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## Decentralised market information service in Lira District, Uganda. Project inception workshop in Lira (NRI report no. 2747)

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**NRI Report No. 2747  
Project A1079**

# **Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District, Uganda**

***Project Inception Workshop in Lira  
27 January 2003***

**Ulrich Kleih**

*This report is an output from a research project funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) for the benefit of developing countries. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of DFID. Crop Post-Harvest Research Programme – Project R8250*



**Radio  
Lira**



**Natural  
Resources  
Institute**

**DFID** Department for  
International  
Development

**PMA  
Secretariat**

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## Abbreviations

ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
AT (U)	Appropriate Technology (Uganda)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBOs	Community base organisations
CDO	Cotton Development Organisation
CEDO	Community Enterprise Development Organisation, CEDO
CPHP	DFID Crop Post-Harvest Programme
DETREC	Development Training and Research Centre, Lira
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
ELF	Extension Link Farmer
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FHH	Female Headed Household
HH	Household
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDEA	Investment in Developing Export Agriculture, USAID Funded
IGA	Income Generating Activities
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
LC	Local Council
LDLG	Lira District Local Government
LIDFA	Lira District Farmers Association
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MHH	Male Headed Household
MI	Market Information
MIS	Market Information Service
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NARO	National Agricultural Research Organisation
NGOs	Non-government Organisations
NRIL	Natural Resources International Ltd
NRI	Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich
PAP	Poverty Alleviation Project
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PMA	Plan for Modernization of Agriculture
PM&E	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PSPC	Private Sector Promotion Centre
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RO	Regional Office, Crop Post-Harvest Programme
SAARI	Serere Agricultural and Animal Production Research Institute
UNFFE	Uganda National Farmers Federation
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
UOSPA	Uganda Oilseed Producers and Processors Association
UPPAP	Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Project
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

### Exchange Rate

£1 = US\$2,900 (January 2003)

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The project team is also indebted to Ms Alyano Elizabeth of DETREC for taking the workshop notes so competently.

Last but not least we would like to thank the DFID Crop Post-Harvest Research Programme for providing the funds for this project.

## SUMMARY

This inception workshop was the first activity of the research project **Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District, Uganda**, which is funded by the DFID Crop Post-Harvest Research Programme. The main objective of this project is to test information delivery models for poor farming communities, with emphasis on decentralised market information services and the use of FM Radio.

The objectives of the inception workshop included the following:

- Presentation of the project to stakeholders;
- Stakeholder presentations on project related issues;
- Discussion of the project objectives and research methods;
- Selection of Sub-counties where the research will take place;
- Formation of Steering Committee;
- Start of project partnership building.

Following the opening of the workshop by Mr Ojur Franco, Acting LCV Chairman Lira District, a series of presentations were made on the background of the project, the agricultural system in Lira District and constraints encountered, the role of market information in the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture, the Foodnet operated Market Information Service, the experience of Radio Lira in the context of agricultural information, the NRI / BBC "In the Field" radio programmes, the experience of the Rakai based NGO Community Enterprise Development Organisation, and the NAADS Market Information Strategy.

The presentations confirmed the importance of market information for farmers, and the role it was given by Government initiatives such as PMA and NAADS. Questions raised after the presentations were related to the practicalities and sustainability of a market information system, marketing aspects such as produce standards, storage by farmer groups, and contract farming. In addition, the importance of accountability of Government schemes, as well as training and sensitisation of farmers was mentioned.

A project steering committee was formed involving a number of major stakeholders related to the project. It was agreed that the steering committee should facilitate as informally as possible the communication between project partners and information flow from grassroots to top level.

Five sub-counties were selected for the research, using selection criteria such as commodities produced, NAADS membership / non-membership, and the fact that all five counties of Lira District were represented. The five sub-counties chosen by the workshop participants include Adwari, Aloi, Bata, Namasale, and Ogur.

Discussions on topics to be emphasised during the course of the research centred on issues such as, evidence of impact of market information service, role of the different players in the MIS, and constraints faced by the target groups in using MIS. As for participants' expectations from the project, these include increased awareness/knowledge about market information, improved marketing / profit making, quality production, and increase in the farmers' incomes. The criteria for selecting research participants should include issues such as gender, mobilisation skills, and poverty.

## INTRODUCTION

The research project **Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District, Uganda**, was started in January 2003<sup>1</sup> with funding from DFID Crop Post-Harvest Programme.

The background of the research is related to the unquestionable need for market information in rural communities, a fact which has been highlighted in numerous publications. In this context, up-to-date market information is expected to improve farmers' negotiating power and to facilitate spatial and temporal arbitrage of commodities. In particular, Rural FM radio stations are well placed to provide communities with relevant information in remote areas which lack communication infrastructure.

In light of this, the main objective of this project is to test information delivery models for poor farming communities, with emphasis on decentralised market information services and the use of FM Radio.

Full details of the project are provided in the presentation by U Kleih, which is outlined below.

The objectives of the inception workshop included the following:

- Presentation of the project to stakeholders;
- Stakeholder presentations on project related issues;
- Discussion of the objectives and research methods;
- Selection of Sub-counties where the research will take place;
- Formation of Steering Committee.

In particular, it was expected that the inception workshop would be the first step in the direction of forming a project partnership which would involve stakeholders at local, national, and international levels.

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<sup>1</sup> As yet, funding has been assured until March 2004. Subject to a review in early 2004, the project may be extended until December 2004.

## **OFFICIAL WORKSHOP OPENING, by Mr Ojur Franco, Acting LCV Chairman, Lira District.**

The workshop was officially opened by Mr. Ojur Franco, Acting LCV Chairman, Lira District. He said that the PMA was sponsoring many programmes in Uganda, including those dealing with post-harvest issues. At the same time, he also stated that the post-harvest system in Uganda was disturbed by war, as a result of which farmers in some parts of Lira were not harvesting their crops.

At the same time, the marketing system also poses problems and contributes to the fact that many farmers are subsistence producers. To tackle this, he said there was a need for sensitisation of the farmers in order to raise them from subsistence producers to commercial farmers. He stated that there are many media institutions helping with information on marketing and farming systems, and that unlike during the colonial period conditions in Uganda are now conducive for growing all crops.

In his role as politician he also stated that Local Councils (LCs) played a very vital role in communities. With those remarks, the Chairman declared the workshop as opened and left for other duties.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Presentation of Project “Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District”, by Mr. Ulrich Kleih, Natural Resources Institute**

The presenter provided a summary of the entire research project. According to him, the background of the research is related to the unquestionable need for market information in rural communities. In this context, up-to-date market information is expected to improve farmers’ negotiating power and to facilitate spatial and temporal arbitrage of commodities. In particular, Rural FM radio stations are well placed to provide communities with relevant information in remote areas which lack communication infrastructure.

The **main objective of this project** is to test information delivery models for poor farming communities, with emphasis on decentralised market information services and the use of FM Radio.

Using an **action-research approach**, this will involve the following:

- Participatory and quantitative assessments of information needs of small-scale farmers, processors and traders,
- Monitoring of impact of micro-Market Information Service established by IITA/Foodnet in Lira District,
- Analysis of how radio can be linked to other, more modern, ICTs (e.g. Internet, mobile phones),
- Production and broadcasting of radio programmes on collective marketing by farmer groups,
- Validation of information delivery models, and



- Dissemination of findings.

**The project partners include the following:**

- Natural Resources Institute (NRI), University of Greenwich, UK;
- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) – FOODNET, Kampala;
- Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) Secretariat, Kampala;
- Radio Lira;
- Commodity Market Information Systems (CMIS), London;
- Community Enterprises Development Organisation (CEDO, Rakai)
- NAADS Kampala, and Lira

**Target Audiences for Project Outputs**

- Decision makers in relevant GoU institutions (e.g. MAAIF, PMA, NAADS, Local Government).
- NGOs such as Appropriate Technology (AT Uganda), Community Enterprises Development Organisation (CEDO), Uganda Oilseed Producers and Processors Association (UOSPA), DETREC, ORIBLING, UWESO, Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFF), and Technoserve.
- FM Radio Stations in Uganda and throughout the Region;
- NARO research organisations such as SAARI;
- International networks and organisations (e.g. ASARECA, IITA, and FAO) with an interest in rural information provision. Also, interested donors such as DFID.

**The project research hypotheses are based on the assumptions that**

- (a) Farming communities in remote areas of Uganda and other parts of sub-Saharan Africa lack adequate market information and communication services, and
- (b) Rural FM radio stations can play an important role in disseminating information related to agricultural markets and other aspects of life in remote farming communities.

**The main outputs of the project will be:**

- Improved understanding of the information needs of rural people in Lira District. This will be established through Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) and a household questionnaire survey with farmers and traders.
- Using an action – research approach, information delivery models for poor farming communities will be tested, with emphasis on decentralised market information services, and the use of FM radio.
- Dissemination of research findings.

**Questions asked following the presentation**

One workshop participant stated that these days, with the increase in the number of FM radio stations, people tend to time the programmes they prefer. Being commercial and profit making enterprises, how will radio stations cover the financial side of the market information system, he then asked.

It was also asked who will be broadcasting, at what time, and how will the system be managed.

The issue of under funding of market surveys and what the project will do about this, was raised by a third participant.

### **Answers**

It was reiterated that the project was about farmers' information needs, their sources of information, their current use of radio programmes and their preferences (e.g. timing, contents, etc);

Development programmes are not always well designed. It needs to be discussed how funds could be allocated to radio programmes for the sensitisation of farmers;

A farmer group in one sub-county may have problems that are different from other sub-counties. As a result, localised solutions should be sought and offered.

### **Agricultural Production and Marketing Constraints in Lira District, by Mr. Ajungu Peter - District Agricultural Officer (DAO) Lira.**

At the beginning of his presentation the DAO-Lira said he wanted the house to have some background information on agriculture in Lira. This he said centred on crop growing, livestock, fisheries, and entomology, all of which are practised by small-scale commercial farmers.

#### **Production constraints**

- Long dry spell - yet irrigation is only done in two rice schemes
- Soil fertility - due to poor land management, soils have lost their fertility
- Most farmers use poor breeds and varieties of crops and animals
- Fishing – use of wrong fishing gears. These, however, were abandoned when Kakooza Mutale took his operation Wembley there
- Diseases and pests
- High costs of production inputs, availability and accessibility to farmers
- Very low level of use of intermediary technology; Most farmers use labour intensive tools
- In apiary, farmers still use inappropriate harvesting techniques like burning the bees in order to get the honey.

#### **Marketing constraints**

- Inaccessibility to market information and communication is a big problem
- Poor quality of produce, fish, crops, honey and animal products
- Looking at fish, there is low level of refrigeration
- There is also inadequate storage at landing and at home for the fish. This forces them to sell at landing even with higher demand at the market.
- Most farmers have not had the ability to determine prices to sell their produce and yet some produce buyers come with predetermined prices.
- Farmers tend to act individually especially at time of marketing. In other words they cooperate when producing and disintegrate while marketing.

- District Development Fund (DDF) - farmers are taxed close to three times as they sell their produce. There is the assessment tax, graduated tax, tax on the way to market (produce exit fee) and store tax of Sh500 per bag.

### **Questions**

A participant asked about what the District had done to address the problem of storing produce as a group – since this was raised as a constraint in marketing produce;

Another participant heard that there was a cooperative group coming up and wanted to know more about it;

Illegal clearing of Kakooza Mutale – The Deputy RDC asked what the District Agricultural Office had done about this.

### **Answers**

To question one, the DAO said that in the 1960s and 1970s, produce was bought and stored by cooperative societies, which however collapsed. In 1997-2000, through LDDP, produce was stored in society support units to revive the old primary cooperatives. They did put in place new management through which they gave crop finance to societies. These societies bought all produce and marketed it collectively, however most of them lost the money due to mismanagement.

To question two, he said he had scanty knowledge but cooperative societies had been launched. In supplement, a participant said that Government is saying cooperative dealings should not be restricted to one crop or three but can be in any activity. He said the President had launched cooperatives at Kyankwanzi. He continued to emphasise that in the old cooperative groups, any farmer could join but now they should be formed for any interest group say, Youth, Elderly, Widows and Women.

In response to the third question the Agricultural officer said that he was not aware that the illegal gears were back in water but he would liaise with the office of the RDC to settle the issue. However he cautioned that brutality should not be the solution.

## **The Role of Market Information in the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture, by Dr Willie Odwongo - Director PMA Secretariat, Kampala**

As part of the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), a new strategy Marketing and Agricultural Processing Strategy (MAPS) had been designed to deal with the post-harvest sector. He said the PMA is based on the principles of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which is the focus of the current government programmes. The presenter discussed the PEAP and PMA principles before outlining the components of MAPS.

### **PEAP Pillars**

- Economic growth and structural transformation
- Good governance and democracy
- Increasing household incomes
- Improving quality of life

### **PMA Vision**

“Poverty eradication through profitable, competitive, sustainable and dynamic agricultural and agro-industrial sector”

### **PMA Mission**

“Eradicating poverty by transforming subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture without degrading the environment”

### **Objectives**

- Increasing household incomes and improving quality of life of poor subsistence farmers
- Improving household food security through the market.
- Providing gainful employment
- Promoting sustainable use and management of the environment and natural resources

### **PMA principles**

- Deepening decentralisation
- Liberalisation
- Privatisation
- Democratisation and stakeholder participation
- Gender sensitivity
- Environmental sustainability
- Partnership and multi-sect oral approach

### **PMA Priority areas**

- Research and Technology development
- Agricultural advisory services
- Agricultural education
- Rural financial services
- Agro-processing and marketing

- Sustainable natural resource use and management
- Physical infrastructure

With the above background to PMA, the presenter went ahead to outline the main agricultural trade and processing shortcomings currently experienced by the various operators in commodity marketing chains.

#### **Current Short-Comings**

- Capacity
- Marketing finance
- Lack of organised agriculture
- Lack of market information and poor quality produce
- Inefficient transport systems
- Infrastructure shortcomings

As part of the above list, the following market information related issues were presented.

#### **Lack of Market Information & Poor Quality Produce**

- Absence of objective, reliable and regular information on quantities, prices and trends of agricultural commodities
- Collection, analysis and availability of timely market information to both farmers and traders
- Poor post-harvest handling practices-low quality produce which cannot compete even in regional markets

In this context the, **MAPS Intervention Areas** were presented as follows.

- Trade and finance
- Producer support
- Infrastructure

In particular, market information is dealt with as part of **Producer Support**, which contains the following elements.

- Provision of market information (farmers & traders) - NAADS (Specialist consultancy to establish & manage an agricultural information service)
- Introduction of quality standards & improved post-harvest technologies (UNBS, Uganda Grain Traders etc.), EU funded research
- Improved farmer organisations
- Educational programmes to engage farmers more effectively in the liberalised market environment.

#### **Questions**

It was asked who the setting of standards was for and who will enforce it?

Another participant said that the standard of crops is better in the North compared to other regions, however he also queried how farmers should plant more.

### **Answers**

Standards should start at the farmers' level and NAADS have a key role to play in this context. The processors should also ensure that proper standards are followed in storage and processing. The approach is to involve all key players.

In addition, the presenter said that it is Uganda Bureau of Standards (UBOS) to enforce the standards under the government enforcement programmes.

To the second question, he said that the observation made about better standards in Lira compared to other regions is a compliment, however we are not yet there in terms of quality.

### **Foodnet Activities of the Uganda Market Information Service (MIS) Project, by Mr. Okoboi Geoffrey, Research Officer, IITA-Foodnet**

The presenter started with the background to Foodnet, which was related to the lack of and gap in information flow on agricultural activities, trade and produce. Foodnet aims to collect, document, process and disseminate timely and accurate market information to improve market access and efficiency for Uganda's producers, traders and processors.

The Foodnet Market Information System has two components:

1. Macro-level MIS that targets the needs of the policy sector and larger traders
2. Micro-level MIS that aims to provide localised information to small-scale producers and traders at local level.

The market information (MI) collected by Foodnet is based on **both primary and secondary sources**, and includes:

- Off lorry/farm gate, wholesale and retail prices of 28 agricultural commodities from 19 districts.
- Prices of local and imported cooking oil, rice and wheat products
- Trade volumes
- Demand and supply conditions in the markets
- Quality of produce
- Weather conditions
- Market news from Uganda, East Africa and around the world

The **19 districts** from which MI is currently collected include:

Arua, Gulu, Iganga, Jinja, Kabale, Kasese, Lira, Luwero, Masaka, Masindi, Mbale, Mbarara, Moroto, Rakai, Soroti, Tororo, Kampala, Kitgum, Kotido.

**Sources of primary information** include:

- District commercial/trade/marketing officers found in Arua, Iganga, Kasese, Masaka, etc
- District cooperative officers (Kabale)
- District farmers association officers (Lira)
- District agricultural officers (Rakai, Luwero)
- Business community
- Karamoja implementation unit officials

- International volunteers services association
- Soroti District Development Programme (SDDP)

The Sources of secondary information include:

- Agribusiness Development Centre/ Investment In Development of export agriculture
- Kenya Agricultural Commodity Exchange (KACE)
- Foodnet Tanzania
- Consumer price index- UBOS-Entebbe
- Famine early warning system (FEWS)
- PASAR project-Rwanda
- Newspapers
- Internet

Data collected from Kampala and the districts is processed and analysed in the Foodnet office in Kampala, whilst dissemination of MI takes place through radio stations, newspapers, reports, magazines, SMS via MTN platform 198, E-mail ([mis@iitaesarc.co.ug](mailto:mis@iitaesarc.co.ug)), telephone and fax, internet, post, hand delivery, and word of mouth when their office is visited.

The users of Foodnet information are: Farmers, traders, district authorities, govt ministries, NGOs, research organisations, business community, and students for study purposes.

Other MIS related activities include, training, technical expertise (e.g. setting up of MIS), Web creation, technical studies, and NAADS funded MIS activities to be executed in 6 districts.

Foodnet partners were also made known to participants:

- Government
- NGOs
- International and local research organisations
- Private sector
- Media houses, radio stations etc

As a new development or an upside for now, the presenter said they have generated much interest in MI. As a result, the private sector and larger donor funded projects are approaching them. Also, there is a general shift of NGOs to a more market driven approach, and Foodnet MIS activities fit in with the Govt approach under the PMA.

### Questions

One participant stated that according to the last SMS maize in Lira was at Sh300/=, and he wanted to know where this information was coming from?

According to another workshop participant, the presenter said that a lot of information is given to farmers through the different channels, and he enquired to what extent the usability of information is enhanced?

### **Answers**

The presenter told the house that the information was from their agent, who was also participating at the workshop, and the issue had been discussed before. He however stated that the system is not yet perfect and still needed betterment.

In response to question two, the presenter stated that information usage is enhanced through training and sensitisation of the people so that they know the value of market information. He stressed that the market information (MI) should be able to inform the public of the price trend in the country. The presenter also said this requires a multi-sectoral approach - all people should take a hand on it as there are many components in the production system.

Participants also wanted to know what impact Foodnet had for farmers and traders, as they had not yet increased awareness? A participant from Rakai wanted to know what plan there was to assist producers and buyers? In response, the presenter replied that by the time Foodnet had been contacted, the farmers in Rakai had already contacted seed processors for knowledge.

### **The Use of Information Technology for Agricultural Development in Uganda, by Mr Gordon Bell, Director, Radio Lira**

The presenter brought to the knowledge of the house that since the start of Radio Lira in 1999, they had seen a positive effect on agriculture in Northern Uganda. He said in a survey carried out in late 2002, it was found that every farmer questioned knew the value of his or her crops, and that this was due to the prices transmitted regularly on the station in Luo and English once a week. With the help of Foodnet, he said they had instigated the use of SMS for disseminating market information. He added, they also syndicate information to all stations using the Afristar Satellite, and they are sending data for display in local markets.

Other points mentioned include:

- It is important to sensitise farmers as to what crop to grow, where the best market is, and creation of groups to enable farmers aggregate their produce and sell in bulk.
- They offer free E-mail addresses in order to encourage stakeholder participation.

Gordon Bell also stressed that they do all the above to promote Lango as a whole. He wants to make Lira the de facto commercial capital of Northern Uganda and set a lead to the rest of the country. Finally he said they welcomed any suggestions or ideas, which would help propel the above idea and asked the house not to hesitate to contact him on 077-605574 or Benson Taiwoo at Radio Lira.



## **Communicating Innovation through Radio-The experience of the BBC “In the Field Series”, by Monica Janowski, NRI, University of Greenwich**

She presented some background to the “In the field” radio series produced as collaboration between the BBC and the NRI. She said that this tackled the need to introduce innovations in a lively, human way - innovations such as those which came out of research projects at NRI. The series met a need felt by NRI staff to disseminate the results of their research more widely. The BBC, on the other hand, was interested in the collaboration because of their need for interesting, relevant content, which was educational for their world-learning stream.

The series consisted of 12, 15-minute programmes, with each programme including excerpts from interviews with villagers and researchers, local music and sound effects, and a script. The series was made using careful English, avoiding unnecessary jargon and glossing necessary jargon words. A booklet accompanied the programmes, and there are websites at the BBC and the NRI with the audio of the programmes and the notes in the booklet. The topics covered a wide range of issues, both technical innovations and new ways of doing things.

The programmes and booklet were targeted at a wide range of listeners from policy makers down to village level. They are currently being used in training and educational contexts throughout the world. This kind of material is suitable for sensitising audiences to innovations, and it is proposed that we use this model for making a programme on marketing in Uganda, drawing on CEDO’s project in Rakai, for broad cast on local Radio stations.

With the involvement of Radio Lira it would be possible to make a programme in one language (probably initially English), which could then be repackaged in different languages for broadcast on different local radio stations. This initial sensitisation programme could be accompanied by a short leaflet to be distributed free through NGOs, and could be followed by discussion programmes on the local radios broadcasting it. These discussion programmes would deal with group marketing, including interviews with local farmers and NGO staff giving their views and experiences relating to the topic. This could then ideally be followed up by actual face-to-face training in the techniques of group marketing, as planned for Lira district.

## **A Model for the Formation of Farmer Groups, by: Mr. Frederick Bikande, Community Enterprise Development Organisation (CEDO, Rakai)**

The presenter outlined some of the fundamental things to put in place for effective marketing. He started off by presenting the factors that led to the formation of CEDO, which included, poor production input, lack of market for produce, and lack of market information (MI), amongst others.

He then said, the objective of formation of CEDO was to ensure increased incomes at household level and food security through collective production activities and improved agricultural techniques.

The formation of groups is on the basis of groups with the same purpose, which CEDO then train to build their capacity. The training is on issues such as:

- Group dynamics
- The making of laws governing their operations
- Record keeping
- Leadership
- Regular meetings

According to Mr Bikande, in order to improve farmers' conditions, CEDO have

- Raised farmers from consumer producers to larger producers, and to produce crops for processors;
- Raised their awareness through market awareness training sessions;
- Trained extension link farmers (ELFs) to mobilise farmers to reduce the work load of office bearers;
- Worked hand in hand with government production department, with which they share their monthly and quarterly work plans;
- Tried to link the groups to NGOs like UWESO, Women groups, etc;
- Organised small funds to provide stationery, and
- Offered loans to them to assist in transporting their produce.

The presenter then stated that production trends are rising. On the other hand, marketing problems set in when produce is still in the store because of poor planning at the beginning of the season. According to him, early planning by the groups is required to avoid these problems. In addition, he said that standards and quality must be set and marketing teams established in order to help farmers improve production and marketing.

Lastly, he indicated that people had shown interest in their groups and soon he would visit Lira again. He had already visited Apala and Aromo. In concluding, he emphasised the need to establish marketing teams as a first step in marketing produce.

### **Questions**

One participant pointed out that, according to the presenter, farmers are well organised in Rakai, but in Lira there are two seasons and yet prices fluctuate and even change given the type of market. The same person also wanted to know more about the experience of contract farming.

Another participant asked if the presenter could shed more light on the loans and compensation scheme run by CEDO in Rakai.

A third question was on how manageable it was to convince farmers to store their produce in bulk, and the experience made by CEDO in relation to this.

### **Answers**

The presenter said it was high time we organised our farmers since things are changing. For example, he said that oilseed farmers are organised to the extent that all farmers will be reprimanded if one of them fails. He also said that buyers tend to exploit the ignorance of farmers, however it would be a different story if they were trained.

In relation to the second question, the presenter said that in case of, say, a dry spell, flood etc, the farmers have security – that is they can be compensated with seeds to replant in the next season.

In response to the third question the presenter noted that they couldn't be 100% correct or sure because some farmers sell off their produce immediately after harvest. However he said others are advised to plan early, harvest, determine prices and sell when they are best. Again, if for instance a farmer has a small problem of say Sh10,000/=, then the group can lend him/her so that instead of selling his/her one sack at Sh50,000/= he/she waits and sells as a group member at a higher price.

### **The NAADS Market Information Service (MIS) Strategy, by: Mr. Alex Turrall, NAADS (Kampala)**

NAADS stands for National Agricultural Advisory Services. As such it is a core element of the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), which is also a medium through which the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) is being implemented.

The NAADS Mission is to facilitate the change of Ugandan farmers from subsistence production to commercial production. He said the whole country will be covered in five years through the new revamped agricultural extension service. Due to shortcomings of the old extension system, NAADS is placing emphasis on issues such as private sector involvement, and the need for the creation of farmer groups.

He then went on to explain why NAADS needs a market information service, stating the following reasons:

- NAADS has a core document on Market Information Service (MIS) roles;
- Market information is high on farmers needs;
- MIS schemes, projects, and research programmes are to be commissioned as part of NAADS;
- Farmers need to be encouraged to trade and become market oriented;
- The MIS would input into the PMA Marketing and Agricultural Processing Strategy.

The presenter then briefly outlined some of the concepts of MIS theory and practice, namely, MIS empowers farmers to make decisions, assists farmers in considering market options, improves transparency of marketing chains, and increases spatial and temporal arbitrage. As such, the benefits of a NAADS funded MIS would be expected to include the following:

- More efficient allocation of resources
- Increased farmers bargaining power

- Reduced transaction costs
- Lower risks

The principles of a NAADS funded MIS would be based on issues such as, poverty targeting, farmer empowerment, commercialisation, fostering of participation, gender mainstreaming, managing the productivity of natural resources, increasing institutional efficiency, privatisation of services, and market access.

Within this context, MIS stakeholders include, traders, exporters, processors, planners and policy makers, bankers, consumers, small, rural, and risk prone farmers.

The future MIS would involve dissemination of information through, radio, friends and family, extension services, printed documents, billboards which are weekly and timely, telephone incl. SMS, internet, tele-centers and e-mail, and warehouse receipt systems (WRS).

The presenter also stated that Foodnet represents an entry point for NAADS, in that it allows them to reach the farmers. This would be based on the implementation of a national MIS through radio and training of client base, 6-month pilot programme, targeting of multi-stakeholder groups, and coverage of 32 commodities in 17 districts.

Lastly, Mr Turrall outlined some of the key questions for M&E of an MIS, which would include the following:

- How does MIS benefit farmers?
- How do farmers use MIS?
- How do farmers access Market Information (MI)?
- To what extent have farmers' incomes increased?

In this context, NAADS are working on the establishment of a M&E system, which would allow them to assess to what extent farmers are becoming more market oriented as a result of MI?

### **Questions**

One participant asked what arrangements have been put in place to check/account for the funds allocated to districts and sub-counties as all districts with NAADS have had "people running up and down"?

### **Answer**

In response to this, the presenter said that there are financial rules in place. In addition, the Director of the PMA also made a supplement that there is a system in use which is called Double Monitoring.

## FORMATION OF PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

A project steering committee was selected at the workshop, consisting of the following individuals and organisations:

PMA- Dr. Willie Odwongo, Committee Chairperson  
 NAADS - Dr. Jacob Oweta  
 Foodnet - Mr. Okoboi Geoffrey  
 NRI – Mr Ulrich Kleih  
 Radio Lira – Mr Gordon Bell  
 UOSPA – Mr Agong Ray  
 LIDFA / UNFFE – Mr Christopher Odongo  
 Private Sector Promotion Centre (PSPC) – Mr Ferdinand Olang

It was agreed that their roles and tasks should include:

- Liaising with each other about issues arising on the ground;
- Liaising with farmer groups and processors, and communicate issues arising from grass root to top;
- The mode of communication should be as informal as possible, however communication should take place on a regular basis.

## SELECTION OF SUB-COUNTIES FOR RESEARCH

The selection of sub-counties where the research would take place was undertaken using the following two selection criteria:

- Crops grown;
- Mix of NAADS and non-NAADS sub-counties.

**Table 1: Sub-counties Selected for Research**

Sub-county	County	NAADS	Crops/ Commodities
Namasale	Kyoga	No	Fish
Bata	Dokolo	Yes	Beans, maize
Adwari	Otuke	Yes	Beans, pigeon peas, groundnuts
Aloi	Moroto	No	Maize, beans
Ogur	Erute	Yes	Sunflower, soyabeans

## **DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH TOPICS, EXPECTATIONS, AND CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

A discussion was held on the **topics to be covered in this market information (MI) related research**. During the course of this exercise, workshop participants were asked to write their preferences on pieces of paper. The following list summarises the participants' ideas and preferences:

- Evidence of impact of market information service
- Role of the different players in the MIS
- Potential for the use of ICTs
- Where farmers get information from (sources)
- Constraints faced by the target groups in using MIS
- Which radio station they feel is appropriate
- Packaging of information
- Major markets and their distances from farmers
- Availability of storage facilities
- Sorting/handling of produce
- Availability and cost of machinery for processing, cleaning and sorting produce;
- How many times should market information be aired

A discussion was also held to find out about the **expectations of the research project by the workshop participants**. This exercise led to the following list of points:

- Increased awareness/ knowledge about MI
- Improved marketing / profit making
- Quality production
- Increase in the farmers' incomes
- Market oriented production
- New business friends and linkage building
- Networking among farmers
- Selling in bulk as a group
- Quality, differentiation and diversification - Storage
- Promotion of small scale farmers
- Better organised groups

As part of a final exercise, the **criteria for selecting participants** in this research were discussed. This resulted in the following list of qualifying factors:

- Gender
- Mobilisation skills in the community
- Distance to markets and villages
- Age brackets
- Involvement of farmer groups and other organisations
- Level of education
- Husband/ wife
- Poverty level

## **CLOSURE OF WORKSHOP**

Dr. Willie Odwongo, Director of PMA Secretariat, delivered the closing remarks for the workshop. He said that the importance of the topic and the issues covered had brought us to this workshop. He mentioned that when looking at the background of the project Lira District would be the first district to benefit from its results, as it has also benefited in many other areas. The PS Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries comes from Lira, as well as the Director of the PMA Secretariat. Also, Lira now forms part of the NAADS Districts.

With those remarks he called upon Lira district to work diligently on this project and that the responsibility was on them, and when they worked hard they would like the outcome. He said that when we are a bigger group we cause change - where upon he declared the workshop as closed.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1 - Presentations**

Presentation of Project “Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District”,  
by Mr. Ulrich Kleih, Natural Resources Institute

The Role of Market information in the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture, by Dr  
Willie Odwongo, Director PMA Secretariat, Kampala

Foodnet Activities of the Uganda Market Information Service (MIS) Project, by Mr.  
Okoboi Geoffrey, Research Officer, IITA-Foodnet

The Role of Radios in Market Information – Experience of Radio Lira, by Mr Gordon  
Bell, Director, Radio Lira

Communicating Innovation through Radio-The experience of BBC “In the Field  
Series”, by Monica Janowski, NRI, University of Greenwich

The NAADS Market Information Service (MIS) Strategy,  
by: Mr. Alex Turrall, NAADS (Kampala)



## **Presentation of Project “Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District”, by Mr. Ulrich Kleih, Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich**

### **Project Summary**

The need for market information in rural communities is unquestionable. Up-to-date market information improves farmers’ negotiating power and facilitates spatial and temporal arbitrage of commodities. In particular, rural FM radio stations are well placed to provide communities with relevant information in remote areas which lack communication infrastructure.

The main objective of this project is to test information delivery models for poor farming communities, with emphasis on decentralised market information services and the use of FM Radio. Using an action-research approach, this will involve the following:

- Participatory and quantitative assessments of information needs of small-scale farmers, processors and traders,
- Monitoring of impact of micro-Market Information Service established by IITA/Foodnet in Lira District,
- Analysis of how radio can be linked to other, more modern, ICTs (e.g. Internet, mobile phones),
- Production and broadcasting of radio programmes on collective marketing by farmer groups,
- Validation of information delivery models, and
- Dissemination of findings.

### **Project Team**

- Natural Resources Institute (NRI), University of Greenwich, UK;
- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) – FOODNET, Kampala;
- Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) Secretariat, Kampala;
- Radio Lira;
- Commodity Market Information Systems (CMIS), London.

In addition, it is intended to involve staff from the NGO Community Enterprises Development Organisation (CEDO, Rakai) in the preparation of a radio programme on agricultural marketing by farmer groups. Also, NAADS officials will participate in the project activities.

### **Project Starting and Finishing Dates**

January 2003 – March 2004.

As yet, funding has been assured until March 2004. Subject to a review in early 2004, funding will be provided until December 2004.

## **Geographical Focus**

It is intended that the main project activities will take place in four Sub-counties of Lira District, which are to be identified as part of this workshop.

In addition, surveys will be carried out for a comparative case study in another district where there is no market information service; i.e. most likely Kabale District.

## **Target Audiences for Project Outputs**

- Decision makers in relevant GoU institutions (e.g. MAAIF, PMA, NAADS, Local Government).
- NGOs such as Appropriate Technology (AT Uganda), Community Enterprises Development Organisation (CEDO), Uganda Oilseed Producers and Processors Association (UOSPA), DETREC, ORIBCING, UWESO, Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFF), and Technoserve.
- FM Radio Stations in Uganda and throughout the Region;
- NARO research organisations such as SAARI;
- International networks and organisations (e.g. ASARECA, IITA, and FAO) with an interest in rural information provision. Also, interested donors such as DFID.

## **Research Hypotheses**

- (c) Farming communities in remote areas of Uganda and other parts of sub-Saharan Africa lack adequate market information and communication services.
- (d) Rural FM radio stations can play an important role in disseminating information related to agricultural markets and other aspects of life in remote farming communities.

## **Project Outputs**

The main outputs of the project will be:

- Improved understanding of the information needs of rural people in Lira District. This will be established through Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) and a household questionnaire survey with farmers and traders.
- Using an action – research approach, information delivery models for poor farming communities will be tested, with emphasis on decentralised market information services, and the use of FM radio.
- Dissemination of research findings.

## Project Activities

In order to achieve the above outputs, the following **activities** are envisaged:

1.1 Formation of a **project steering committee**, including project collaborators and local stakeholders, such as traders, owners of radio stations, farmer representatives, NGOs and local government officials.

1.2. Using a Livelihoods Approach, **collection of baseline data** on community background and information needs of small-scale farmers, processors and traders. In this context it is important not to repeat data collection exercises that have already been undertaken in the past, but to concentrate on gathering baseline information that can be used for future monitoring and evaluation surveys. Key issues to be addressed include: vulnerability context of the communities (e.g. market vagaries, conflict situations, climatic changes), household capital assets (e.g. social and human capital and access to information), and institutional and policy context (e.g. decentralisation, informal marketing and credit arrangements, etc).

The survey will take place in up to four sub-counties of Lira District, with different types of characteristics related to market access (e.g. distance to Lira town) and agro-ecological zones.

Fieldwork will start with a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to be undertaken by a multi-disciplinary team involving project partners and NAADS staff. The participatory survey techniques will include semi-structured interviews with listener groups, ranking (e.g. information requirements and importance), and mapping exercises (e.g. mapping of information flows). In the initial phases of the PRA, training of collaborators and testing of techniques is likely to be required. If necessary, this will be undertaken by the project leader and the Social Anthropologist.

The PRA will be followed and complemented by a questionnaire survey in the same sub-counties where the PRA took place. Given that the latter will have covered the majority of qualitative questions, it is envisaged that the statistical survey will be highly focused (i.e. limited number of key questions, short duration of interviews), exploring issues identified as likely to be relevant through the earlier qualitative work over a wider area and among a larger number of informants.

Stratified random sampling will be undertaken to select villages in sub-counties indicated above (i.e. stratification criteria: market access, agro-ecological zones). The exact number of villages required for the exercise (i.e. most probably about 10) will depend on the size of the village population. The number of households to be interviewed (i.e. sample size) will be of the order of 200 - 300, which will be randomly selected in the villages (i.e. most likely systematic sampling, whereby the first unit is randomly selected and the rest picked systematically). Village household lists will be established for the sampling procedures where required.

The issues to be covered in the questionnaires will take into account the findings of the PRA, but are likely to include questions related to:

- Socio-economic background information, including selected questions on household assets, farming and marketing systems,
- Market information requirements by different socio-economic groups (i.e. gender, age, and wealth related),
- Current access to information on agricultural markets and other issues,
- Preferred means of communication,
- Farmers' ability and willingness to pay for information services.

Processing and analysis of data will be undertaken by the Statistician of IITA's Foodnet Market Information Service in Kampala. The statistical analysis will include tests of research hypotheses, and analysis of correlation between variables such as gender and specific market information requirements.

**2.1 Monitoring of impact of decentralised Market Information Service established by FOODNET in Lira District.** This includes audience research in farming communities and assessment of the impact of the market information service. Given the difficulty to quantify the impact of market information (e.g. in terms of income increases), it is envisaged that mainly qualitative measures and proxy indicators will have to be used. Also, suggestions provided by listeners on radio programmes and broadcasting will be fed back to Radio Lira so that they can be taken into account in the future.

It is envisaged that the monitoring exercises will be less extensive than baseline and evaluation surveys. In particular, participatory discussions with different listener groups (e.g. women farmers, processors, traders) will play a key role. If required they will be backed up by focused (i.e. short) questionnaire surveys. Monitoring exercises will look into issues such as:

- Relevance of information provided by the project on agricultural markets and other topics,
- Broadcasting methods, and potential changes required (e.g. on timing), and
- Impacts of the information system.

**2.2 Analysis of how radio can be linked to other, modern, information and communication technologies (ICTs).** It is argued that FM Radio will benefit if it is used in combination with other ICTs. For example, the internet provides radio stations with access to information available at national and international levels which is not normally accessible to resource poor farmers. Also, the use of mobile telephones has increased rapidly over the last five years in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, including rural Uganda. In this context, through a deal with a mobile phone company, Radio Lira have been able to distribute telephone sets to stakeholders (e.g. collectors of market information) who contribute to the local Market Information Service.

It will be investigated to what extent there are reliable internet and mobile phone connections at District level, through which radio stations can enter into contact with their own listeners, and other parts of the country and the world.

**2.3 Production and broadcasting of radio programme on collective marketing by farmer groups.** Programme to sensitize farmer groups to the existence and potential of collective marketing will be undertaken by CEDO (Community Enterprise

Development Organisation, based in Rakai) under the co-ordination of IITA/Foodnet, with advice from Dr. Janowski, liaising with the BBC.

Details of the feature programmes will depend on survey results, however, it is envisaged to draw on experience gained with the 'In the Field' radio series, which was made jointly by the BBC and NRI, based mainly on field research projects carried out by the latter in developing countries.

**2.4 Broadcasting of radio short features and programmes developed by other sources** for farming communities in developing countries (e.g. NRI/BBC World Service series 'In the Field, Developing Countries Radio Farm Network, InterWorld Radio/Panos)

Through these programmes, the intention is to cover not only information on marketing but also on other aspects of daily life in farming communities identified as relevant through participatory surveys (e.g. agricultural production, health, etc).

2.5 For comparison, a **case study** will be prepared for another district, which does not have a local Market Information Service. Kabala District has been chosen on a preliminary basis, due to its location (i.e. South West Uganda), it belongs to the first generation of NAADS trailblazing districts, and it has a Telecentre. It will be investigated to what extent the latter can serve as a means of communicating information related to agricultural marketing and other aspects of community life. It is envisaged that there will be collaboration with CIAT's Agricultural Enterprise Development project and the African Hills Initiative (AHI) network, both of which are present in Kabale District.

It is planned that this case study will be less extensive than the surveys in Lira District, and concentrate on the handling of information needs in a rural district of Uganda lacking access to market information services.

**2.6 Validation of information delivery model.** This will involve an **evaluation survey** as well as an **end-of-project workshop**. The evaluation survey, which will use the same sample size as the one for the baseline study (i.e. approximately 200 - 300 households), will take place towards the end of the project in the villages where the baseline survey was undertaken. It will be attempted to use the same households as for the baseline study, however the feasibility of this needs to be determined once in the field. Migration and other socio-economic movements of the population may prevent this. In parallel to the questionnaire survey, a PRA will be carried out as part of the evaluation:

Key questions to be addressed during the course of the evaluation include:

- Overall acceptance of the market information service (e.g. design of the service, relevance of the information disseminated, broadcasting methods, etc),
- Impact on livelihoods of poor farmers, traders, or processors (e.g. changes in agricultural commodity prices, improved input supply situation, better access to credit, etc),
- Sustainability of the service in financial and institutional terms.

Findings of the research will be presented and validated at a **workshop** to take place towards the end of the project. Specialists from other organisations in East Africa,

who have an interest in market information services and rural FM radio will be invited.

**3.1 Dissemination of findings** through end-of-project workshop, electronic media and literature. This will involve GoU (i.e. PMA Secretariat and NAADS), IITA, ASARECA, CTA, and FAO networks. Close links between IITA/Foodnet and ASARECA networks are likely to facilitate dissemination at international level.

Also, it is expected that other Ugandan organisations (e.g. other radio stations, NGOs, NARO) active in this field will apply research results generated. This is expected to happen as a result of interactions with them during the course of the project and their involvement in dissemination activities at the end of the project.

## **Background Information**

According to the GoU's Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (GoU, April 2000), "... Based on the study by NRI/APSEC, a decentralised, flexible information system bringing on board all the main stakeholders (e.g. Local Government, private associations, NGOs, local radio stations, etc) will be adopted for implementation under PMA. Government (central and local), donors and NGOs have to acknowledge the importance of information and make the necessary resources available particularly in regard to provide information to poor farmers where such services may be viewed as public good. The system will be demand driven and reacting to the needs of the target population and starting with a needs assessment of the services. Local radios could be one of the principle means of disseminating such information. ...." As such the PMA acknowledges the importance of information and adequate measures to provide it. It is intended to use this framework for the project 'Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District'.

The 1998/99 World Development Report (World Bank 1999, P149), states that "A sound national knowledge strategy requires that governments seek ways to improve information flows that make a market economy function better ". In particular, agrarian based economies such as Uganda depend on sound agricultural market information services, if the aim is to modernise agriculture (i.e. move from subsistence agriculture towards commercial production). Given the informational imperfections in sub-Saharan agricultural markets, the need for market information is unquestionable. Barriers to market access and information flows may be due to structural and behavioural factors (Poole, 1999). "Up-to-date, or current, market information enables farmers to negotiate with traders from a position of greater strength. It also facilitates spatial distribution of products from rural areas to towns and between markets. Well-analysed historical market information enables farmers to make planting decisions, including those related to new crops. It also permits traders [and producers] to make better decisions regarding the viability of intra and, perhaps, inter-seasonal storage." (Shepherd, 1997).

Shepherd (ibid) distinguishes between market information and marketing information. The former emphasises collection and dissemination of prices, and, in some cases, quantities, whereas the latter represents a much wider concept, including information

on market channels, potential buyers and their contacts, payment requirements, quality standards, etc. Here, only the term market information is used.

In particular larger-scale traders usually have their own information networks relying on more or less modern communications technology (e.g. fax, e-mail, etc). Although generally quite well informed of local markets, small-scale traders lack the resources to monitor markets on a regular basis (Sheperd, *ibid*). They depend more on “word-of-mouth” information, which depends on the existence of traditional communication channels such as telephone lines, and a functioning transport infrastructure. The latter not only result in larger quantities transported but also improved flow of information.

Although it is increasingly argued that users should pay for information, in the context of resource poor farmers this may seem unrealistic. Especially where mass media such as radios are used it is difficult to recover costs. Nevertheless, some FM radio stations in Uganda, such as Radio Lira, are experimenting with cost recovery and ways of involving listeners in programme making.

In particular in remote areas, demand for information needs to be created. Farmers need to be made aware of their right to information, how they can make use of it, and how to influence its delivery. This can take the form of “pressurising” an extension officer to provide a particular piece of information or request better packaged agricultural radio programmes from the local FM station.

At the same time it is important to bear in mind that provision of information alone, however good its quality, is not sufficient. Markets must be sufficiently competitive so that farmers or small-scale traders can take advantage of opportunities offered. Aside from the availability of production factors, farmers must have the entrepreneurial spirit and knowledge to be able to make use of information. Obviously, if increased market orientation would lead to unjustified risk to their livelihoods then farmers cannot be expected to adjust production accordingly.

According to Robbins (1998), “farmers need to be able to compare local market conditions with those further away, .... prices between one grade of product and another, ...and they need information on individual traders’ track records so that they can avoid those that are untrustworthy”.

In Mali, the execution of needs assessment studies was one of the first activities of the newly established “Observatoire des Marchés Agricoles”. Target groups for this exercise included, farmers, traders, processors, and institutional decision-makers. According to Sanogo (1998), farmers requested the following types of market information: different food security and cash crops (i.e. not only cereals should be covered), supply and demand situation and prices on markets, availability and prices of inputs (including transport, equipment, fertiliser, etc), availability and conditions of credit.

This clearly shows that farmers and traders require more than market information which is primarily based on prices. Technical information includes both pre- and post-harvest aspects of farming. Traditionally, extension services were given a leading role in providing this information, however, at best, their results have been mixed.

If agriculture is to be modernised then farmers need a more commercial approach to their business. This requires a minimum exposure to farm management concepts such as gross margins, profitability, etc. In this respect, extension officers, be they from Government departments, NGOs, or private sector, have an important role to play in communicating these concepts. Needless to say that the extension staff themselves require more exposure to commercial approaches (Kleih, et al, 1999).

Although not directly linked to market information, institutional information has an important role to play in rural development. This may correspond to civic education whereby villagers are made aware of their rights and duties. In particular, following decentralisation, it is important that Local Government actions and decisions are made as transparent as possible.

“Radio is clearly the most effective and appropriate means of communicating information in remote areas to farmers many of whom have poor literacy skills.” (Robbins, 1998). This also applies to the dissemination of agricultural market information. In particular, local FM stations appear to be well geared towards the needs of farming communities (e.g. focus on local issues, use of vernacular languages, closer links with audience). The advantages of local radio in the context of disseminating agricultural market information in developing countries is also recognised by Shepherd (no date). Lynch and Ashimogo (1999) suggest that there may be scope for a radio station to disseminate agricultural market information in Tanzania; however they also point out that in the past broadcasts on market prices were ignored because farmers considered them as not relevant.

In early 2003, there are about 100 FM radio stations in Uganda covering the bulk of the country. The majority of these stations tend to have a commercial, profit-making approach with income coming from advertising, but also broadcasting of development programmes, and personal messages. The radius of FM Stations can vary considerably. Smaller stations with less expensive equipment have a radius of about 50 km which can increase to 100km and more if the transmitter is well positioned (e.g. on top of a mountain). Larger stations with several transmitters can cover several regions of a country as the example of Voice of Toro in Uganda shows.

Competition is likely to increase the commercial element in broadcasting, requiring stations to take close account of listeners' wishes. Findings from survey work as part of a workshop organised by CTA and GRET in Mali in 1997 highlight the importance of “staying in touch” with the audience (Sultan, 1998). For example, it was found that women prefer to have “their” programmes broadcast during the evening hours after 8pm, when they have more time, as compared to the rest of the day. Another lesson drawn was the fact that “listeners frequently regard a radio station as their ‘property’ and therefore tend to use the language of the ‘stakeholder’, when talking about the subject”.

In particular in cases where villagers contribute financially through subscriptions to the running costs of the local station, they have a strong interest that their concerns are addressed and there is adequate coverage (Sultan, 1998). In this context, it is important to recognise that communication and information flow must be a two-way



street between information providers and users, requiring the building of trust between the parties involved (World Bank, 1999).

Myers (1998) describes the successful use of local radio broadcasting in an NGO project promoting reforestation in Mopti Region, Mali. The success of the radio campaign was due to the following factors:

- “Firstly, the radio campaign did not stand alone; it backed-up an on-going extension programme of face-to-face contact between development workers and villages.
- Secondly, the radio promoted ideas and techniques, which were not totally new to listeners; it intentionally built on traditional knowledge and recommended small adaptations to what people were already doing.
- Thirdly, the campaign benefited from being attached to a popular local radio station which people trusted.
- Fourthly, the campaign was run in a relatively remote area where people do not have access to much information or entertainment.
- Finally, and crucially, the radio campaign provided new information with which listeners could make their own decisions”.

This suggests that not only market information as such but also technical information can be successfully broadcast to target population groups. As a consequence, extension services should be encouraged to make wider use of local radio stations, in particular in remote areas which have often been neglected by projects and extension services. However, Myers (1998) also highlights the need for increased funding of rural radio. According to her, “the problem is that almost everywhere rural radio is chronically under-funded”.

Based on project experience in Meru District in Kenya, Lloyd Morgan and Mukarebe (1998) describe “how audience research and imaginative programming have enabled radio to reach women farmers”. The project was in support of Kenya’s Agricultural Information Centre (AIC), trying to develop new approaches to radio programming in order to meet rural women’s needs.

In some countries, radio ownership and availability/cost of batteries can be of an issue. The latter constraint led to the invention of the clockwork radio by Trevor Baylis in 1993, which is now manufactured by BayGen in South Africa (Myers, 1998, P30). The idea was to provide poor people living in remote areas with a cheap communication tool not requiring batteries. “The energy storage and release mechanism is based upon energising a steelspring by winding it from one spool to another” (Robbins, 1998). 30 seconds of winding are required to have a listening time of 30 minutes. A new version of the radio using a built-in solar panel, has recently been developed (ibid).

In addition to radio technology (i.e. broadcasting equipment and receivers), it appears necessary to investigate how the latter can be successfully linked to other traditional

and 'new' forms of ICT to the benefit of poor farming communities. Mobile/satellite telephony and internet connections are important means of communication not only in the context of market information systems but also FM broadcasting. At the same time, according to Bay Petersen (quoted in Robbins 1998), "in our enthusiasm of what electronic information systems can do, we must not forget the problem of equity. If this is overlooked, it seems likely that unequal access to highly effective information systems is going to follow and reinforce the present inequalities of wealth. If we emphasise electronic technology too much in agricultural information we may find that we are helping only those who already have the best access to information to get more of it." In light of this statement, the challenge remains to create information and communication services for remote rural communities that are at the same time effective and equitable.

In 1999, IITA/Foodnet have established the first phase of a macro-MIS (Market Information Service) for Uganda, which provides information needed by planners in government and development agencies, including those dealing with food security (Ferris and Robbins, 1999). In addition, the national MIS is linked to regional and international information systems. In 2000, in collaboration with CTA, Foodnet went a step further and embarked on a locally-based pilot market information service targeting small-scale farmers, traders and processors at District level. The geographical focus of the micro-MIS is on Northern Uganda (i.e. originally Gulu, but now shifted to Lira), Western Uganda (i.e. Rakai), and Eastern Uganda (i.e. 5 Districts including, Jinja, Tororo, Kapchorwa, Mbale, and Busia) (Okoboi and Ferris, 2000). At local level the project is supported by development agencies such as World Food Programme, World Vision International, and Irish Fund for Co-operative Development. Data from the pilot sites is processed and analysed at the Information Processing Centre (IPC) in Kampala before it is broadcast in farming communities.

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**The Role of Market information in the Plan for Modernisation of  
Agriculture, by Dr Willie Odwongo, Director PMA Secretariat,  
Kampala**

## MAPS and the PMA

Dr. Willie O. Odwongo  
Director, PMA Secretariat

## STRUCTURE

- What is the PMA
- Cardinal PMA Principles
- Current short-comings
- Interventions of MAPS
- Operationalisation of MAPS
- Way Forward

## What is the PMA ?

- Derivation from PEAP
- Vision or Big Picture
- Mission
- Objectives
- Principles
- Priority Areas

## PEAP PILLARS

- Economic Growth and Structural Transformation
- Good Governance and democracy
- Increasing household incomes
- Improving quality of life

## VISION

“Poverty eradication through profitable, competitive, sustainable and dynamic agricultural and agro-industrial sector”

5

## MISSION

“Eradicating poverty by transforming subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture without degrading the environment”

6

## OBJECTIVES

- Increasing household incomes and improving quality of life of poor subsistence farmers
- Improving household food security through the market.
- Providing gainful employment.
- Promoting sustainable use and management of the environment and natural resources

7

## PMA PRINCIPLES

- Deepening decentralisation
- Liberalisation
- Privatisation
- Democratisation and stakeholder participation
- Gender sensitivity
- Environmental sustainability
- Partnership and multi-sectoral approach

8

## PMA PRIORITY AREAS

1. Research and Technology Development
2. Agricultural Advisory Services
3. Agricultural Education
4. Rural Financial Services
5. *Agro-processing and Marketing*
6. Sustainable Natural Resource Use & Mgt
7. Physical Infrastructure

## Complementary Roles

- The private sector is responsible for actual production, processing and marketing.
- The public sector is responsible for creating conducive environment:
  - Appropriate policies
  - Removing barriers at all levels
  - Improving infrastructure
  - Appropriate legal and regulatory framework

## What will MAPS do?

- Highlights the priority areas in which the public sector will involve itself in order to facilitate the activities of the private sector.
- At the same time MAPS recognizes that there are already many initiatives
- There are also a number of areas to be tackled- thus, MAPS will fill in the gaps.

## CURRENT SHORT-COMINGS

- Capacity
- Marketing finance
- Lack of organised agriculture
- Lack of market information and poor quality produce
- Inefficient transport systems
- Infrastructure shortcomings

## Capacity Shortcomings

- Limited national capacity to negotiate in international trade forums and to analyse trade issues
- Inadequate representation and effectiveness at international trade negotiating forums
- Poor analytical capacity on trade issues
- Institutional shortcomings

## Marketing Finance

- Perennial complaint among the business community particularly in rural areas
  - Lack of long term trade finance(marketing finance)
  - High costs of funds
- Result -severe constraint on investment in marketing, processing and trade in agriculture (in the broad sense - fisheries, crops, livestock etc)

## Lack of organised agriculture

- Individual rather than group/association/co-operative dealings with market agents - do not take advantage of economies of scale (both for inputs and outputs)
- Consequence is limited bargaining power, thus relatively low returns.

## Lack of market information & poor quality Produce

- Absence of objective, reliable and regular information on quantities, prices and trends of agricultural commodities
- Collection, analysis and availability of timely market information to both farmers and traders
- Poor post-harvest handling practices-low quality produce which cannot compete even in regional markets



### Inefficient Transport Systems

- Land-locked nature of Uganda (and long distance to export/import ports)
- Inefficiencies in key areas - railways, border crossings, etc.
- Inadequate network and poor state of repair of rural roads
- Results: a) high costs (including delays) of transporting agricultural inputs, outputs, and processed products, both internally and to export markets (b) general lack of affordable transport.

### Infrastructure shortcomings (i)

- Only 1% of the population connected to national electricity grid
- Grid is spatially constricted (Entebbe-Jinja conurbation)
- High cost of energy
- Lack of quality standards for agricultural produce for export and capacity to police the regulations
- Storage capacity

### Infrastructure shortcomings (ii)

- Inadequate post-harvest practices at farm level
- poor quality of physical infrastructure of retail markets for agricultural produce
- Complex and high taxes on produce trading

### MAPS intervention Areas

- Trade and finance
- Producer support
- Infrastructure

## Intervention Areas - Trade & Finance (1)

- Trade Policy/Negotiations (including expert teams for trade/market analysis & intelligence
  - EC supported UPTOP - commence in 2002 (main focus is trade policy)
  - USAID supported UTRADE - also in 2002 (main focus on national export strategy)
- Increased Trade Finance
  - WRS and ACE is expected shortly
- Improved Rural Contract Law

## Intervention Areas - Producer Support

- Provision of market information (farmers & traders) - NAADS (Specialist consultancy to establish & manage an agricultural information service)
- Introduction of quality standards & improved post-harvest technologies (UNBS, Uganda Grain Traders etc.), EU funded research
- Improved farmer organisations
- Educational programmes to engage farmers more effectively in the liberalised market environment.

## Intervention Areas - Infrastructure

- Increase investments in roads to link farmers with markets - District & community roads strategy to be implemented from 2003 - MOWHC
- Over-coming other infrastructure shortcomings
  - ERT (10 year programme launched)

## Operationalisation

- Existing institutions and within the PMA framework.
- Trade Policy/Trade negotiations programme - resources to MTTI (functional analysis to be undertaken)
- Market information - NAADS
- Public sector - focus on collection and analysis of information, quality control and promotion of farmers' associations.

**Foodnet Activities of the Uganda Market Information Service (MIS)  
Project, by Mr. Okoboi Geoffrey, Research Officer, IITA-Foodnet**

## Uganda Market Information Service project

# Foodnet

## Activities of the Uganda Market Information Service project

Okobol Geoffrey

1

## The Market Information Service (MIS)

Aims to collect, document, process and disseminate timely and accurate market information both at the macro and micro levels to improve market access and efficiency for Uganda's producers, traders and processors.

The MIS has two components:-

(i) Macro-level MIS that targets the needs of the policy sector and larger traders

(ii) Micro-level MIS that aims to provide localized information to small-scale producers and traders at Local level

2

## Market Information Collected by MIS

MIS project collects both Primary and Secondary data on:

- Off lorry/farmgate, wholesale and retail prices of 28 agricultural commodities from 19 districts. Prices are collected on a weekly basis from 18 districts and daily from Kampala
- Prices of Local and imported cooking oil, rice and wheat products
- Trade volumes in Owino market, Kampala
- Demand and supply conditions in the markets
- Quality of the produce in the markets
- General weather conditions in selected districts (FEWS)
- Production and price projections of major staples
- Market news from Uganda, the East African region and around the world.

3

## Districts covered by MIS

Arua	Gulu	Iganga
Jinja	Kabale	Kasese
Lira	Luwero	Masaka
Masindi	Mbale	Mbarara
Moroto	Rakai	Soroti
Tororo	Kampala	Kitgum
Kotido		

4

## Sources of Primary Information

- i. District Commercial/trade/Marketing officers (Arua, Gulu, Iganga, Jinja, Kasese, Kitgum, Masaka, Masindi, Mbale, Mbarara, Soroti)
- ii. District co-operative officers (Kabale)
- iii. District farmers associations officers (Lira)
- iv. District agricultural officials (Rakai, Luwero)
- v. Business community (Kampala, Tororo)
- vi. Karamoja Implementation Unit officials (Moroto & Kotido)
- vii. International Volunteers Service Association (Kitgum)
- viii. Soroti District Development Programme (Soroti)

5

## Secondary Information - SOME

### SOURCES:

- Agribusiness Development Centre /Investment in Development of Export Agriculture
- Kenya Agricultural Commodity Exchange (KACE)
- Foodnet -Tanzania
- Consumer Price Index—Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS-Entebbe)
- Famine Early Warning System (FEWS)
- PASAR Project—Rwanda
- Internet (Public ledger, Agrimark, ...)
- Newspapers

6

## Data processing and analysis

- ☑ All data from districts processed and analysed in Foodnet office, Kampala
- ☑ Weekly Price spreadsheet,
- ☑ Radio script
- ☑ SMS data
- ☑ Web data

7

## Dissemination of Market Information

- Market Information on 9 Radio stations
- News Papers (market focus, The East African, New Vision, Monitor, etc)
- Reports
- Magazines - Agricultural Review
- SMS via MTN Platform 198
- E-mail [mis@ittaesara.co.ug](mailto:mis@ittaesara.co.ug)
- Internet (<http://www.Foodnet.egiar.org>)
- Telephone and Fax
- Post Office Box 7878, Kampala
- Hand delivery
- Word of mouth

8

### Users of Foodnet Market Information

- a. Farmers (Peasant and commercial)
- b. Traders (small and large scale)
- c. District Authorities
- d. Government Ministries & Departments
- e. Non Governmental Organisations
- f. Relief Agencies
- g. Research Organizations
- h. Business community
- i. Students

9

### Other MIS-related activities of project

- Training
  - small-scale farmers, traders and processors how to use and benefit from market information
  - NGOs in analysis, interpretation of MI
- Technical expertise - setup and operationalisation of a MIS
- WEB creation, hosting
- Technical studies-Research
- Foodnet MIS project to execute NAADS funded MIS activities in 6 districts

10

### Foodnet partners?

- Foodnet synonymous with market information
- Foodnet major partner with:
  - Government,
  - NGOs,
  - international and local research organizations,
  - private sector,
  - media houses,

So if you are thinking about market information, think Foodnet.

11

### Upside for Now

- Generation of much interest in market information
- Private sector is coming to work with us.
- Larger projects within Uganda requesting us to provide greater input, IDEA, WFP, Technoserve
- General shift of NGOs to market driven approach
- Fits in with Government model under the PMA and therefore has potential for local fund raising

12

**The Role of Radios in Market Information – Experience of Radio Lira, by Mr Gordon Bell, Director, Radio Lira**

# The Use of Information Technology for Agricultural Development, in Uganda

Gordon Bell Managing Director, RadioWorks 23/3/2003  
director@radiolira.com

## Background

Since the start of Radio Lira in 1999 we have seen a positive effect on agriculture here in Northern Uganda. In a survey carried out in late 2002 it was found that every farmer questioned knew the current value of his or her crops. This was entirely due to the commodity prices being transmitted regularly on the radio in Luo and English twice per week.

Radio Lira is in the forefront of developing the use of technologies for development. We, with the help of FoodNet have instigated the use of SMS for dissemination of market information. Already, in Eastern Uganda, after 6 months in operation, 27% of traders use the SMS to trade. We have also developed a method by which we can syndicate information to all radio stations using the Afristar satellite. Now all radio stations can receive and retransmit programmes to their rural audiences. These programmes are designed for maximum impact in local language and English. Furthermore, we can send data for display in local markets,

As a station exclusively set up for development in Lira, we have been sensitizing farmers as to which are the best crops to plant, where is the best market and, most importantly, to aid in the process of creating groups of farmers who can aggregate their crops such that they can be sold in bulk.



Due to the unfortunate effect of weather and politics, Uganda is now in a prime position to sell, in particular, maize and beans to help those areas of Africa that are currently suffering from famine. This year, for example, only 30% of the previously abundant land has been planted in Zimbabwe. Ethiopia is looking at a severe shortage this year.

With the 9 Billion Shilling fund created by Uganda Grain Traders for buying maize and beans this year, for the first time, Ugandan farmers will be guaranteed a minimum price for their goods. With UGT having 23% of the export market already and a recent sale of 35,000 tonnes of maize to Angola, the stage is now set for farmers & traders to capitalize on the situation. The Managing Director of UGT himself contacted me to praise the response of the North in providing commodities for export. He himself did not know the power of radio to mobilize.

This mobilization can only be done on the ground by farmers groups actively cooperating with each other. Farmers need information as to weather, road conditions and those other data which help in maximizing production, processing and marketing. In addition, farmers need to contact and share information between themselves.

### The Way Forward

As regards information, there are many methods available, but radio and allied technologies, such as SMS and internet, are converging to enable us to put together a modern, effective system to directly benefit farmers in Uganda.

I propose that in Lango we create a system which will have no parallel anywhere else in Uganda. From the lessons learned here we can go forward to create a model for the rest of Uganda and East Africa.

With the introduction of internet here in Lira. Radio Lira is putting in place a system whereby we can create a situation whereby all interested parties can have common access to information. We have built a computer server, exclusively devoted to development, which allows access to many different types of information to aid development. The content of this server, or, really to give it its proper name, library will be available to all.

I offer trading centres, identifiable farmers groups, district officials and schools in town and outlying parts of the district a free email address, such that they are empowered to participate. Radio Lira will maintain the technology for the benefit of all.

Those in town can access their information directly and those outlying participants will be advised on air or by SMS, where available, that their email has arrived and can come and pick it at leisure. This will allow many differing types of information to be available to the farming and administrative communities.

Since useable information is created by a two way flow, we would urge participants to give information about the situation in their parish or sub-county to help build an overall picture of what is going on.

We do this to promote Lango as a whole. Let us make Lira the *de facto* commercial capital of Northern Uganda and set a lead to the rest of the country.

**We welcome any suggestions or ideas which will help propel this idea forward. Please do not hesitate to contact myself (077-605574) or Benson Taiwoo at Radio Lira**

**Communicating Innovation through Radio-The experience of BBC  
“In the Field Series”, by Monica Janowski, NRI, University of  
Greenwich**

# Communicating innovation: the 'In the Field' project

Monica Janowski and Kaz Janowski

Under an apple tree in our garden in 1998, we talked about innovation and communication. Monica is a social anthropologist at the Natural Resources Institute (NRI) of the University of Greenwich, whose staff need and want to communicate the results of ground-breaking projects to a wider audience who are not scientists or specialists. Kaz is a radio producer at the BBC, which needs depth and really good content in programmes. We decided that there was potential complementarity there; and that we would try to make something happen.



Two years later, after discussions within NRI and between the NRI, the BBC and the UK Department for International Development (DFID), we succeeded in getting a series of 12 programmes commissioned by the BBC World Service, and in getting funding from DFID to support NRI's part in the collaboration. We called the series 'In the Field', with the subtitle 'Exploring Innovative Improvements to Livelihoods around the World'.

## Making 'In the Field'

Building on earlier discussions, Monica put out the word at NRI asking for researchers to volunteer their projects as topics for programmes. The idea was that the researchers themselves, where possible, would act as 'barefoot reporters' and would carry out the interviews themselves, with villagers and local researchers in their project sites. At the core of each programme we wanted to have local people telling their own stories and talking about their feelings about the particular problem they had faced and how this had been tackled.

To act as reporters, NRI researchers needed practical training in using the equipment and in face-to-face interviewing skills.

## Programmes in the "In the Field" Series

- The Buabeng-Fiema monkey sanctuary, Ghana
- Tree pods - a new way of feeding goats, India
- The need for agricultural land in the city, Ghana
- Stepping off the pesticides treadmill, India
- Vegetable gardens in the city, Zimbabwe
- Farmers who just don't farm, Poland
- Introducing ethical trade, UK and Ghana
- Different ways of understanding ethical trade, Ghana and UK
- Fighting the rat problem using new traps, Mozambique
- Alternatives to "slash and burn" agriculture, Bolivia
- Trading cocoa fairly, Ecuador

We arranged this at the BBC. The training was enjoyed by all; BBC staff found the topics of the research projects very interesting and the researchers were excited at the prospect of communicating their results to a wider and more general audience through their input to the programmes.

Once the researchers returned from the field, we used excerpts from the interviews, local music and sound effects to make the programmes, held together by a script read by a presenter. Where voice-overs in English were necessary, we used people from the countries concerned, so as not to distance them from the interviewees themselves. We also interviewed the researchers and included excerpts from these interviews in the programme, so that the researchers became 'characters' in the story too. Topics covered in the programmes were wide-ranging, both geographically and in terms of subject matter, from tackling the rat problem in Mozambique to trading cocoa fairly in Ecuador (see box on this page).

We worked closely with the NRI researchers, and through them their local research partners, to ensure that they, and local informants, were happy with what went into the programmes. We decided that this was very important since researchers told us that that in the past when they had been in touch with the media, whether print or broadcast, their work had often been misrepresented.

## The 'In the Field' booklet and websites

To partner the radio series, we produced a booklet with the aim of consolidating what was in the programmes and to raise other related issues. The booklet was funded by DFID, and was sent out by the BBC free of charge to listeners, who were prompted to write in.

We tried to make the booklet as attractive and engaging as possible, with photographs of many of the villagers who talk to us in the programmes and of the villages they live in and maps showing the location of villages. The double page spread for each programme is separated into sections for ease of reading, entitled 'Setting the Scene', 'Defining the Problem', 'Taking Action', 'Global Relevance', 'Cast and Key Quote' and 'Thinking Points' (see example on p.24). There are also two double page spreads looking at cross-cutting issues related to tackling livelihood problems. To ensure that the text for the booklet was accessible, we brought in a popular science journalist to work with Monica on it.

In addition to producing the booklet, we presented the text, photographs and maps in downloadable form on a series website at the NRI (<http://www.nri.org/InTheField/>). The audio of the programmes is on a series website at the BBC ([http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/sci\\_tech/features/field/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/sci_tech/features/field/index.shtml)).

The series was first broadcast on the World Service between January and March 2001. It went out for the second time between January and March 2002.

## Who was listening and what did they think?

Our hope with the series was to increase appreciation of the common issues and problems affecting people in different parts of the world, and how these can be tackled effectively. We also hoped that this would stimulate and encourage local initiative to tackle problems of this kind.

Our potential audience for these programmes was very wide,



Natural Resources Institute



Exploring innovative improvements to livelihoods around the world

Notes to accompany the radio series

**DFID** Department for International Development



**BBC** WORLD SERVICE

farmer at a small mountain village about 140 km SW of X'an. At that time I grew vegetables for making money. Nowadays I usually grow vegetables on the balcony of my house for enjoyment. Anyway, I love looking at and caring for vegetables.'

Another from Huthyfa H. Mohammed in Baghdad, who has 'an interest in global issues and self-improvement': 'I am enormously grateful and thankful for the significant help you afford me throughout your fundamental informative programmes broadcasted by your unique World Learning. In the Field, one of these lively and provoking programmes to which I keep listening intensively, since it enhances my knowledge and invigorates my experience as long as I live in the modern world'.

From Anish Damodaran a livestock inspector from Kerala in India, who was attracted by the programme on paravets in Indonesia: 'I have been working in villages as a livestock inspector for about 5 years. I will try to become a barefoot vet. This article has been a great source of inspiration. This has been an idea I have been keeping for a long time. At some point in my life I will go back to teaching. Then these notes can be a study material. I will share these notes with anybody who is interested to do first aid for animals, to love them or as a hobby'.

### An educational role for 'In the Field'

Because we received so many responses from educational institutions saying how much they liked the programmes and notes and that they were already using the booklet in teaching, we decided that it would be worthwhile to formally pilot the use of the notes and radio programmes in teaching.

We have therefore set this going in a number of institutions around the world, both in the North and in the South. We identified schools, colleges and universities to pilot the material both through the responses which the BBC received from listeners and through contacts which the NRI has with institutions around the world.

As well as making class sets of the booklet available to teachers piloting the material, we wanted to make it possible for them to use the radio programmes themselves in teaching. Although the radio programmes are posted on the BBC series website, it is not always easy for institutions, particularly in the South, to play these in a classroom. We have therefore produced cassettes containing the radio programmes, which we are sending out free of charge to educational institutions involved in piloting.

### Reaching down to village level

We haven't heard as much as we would like from listeners right down at village level, although most of our correspondents seem to have close contact with villages either personally or professionally. In order to ensure that we are succeeding in reaching into villages, we are hoping to go more local through rebroadcasting. We have received several requests to allow rebroadcasting of the series on local radio stations, which the BBC allows free of charge.

We are particularly interested in an initiative in Zambia, where rebroadcasting is being combined with setting up Listener Groups to discuss the programmes at village level, whose members use wind-up/solar-powered radios.

### Conclusion: the benefits of partnership and the future

We feel that the 'In the Field' collaboration between the BBC and the Natural Resources Institute has been a great success. The two sides brought very different backgrounds, skills, and networks to the table, and we found that these were complementary in many ways. From the BBC's point of view, the collaboration with the NRI has meant access to a network of knowledge and village-level research; from the NRI's point of view, the BBC has access to a wide audience of people in all parts of the world, and we are now reaching out to people at village level, far beyond the NRI's project

opinion leaders to people at village level in countries where English is spoken as a second language. To find out whether we had been successful in our aims, we wanted first of all to try to find out who was listening to the programmes, who was writing in for booklets and what they thought about the series, website and/or booklet. We were particularly interested to know whether people at village level were listening to the programmes and writing in for the booklet.

Since we didn't have funds to do research locally on response to the programmes, we relied on response to the booklet, with which we enclosed a feedback form. In this we asked listeners/readers to let us know something about who they were, how they might use the material and what they thought of it. We had a healthy response, from all over the world, to the offer of the notes, both on the feedback form and by email. The initial print run for the booklet was quickly exhausted and a reprint was arranged in early 2002, in time for the second transmission of the series in January that year.

We have had a number of requests from people at institutions who see the material as a valuable resource for teaching and for teacher training, both in the South and in the North. This includes teaching in schools, at university level and teaching extension workers at village-level.

We have also had many responses from people who were interested on a personal level in the programmes. These demonstrate the chords which the programmes seem to have touched in relation to individual work and also in relation to interest in how people live in other parts of the world, and how these parallel respondents' own experiences. For example, a comment from Chun-Quan Meng in X'an in China: 'I enjoyed *'In the Field'* very much. It is an interesting and practical agricultural programme. On January 30<sup>th</sup>'s programme you

## Training 'barefoot vets' to treat village animals

Indonesia

### Introduction

Everybody knows that doctors are vital to the health of a community. But how about vets? Without them, sick animals die, investment in improved livestock is hampered and livestock-rearing communities remain poor. Yet in much of the world, trained vets are very thin on the ground.



Senfih Sondak  
Jockey horse trainer  
and farmer



Brexi Raring,  
paravet in  
Kowley village,  
with clients



### Defining the problem

And that was the case in the district of Minahasa, the most densely populated part of north Sulawesi in Indonesia. In this mountainous volcanic area among the profusion of people, rice fields, vegetable patches and groves of clove trees live large populations of animals. There are 500 villages, and in them almost every household has at least one pig kept for slaughter at weddings and funerals and a handful of chickens, ducks and geese. Many have cows that plough fields as well as providing meat, and a good number have working horses. A recent census put the total livestock at almost 5 million.

But until 1997, they all had to share a single fully-qualified vet. "There should be someone to give animal health services in each village living in the community," says government vet Cakra Leksmono ("Lexi"). Plenty of vets get trained, but few want to stay in the area.

This is partly because few communities can afford their high fees, and partly because most ambitious vets want to move on to places where they can make more money. For Lexi, the solution is to find a middle way -- to create community vets, rather than human health services create community nurses. Farming communities need local people trained in a few of the basic skills of veterinary science -- such as giving vaccinations, stitching wounds, treating common diseases, castration and artificial insemination. They need to be people living and working in the community and charging affordable prices.



Hengly Sondak - paravet  
in Kanongan Dua village

### Global relevance

The new service gives villagers greater confidence in their livestock. Syanet Wallah, for instance, says that formerly she was at a loss when her pigs got sick. She didn't know how to cure them and had no vet to call on. Mostly, they died. With paravet Hengly Sondak on call in her village, she feels that sick pigs can be cured, so the risks she runs whenever she gets out to buy a new one are less. The result is that she has not just got healthier pigs, but is prepared to buy "a better breed of pig," she says. And that is a lesson with a global message.

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### Taking action

Lexi is one of the organisers of a project launched in Sulawesi in 1997 by the District Livestock Service, with backing from the Indonesian and British governments that offered basic veterinary training to 40 local farmers. The aim was to create a core of part-time local "paravets" -- sometimes known as "barefoot vets" -- able to practice certain skills independently but with periodic supervision to check their work.

Many of the new paravets were not entirely new to treating animals. In the absence of Western-style veterinary services, traditional methods survived in these villages. Rather than rejecting the practitioners of this tradition, Lexi's team recruited them, giving them training in modern methods as well.

One such is school caretaker Hengly Sondak. "I used to treat animals before using traditional medicine and a bit of modern medicine that I learned by reading the brochures that came with the medicine," he says. He reckons that before training his success rate was only 30-40%, but now it is much higher, around 90%. Veterinary work has become a major activity for him, with 50 or more animals treated each month.

The paravets do not provide their services free. After getting their training, they go into business. "There is a high demand for the service," says Lexi. "Farmers are willing to pay because they know that it is an investment for them to have healthy animals."

And we are not simply talking farm animals. The Minahasa district is also famous for its racehorses, which have been raised here for 300 years. One of Hengly's customers, Senfih Sondak, is a local jockey and horse trainer as well as a farmer who keeps cows for ploughing his rice fields. All are now kept fit by Hengly.

The training project involved 40 farmers being trained over six days during 1997 and 1998 with regular follow-up sessions and assessments. Today, not only are the paravets doing a roaring trade, they are attracting others into the business. Farmer Brexi Raring was trained as a paravet after being nominated by the fellow farmers in his village in 1997. Now he chairs the Paravets Association and is training others, such as fellow villager Jules Rumbibi. To carry on the work, "I am looking forward to practising my skills as a trainer," he says proudly.

Training paravets in Indonesia is part of the Deliver project, funded by the UK Department for International Development and the Government of Indonesia.

### Cast - Key Quote

"I used to treat animals before using traditional medicine and a bit of modern medicine that I learned by reading the brochures that came with the medicine" -- Hengly Sondak, paravet from Kanongan Dua village.

\* Cakra Leksmono ("Lexi"), government vet and project worker

\* Brexi Raring, from Kowley village, chairman of Paravets Association

\* Senfih Sondak, jockey horse trainer and farmer

\* Syanet Wallah of Kanongan Dua, farmer

\* Jules Rumbibi, trainee paravet



Syanet Wallah

Cakra Leksmono  
(Lexi)

Success rate  
before and after  
training

### Thinking points

\* Community vets can be as important to a village as community nurses

\* Traditional animal healers can be ideal candidates for training in modern methods

\* Farmers are more willing to invest in their animals if they are confident that they can be cured of sickness

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Crucially, as far as the NRI is concerned, the BBC has the ability to make interesting and lively programmes that have a wide popular appeal, translating the findings of research projects into something that is human and accessible. This is something which NRI scientists do not have experience in, and consequently it is difficult for them to communicate the findings of their projects directly to the people they most want to reach -- potential beneficiaries of their new knowledge at village level around the world.

The fact that the programmes have been transmitted on the BBC World Service all-English stream is both a help and a hindrance to communication. A major plus is that programmes can be made which are listened to around the world, and that the drawing of parallels between problems and solutions in different places is encouraged in a way that would not be possible through a purely locally-focused series. However, most people in most countries do not understand English and they can have access to the programmes only through an intermediary. We hope that in many countries where English is a second language there will be at least a few people in each village who will listen to the programmes and tell others about them. However, we do have concerns about the exclusion of many people because the means of communication is English. Rebroadcasting in languages other than English, maintaining the original interview village-level extracts and translating the script and voice overs, is a way of overcoming this problem.

The feedback forms and emails we have received are only partial commentaries on response to the material. We do not have very much information on the kinds of people who are

responding in this way, and on the responses of groups of people, in particular within communities at village level. It would be very useful to be able to carry out research at village level in conjunction with local broadcasting of 'In the Field' through a local radio station. This would enable us to make an assessment of the responses of different categories of people -- for example young/old, women/men, poorer/better off -- within communities.

This in turn would allow us to begin to see how this kind of approach, combining broadcast information with printed information, can be used at village level to disseminate information on useful technologies and to stimulate debate on important topics. A particularly exciting idea would be to set up links between discussion groups and/or interest groups (with, for example, the same technical problems) in different parts of the world through an initiative where the same material is used in different places. This could potentially be linked to the connection of villages to the internet which is developing in different parts of the world.

Monica Janowski, Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich, Chatham Maritime, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4TB, United Kingdom. [m.j.janowski@gre.ac.uk](mailto:m.j.janowski@gre.ac.uk)  
Kaz Janowski, BBC, Bush House, Strand, London WC2B 4PH, United Kingdom. [kazimierz.janowski@bbc.co.uk](mailto:kazimierz.janowski@bbc.co.uk)

Copies of the booklet can be obtained free of charge from: World Learning, BBC World Service at the address above or e-mailing [world.learning@bbc.co.uk](mailto:world.learning@bbc.co.uk). They can also be found on [www.nri.org/InTheField](http://www.nri.org/InTheField)

For class sets of the booklet and the cassettes contact Monica Janowski at the above address.

# "In the field" will be transmitted for the third time

**The NAADS Market Information Service (MIS) Strategy,  
by: Mr. Alex Turrall, NAADS (Kampala)**



# NAADS Market Information Service (MIS) Strategy

Presentation for NRI  
MIS Project in Lira

NAADS MIS strategy (draft)



## Structure

- Why NAADS needs an MIS policy?
- MIS theory and practice
- The benefits of MIS
- MIS stakeholders and their perceived needs
- Principles of a NAADS-funded MIS
- Finance and delivery of MIS
- Dissemination
- Foodnet and M&E

NAADS MIS strategy (draft)

## Why NAADS needs an MIS policy?

- NAADS core document MIS roles
- Market information high on farmer's needs
- To commission MIS schemes/ projects/ research/ programmes as part of NAADS
- To encourage farmers to trade and become market-orientated
- \$US128,000/ year within NAADS to be spent on MIS
- Input into MAPS

NAADS MIS strategy (draft)



## MIS theory and practice

- MIS empowers farmers to make decisions
- Assist farmers in considering marketing options
- Transparency of marketing chain
- Spatial and temporal arbitrage

NAADS MIS strategy (draft)





## The benefits of MIS

- Efficient allocation of resources
- Increased farmers bargaining power
- Reduces transaction costs
- Lowers risk
- Increased efficiency of marketing system
- Provides an early warning system

NAADS MIS strategy (draft)



## Principles of NAADS-funded MIS

- Empowering farmers
- Poverty targeting
- Gender mainstreaming
- Deepening decentralisation
- Commercialisation
- Fostering participation
- Managing NR productivity
- Increasing institutional efficiency
- Privatisation
- Market access

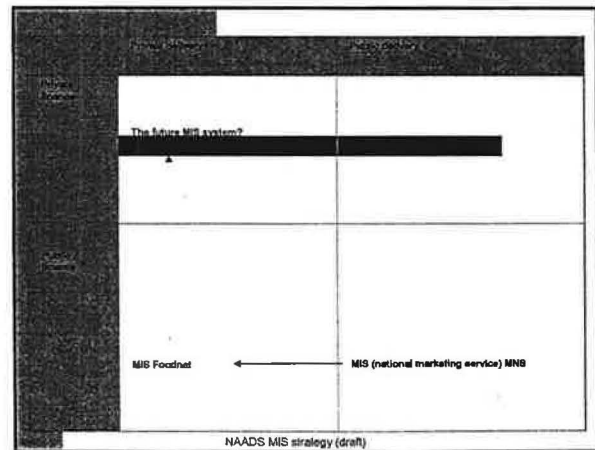
NAADS MIS strategy (draft)



## MIS stakeholders

- Small, rural, risk-prone farmers
- Traders
- Exporters
- Processors
- Planners
- Planners and policy-makers
- Bankers
- Consumers

NAADS MIS strategy (draft)



NAADS MIS strategy (draft)



## Dissemination

- Radio
- Friends/ family/ neighbours/ extension
- Printed
- Billboards
- Telephone, SMS
- Internet, telecentres, email
- WRS

NAADS MIS strategy (draft)



## Foodnet

- Implementation of a national MIS through radio and training client base.
- 6-month pilot programme.
- Multi-stakeholder groups targeted.
- 32 commodities in 17 districts.
- Many partners.
- Exit strategy for IITA.

NAADS MIS strategy (draft)



## M&E of MIS

- How does MIS benefit farmers?
- How do farmers use market information?
- How do farmers access market information?
- To what extent have farmers incomes increased as a result of market information?
- Are farmers becoming more market-orientated as a result of market information?

NAADS MIS strategy (draft)

## APPENDIX 2

**List of participants of inception workshop of research project” Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District”, 27 January 2003, Lira Hotel, Lira.**

<b>Names</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Position</b>
1. Kagimu Bikande Fred	CEDO-Rakai	Training Co-ordinator
2. Okoboi Geoffrey	IITA-Foodnet	MIS Coordinator
3. Benson Taiwoo	Foodnet Lira	Field Technician
4. Grace Okwenye	IITA-Foodnet	Chairperson
5. Dr Monica Janowski	NRI	Researcher –Radio
6. Ulrich Kleih	NRI	Project leader
7. Dr W.O. Odwongo	PMA Secretariat	Director
8. ACD Turrall	NAADS	Information Coordinator
9. K. Singh	Gurunakanak oil mill	Market officer
10. Grace Opudo	Lira oil seed farmers	Farmer
11. Odyek John David	LIDFA	Rep. Gen Secretary
12. Tom Oguta	Techno-serve	Agric. Dept. Officer
13. James Oloch	Rupiny	Researcher, Press
14. Isabirye Abu Agedi	Lira Produce Buyers	Chairman
15. Ajungu Peter	LDLG	DAO
16. Ebonga Samuel	LDLG	Agric. Officer
17. Okello Thomas	LDLG	DFO
18. Adupa Alfred	LDLG-Ogur fish farmers	Fish farmer
19. Piloya Consolata Rose	UWESO	Volunteer
20. Pato Omia	UTV	Info. Officer
21. Mrs. Kevin Opok	Researcher/GP	Model farmer
22. Alyano Elizabeth	DETREC	Programme Assistant (Capacity Building)
23. Ojur Franco	LDLG	Acting Chairman, LCV
24. Dr. Okwir Wilson	LDLG	DVO
25. Agong Ray	UOSPA	Supervisor
26. Mrs. Odongwe Margaret	ORIBCING	Chairperson
27. Mrs. Angela Odoi	Acungapeny Farmers group	Member
28. Otim Jimmy	LDLG	A.D.E
29. Challe Omor Charles	LDLG	DCO
30. Atepo Joseph	RIDF	Prog. Coordinator
31. Gordon Bell	Radio Lira	MD
32. Liz	Radio Lira	Coordinator
33. Moses Ongu	Radio Lira	Station Manager
34. Ouni Patrick	Radio Rhino	Reporter
35. Ogwang Jacob	Radio Rhino/Rupiny	Reporter
36. Joel Odongo	LDLG	Market officer
37. Julie Bell	Radio Lira	G. Manager
38. Odongo Christopher	LDFA	Co-ordinator
39. Mulinde R.K	DPCLs	Micro-Finance Specialist

## APPENDIX 3

### Inception Workshop in Lira Hotel on 27/01/2003 for Research Project “Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District”

#### Workshop Programme

- 9.00 Registration of workshop participants
- 9.30 Opening of workshop by Mr Ojur Franco, Acting Chairman LC V, Lira District
- 9.50 Introduction of workshop participants
- 10.10 Presentation of research project *Decentralised Market Information Service in Lira District*, by Mr Ulrich Kleih, Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich.
- 10.30 Tea Break
- 10.45 Presentation: *Agricultural Production and Marketing Constraints in Lira District*, by Mr Jacob Oweta, Head of Production and Marketing Department, and NAADS Representative, Lira District.
- 11.00 Presentation: *The Role of Market Information in the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture*, by Dr Willie Odwongo, Director, PMA Secretariat, Kampala.
- 11.15 Presentation: *Foodnet Activities in Market Information*, by Mr Geoffrey Okoboi, Research Officer, IITA-Foodnet, Kampala.
- 11.30 Presentation: *The Use of Information Technology for Agricultural Development in Uganda*, by Mr Gordon Bell, Director, Radio Lira.
- 11.45 Presentation: *Communicating Innovation through Radio – The Experience of the BBC “In the Field Series”*, by Dr Monica Janowski, Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich.
- 12.00 Presentation: *A Model for the Formation of Farmer Groups*, by Mr Frederick Bikande, Community Enterprise Development Organisation, Rakai.
- 12.15 Presentation: *The NAADS Market Information Strategy*, by Mr Alex Turrall, NAADS, Kampala.
- 12.30 Discussion
- 13.00 Lunch Break

- 14.00 Project Steering Committee: membership, roles and tasks.
- 14.15 Selection of Sub-counties where research will take place.
- 15.00 Discussion: Topics to be covered in the market information related research.
- 15.30 Discussion: Expectations of research project by workshop participants.
- 16.00 Coffee Break
- 16.15 Working Groups: Selection of participants in research, and reasons for selecting them.
- 16.45 Closure of workshop by Dr Willie Odwongo, Director of PMA Secretariat, Kampala.
- 17.00 Snacks and Drinks.