



Farmers' Dialogue

is a programme of Initiatives of Change

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FARMERS' DIALOGUE DEA - DR CONGO

DR CONGO-KENYA EXCHANGE/SHARING MEETING ON RESTORATION OF DEGRADED
LAND, LAND GOVERNANCE AND PEACE BUILDING

13TH TO 14TH NOVEMBER, 2017



Introduction:

This dialogue was organized by Kenya and DR Congo Farmers Dialogue teams as FDI countries participated in Land and Security Dialogue at Caux, Switzerland in July 2017 which covered ; profitable land restoration, land governance and peace building. It's aim was to pursue the lessons learned and resolutions made during Caux dialogue by both countries sharing their experiences, innovations and practices on the stated themes as a way of reaching farmers and partners in these countries.

The dialogue was held for two days at Action for the Development of Rural Areas (ADMR). Twenty-three participants including 20 FD DR Congo and 3 FD Kenya members (Rosemary NAMATSI, Agricultural Community service provider and FD K Secretary, Dominicah WANJIRU, psychiatrist and farmer – MASALANGE Simon, Treasurer FD K and farmer)

Objectives

- Continue the reflections from Caux on the above themes
- Exchange experiences between Kenya and DR Congo farmers and strengthen the links between the members of the FD International platform, DR Congo and Kenya especially

to explore how these two countries can involve farmers from other FDI countries such as; South Sudan, Somali, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania etc

Dialogue progress

The moderator, M. Justin Ntaboba, introduced the members and welcomed all participants to have participatory sessions for the two days of the dialogue.

Dialogue overview/opening remarks

Ms Rosemary Namatsi congratulated the Congolese secretary of FD International, Mr Pierre Lokeka, for facilitating and organizing the meeting.

In her address, she stated that land degradation has become a global problem and in almost every country. Land degradation and conflicts are now at the root of low agricultural production and environment destruction, and food demand is more likely to increase arithmetically. To reduce this increasing global problem, it is necessary to implement several measures including:



- The revision of the question of land law ie land ownership/utilization
- Making farming profitable (agribusiness)
- Resource mobilization; identify human resources (personnel among us), finance, natural resources from our environment e.g. land, water, air, etc
- Upscaling and promotion of best practices in communities
- Maintain cooperation between communities as they face the problems in agriculture (to build peace between farmers and especially to believe in the values of peace, love, purity and honesty). She mentioned that the aim of FDI was to feed humanity.

For this process, Rosemary suggested using the guidelines of the 4 absolute standards of Initiatives of Change:

- 1) Unselfishness
- 2) Love
- 3) Purity
- 4) Honesty

DR Congo scenario

Engineer BAHATI started the dialogue by presenting on the ADMR organization and its achievements. In his presentation, he explained the following points: Objective, mission and vision of the ADMR organization (Action for the Development of Rural Areas)

- Areas of intervention
- Motto and values
- Partners
- Achievements
- Challenges



After Bahati's presentation, a session of questions and answers was held to help visitors and delegates in gaining a clearer understanding of the issues affecting farmers and their land. Some of the questions asked were:

Q1 / What are the most productive trees that grow in high altitudes?

Q2 / What are the crops that help the land retain its content?

Q3 / What are the plants that preserve the water?

Miss CHARMANTE Kinja of the organization ADMR, presented on the problems of land acquisition by the women in DR Congo.

She started by demonstrating that laws in Congo regulate land transactions but the effectiveness and regulations are not being followed.

She went on to say that there are major challenges to productive growth in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The reasons for this are:

- Discrimination suffered by women in relation to their right to inherit land; they are rarely landowners.
- Demographic pressure following population dislocation following wars.
- The big landowners do not leave the farmland to the people from low background.
- The majority of women are unaware of their rights.

Difficulties related to the land issue:

- Retrograde and out dated custom
- Illegal taxes and harassment of big landowners;
- Infertility of soil
- Insufficient land, etc.
- Possible solutions:
- Intensify education activities especially for women on access to land
- Raise awareness of girls' access to education
- Grouping women into community groups to intensify their strength of action
- Lead advocacy activities for education and information towards local leaders



Miss Charmante concluded her presentation by saying that there is no development possible without the participation of women.

In response, Rosemary and Dominicah noted that there are similarities of problems in Kenya and DR Congo. Faced with these realities she proposed the following ways:

- Organize focus groups to help women understand how they can access the land

- Organize exchange workshops on access to land at local, regional and interregional levels
- Put women in groups to be able to defend their land
- Join networks that can spearhead lobbying and advocacy
- Encourage women to use the little they have to move forward
- Raise awareness and implementation of family planning
- Continue to sensitize women and community at large about the information needed for their development.
- Seek funding

Kenyan scenario by ROSEMARY NAMATSI:

She explained how in Kenya all development activities are done by group approach in order to reach more people at once by any intervention both by the government and non-governmental initiatives. She underlined some needs:

- The contribution of everyone coming from a basic level
- The restoration of the land by everyone using appropriate techniques e.g. ecological farming, agroforestry, afforestation, small livestock, crop diversification, among others
- Alocal reflection on agriculture projects to achieve capacity development
- Enhance team work
- Enhance sensitization on land governance more so on land ownership by youth and women in our communities
- Involvement of youth and women in agriculture projects

Management of human resources

In relation to this point, she explained in details how:

- To prepare for natural calamities
- To efficiently manage water springs and forests
- To avoid conflicts in society
- To well maintain our agricultural projects
- To uphold a good sense of food safety
- To sustain our soil with natural fertilizer
- To manage our biodiversity, birds, animals, humans, crops/plants

Team Building for Peace and Unity

On this point, Rosemary suggested that participants use the group approach for a variety of reasons:

- By being united the group pursues the same objective,
- Each member of the group appropriates the activity,
- Each member plays a specific role because everyone has a particular gift and power,
- The members of the group work as a family.



THE WAY FORWARD

At this point and in link with the means and strategies for the continuation of Caux reflections, to explore and disseminate the lessons on the stated themes and fight against the related global challenges/effects such as hunger, conflict, inadequate marketing, migration, inadequate water supply among others the following challenges were launched to all participants namely:

- What steps can I take to improve my farming?
- How is my relationship with other farmers and partners?
- What can I do to make a difference?
- What can I do to create harmony between young people and women for a better and sustainable agriculture?

As a conclusion and way forward, the following was agreed upon by all participants to be pursued;

- Upscale best practices
- Resource mobilisation
- Carry out surveys and needs assessment to a certain validity of innovations
- Enhance group formation in our communities; youth, women and gender mixed groups
- Documentation to facilitate sharing and feedback
- Enhance marketing channels and strategies within the team and beyond
- Training on appropriate technologies and peace building
- Enhance networking and partnership linkages
- Carry out evaluation on the progress



DR CONGO AND KENYA PARTICIPANTS

Farmers' Dialogue

