

Evidences

Study #2653

Contributing Projects:

- P659 - 1.2.2 Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

Part I: Public communications

Type: OICR: Outcome Impact Case Report

Status: Completed

Year: 2020

Title: Volunteer Farmer Trainer program reaching 352,000 dairy farmers in Uganda increases knowledge and productivity

Short outcome/impact statement:

Since 2012, PIM has supported efforts by ICRAF and partners to implement the volunteer farmer trainer approach in Eastern Africa. As of 2018, 86 organizations across Eastern Africa have adopted the volunteer farmer trainer approach. These organizations work with 17,600 volunteer farmer trainers and serve 352,000 farmers. An impact evaluation found that the use of this approach improved farmers' knowledge of dairy practices as well as dairy productivity and revenues in Uganda's Busoga region.

Outcome story for communications use:

Low agricultural productivity and limited adoption of agricultural technologies by farmers are key development challenges across Sub-Saharan Africa. Can training Volunteer Farmer Trainers, who then disseminate information about technologies to other farmers, increase the coverage and impact of agricultural extension services?

Since 2012, PIM has supported efforts by ICRAF and partners to implement the Volunteer Farmer Trainer approach and monitor the uptake of this promising form of agricultural advice delivery in Eastern Africa [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6].

As of 2018, 86 organizations across Eastern Africa have adopted the volunteer farmer trainer approach. These organizations work with 17,600 volunteer farmer trainers and serve 352,000 farmers.

The East Africa Dairy Development Project (EADD), which ended in 2018, aimed to boost the milk production of smallholder farmers in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. One component of the EADD was a farmer training program through which ICRAF trained Volunteer Farmer Trainers on improved feeding of dairy cows. ICRAF instructed these VFTs to train other farmers in their villages through demonstration plots and lessons.

The program was implemented in Uganda's Busoga region, where most farmers produce staple and cash crops such as maize, cassava, and sweet potatoes and engage in dairy farming as a side activity. Before the intervention, these farmers had a limited knowledge of recommended dairy practices. Two years after the training, both VFTs and farmers in villages with trained VFTs had increased knowledge of improved feeding practices and had adopted improved feeding practices, resulting in higher levels of milk production [7] [8]. These results show that the program increased the knowledge of Volunteer Farmer Trainers, who were able to transfer some of their knowledge to other farmers.

Links to any communications materials relating to this outcome:

- <https://tinyurl.com/yglw2luz>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVttzAczSgE>
- <https://tinyurl.com/ydwenwce>
- <https://pim.cgiar.org/impact/outcomes/vft-rwanda/>
- <https://pim.cgiar.org/2014/05/19/vft-impact-story/>

Part II: CGIAR system level reporting

Link to Common Results Reporting Indicator of Policies : No

Stage of maturity of change reported: Stage 2

Links to the Strategic Results Framework:

Sub-IDOs:

- Improved access to financial and other services
- Closed yield gaps through improved agronomic and animal husbandry practices
- Increase capacity of beneficiaries to adopt research outputs

Is this OICR linked to some SRF 2022/2030 target?: Yes

SRF 2022/2030 targets:

- # of more farm households have adopted improved varieties, breeds or trees

Description of activity / study: <Not Defined>

Geographic scope:

- Multi-national

Country(ies):

- Tanzania, United Republic
- Uganda
- Rwanda
- Kenya

Comments: <Not Defined>

Key Contributors:

Contributing CRPs/Platforms:

- PIM - Policies, Institutions, and Markets
- FTA - Forests, Trees and Agroforestry

Contributing Flagships:

- F1: Technological Innovation and Sustainable Intensification

Contributing Regional programs: <Not Defined>

Contributing external partners:

- HAMK - Hame University of Applied Sciences
- BMGF - Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Technoserve
- J-PAL - Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab
- Paris School of Economics
- Heifer International
- Makerere University
- ABS TCM LTD - African Breeders Services Total Cattle Management
- KDF - Kenya Dairy Farmers federation
- Lilongwe University of Agricultural and Natural Resources
- ILRI - International Livestock Research Institute
- RAB - Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board
- 3ie - International Initiative for Impact Evaluation

CGIAR innovation(s) or findings that have resulted in this outcome or impact:

Volunteer Farmer Trainer approach in Eastern Africa

Innovations:

- 2041 - Volunteer farmer trainer approach in Eastern Africa

Elaboration of Outcome/Impact Statement:

Since 2012, PIM has supported efforts by ICRAF and partners to implement the Volunteer Farmer Trainer approach and monitor the uptake of this promising form of agricultural advice delivery in Eastern Africa [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6].

As of 2018, 86 organizations across Eastern Africa have adopted the volunteer farmer trainer approach. These organizations work with 17,600 volunteer farmer trainers and serve 352,000 farmers.

The East Africa Dairy Development Project (EADD), which ended in 2018, aimed to boost the milk production of smallholder farmers in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. One component of the EADD was a farmer training program through which ICRAF trained Volunteer Farmer Trainers on improved feeding of dairy cows. ICRAF instructed these VFTs to train other farmers in their villages through demonstration plots and lessons.

The program was implemented in Uganda's Busoga region, where most farmers produce staple and cash crops such as maize, cassava, and sweet potatoes and engage in dairy farming as a side activity. Before the intervention, these farmers had a limited knowledge of recommended dairy practices. Two years after the training, both VFTs and farmers in villages with trained VFTs had increased knowledge of improved feeding practices and had adopted improved feeding practices, resulting in higher levels of milk production [7] [8]. Farmers who lived in villages with trained VFTs scored 10 percent higher on a test measuring their knowledge of feeding practices than farmers in comparison villages. Farmers in villages with trained VFTs reported using slightly more technologies than farmers in comparison villages. VFTs and farmers in treatment villages seemed to have produced more milk than those in comparison villages, although the average effects were not statistically significant.

References cited:

- [1] Policy brief "Six ways to improve your volunteer farmer trainers program for more effective advisory services". 2018: www.worldagroforestry.org/downloads/Publications/PDFS/PB18014.pdf
- [2] Kiptot, Evelyne; and Franzel, Steven. 2019. Stakeholder planning of the institutionalization of the volunteer farmer-trainer approach in dairy producer organizations in Kenya: Key steps and supporting mechanisms. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability* 17(1): 18-33.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14735903.2018.1558581>
- [3] Working paper "Farmer-to-farmer extension of livestock feed technologies in Rwanda: a survey of volunteer farmer trainers and organizations". 2016:
<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/downloads/Publications/PDFS/WP16005.pdf>
- [4] Report "The Volunteer Farmer Trainer Approach Three Years after the Exit of the East Africa Dairy Development Project: A Case Study of Four Dairy Producer Organizations in Kenya". 2017:
<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/output/volunteer-farmer-trainer-approach-three-years-after-exit-east-africa-dairy-development>
- [5] The volunteer farmer trainer extension approach: A user guide". 2016:
<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/downloads/Publications/PDFS/TM16068.pdf>
- [6] Policy brief "Volunteer farmer trainers boost Rwanda's dairy sector with information on improved livestock feed practices". 2016:
<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/downloads/Publications/PDFS/WP16033.pdf>
- [7] Behaghel, Luc; Gignoux, Jérémie; Kamugisha, Rick; Kugonza, Jane; Macours, Karen; and Najjingo Mangheni. Margaret. "Dissemination of new agricultural technologies in Africa: making extension work." Final project report, June 2018. [CONFIDENTIAL]
- [8] Blog post on J-PAL website "The Impact of Farmer-to-Farmer Training on Agricultural Productivity in Uganda":
<https://www.povertyactionlab.org/evaluation/impact-farmer-farmer-training-agricultural-productivity-uganda>

Quantification: <Not Defined>**Gender, Youth, Capacity Development and Climate Change:****Gender relevance:** 1 - Significant

Main achievements with specific **Gender** relevance: Findings show that organizations that made an effort to recruit female volunteer farmer trainers (VFTs) were able to engage large numbers of them. For example, in the East African Dairy Development Project, Uganda, only 5% of the professional trainers were women whereas 33% of the 1,100 VFTs were women. In the Ministry of Agriculture, Malawi, 21% of the field staff were women, whereas 40% of the 12,000 VFTs were women. The findings also indicated that in most cases, women trained significantly more women than men did.

Youth relevance: 0 - Not Targeted**CapDev relevance:** 2 - Principal

Main achievements with specific **CapDev** relevance: The Volunteer Farmer Trainers approach aim to build the capacity of farmers. Several capacity building events were conducted as part of this project.

Climate Change relevance: 0 - Not Targeted**Other cross-cutting dimensions:** NA**Other cross-cutting dimensions description:** <Not Defined>

Outcome Impact Case Report link: [Study #2653](#)

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