still being broadcasted.

There is visible diversification across the groups and evidence of bulking their produce and selling as a group for example Sunflower. Groups exhibit marketing and negotiation skills

Agriculture loan concept well understood by the groups and is financing agricultural activities as well as reduction in GBV

SRHR information is well taken by the farmers which resulted in to increased labour for production

Recommendations

- Continuous follow ups and mentorship by the sub county for sustainability
- Groups recommended joining PDM SACCOS at their respective parishes
- Support groups with simple value addition equipment's such as oil pressers etc
- Government to recruit more Extension workers to consolidate on the achievements made so far by NURI.

Group 5

The fifth group visited four sites in Palabek gem and ogili

1. Green Road for Water (GR4W) Lakama to Ausha (3.5km)

Observations

The road was well graded and shaped with some parts graveled but not yet well compacted 6 lines of 600mm concrete culvert and 2 lines of double 900mm concrete culvert on Liki stream much as culvert covers not yet properly done. There is inadequate miter drains however there are evidence of trees planted on both sides of the road in zigzag manner at the interval of 12m with some protected buckets removed Perma garden established by 10 group members

Recommendations

Culverts top to be covered and re-compacted, improvement on maiter drains and more to be added, ring weeding around the trees, CSA team to be involved in perma garden management Lamwo DLG to support the village with safe and clean water point

2. Food forest at Alimotiko village, Labigiryang parish, Palabek Sub-County

Observations

Food forest belong to one Obolu David, the plot is well fenced and maintained, survival rate is approximately 90% plus. Owner has already some short of food forest existing at home and is ready to sustain and maintained

Recommendations

The farmer should cascade the practice to other households, while keeping up maintenance

3. Bed Ki gen Farmers Group at Kenya village, Moroto Parish, Palabek Gem Sub-County

Observations; Well-functioning group with some elements of value addition exhibited and they looked more of a cooperative society than a group however, they complained of exploitation from middle men.

Recommendations

- NURI and District should support the group in LSB to improve on their income
- Group should carry out collective market to avoid the exploitation from middlemen
- Need for store for their produce
- Support the group in training them in food value addition
- Link them to NOSP (National oil seed programme)

4. Can miyo Ryeko Farmer Group at kamama village, moroto parish, Palabek Sub-County

Observations

A group member is already producing energy saving stove. Has block garden of sunflower

Recommendations

- Group should carry out collective market
- Support the group in training them in food value addition
- Link them to NOSP (National oil seed programme)
- Link the group to for selling of their energy saving stoves. NURI should promote this.

Group 6

Group six visited four groups in Palabek settlement

1. CAR from Apyeta Central to Apyeta North

The CAR is 6.2 km constructed in 2020 and commissioned in 2021 the road is connecting the community to school a health centre and the local markets the road has well planted trees along 2km stretch.

Challenges; Difficulty in negotiation with other land owners for the road passage, weather changes, much as there were challenges the cash from the road work supported them in, paying school fees purchase of house hold production assets sheep and goats.

Maintenance plan

The community agreed on three schedules for maintenance of the road in a year and enacted a by-law which will enforce the road maintenance

2. Alero Water pond in Palabek

This water pond was constructed for watering the animals during the dry season; the community have a vision of introducing fish farming in the near future and also using the water for production especially simple irrigation for vegetable production. The trees planted along the water pond will improve the micro climate of the area hence protecting the water from evaporation.

3. CSA Kacel Watwero farmer group zone 7

This is a women group of 30 members they were trained in GAP and received inputs ranging from cassava cuttings, Sweet potatoes vines, African egg plants seeds, okra seeds and pawpaw seedlings. Sales from the production of vegetables has greatly improved household income. Group had exchange visit to RD site Padibe which has motivated the group members to work harder especially in vegetable production.

4. Kica ber farmer group-Zone 6

This is a mixed group of refugees and nationals, 30 members, half are refugees. (7 M, 23F) Members were able to increase household income from the sales of the produce, Household food security also improved within the years

Members were able to purchase production assets like animals

11. Summary: Challenges encountered during implementation

Climate Smart Agriculture

- Unreliable rainfall (late onset, early ending, flush floods and prolonged dry spell)
- Covid 19 pandemic slowed down activities' implementation
- Land conflicts between nationals as well as nationals and refugees
- Scarcity of, and high prices of quality agricultural inputs e.g. improved sunflower seeds
- Poor road network and conditions of the roads
- Price increase and fluctuations (fuel and others).
- Political campaigns and social events interrupted activities
- Destruction of farmers' crops by stray animals

Rural infrastructure/Water resource management

- Global fuel prices increase leading to general price rises
- Unwillingness of some community members to donate their land delayed and or halted implementation of some projects mostly in peri-urban areas.
- The weather conditions in 2021/ 2022 affected the survival of established food forests and the yield of springs.
- 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 reporting 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 affected retention and participation of group members in public works activities.
- GOU imposed lockdowns and SOPs including limitations on numbers 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.

12. Summary: Lessons learnt during implementation

- Farmer to farmer exchange visits within the villages encourages groups to work harder
- The best planting period for sesame seems to have shifted from season B (late June-early August) to season A (May - June).
- Partnership with research institutions enhanced knowledge transfer and build capacity of the NURI extension staff e.g. NARO

- Use of staff with talents and expertise within the program accelerated knowledge transfer in-house and cheaper option.
- Bigger water harvesting structures have enhanced the recharge of spring lines, flood control, and keeping the roads dry and motorable throughout the year.
- There is an increasing trend in the revival of traditional approaches to the maintenance of the created assets.
- Combination of the labour-based and equipment produces quality access roads.
- Testing of construction materials as a means of assuring quality has greatly reduced on losses resulting from premature failure of structures in previous instances.
- Resilience Design activities related to Food Forests have increased the volume of work for Cash for Work participants and tend to be abandoned after the creation
- Growing trees planted along the roadside needs deliberate efforts of planting overgrown, drought and fire-resilient varieties like Teak.
- Food Forest where more than one maintenance was done showed a better growth rate than the ones with only one maintenance as in the program design.

13. Success factors

- **Labour-based approaches** not only offered temporary employment for youth and women but also presented a suitable low-cost approach to implementing RI and WRM.
- **Coordination and involvement of the local government** in the planning implementation, monitoring, and supervision of project activities. This enhanced ownership and sustainability of created assets.
- **The support from the district** in terms of equipment and personnel reduced implementation costs and improved access to reliable earth-moving equipment.
- **Community engagement** through; needs identification processes, site dialogue meetings, etc minimised land conflicts leading to timely implementation, created awareness on safety issues related to projects like water ponds, among others.
- **Capacity building** of DRC and local government staff on resilience design improved knowledge on water management skills in the projects implemented.
- **Testing of construction materials** has greatly improved the quality of structures constructed.
- Having experienced staff from previous phases of the project expedited smooth implementation of the project.
- **Coordination and involvement of the local government** in the planning implementation, monitoring and supervision of project activities. This enhanced ownership and sustainability of created assets.

14. Recommendations/action points

RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
<p>Climate Smart Agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More intervention on climate change adaptation to scale NURI endeavors • Land conflicts handled by Government at all levels • Farmers to embark on local seeds business for easy and cheap seeds access • Concept of production and market plans needs to be scaled to all FGs. • More efforts to control stray animals • More needs to be done on market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NURI CF • DLGS AND LLGS • Farmers supported by NURI • Community/LLGs • All the stakeholders 	
<p>Rural Infrastructure/Water Resource Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous community engagement through site dialogue meetings and signing of Voluntary Land Donation forms to resolve land-related conflicts • Thorough screening of projects to minimize changes in the design of structures and costs • Motivate DLGs to perform their roles through a review of the SDA rate. • Carry out an assessment on 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRC/ LLGs/ Community • DRC/ DEC/LLGs 	
<p>GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS/ACTION POINTS</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear road map to be shared with stakeholders for the one-year extension of NURI • West Nile is developing Horticulture plan NURI to be invited during the planning meeting • More extension workers to be recruited to fill the gap when NURI phased out • Local leaders to be involved during land acquisition for community access roads • Involvement of the District Engineers during culvert installations • Modifications to be done on the dams to accommodate simple irrigation structures for vegetable production • Road safety signs to be incorporated during the design of the CAR • Gravelling of the entire road length as opposed to spreading many projects • Trade and industry department to be involved in the new phase of NURI • Tree Nursery bed operators to be supported in the NURI extension • Request for the next phase of NURI was put forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NURI-CF • DLGs/MAAIF/MoFPED • DRC • DRC • RDE 	

15. Closure of the meeting

The meeting was officially closed by the LC5 Obongi district with the following closing remarks;

Thanked the meeting organizers for successful organization of the meeting, appreciated NURI for the impact created within the community as witnessed during the field visits on the second day and urged the DLGs to sustain the gains so far made by NURI

He commended the Embassy of Denmark for the cordial collaboration and support to the government of Uganda. He assured the people of Denmark that their donations have been put to good use both in Acholi and West Nile sub regions.

He reiterated that NURI has created employment for the youths, for example the extension officers and the cash for work beneficiaries. He thanked the government of Uganda for having received donations to support the vulnerable.

The support has created good relationship between the nationals and the refugees. Refugee influx has caused environmental destruction in host areas, he therefore appealed that the second phase of NURI should work towards restoration of the environment.

He appealed to the RDE to consider the second phase of the program

The chairman thanked all the partners for their participation NURI, CARE, DRC, DLGs and the line ministries and declared the meeting closed at 5:42pm.

16. Annexes

Program for IMC 2022 meeting in Kitgum

IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING PROGRAMME – ACHOLI SUB-REGION/NORTH WEST NILE

VENUE: Kitgum DLG Council Hall, Kitgum Municipal Council

DATE: 31/10 – 1/11/2022

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
30/10/2022	9:00 – 6:00pm	Travel to Kitgum	NURI Senior Driver
DAY 1 31/10/2022	8:00 – 8:30am	Registration of participants	NURI FAO/FAA
	8:30 – 8:45am	Welcome introduction of participants	NURI M&E
	8:45 – 8:50am	Official welcome to the host district	LC5 Kitgum (will invite the Ambassador)
	8:50 – 9:00am	Official opening of the meeting	Her excellency the Ambassador RDE
	9:15 – 9:30am	Review of last meeting minutes	NURI NPC
	9:30 – 10:30am	NURI CSA Results Acholi & North West Nile (2019-2022)	Coordinator RAU Kitgum/Lamwo
	10:30 – 11:00am	TEA BREAK	NURI FAO/AO
	11:00 – 11:30am	Reactions to CSA results	NURI NPC/M&E

	11:30 – 12:00am	WAY results + reactions	UNFPA/CARE
	12:00 – 1:00 pm	NURI RI/WRM Results Acholi & North West Nile (2019-2022)	PM -NURI 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 North West Nile + Acholi sub-region	DPO – Moyo
	3:30 – 4:00pm	NURI Extension (proposed activities)	PMA NURI
	4:00 – 4:30pm	Remarks from 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 NPC/M&E
	5:30 - 6.00pm	Evening tea	NURI CF FAO/FAA
	6:30 – 9:00pm	Cocktail (at Accakki Lodge, directions to be given)	NURI CF
DAY 2 1/11/2022	8.00 - 8.30am	Participant's registration & reporting	NURI FAO/FAA
	8:30 – 9:00am	Early break tea & organizing for field trip	NURI NPC/M&E/ RC Acholi sub-region
	9:00 – 9:30am	Travel to the field	NURI NPC /M&E/RCs/RAUs
	9:30 – 1:00pm	Field excursion	NURI NPC/M&E/RCs/RAUs
	1:00 – 2:00pm	Travel back from field	NURI NPC/M&E/RCs/RAUs
	2:00 – 3:00pm	LUNCH BREAK	
	3:00 – 4:45pm	Feedback from the field excursion	NURI NPC & M&E
	4:45 – 5:00pm	Official closure	LC5 Obongi
	5:00 – 5:30pm	Evening tea & departure	NURI CF FAO/FAA

List of participants for NURI IMC meeting 2022

S/N	Participant category	Number	Comments
1.	Ambassador and staff from RDE	4	The Ambassador and technical staff from the RDE
2.	Representatives from Line ministries	7	MoFPED, OPM, MoWT, MoLG, MWE, MAAIF, MGLSD
3.	CRRF Secretariat	1	CRRF
4.	UNFPA/Care	6	1 UNFPA, 1 Care representative + others
5.	UNWMZ (Lira)	3	
6.	RDOs – Palabek Settlement&Adjumani	2	1 from Palabek, 1 from Adjumani
7.	District Local Council Chairpersons	6	Agago, Kitgum, Lamwo, Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi
8.	Chief Administrative Officers	6	Agago, Kitgum, Lamwo, Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi
9.	District Production Officers	6	Agago, Kitgum, Lamwo, Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi
10.	District Engineers	6	Agago, Kitgum, Lamwo, Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi
11.	District Focal Point Officers	6	Agago, Kitgum, Lamwo, Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi
12.	DRC Management	7	CD, Project Manager NURI, SSPM, MEAL Coordinator, SE/WE, Resilience Coordinator
13.	RAU	5	RAU Coordinators, Assistant Coordinator, CSAC
14.	NURI CF	12	All (Kampala, Moyo, Arua, Kitgum)
	Total	77	

Support Teams: Drivers (27), Security DLGs (7), Others (3)

Photo Gallery



Figure 1. Delegates attending a presentation at the NURI IMC 2022 in Kitgum DLG Council Hall



Figure 2. Visit to Kila-Ngom Onyaa Community Access Road in Lukung Sub County, Lamwo district