

Annual Report 2014/15



OUR MESSAGE

2014/15 has been an incredible year for ESAFF Uganda as an organization therefore this Annual Report aims at giving a brief insight of different activities that have been implemented under each of ESAFF Uganda's Strategic program and achievements within the 12 months.

ESAFF Uganda recognizes the importance of small scale farmers in poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability and key policy formulation. Therefore we aim at strengthening small scale farmers' engagement in policy processes through creating regular platforms for them to stimulate collective reflection, renewal, strategising and action on socio-economic and political issues hence our key program of Research and Policy Engagement.

Small Scale Farmer communities under the economic sustainability program continue to exploit local capital opportunities that sustain local human and natural resources, while minimizing and yielding adequate returns as the fight against poverty continues.

Given the current and on-going change of events especially within our environment and climate, ESAFF- Uganda works towards ensuring environmental sustainability since climatic change is greatly escalating poverty levels especially among small scale farmers who are losing property including crops, animals, houses, incurring post-harvest losses and therefore living undesirable lives.

ESAFF Uganda is a farmer institution and therefore is mandated to develop and maintain its institutional structures in order to ensure that small scale farmers are at the fore front of development.

We hope that this year's annual report helps illustrate key developments and achievements of ESAFF-Uganda in empowering Small Scale Farmers. On behalf of ESAFF-Uganda, we thank our beloved small scale farmers, ESAFF board members, ESAFF district leaders, different Government Officers, civil society organisations counterparts, Development partners and our dedicated staff for their support, commitment and guidance towards the success of the work of ESAFF Uganda.



OUR BACKGROUND

Eastern and Southern Africa Farmers Forum- Uganda (ESAFF- Uganda) is a part of a regional small scale farmers coalition that started during the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa in 2002. The forum was established to bring together small scale farmers into a social movement to build common aspirations, learning and linkages. It has hence brought together small scale crop farmers, apiculturists, pastoralists and traditional fisher folks.

ESAFF- Uganda is thus part of a regional forum of small scale farmers that jointly advances issues affecting the farmers at different levels. The forum operates in several other countries in eastern and southern Africa including; Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Lesotho, Madagascar and Seychelles. ESAFF Uganda objectives and activities are aligned with the regional strategic plan to which these directly contribute.

OUR VISION

ESAFF Uganda envisions empowered self-reliant small scale farmers

OUR MISSION

ESAFF Uganda seeks to nurture the participation of small scale farmers in sustainable development processes, for self-reliance through advocacy, capacity building and institutional development.



OUR APPROACH

During the implementation of programs, three interlinked approaches were employed;

1. Capacity Building

It is important to have the right information and the capacity to relay it to the right forum. Therefore ESAFF Uganda develops capacities of its membership to achieve the strategic goal of the organization while at the same time address issues that affect small scale farmers.

2. Advocacy

ESAFF Uganda increases the participation of small scale farmers in policy planning and implementation through availing information on agriculture related policies and processes that affect small scale farmers. Through policy analysis and research ESAFF Uganda has been able to ensure that policies are coherent and address the typical issues that affect small scale farmers.

3. Building Networks

ESAFF Uganda has built networks with likeminded organizations to influence policies jointly since advocacy is sometimes about numbers. ESAFF Uganda is also a member of many networks, forums and coalitions of organizations pushing for small scale farmers views at national and regional levels.



OUR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

RESEARCH AND POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Building networks and alliances

The ability to build meaningful alliances has helped ESAFF Uganda to accomplish goals for both the organisation and the small scale farmers at grass root level. ESAFF Uganda is a member of networks and alliances that contribute to improving the livelihood of small scale farmers at national and regional level like FRA, CSBAG, UFCOV and AFSA and has built working relations with likeminded organisations in the different networks and alliances like Action Aid International, CARITAS Uganda among others. The development of these networks made ESAFF Uganda better prepared to handle the rapid changes often taking place in today's dynamic organizations. Members of ESAFF Uganda like those in Gulu, Apac, Adjumani, Pader, Amuru, Nwoya and Masaka district also enjoyed benefit of the networks since they were being involved in the activities that members of the network were implementing in their districts.

We are now La Via Campesina (LVC) members

ESAFF Uganda has officially become a member of LVC. With this membership, ESAFF Uganda becomes part of the largest peasant movement which means the voices of small scale farmers in Uganda would not just be nationally or regionally heard but also internationally.

Advocacy for increased public financing to Agriculture sector

From the inception of ESAFF Uganda, budget advocacy has been one of the core advocacy issues. Increase in public investment in the agriculture sector would drastically transform the lives of small scale farmers if these investments are managed well. ESAFF Uganda held district level budget consultative meetings in Mayuge and Kabale district where SSFs had an opportunity to engage policy makers at district level. These engagements resulted into local leaders making commitments to prioritise agriculture financing. At national level, ESAFF Uganda organised a conference on the Malabo declaration and CAADP which was attended by over 40 MPs, 120 SSFs and 10 officials from the Ministry of Agriculture to challenge government to fulfil their commitment of investing 10 percent of the national budget in agriculture. A total of 116 SSFs from Kabale, Mayuge, Iganga, Mukono, Jinja, Masaka, Mubende, Gulu, Bukedea, Adjumani, Pader, Zombo, Nwoya, Amuria, Soroti, Serere, Ngora, Kamuli, Bugiri, Kumi, Nebbi, Mityana, Manafwa, Mbale, Arua and Kisoro also participated in the CSBAG post and pre budget dialogues both in 2014 and 2015 which was also attended by MPs, media and other organisations. During their interactions with MPs, SSFs shared their budget position which was later taken by the MPs for action and they acknowledged the contribution of small scale farmer organisations like ESAFF Uganda in influencing policy directions in the country.

ESAFF Uganda organised the EAC Agriculture budget summit together with other CSOs to consider the commitments the East African Partner States have in their plans and budgets to finance agriculture. It was attended by over 100 participants including civil society, government ministries, departments and agencies, the media as well as small scale farmers. The key outcome of this summit was the communiqué that was drafted and shared by mostly SSFs demanding governments of EAC countries to adhere to their commitment in Malabo in 2014.

ESAFF Uganda working with Action Aid Uganda organized a conference during the CSO fair on Agriculture financing for family farming recognizing the contribution of family farmers mostly rural women in feeding the nation. During this conference, SSFs amplified the need for government to increase financing in the agriculture sector but mostly directing it to family farmers who makeup the largest population of people in sector. The conference was attended by 33 participants including MPs, media, CSOs and SSFs from Nebbi, Mukono, Gulu, Mityana and Nwoya district.

ESAFF Uganda was part of the network of organizations that collected signatures from SSFs during the campaigns to scrap taxes on agriculture inputs like hoes and seeds which was being proposed in the 2014/15 budget. Over one million signatures were collected and the government later withdrew the proposal and the taxes didn't pass in parliament. SSFs in ESAFF Uganda districts celebrated this achievement during their different district meetings.

Ensuring public finance accountability

The government releases funds to the different districts every financial year for implementation of projects. With the different corruption allegations, SSFs developed interest in tracking public finances. ESAFF Uganda carried out PETS training for 35 SSFs in Kabale and Mayuge districts to build their capacity in budget tracking as well as increase their vigilance in playing their role as responsible citizens. After the training, SSFs developed tools that they used during budget tracking in the two districts. SSFs tracked budget of NAADS and roads in the two districts and with the collected evidence of inconsistencies and poor service delivery, SSFs engaged district local leaders during budget conferences held in the separate districts. Some local leaders like in the case of Mayuge district took some actions on the irregularities identified in the PETS study report that was developed.

Campaigning for fair market for SSFs

ESAFF Uganda disseminated information on legal frame work and market related policies and enabled SSFs understand the key policies and legal frameworks related to the local and national markets. ESAFF Uganda organised stakeholders meetings in Amuru, Gulu, Nwoya, Apac and Arua district where 101 male and 88 female attended. These meeting created a close working relationship between stakeholders in the market including policy makers, producers, middlemen, media, tax men among others. As a result of these workshops, there was increased understanding about market related issues and built confidence of SSFs in sharing their market related concerns freely with different stakeholders.

Seed and Food sovereignty symposium

ESAFF Uganda organized a regional symposium to address the different challenges and experiences in food sovereignty which among others includes gender equity, land, water resources and seeds among small scale farmers in Uganda. The event featured 65 participants including small scale farmers from 30 districts, legislators, technical officers, and media as well as participants from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Tanzania, and Spain. During the workshop, participants shared their different experiences on how to ensure seed and food sovereignty in their respective countries. Participants challenged government through a press statement to avoid the introduction of GMOs in the country and an advocacy roadmap was drawn to see to it that small scale farmers can influence government's decision on seed and food related policies.

This symposium included a field visit to Kikandwa Environmental Association (KEA) and RUCID Agro-ecology Centre in Mityana district which use agro-ecological practices and develops market oriented products meant to improve livelihoods of the local communities. This visit enabled participants understand the need for small scale farmers to protect the environment and have the ultimate power and control over seed and food in the country.

Media engagement on policy issues

In this year, ESAFF Uganda organised a number of radio talk shows to discuss different issues including agriculture budget, market, food sovereignty among others. Radio talk shows were organized in Amuru, Gulu, Nwoya, Apac and Arua district on market access and favorable trade conditions. ESAFF Uganda also organized a radio talk show on Capital FM attended by a SSF on 5th February 2015 to call upon government to increase invest in agriculture considering the 2014 Malabo declaration. ESAFF Uganda also organized a radio talk show on 16th October 2014 on CBS FM to discuss issues related to food sovereignty and the need for SSFs to embrace the right to seed and food. There were also radio talk shows organized in Kisoro, Masaka and Mubende district giving SSFs opportunity to engage the public and policy makers on different issues affecting SSFs including land and other government programs.

Materials for advocacy

Evidence based advocacy has proved to yield more results according to our past experience, ESAFF Uganda carried out a study on market access in Uganda focusing on government programs in 2014. ESAFF Uganda also analysed public financing for the agriculture sector where different recommendations were made. After the heads of state signing the Malabo declaration, ESAFF Uganda summarised the declaration and shared with it the SSFs.



ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Using GALS methodology to reduce gender injustice in value chain

ESAFF Uganda organised a two days GALS training for the 9 board, 8 staff and 6 partners of ACORD and YADEN aimed at sustainable empowerment of partner organization in implementing the GALS methodology in programmes for improved livelihoods of small scale farmers. As a result of the training, there was strengthened capacity of partners and staff to make detailed plans for field testing GALS in their own context. Partners also developed plans for engagement on the GALS methodology in their different organizations. After the training ESAFF Uganda organised an exposure visit to further strengthen the capacity of staff, board and Partners in using the GALS methodology. The visits took place at Poroporo cooperative in Yumbe District and ESAFF communities in Adjumani district in April and May 2015. A total of 93 SSFs, 8 staff, 9 board members and 4 partners from YADEN and ACORD participated in these exposure visits.

Participants appreciated the GALS methodology even more and were even more determine to apply the tools in their day to day lives. Some participants have reported having started using the GALS methodology

Reducing land grabbing and ensuring women land rights

To address land grabbing cases mostly in the northern region of Uganda, ESAFF Uganda carried out land rights sensitisations mostly for women who are oppressed as a result of cultural factors and the aim was building and raising the farmers' confidence to participate in active advocacy on land issues, ability to know how to handle issues pertaining to land and land disputes and also proper land uses. These trainings were done in Adjumani, Arua, Pader, Gulu, Nebbi and Nwoya districts with a total of 218 SSFs from all the districts participating. The land rights trainings acted as an eye opener to most small scale farmers about land registration and other land issues. Some SSFs are able to build networks and support each other on land issues in addition to sharing critical land information with other members of the community. ESAFF Uganda also developed IEC materials that were used to enlighten other farmers about the rights that women should also have enough land.

Increasing SSFs incomes through practising farming as a business

ESAFF Uganda carried out FAAB trainings in 8 districts of Adjumani, Arua, Pader, Gulu, Nebbi, Nwoya, Zombo and Amuru in value chain development, gender equality, better planning at individual, household and group levels aided with GALS tools. 330 SSFs including male and female from those districts participated in the trainings. The trainings strengthened the capacity of small scale farmers and triggered positive thinking of farmers to doing farming as a business and many of them valuing the idea of collective marketing. Farmers were also encouraged to use the GALS tools in developing business plans and visions covering the illiteracy gap.

ESAFF Uganda also organised an exposure visits to Wadelai cooperative in Nebbi engaged in Farming as business. This visit involved 32 of the trained members from the 8 districts of Adjumani, Arua, Pader, Gulu, Nebbi, Nwoya, Zombo and Amuru. The visit inspired, motivated and strengthened the capacity of SSFs to engage in meaningful productive agriculture in addition to equipping them with knowledge on record keeping, accounting and value chain.

ESAFF Uganda also developed and published IECs including posters and T-shirts with messages that encourage SSFs to carry out farming as a business in a household by both men and women.

Participation on international celebrations

On 5th June 2015, ESAFF Uganda supported 14 SSFs to participate in the World Environment Day celebrations. During the celebrations, SSFs displayed their produce as well as explaining to other celebrants the GALS methodology which has been a powerful tool in ESAFF Uganda especially in address gender inequalities. 5 SSFs from Apac, Amuru, Gulu and Adjumani also participated in the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) celebration making SSFs aware of the IYFF and the need for them to

celebrate and acknowledge their contribution to the economy given that most ESAFF Uganda farmers are family farmers.

On 16th October 2014, 8 SSFs from Masaka, Mityana, Mubende and Serere district participated in the World Food Day celebrations held at the National Crops Resources Research Institute Namulonge. Small scale farmers were able to showcase a variety of indigenous food crops which are slowly fading out and promote the need to conserve them.

Accessing free agriculture information through the use of ICT

To address some of the effects of climate change like post harvest losses, SSFs needed to have access to researched agriculture information. ESAFF Uganda developed an online SMS application to enable SSFs access free agriculture information in the local language. This was piloted in Soroti district though coverage was Teso region benefited. 85 SSFs were trained on how to use the application on their mobile phones in Soroti district and in turn they trained other farmers from their farmer groups. A radio talk show was organised on Voice of Teso FM to educate more farmers on how to utilise the application. The online SMS application which has 1,154 subscribers was officially launched by the district LC 5 Mr. Egungu Egirigori in Soroti town.



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Our environmental sustainability program made substantial progress in tackling its objective in the 2013/17 strategic plan.

Practising climate smart agriculture

ESAFF Uganda believes that the problem of climate change can be reduced by availing information on Climate Change to famers and introducing technologies suited to the small scale farmers that will increase their adaptability to the seasonal changes and disastrous effects of Climate Change. ESAFF Uganda has empowered SSFs to adapt and mitigate the different effects of climate change. 280 SSFs from 8 districts of Pader, Nwoya, Gulu, Arua, Adjumani, Nebbi, Zombo and Amuru were trained on how to practise Climate Smart Agriculture and some selected 16 SSFs were exposed to these technologies at Katende Harambe Rural Urban Farming Institute. These SSFs are currently exploring these technologies in their gardens. In some districts, these farmers have also trained other small scale farmers in the different technologies that they have learnt. ESAFF Uganda expects to turn the 16 SSFs into Climate Smart champions who would be model farmers in their districts. Focus was also put on women youths in these rural communities during capacity building on climate related issues, this presented many opportunities for women and youth to have power in addressing climate change. Currently, some farmers are able to put up some of the technologies such as sack mound gardens and kitchen gardens.



INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Capacity building for a strong farmers' institution

The strength of ESAFF Uganda depends on having strong small farmer groups at grass roots. ESAFF Uganda organised group management trainings aimed at strengthening farmer groups at district level through developing their management capacity. These trainings took place in the districts of Manafwa, Kisoro, Apac, Masaka, Pader, Arua and Bugiri. A total of 336 farmer group leaders were trained from 7 districts. Small scale farmers worked on their leadership structures at district level. Some farmer leaders have also signed MoUs with their respective local governments while others are in the process of doing so.

Board training in governance

ESAFF Uganda also organised board governance training with an aim of contributing to the proper governance of the organisation. The capacity of board members in governance strategies and practices was strengthened creating a more equipped board.

Orientation of new board members

A new board was elected during the AGM held in June 2014; these new board members were welcomed and introduced to the working structure of the board. Board members were well prepared to commence their duties.

Staff capacity building

ESAFF Uganda organised in house capacity building for 8 Staff members in documentation, fundraising and finance management in January and February 2015. These trainings resulted into strengthened capacity of staff hence improving their competence at work.

ESAFF at district level

ESAFF Uganda organised a district performance evaluation workshop attended by 29 small scale farmer leaders from the ESAFF districts of operation. The participants analyzed the status and performance of ESAFF Uganda at district level and also made recommendations on how to improve ESAFF district performance.

Review and development of governance and management tools

ESAFF Uganda reviewed the national constitution considering the different recommendations that were raised by SSFs during the different consultative meetings. ESAFF Uganda also reviewed the strategic plan to make it inclusive of new ideas.

Governance meetings and AGM

In this year, ESAFF Uganda held one AGM with four board meetings. During the board meetings, board members reviewed implemented programs and passed program workplans and budgets. The year has also seen board members bringing in new governance approaches that led to a successful year.



FUNDRAISING

We continued to diversify our resources this fiscal year with contributions from new partners who share our vision of an empowered and self reliant small scale farmer. As ESAFF Uganda we would like to express our sincerest gratitude to the following donors for the contributions they made this year:

Funding to ESAFF Uganda directly

Oxfam
VSF Global Food Justice
COMESA – Climate Change Unit
Membership fees

Funding through ESAFF Regional office

European Union
Trust Africa



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