

*Uganda experiences in
Agroecology scale up
initiatives*

Why Agroecology

- Uganda among world's fast growing population at 3.4% dependent on static resources
- Agriculture contributes 26% and employs 69% of population. women smallholder farmers produce over 70% of the food we eat.
- High rate of land degradation costing over 10% of GDP
- Increasing climate change effects and high vulnerability of SHFs
- Existing Industrial agriculture models have failed deliver inclusive socio economic development and resilience (e.g sugar cane in Busoga).
- Need for more aggregated land for plantations leading to increasing cases of land grabbing and destruction of natural ecosystems
- Inappropriate use of chemicals leading contamination and poisoning

Agroecology for rural transformation

- A long term (2005 to 2015) study by Misereor in Uganda revealed that agroecology offer more viable alternatives for smallholder farmers than conventional/ industrial farming;
- Farmers practicing agroecology exhibited more resilience to market fluctuations, pest and disease outbreaks and harsh climatic conditions
- As a result, agroecological farmers were more food/nutrition secure (dietary diversity) and had higher incomes (less expenditure on food, labour, inputs and treatment for basic ailments).

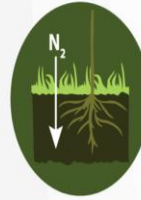
Agroecology and resilience

Methods



Conservation tillage

Minimum tillage improves soil structure, aeration and water infiltration/retention, and increases organic matter (maintains soil carbon).



Natural nitrogen fixation

Use of legumes like beans, peas, clover, lucern, acacia are used to fix nitrogen. These plants contain symbiotic bacteria in their roots that sequester nitrogen from the air.



Natural pest control

Increasing resilience to pests, e.g. by favouring pests' natural enemies, use crop rotations and a diversity of crop varieties.



Agroforestry

Integrating trees in farming systems can provide fodder, fuel and shade, erosion control and natural nitrogen fertilization.



Cover crop & mulching

Cover crops and mulching: provide soil nutrients, reduce erosion, and enhance biological pest control.



Rainwater harvesting

Small-scale collection and storing of rainwater combined with innovative watering techniques for better water resource management.



Empowerment and stakeholder engagement

Taking advantage of local stakeholder's knowledge, initiatives and creativity, e.g. through participatory research projects and establishment of value change groups.



Recycling of nutrients

Local recycling of plant nutrients and improved fertility by composting, which build humus that increases water retention and soil permeability.



Biodiversity & ecosystem services

Diversity on different scales; varieties, crops, animals, crop rotations, farming systems and use of ecosystem services for more resilient production and food security.



Socio-economic regulations

If agriculture is to deliver both livelihoods and collective benefits, there is a need for economic instruments (e.g. subsidies, certification) and law based regulations (e.g. environmental legislation, procurement schemes).



Towards scaling up Agroecology in Uganda

Key Actions

Regional Agroecology Actors symposiums

- Over 350 representatives discussing regional context for scaling up agroecology
- Formation regional agroecology actors platforms and steering committees
- Follow up steering committee meetings to further synthesis issues generated from regional symposiums



1st National Agroecology Actors symposiums

- Theme: Advancing multistakeholder responsiveness towards scaling up agroecology
- Over 300 representatives discussing national strategies for scaling up agroecology
- Launch of National Agroecology Actors Platform
- Launch of EOA I phase 2 in Uganda
- 6 thematic sessions; research, market, resource rights, agroecology financing, climate resilience and mainstreaming agroecology in extension services



National Agroecology Actors platform (NAAP)

Purpose

- To strengthen coordination, co-creation, experience sharing and a collective voice for scaling up agroecology in Uganda.

Specific objectives include;

- To facilitate networking and experience sharing among agroecology actors in Uganda.
- To strengthen visibility of Uganda's scaling up agroecology initiative
- To facilitate co-creation of joint initiatives among various categories of stakeholders for scaling up agroecology in Uganda.
- To strengthen the voice of Agroecology actors towards advocating for an enabling policy environment.

NAAP Operations

- NAAP members will be organised around their specific expertise
- The thematic areas will be developed along the core function of developing a national agroecology strategy.
- Activities will be decentralised as much as possible to ensure that the regional platforms are functional.

Envisaged activities;

- Member profiling and database generation/ updating
- Development of a National strategy for scaling up agroecology
- Develop and operationalization of an online platform
- Periodic National Agroecology Actors symposiums
- Thematic focused meetings to engage on specific issues
- Periodic National and regional steering committee meetings.

Synergies for NAAP

- The Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOAI) Phase 2: EOAI already has an established leadership structure at National and continental levels. Therefore no need for new leadership structure
- **Organic Agriculture Knowledge Hub:** PELUM Uganda together with BvAT will co-host the Eastern Africa Knowledge Hub funded by BMZ/GIZ.
- **Library for Food Sovereignty (LFS):** PELUM Uganda is partnering with **AGC** to host this virtual Library to facilitate knowledge and experience sharing on agroecology and local innovations.

Launching of NAAP



Opportunities

- FAO led Scaling up agroecology initiative
- Growing consumer awareness on sustainable consumption
- Growing body of research in favour of agroecology
- Strong Academic and research institution (UMU, ARU, MMU etc)
- Relevant financing mechanisms; climate finance, green growth etc
- Relevant national policies and strategies. E.g National SDG Implementation strategy supported by UNDP, USAID etc
- strong CSO networks and farmer organisations; PELUM, FRA ETC
- Strong farmer movement globally and nationally championing agroecology

Strategies

- Develop an inclusive strategy/ roadmap for scaling up agroecology in Uganda with clear commitments from actors
- Agroecology market development at all levels; PGS and consumer awareness campaign.
- Strong communication strategy for mass awareness creation about agroecology in Uganda
- Further strengthening of research with clear mechanisms for utilising research to inform policies and practices.
- Advocacy for Agroecology at local, National and International level
- Land rights awareness and safeguarding for SHFs

Strategies-cont

- Make agroecology work for the youth; skilling and attractive value chains for inclusiveness
- Strong collaboration between, public and private partners
- National Agroecology actors platform
- Strategies to boldly tackle gender inequalities; GALS etc
- Build strong farmer movement of farmer with global linkages
- Citizens science approach; participatory action research
- Biodiversity conservation and use; community gene banks, traditional food campaigns etc
- Promote farmer managed seed systems
- Landscape approaches for community resource management
- Use of ICT in Agroecology

Next Steps for scaling up agroecology

- Development of National strategy for scaling up agroecology
- Formulate and operationalize technical working groups
- Develop agroecology research agenda
- Replicate agroecology centres of excellence
- Policy reviews and advocacy



Launching of EOA | Phase 2



Exhibition of Agroecology products



Seed diversity for resilience



Thanks!

ANY QUESTIONS?

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