**CGIAR Research Program on   
Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS)**

**Organisational Baseline Study:  
Overview Report for Kagera Basin – Rakai, Uganda (UG0204)**

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# INTRODUCTION

This is a report of the Organisational Baseline Survey (OBS) carried out in February 2012. The interviews were conducted at 12 organisations that were working or collaborating with farmers and/or the community in Rakai in the Kagera Basin, Uganda. Rakai has a steep rainfall gradient, which ranges from over 1400mm along Lake Victoria, to under 1000mm in Western Rakai. The basin vegetation includes forest and woodland, savannah shrub and grassland, and wetlands. The district is known for increasing climatic variability and experiences heavy deforestation, reduced river flow and water stress. The site has rainfed annual smallholder farming systems along the lake, mid-hill perennial mixed coffee agro-forestry in the centre, and large areas of highly vulnerable smallholder agro pastoralists in the western half of Rakai. Cattle migrate into the site from Tanzania, resulting in heavy grazing pressure and many farmers have resorted to planting with each rain, leading to seed and labour losses. Communities tend to survive mostly on perennials and cassava.

CCAFS' organisational-level baseline studies supplement the quantitative household baseline surveys and the qualitative village baseline studies at the same locations.

The objectives of the organisational baseline study are to:

* Provide indicators to allow us to monitor changes in behaviours and practices of locally relevant organisations over time
* Understand the provision of information/services at the local level that informs farmers’ decision making about their livelihood strategies in response to climate change

# ORGANISATIONS INTERVIEWED

Prior to this organisational study, CCAFS conducted a participatory village study within the Rakai site. Participants of the village study were asked to create an institutional landscape of their community by listing the most important organisations that were active in the area and then providing information on how they were involved in the community. Specifically, the participants were asked which organisations were involved in food security activities, food crisis situations, and natural resource management work. CCAFS then took this list of organisations and provided it to the interviewer conducting the Organisational Baseline Survey. The interviewer was given leeway to eliminate an organisation s/he believed was not relevant and to add any organisations that may have been left out of the village study discussions.

The village survey generated a list of 9 organisations for this site. Three additional organisations were selected for interview based on the interviewer's assessment.

Tabulated below is the list of organisations interviewed, omitted and added with a brief description of their activities.

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| Organisation | Main areas of activity |
| (AA) Agali Awamu | this CBO promotes group farming, and contributes money for rearing animals and buying farm implements. |
| (CA) Co-operAid | this INGO is no longer operational in the area. When it was, it built schools, paid school fees, gave desks to schools, built houses for the poor and provided seeds and animals. |
| (LC) Local Council | enforces the law, in part by controlling deforestation, and encouraging tree planting. |
| (NAADS) National Agricultural Advisory Services | according to its current objectives, NAADS is working to increase food security and household income, while promoting sustained natural resource use and management. |
| (NEMA) National Environmental Management Authority | regulates the use of wetlands and creates awareness on forest and wetland conservation. |
| (RACA) Rakai AIDS Counsellors Association | this local NGO raises awareness of HIV/AIDS, promotes income generating activities among HIV/AIDS affected/infected homes, advises against child labour and provides education scholarships. It also encourages tree planting for shelter, medicine and fuelwood, and gives out livestock, seeds and banana suckers. |
| (RHSP) Rakai Health Sciences Program, formerly Rakai Project | this government organisation supplies food and planting materials to the community, especially orphans, as well as passing on information to encourage food production. |
| (VA) Vi-Agroforestry | this INGO is no longer operational in the Rakai area. When it was, it trained and supported the community in tree planting. |
| (WV) World Vision | this INGO builds houses for orphans, builds schools, implements school feeding programs, provides tractors for ploughing, gives heifers to farmers and supports communities to establish tree nurseries. |
| Added Organisations | Activities and/or why they are included |
| (CEDO) Community Development Organisation | trains farmers on improved farming methods, soil and water conservation, provides improved seed, promotes water and sanitation, and gives out fruit tree seedlings. |
| (CIDI) Community Integrated Development Initiatives | promotes sustainable agriculture, water and sanitation. It works with a focus on HIV/AIDS awareness and empowerment of infected and affected persons. |
| (MADDO) Masaka Diocesan Development Organisation | provides farmers with training on improved farming methods, soil fertility enhancement, soil and water conservation. It also provides improved seeds and promotes energy saving technologies, sanitation and hygiene at the household level. |

## Additional Information and Lessons Learned

VA is no longer operational; therefore its activities are referred to in the past tense. It was operational in this area for 5 years, from 2002 to 2007. The interviewer did note that despite the organisation no longer being active in the area, the communities that it worked with have continued planting agro-forestry tree species for fuel and fruit benefits. He further added that a valuable lesson to be learned from VA's work is that, "it is much easier to promote fruit trees than other trees in rural communities of Rakai, since the target groups quickly see the direct benefits from trees – the fruits. Therefore, any interventions in the direction of promoting tree growing should consider including fruit trees for quick adoption."

CA is no longer operational; therefore its activities are referred to in the past tense. It worked in the area for 13 years before its closure in 2009.

According to its current objectives, NAADS is working to increase food security and household income, while promoting sustained natural resource use and management. However, the interviewer's overview of NAADS only states that it "gives coffee seedlings to farmers and transports coffee from farm to coffee mill." This is confusing as there is no mention of coffee in the interview write-up and this overview does not refer to any of the activities mentioned in the interview. The discrepancy may indicate that the organisation's ideas and activities do not line up. On another note the interviewer stated that, "the value attached to trainings by the NAADS' target population in Lwanda Sub-county is very low, as evidenced by low attendance of training workshops. This was attributed to the low literacy levels in the area and the fact that some people are fed up with seminars but rather need tangible initiatives. Hence any CCAFS intervention involving sensitization has to find a way of overcoming this challenge."

The respondent from MADDO reported that more women would come to training sessions, unless there was a monetary benefit attached, implying that men attach more value to handouts than training. CCAFS may need to take this into account when planning future training, particularly if it hopes to achieve a gender balance among its participants.

It was noted that NEMA works closely with the Rakai district environment department to coordinate, monitor, regulate and supervise environmental management activities in the district. Thus, any partnerships with NEMA in Rakai should target the district environment office.

# SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

## Natural resource management:

Natural resource management (NRM) activities are present in the area, with a focus on sustainable farming practices, soil and water conservation, water harvesting, environmental conservation, and tree planting. MADDO and NAADS list NRM as a current objective of theirs and NEMA states that its only objective is "to ensure that natural resources maintain their integrity".

In terms of environmental protection, NEMA teaches people to respect the environment in general. It also sensitises the community on wetland friendly activities, and gives advice on wetland appropriate tree species and other environmentally friendly crops. Finally, NEMA forms groups in communities to advise against the indiscriminate harvesting of papyrus. Meanwhile, CIDI encourages and sensitizes the community to preserve forests and wetlands as well as discouraging de-forestation and bush burning. NAADS is involved in wetland conservation and advises farmers to reduce charcoal burning, bush burning and over stocking. LC enacts by-laws against bush burning and wetland destruction as well as organising training on wetland preservation and discouraging the planting of eucalyptus in wetlands. VA discouraged bush burning and grazing and CEDO advises against indiscriminate tree cutting.

Tree planting is a wide spread activity. Growing trees for increased fuel, fruit and climate change mitigation was a key objective for VA when they were working in the area. None of the other organisations mention it among their current objective, though they do engage in tree planting in a variety of ways. AA has a group nursery and CEDO gives free seedlings to farmers and promotes tree planting. LC advises people on the benefits of tree planting and promotes tree planting. The RHSP encourages people to grow trees for landscape and medicinal purposes, to get shade and for money. NEMA is more precise, promoting tree planting in hilly areas. MADDO and CIDI both encourage the planting of trees and fodder crops, the latter also promotes the planting of fruit trees. Finally, NAADS is involved in tree planting and managing existing trees.

Soil and water conservation is an area of activity for CA, MADDO and VA, the latter specified its interest in mulching and ridges. NAADS provides training on soil and water conservation, while the AA's group members carry out such practices in their own farming. CEDO encourages farmers to use fallows and to grow Calliandra for soil and water conservation. MADDO is involved in soil fertility enhancement. NEMA advises against the contamination of water bodies and spraying animals in the wetlands.

CIDI addresses water harvesting and water conservation, including: roof water, tapping runoff and constructing simple reservoirs using tarpaulins, through demand driven demonstrations and follow ups. RHSP also states an involvement in water harvesting, as does AA which works on creating the necessary structures. RACA constructs small water reservoirs of 2000L-3000L. WV implements water and sanitation interventions and LC encourages sustainable use of resources such as wells.

Training on sustainable agricultural methods is provided by RACA, who works with district experts to conduct sessions. CEDO gives advice to farmers on agricultural practices and trains them on good management practices. NAADS encourages farmers to use land sustainably and intensively. CA provided training in livestock management, poultry keeping and manure management. VA promoted organic pest control, such as bananas.

There are also a few activities relating to energy efficiency and proper waste disposal. AA is involved in energy saving stoves; RACA promotes the use of harvested cassava stems for fuel. MADDO promotes energy saving technologies and proper waste disposal. Finally, NEMA teaches garbage management.

## Preparation to withstand extreme events:

Improved food security is the most widely spread activity pertaining to enhancing preparedness to withstand extreme events. Improving food security is high among the current objectives of AA, WV, CEDO, MADDO, CIDI, NAADS and LC.

WV's focus on improved food security is particularly aimed at child well being. As well as working to increase food security, CIDI encourages group and individual savings. The AA's farming group plants drought resistant crops and LC enacts by-laws encouraging food security crops (e.g. cassava and beans).

## Reduction of risk due to climate variability:

In order to reduce the risk due to climate variability, organisations are encouraging diversified farming, improved farming inputs and planting times, improved post harvest handling, and income generating activities.

The provision and promotion of improved seed varieties is a way that organisations are working to reduce the impact of climate variability. These are made available by RACA and MADDO. The latter also gives information on variety and breed selection. CIDI provides improved seeds, seedlings and start-up livestock as well as training on improved animal breeds. NAADS is involved in improved varieties and breeds, though it is not clear in what capacity, training or provision. VA promoted growing more and diverse crops (e.g. early maturing, drought resistant, pest resistant). CEDO provides farmers with fruit tree seedlings, potato vines and cassava cuttings. It also gives vegetable seeds to HIV positive groups. AA members practice timely land preparation and planting. NAADS promotes early land preparation as well as planting early maturing and drought resistant crops. CIDI provides training on selected crop varieties, e.g. what, when, and how to plant. Finally, LC gives advice on timely planting and appropriate crop selection.

Post harvest handling is another area of activity. VA built food storage structures and CEDO supports the farmers to build such units. Both AA and NAADS are involved in storage and post harvest handling. NAADS also encourages people to reserve or store food before the next harvest. MADDO provides information and support on storage and post harvest handling, while RHSP is involved in food preservation.

Ensuring people have income generating activities is a current objective for CA, VA and LC. RACA emphasizes income generating activities on animal husbandry e.g. goats, local chicken, pigs, and free range egg sales.

## Activities and Their Relationship to Climate Change:

There does not seem to be a strong focus on climate change and variability. Natural resource management seems to be the best addressed area of the three explored above. LC lists, "helping people to adapt and cope with the changing climate conditions" as a current objective. WV clearly expresses its understanding of the need to address environmental protection, which it says is a crosscutting issue incorporated in all projects of its organisation. Although it is no longer in operation, VA promoted agroforestry with the goal of climate change mitigation.

Due to the use of lists and concise descriptions, there is some ambiguity as to whether the activities in the above three subsections are climate change related activities. They have been listed because they do relate to climate change; however, in many cases there may be other reasons for implementation, such as to improve agricultural productivity or to overcome natural year to year variability. Thus, the organisations' climate change activities may be activities that date back to before there was a focus on climate change, and their attention to it is a by-product.

## Potential CCAFS Partners

The interviewer identified the following organizations as potential partners for CCAFS for the reasons outlined below.

**NAADS** is a potential partner in future CCAFS work given their approach to agricultural extension activities, which target the sub-county level. In addition, NAADS is interested in all initiatives aimed at improving soil and water conservation for better agricultural productivity.

**LC** was identified as a potential CCAFS partner given the political influence of the various councillors in shaping the strategic direction of the district.

**MADDO** is a potential CCAFS partner as a number of its activities link to CCAFS' agenda. These include the promotion of energy saving technologies, soil and water conservation, and provision of improved seeds.

**RACA** is a potential partner because it is working to empower people affected/infected with HIV/AIDS through the promotion of food security and income generating activities. It also encourages tree planting for shade, fuel wood and for medicinal purposes. Finally, RACA's wider coverage could be a good entry point as its existing networks could be useful in promoting CCAFS programs and activities.

**CIDI** is a potential CCAFS partner as it is already involved in sensitization on rural water harvesting strategies, forest and wetland conservation and is promoting afforestation in the sub-counties of Kyebe, Lwanda, Kalunda, Kasaali, Kakuuto and Kasasa. Their main activities include: promotion and provision of fruit tree seedlings, training farmers on improved farming methods, promoting soil and water conservation strategies, and providing improved seeds. These are in line with CCAFS' agenda and the respondent clearly stated that CIDI welcomed partnerships on any of the activities under their mandate.

**NEMA** is the principal agency in Uganda charged with the responsibility of coordinating, monitoring, regulating and supervising environmental management in the country. This makes it an obvious potential partner for CCAFS.

**World Vision** has no single funded project targeting environmental related issues, but in view of the importance of climate change it is handling environmental conservation issues as a cross-cutting issue in most of its projects. In addition, World Vision has an existing structure that can accommodate climate change related activities with minimal modification.

**CEDO** is promoting food security initiatives such as the provision of improved seed and market information to farmers. Therefore, CEDO could be a good partner for CCAFS' food security component. Furthermore, the interviewer stated that currently CEDO’s environmental awareness and conservation activities are limited to those that don’t require a lot funding since there is no specific project funding for environmental-related activities. However, the field extension officer's description of CEDO's long-term plans indicates that CEDO has a strong environmental component, which can only be strengthened with the availability of funds.