



GP-SAEP AERAS CASE STORIES

**AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH RURAL
ADVISORY SERVICES (RAS) IN UGANDA**



AccessAgriculture



The GP-SAEP ÆRAS Project was jointly implemented by the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS) in partnership with: African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), Access Agriculture (AA), and Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD).

This work was made possible by the support of the European Union (EU) through the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The contents of this document are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of EU and IFAD.

Suggested Citation: UFAAS (2026) Case stories from the GPSAEP-Accelerating agroecological transformation through Rural Advisory Services (ÆRAS). Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS), Kampala, Uganda.

© Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS), 2026.
All rights reserved

Editorial



The Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP), Component 3: Accelerating agroecological transformation through Rural Advisory Services (ERAS) sought to strengthen agroecological transitions by improving access to knowledge, advisory services, technologies for small-scale producers.

In Uganda, implementation was led by the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS), in partnership with the Africa Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), Global Forum for Rural

Advisory Services (GFRAS), the, Access Agriculture, Young Professionals in Agricultural Research and Development (YPARD), and district-level Rural Advisory Service Provider Organisations. Together, these partners embarked on an ambitious journey to demonstrate that agricultural transformation is most effective when it is built on participation, learning and local ownership.

The project was launched in 2024 and implemented across five districts, Bugiri, Buikwe, Lira, Sembabule and Soroti, each representing unique farming systems, cultures and agroecological opportunities. Yet despite their differences, these communities shared a common aspiration to build farming systems that are productive and environmentally sustainable.

Over the three years, UFAAS Master Trainers mentored Rural Advisory Service Facilitators who, in turn, walked alongside farmers. Access Agriculture's Entrepreneurs for Rural Access introduced communities to locally translated learning videos. YPAR's young professionals brought fresh energy and digital innovation. District local governments and NGOs provided institutional support, while farmers themselves became teachers, innovators and champions of change.

Purpose of the GP-SAEP ERAS Story Book:

This booklet captures that journey. It documents the experiences of the people behind the transformation –

from farmers who adopted innovations such as Black Soldier Fly production, biochar, improved pastures, zai pits, organic bio-inputs, kitchen gardens, Lorena stoves and farmer-led experimentation, to the extension professionals, Entrepreneurs for Rural Access, and young agroecology champions who supported them along the way.

The stories highlight how the project has:

- Shifted agricultural extension from telling farmers what to do towards learning with them.
- Through Farmer Field Schools, Farm Family Learning Groups, Learning Clusters and Peer Learning Teams, communities experimented together, reflected together and shared their experiences with one another.
- Built the capacity of Master Trainers, RASFs and farmers to promote agroecological transitions.
- Strengthened peer learning, collaboration and networking among farmers, extension providers and partner organisations.
- Expanded access to agroecological knowledge through practical demonstrations, video-based learning and farmer-to-farmer exchanges.
- Strengthened community collaboration and peer learning.
- Revived and promoted indigenous knowledge alongside scientific practices.
- Inspired young people to pursue agriculture as a viable livelihood.
- Transformed extension

- services into participatory, farmer-centred learning.
- Empowered farmers to experiment, innovate, and share knowledge with others.
- Improved the capacity of farmers and extension actors to drive agroecological transitions
- Generated and shared knowledge products
- that capture locally tested innovations and lessons for wider learning and scaling.

As the GP-SAEP project concludes, this storybook stands as both a celebration of what has been achieved and a practical resource for all stakeholders seeking to advance agroecology. Above all, it reminds us that lasting transformation is built through

learning together, sharing knowledge, and empowering farmers to lead the change.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of GP-SAEP cannot be measured by the number of trainings conducted or videos translated. Its true success lies in the confidence it inspired, the confidence that communities already possess the knowledge and creativity needed to shape their own future when provided with the right opportunities to learn together.

This story booklet celebrates that journey.

Congratulations to the team!

Elizabeth Asimwe

Email: alizeff@yahoo.com



Table of Contents

Editorial	3
Table of Contents	5
List of Acronyms	6
Foreword	8
Acknowledgements	10
Message from the UFAAS Chief Executive Officer	12
Message from Access Agriculture	13
A word from Young Professionals in Agricultural Research and Development (YPARD)	14
Message from the GP-SAEP Uganda Project Officer	16
Map showing GP-SAEP Districts/Clusters	17
1.0 Our journey	18
2.0 The faces behind the transformation	20
3.0 Voices from the field	27
4.0 Key lessons from the GP-SAEP project	76
5. Other Photos	79

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AE	Agroecology
AEAS	Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services
AFAAS	African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
ÆRAS	Accelerating Agroecological Transformation via Rural Advisory Services
BAIDA	Bugiri Agribusiness Institutional Development Association
BSF	Black Soldier Fly
BSFL	Black Soldier Fly Larvae
ERA	Entrepreneur for Rural Access
FFLG	Farm Family Learning Group
FFS	Farmer Field School
FINASP	Facilitation for Innovations and Sustainable Productivity
GFRAS	Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services
GP-SAEP	Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IMO	Indigenous Microorganisms
MT	Master Trainer
PLT	Peer Learning Team
RAS	Rural Advisory Services
RASF	Rural Advisory Services Facilitator
RASPO	Rural Advisory Service Provider Organisation
SPT	Solar Projector Technology
UFAAS	Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
YPARD	Young Professionals in Agricultural Research and Development



Foreword



It is a profound honor to present “Growing Agroecology Together: The GP-SAEP Uganda Case Stories (2026),” a publication that serves as both a celebration of remarkable achievements and a practical roadmap for the future of sustainable food systems in Uganda. As the Chairperson of the Board of the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS), I am proud of the way this project has transformed the landscape of rural advisory services across our nation.

The Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP) sought to strengthen agroecological transitions by improving access to knowledge, technologies, and advisory services. In Uganda, this journey was built on the

foundation of participation, learning, and local ownership. We moved deliberately away from traditional “top-down” extension models toward a participatory approach of “learning with” farmers, utilizing powerful tools such as Farmer Field Schools, Farm Family Learning Groups, and locally translated video-based learning.

The stories within these pages represent the experiences of over 6,300 farmers across the districts of Bugiri, Buikwe, Lira, Sembabule, and Soroti. These narratives document a shift from dependence on expensive synthetic inputs to the embrace of homegrown, sustainable innovations. Whether it is the restoration of soil fertility through biochar and jack beans, the production of affordable livestock feed using Black Soldier Fly larvae and Azolla, or the resilience built through Tumbukiza (zai) pits, the results are clear: higher yields, improved household nutrition, and increased incomes.

This transformation was made possible by a dedicated network of people—the “Faces Behind the Transformation”. I extend my gratitude to our project management team led by our CEO Mrs. Beatrice Luzobe, the project officer Ms. Ruth Mugisha, the project staff, Ms. Elizabeth Asimwe, Ms. Scovia Ojuru and Ms. Shakira Nakitto, the 5 Master Trainers for high level commitment in delivering this project. I do appreciate the great partnership we have developed with the leaders of the Rural Advisory Service Provider Organizations (RASPOs) in the five districts, including the local government agricultural actors, and the Non-Governmental Organizations FINASP. I appreciate our Rural Advisory Service Facilitators (RASFs) for walking every step with the farmers, and our Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs) for making knowledge visible through digital innovation. We are also inspired by the

Agroecology Fellows from YPARD, whose youthful energy and leadership have proven that investing in the next generation is vital for driving lasting change. I celebrate that most of these players have joined UFAAS as members and have reinforced our network. I thank the Board members who have also enabled to smooth implementation of this project with their great advice and support.

While the formal GP-SAEP project concludes, its legacy is firmly embedded in the strengthened capacities of our extension actors and the integration of agroecology into district local government work plans. To me, this book is a dedication to our distinguished members of UFAAS. A tool that they can use to scale out the great approaches, methods tools and innovations that have been used to scale out agro-ecology across the country. This book reminds us that the greatest success of the project is the confidence it inspired—the belief that our farming communities already possess the creativity and knowledge needed to shape a resilient future. I am proud of the visibility it is according us across the world and in our country.

On behalf of the UFAAS Board, I wish to thank the European Union and IFAD for their support, and our partners at GFRAS, AFAAS, Access Agriculture, and YPARD for their unwavering collaboration.

I invite you to read these stories and join us as we continue to grow agroecology together for a more sustainable Uganda.

Dr. Richard Miiro
Chairperson, Board of
Directors Uganda Forum
for Agricultural Advisory
Services (UFAAS)

Email: rfmiiro@gmail.com



Acknowledgements



the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) and the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) for their leadership, technical guidance, and coordination throughout the programme.

We acknowledge our implementing partners, Access Agriculture and YPARD Uganda, for their unwavering collaboration in promoting farmer-centred learning, digital knowledge sharing, youth engagement, and innovation. Together, we strengthened rural advisory services and created opportunities for farmers to transition towards sustainable agroecological practices.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the Master Trainers, Rural Advisory Service Facilitators (RASFs), Agroecology Fellows, Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs), Rural Advisory Service Provider Organisations (RASPOs), district local governments, and thousands of farmers who embraced the project with enthusiasm. Their willingness to learn, experiment, share experiences, and support one another is the true legacy of GP-SAEP.

We are especially grateful to all stakeholders who generously shared their personal journeys, and allowed their experiences to be documented.

Finally, we thank everyone who contributed to documenting, reviewing, photographing, filming, and producing this storybook. It stands as a testament to

the power of partnership, farmer-led innovation, and collaborative learning in accelerating Uganda's transition towards sustainable and resilient food systems.

The farmers' stories were collected and written by Kimbugwe Photography, Arinaitwe Patricia, and Deborah Nabulime. The photos were taken by Kimbugwe Photography, Andrew Ssebunya and others courtesy photos by the individuals.

Elizabeth Asiimwe edited the case stories and compiled the booklet.

Ms. Beatrice N. Luzobe
UFAAS Chief Executive Officer

This storybook is the result of a collective journey of learning, collaboration, and shared commitment to advancing agroecology in Uganda through the Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP).

The Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS) extends its sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to the success of the project and the development of this publication. We are deeply grateful to the European Union, IFAD whose support made the implementation of GP-SAEP possible, and to



Message from the UFAAS Chief Executive Officer



It has been a privilege to provide overall leadership and supervision for the implementation of the Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP) in Uganda, implemented across Buikwe, Bugiri, Lira, Soroti and Ssembabule districts.

With over 30 years of experience in agricultural extension, including more than 20 years managing agricultural extension organisations, programmes and projects, I have had the opportunity to participate in

and lead many development initiatives. However, GP-SAEP has been a uniquely enriching experience. Rather than simply transferring technologies to farmers, the project created opportunities for everyone to learn together, test innovations, adapt them to local realities and share what worked and what did not.

I was particularly inspired by the commitment and motivation of the project teams. Even when resources were delayed or circumstances were challenging, the field teams remained committed to supporting farmers and advancing project activities. This is a team to remember—a team I would gladly work with again.

Another important strength of GP-SAEP was its locally anchored implementation approach. The partner organisations based in the project districts did much more than facilitate activities; they hosted the project, supervised implementation and developed a strong sense of ownership of the interventions and results. This local ownership provides an important foundation for sustaining the changes initiated by the project.

The farmer and field-worker stories documented in this book bring the GP-SAEP experience to life. Behind the project statistics are real people, real learning experiences, challenges overcome, innovations adopted and livelihoods

transformed. Their voices provide compelling evidence of how participatory Rural Advisory Services, farmer-to-farmer learning and locally adapted agroecological innovations can make a meaningful difference.

As you read these stories, I hope they will not only demonstrate what GP-SAEP achieved in Uganda, but also inspire extension professionals, development partners, policymakers and farming communities to continue investing in farmer-centred, participatory and locally owned agroecological transformation.

Ms. Beatrice N. Luzobe
Chief Executive Officer
Uganda Forum for
Agricultural Advisory
Services (UFAAS)

Email:

ufaas2013@gmail.com

Message from Access Agriculture



Access Agriculture website and mobile application, providing farmers, extension workers, and other stakeholders with access to locally relevant agricultural knowledge in their preferred languages.

As a Coach, I provided coaching and mentorship to 10 ERA teams comprising 22 members across the project districts and beyond. These teams have worked closely with Rural Advisory Services (RAS) Facilitators to deliver video-based agricultural training to farming communities. To date, the ERAs have reached more than 12,000 farmers through over 1,000 video training sessions conducted across the target areas.

Over the course of the project, I conducted more than 300 coaching and mentoring sessions with the ERA teams. These sessions covered a wide range of topics, including mindset transformation, personal development, entrepreneurship, business management, financial literacy, interpersonal communication, business development, and business planning. The coaching process focused on strengthening the ERAs' capacity to establish sustainable agribusiness models that will enable them to continue delivering agricultural advisory services and creating impact beyond the project lifespan.

Several ERA teams have successfully integrated video-based extension services into viable business models. For example, Mukuve Ivan's team in Bugiri trains rice farmers using Access Agriculture videos on improved rice production practices and subsequently purchases their harvest for value addition. This approach has created a sustainable supply chain in which trained farmers become long-term business partners.

Access Agriculture was mandated to implement two key activities under the GPSAEP-Uganda project. The first was to translate 300 farmer-to-farmer training videos into five Ugandan languages—Luo-Lango, Ateso, Lusoga, Luganda, and Runyakitara—and upload them to the Access Agriculture website and mobile application for easy access by farmers and extension workers. The second activity was to coach and mentor Young Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs) throughout the project implementation period.

The translation and digitization of all 300 videos have been successfully completed. The videos are now available on the

10

ERA teams coached

22

ERA members coached

300

Videos translated

1,000

Video training sessions

12,000

Farmers reached

Similarly, Ahabwe Canary uses a smart projector to conduct video-based training sessions for women and youth interested in mushroom production. In addition to building farmers' technical capacity, he supplies mushroom spawn to the trained participants, thereby generating income while supporting enterprise development within the community.

Beyond coaching, ERAs have also been supported through strategic business linkages and networking opportunities. Through the project, they participated in several physical and virtual events, where they promoted their services, expanded their professional networks, and explored new business opportunities.

Mr. Ezra Masolaki
Entrepreneurs for Rural Access Coach, Uganda.

Email:
ezra@accessagriculture.org

A word from Young Professionals in Agricultural Research and Development (YPARD)

Three Years of Transformation



The 3-year GP-SAEP Agroecology Fellowship, led by YPARD, has been a transformative journey of learning, collaboration, leadership, and professional growth for young agroecology professionals in Uganda. Going beyond conventional classroom training, the fellowship

immersed participants in real-world agroecological experiences, enabling them to work alongside extension practitioners, researchers, farmers, and other Agriculture Rural Advisory Services (RAS) actors.

Through close collaboration with stakeholders at national, district, and community levels, fellows gained practical insights into the complementary roles of extension services, research institutions, farmer organizations, civil society, and development partners in advancing sustainable agrifood systems. A defining feature of the programme was its emphasis on intergenerational learning, where experienced farmers shared invaluable practical knowledge that complemented scientific training.

The fellows underwent mentorship, which connected them with internationally recognized agroecology experts through virtual mentoring sessions, and they gained international exposure by participating in events such as the East Africa Agroecology Conference in Kenya, the Africa-Wide Extension Week in Malawi, and the GFRAS General Assembly in Senegal.

Over 346

Knowledge Cafe
participants engaged

Knowledge exchange flourished through YPARD Cafés and Communities of Practice (YCoPs) that received a participation of over 346 participants. As of June 2026, fellows Tadeo Ajuna had established an agroecology demonstration farm, while Frank Mufuruki was elected to the Board of the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS) and continuing with his PhD at Makerere University. Nabulime Deborah secured employment with both a private farm and a municipal authority. Okello John and Emiru Jacob have continued to venture into agriprenueurship. Ultimately, the GP-SAEP Fellowship demonstrated that investing in young professionals creates confident leaders capable of driving sustainable agrifood systems transformation.

Mr Tadeo Ajuna
YPARD Agroecology Fellow
and Uganda Country
Coordinator
Email: tadeo.ajuna@ypard.net



Photo: AE Fellows Mufuruki Frank, Ajuna Tadeo, Nabulime Deborah, Emiru Jacob, Okello John after holding a successful YPARD Cafe in Kampala Uganda

Message from the GP-SAEP Uganda Project Officer



through Rural Advisory Service Facilitators, GP-SAEP strengthened the capacities of Master Trainers, Rural Advisory Service Facilitators (RASFs), Agroecology Fellows, and Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs), reaching more than 6,300 farmers across Lango, Lira, Soroti, Sembabule, Buikwe, and Bugiri. Together, we promoted practical innovations such as Black Soldier Fly production, biochar, improved pastures, kitchen gardens, organic bio-inputs, and farmer-led experimentation, while fostering peer learning, demonstration sites, and digital knowledge sharing.

These achievements are a testament to the dedication of our Master Trainers, RASFs, Fellows, ERAs, RASPOs, district local governments, the UFAAS Secretariat and Board, and above all, the thousands of farmers who embraced agroecology with enthusiasm and became champions of change in their communities.

the networks built, and the confidence of farmers who will continue to innovate, teach others, and lead Uganda's transition towards resilient and sustainable food systems.

Thank you for being part of this extraordinary journey. Together, we have grown agroecology and transformed lives.

Ms Ruth Mugisha
GP-SAEP Project Officer,
Uganda
Email: ruthmugisha0@gmail.com



It is with great pride and gratitude that I reflect on the remarkable journey of the Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP). Over the past three years, the project has shown that when farmers are empowered with knowledge, supported by strong advisory services, and connected through partnerships, they can transform their farms, livelihoods, and communities.

Through Component
3: **Accelerating the
Agroecology Transition**

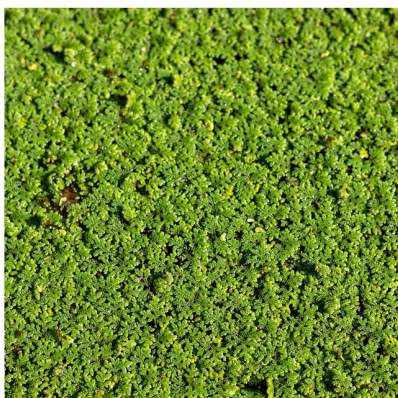
I extend my sincere appreciation to the European Union, GFRAS, and AFAAS for their vision, partnership, and unwavering support. I also thank everyone who contributed to training, coordination, documentation, and knowledge management throughout the project.

This storybook celebrates the people behind the transformation and the partnerships that made it possible. While the project has come to an end, its greatest legacy lives on in the knowledge shared,

A map of Uganda showing its administrative districts. The districts of Lira, Soroti, Ssembabule, Buike, and Bugiri are highlighted in dark green. Kampala is marked with a red dot in the central region. The map also shows major water bodies like Lake George and Lake Edward, and the surrounding international borders.

01

Our Journey



The GP-SAEP AERAS project was launched in Uganda in 2023. The objective was to strengthen rural advisory services so that small-scale farmers could transition towards agroecological production systems through better access to knowledge, practical learning opportunities and stronger local partnerships.

Five agricultural professionals were trained as Master Trainers to guide the implementation process across the five learning clusters. They, in turn,

mentored thirty Rural Advisory Service Facilitators who became the project's frontline extension practitioners. Supported by five Entrepreneurs for Rural Access and five YPARD Agroecology Fellows, these teams worked alongside Rural Advisory Service Provider Organisations to train and co-create with farmers and build vibrant learning communities.

The project encouraged communities to identify local challenges and test practical agroecological

practices. The stories about these innovations highlight real experiences from farmers, organizations, and stakeholders, showcasing best practices, lessons learned, and the positive outcomes of sustainable farming approaches. Access Agriculture videos translated into local languages sparked discussion, while Farmer Field Schools and Farm Family Learning Groups provided safe spaces for reflection and collective problem-solving.

2023

- Mission event

2024

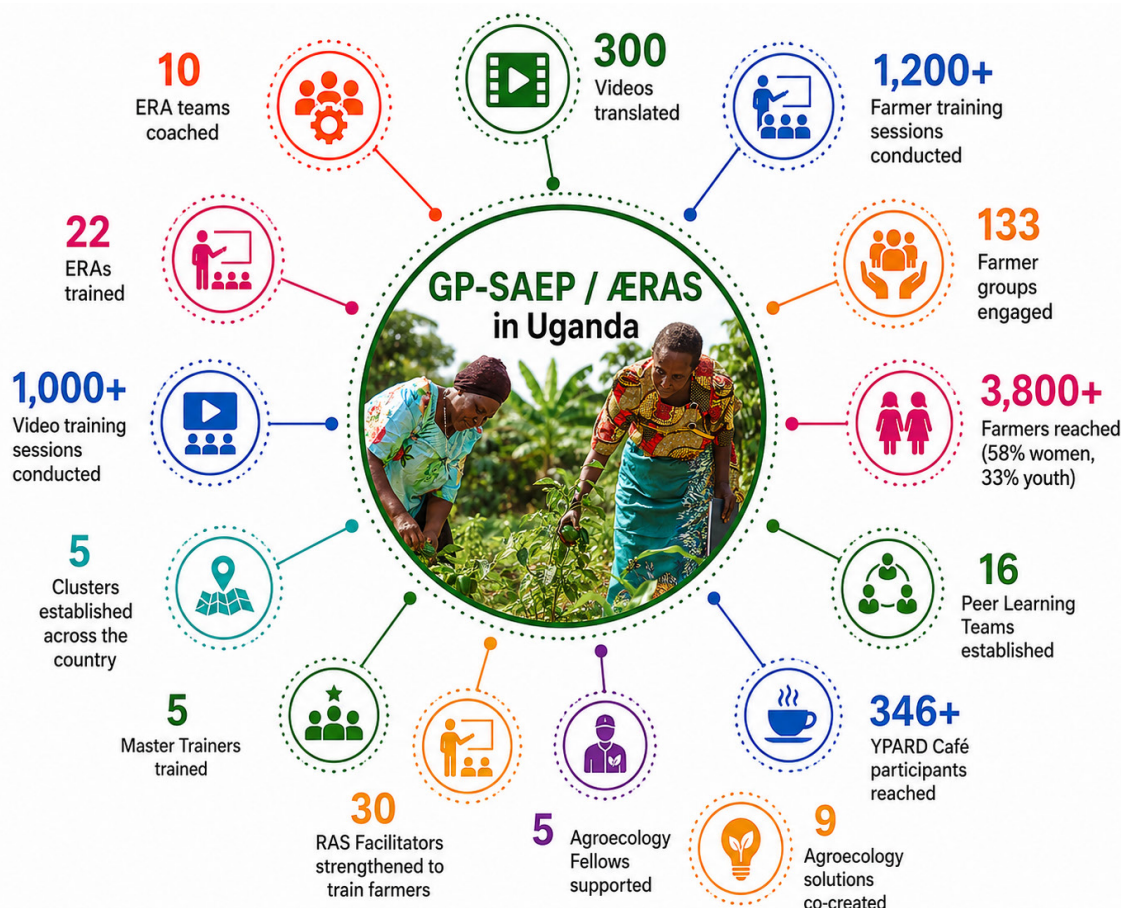
- Project Launch
- Master Trainer & RAS selection
- 1st Experience sharing

2025

- 2nd Experience sharing
- Innovation selection and implementation

2026

- 3rd Experience sharing
- Endline Project evaluation
- Phase 1 closure



02

The faces behind the transformation



Behind every farmer who embraced the transition to agroecology was a network of dedicated people working together. GFRAS subject matter specialists trained the Master Trainers, who in turn trained the Rural Advisory Services Facilitators, who trained and worked hand in hand with farming communities. YPARD Agroecology Fellows brought youthful energy

and conversations on several agroecology innovations, while Access Agriculture's Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs) used videos to make knowledge accessible in local languages. Together, they formed the GP-SAEP AERAS team.

UFAAS Secretariat



Beatrice N. Luzobe
UFAAS Chief Executive
Officer



Ruth Mugisha
GPSAEP Project Officer



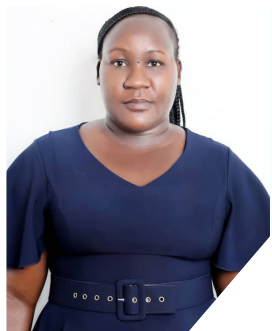
**Scovia Lindyway
Ojoru**
Program Officer,
UFAAS



Shakira Nakitto
Accounts Assistant



Master Trainers



Lydia Adong
Soroti Cluster



Andrew Munyole
Buikwe Cluster



Isaac Awany
Lira Cluster



Gerald Kasiita
Sembabule Cluster



Zabron Omalla
Bugiri Cluster

UFAAS: Rural Advisory Services (RAS) Facilitators



Kasamba Ratif
Bugiri



Mwanja Keneth
Bugiri



Rebecca Kalinaki
Bugiri



Semakula Yasin
Buikwe



Kayondo Ratif
Buikwe



Jingo Joseph Nkumbi
Buikwe



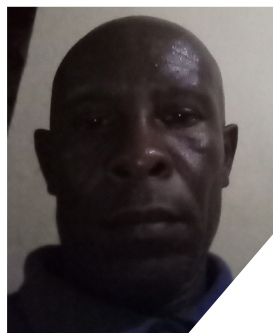
Kabagambe Mubarak
Buikwe



Waiswa Nicholas
Buikwe



Nalubiri Margaret
Sembabule



**Balikuddembe
Patrick**
Sembabule



Namazzi Annet
Sembabule



Ejuku David Ambrose
Soroti



Acam Ruth
Soroti



Asau John Francis
Soroti



Asingo Miriam
Soroti



Tino Rebecca
Soroti



Ogwali Francis
Lira



Okao Hamir
Lira



Akullu Jennifer
Lira

Access Agriculture: Entrepreneurs For Rural Access (ERAs)



Kasamba salim
Bugiri



Micheal Jordan
Kyobe
Buikwe



Tumukunde Amon
Sembabule



Ahabwe Canary
.....



Mukuve Ivan
Bugiri



Mali Ronald
Bugiri

YPARD Agroecology Fellows



Nabulime Deborah
Buikwe



Emiru Jacob
Soroti



Ajuna Tadeo
National Co-ordinator

Rural Advisory Service Producer Organisations (RASPOS)



Byarugaba Simon
District Production
Officer
Sembabule Cluster



Osman Owidi
Manager, Facilitation
for Innovations
and Sustainable
Productivity (FINASP),
Lira and Soroti
Clusters



Moses Makaka
Centre Manager,
Bugiri Agribusiness
Institutions
Development
Association (BAIDA),
Bugiri Cluster



Vincent Kayanja
District Production
Officer, Buikwe Cluster



03

Voices from the field



3.1 Farmers

From Feed Shortages to Thriving Pastures and More Milk in Sembabule



retention and diversified fodder have made his farm more resilient to dry spells while reducing dependence on external inputs. “When I add cow dung in the pits, plants stay greener longer because of good soil, compared to when we use the white chemical fertilisers that we used to use”. From the cow dung of the zero-grazed cows, he also produces biogas which the family uses for cooking food, and this has saved the family from using firewood and the associated effects of deforestation.

Mr. Lubwama Emmanuel, 79, a smallholder farmer from Mabindo Village in Ssembabule District, depends on mixed farming to support his family. Despite keeping cattle, goats, and poultry, he struggled with declining pasture productivity, poor soil fertility, and unreliable milk production. His reliance on conventional napier grass and synthetic fertilizers proved unsustainable, especially during prolonged dry seasons.

added organic manure, and diversified livestock feed by planting **desmodium, lablab and improved sweet potato vines**. Farmers in the group get planting materials from the demo site at his place.

The results have been significant. Improved pasture quality increased his cattle’s feed intake, raising milk production from 10 to 16 litres per day. Better soil moisture

Although limited access to quality planting materials and a feed chopper continues to constrain expansion, Mr. Lubwama remains committed to scaling up agroecological practices. He encourages fellow farmers to embrace integrated farming systems and seek guidance from extension workers, believing that combining multiple agroecological practices, and not relying on a single

His turning point came through the GP-SAEP AERAS project, where training from Rural Advisory Services introduced him to agroecological livestock production. As a member of the Twezimbe Farmer Field School and host of a pasture demonstration site, he adopted **Pakchong (Super Napier) grass**, established **zai pits (Tumbukiza)** for soil and water conservation,



solution – is the key to building resilient and productive farms.

“The new grass is softer, and my animals eat it more willingly. Even during dry periods, I now have pastures because the tumbukiza pits areas do not dry completely, like the garden with no pits.” – Mr. Lubwama Emmanuel

In the neighbouring community of Lugusulu, Katwe, Mariam Namusisi (56) has experienced her own agroecological transformation. A widow and member of the Konoweeka Farmer Field School, Mariam now manages nine dairy cows largely on her own, as her children are away at school and work.

Before joining the GP-SAEP project, livestock keeping was physically demanding. With limited pasture, she relied on tethered rotational grazing, spending long hours moving the cows from one spot to another. The work was exhausting, and the animals often broke loose, destroying her crops and those of neighbouring farmers.

Everything changed when Mariam

became a GP-SAEP pasture demonstration host farmer. Through weekly Tuesday training sessions, video screenings and practical demonstrations, she learnt to establish Pakchong Napier grass, Silverleaf desmodium, lablab, and Tumbukiza (zai) pits to improve soil moisture and pasture production. As her forage supply increased, she was able to transition from tethering to zero grazing, ensuring a reliable supply of quality feed throughout the year.

The difference was immediate. Her cows became healthier, milk production increased, and the quality of the milk improved significantly.

“Kati amata makka, tegatagaala,” she says with a smile—“Now the milk is thicker and creamier.”

Zero grazing has also reduced her daily workload and eliminated the problem of cows straying into neighbours’ gardens. Today, Mariam’s farm demonstrates how improved forage production and sustainable livestock management can reduce labour, improve productivity.

Constraints:

Limited pastures for livestock due to poor varieties and dry spells

Results

Farmers embraced Tumbukiza (Zai pits) established Pakchong Napier, Silverleaf desmodium, lablab and Tumbukiza pits, adopted zero grazing, leading to healthier cows, higher-quality milk, reduced labour, and fewer conflicts with neighbours



Growing Hope: How Agroecology Transformed Florence Nakawooya's Livelihood



Nakawooya Florence, a 56-year-old small-scale farmer from Kasalu Village, Ssembabule District, manages a two-acre farm where she grows vegetables, coffee intercropped with bananas, and rears goats, rabbits, and poultry. As a mother of four, farming is her family's main source of food, nutrition, and income. After joining the Kasolo Farmers Group, Florence participated in agroecology training supported by video-based learning. Inspired by the practical demonstrations, she replaced synthetic pesticides with homemade organic pesticides prepared from locally available materials. She also established a diversified mandala garden, improving land use efficiency, biodiversity, and year-round household food production. Together with other community members, she helped establish a water storage tank using local resources.

By adopting agroecological

practices, Florence has reduced dependence on costly synthetic inputs while improving crop health and environmental safety. The mandala garden has enhanced household nutrition and inspired neighbouring farmers to establish similar gardens. Video-based learning has strengthened her confidence to test, adapt, and share innovations within her community. "From the trainings using the videos shown to us, I try out what I see, and it eventually works for me," she shares. However, Florence struggles to sell her vegetables at a premium price, as most consumers often prioritize cheaper conventionally-produced options, undervaluing the benefits of agroecological organic products. In addition, the irrigation pipes available to her are of poor quality, affecting water distribution, especially during the dry season when vegetable farming is most critical.

Looking ahead, Florence plans

to expand her vegetable production and also find ways of getting a reliable market for her produce. She looks forward to accessing better farming inputs to support irrigation.

She also calls for dedicated markets, fair pricing for agroecological produce, and improved irrigation infrastructure to motivate wider adoption and strengthen sustainable livelihoods.

A mandala garden is a circular garden designed to capture rainwater runoff and produce abundant vegetables on small or poor soils. Built on a slope, it stores water in the center, making it ideal for dry seasons. It provides year-round food, improves food security, and generates income.



Minimal cost– high return: Tendo happy with her decision to embrace agroecology



One Wednesday morning, 46-year-old Tendo Allen, a resident of Lukka Village, Lugala Parish, Ssi Sub-County, Buikwe District, traveled to her sub-county headquarters to attend a meeting on the Government's Parish Development Model (PDM), as a member of Baseka Majja Lukka Development Group. While there, she met extension workers who were training farmers on how to make the best use of PDM funds. A farmer since childhood, Tendo grows crops such as banana, cassava, maize, coffee, beans, among others, and also keeps poultry and rears pigs.

During the session, they introduced participants to the GP-SAEP project and the benefits of agroecology. The idea immediately resonated with Allen. Encouraged by the advantages of low-cost, sustainable farming, she joined the project and began learning about innovations such as Azolla, organic fertilizers and pesticides, improved livestock

management, and kitchen gardening. Allen established an Azolla pond in a tarpaulin to produce nutritious feed for her pigs and poultry. She also learned to formulate organic fertilisers and pesticides using human and livestock urine, aloe vera, red pepper, wood ash and other locally available plant materials, reducing her dependence on purchased chemicals. She improved her poultry and piggery enterprises by constructing proper animal houses and feeding livestock on Azolla mixed with maize bran. At the same time, she established thriving kitchen gardens where she grows vegetables such as amaranth, collard greens, and eggplant, improving her family's nutrition while generating additional income. "Currently, I am not yet selling much, but my children and I, can now eat eggs and vegetables regularly." Allen said.

Her once-declining banana plantation is thriving after

being replanted with improved suckers and managed using organic manure. Her pigs and poultry now grow faster and healthier, egg production has increased, and production costs have fallen because she relies largely on inputs available on her own farm. Her home has turned into a learning site where neighbouring farmers regularly visit to learn about agroecological practices, and 'this is fulfilling' she says. She aspires to be the lead agroecological farmer famous in Buikwe District and beyond.

"With these new practices, I spend almost nothing because I use the resources I already have, yet the results are far better than before. I encourage every farmer to embrace agroecology."

– Tendo Allen

From Costly Feeds to Homegrown Solutions: Azolla and Black Soldier Fly



commercial feeds. Kaszi's next ambition is to commercialise BSF- and Azolla-based livestock feeds. However, he still requires a larger dryer to improve the shelf life and quality of the feed and continues to battle a persistent weed that affects Azolla production.

"Agroecology has shown us that the resources we need are already on our farms. We simply needed the knowledge to use them well."
— Kaszi Peter

For years, Kaszi Peter (57), Chairperson of the Galikwoleka Multi-Purpose Group in Buikwe District, struggled with the rising cost of livestock feed. His poultry and pigs grew slowly, while expensive commercial feeds and declining farm productivity limited his income. Although he earned about UGX 50,000 a month from his banana plantation, farming was becoming increasingly unsustainable.

Everything changed when Kaszi joined the GP-SAEP project. Through practical training, demonstration sites, Access Agriculture videos, and regular support from Rural Advisory Service Facilitators (RASFs), he discovered the potential of Black Soldier Fly (BSF) larvae and Azolla as affordable, nutritious livestock feed. Using locally available resources, he began producing his own feed, significantly reducing production costs while improving the growth and health of his poultry and pigs. He also applied composted organic manure

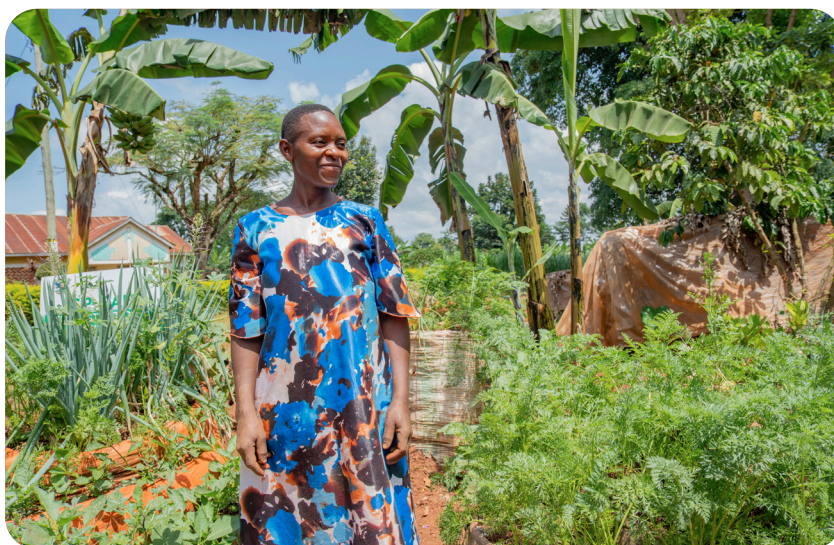
and mulching to restore soil fertility and improve his banana plantation.

Today, Kaszi's farm tells a different story. Lower feed costs and healthier livestock have increased the profitability of his livestock enterprise, while improved banana production has raised his monthly income to about UGX 300,000. As a demonstration farmer, he now trains fellow farmers on BSF and Azolla production, with neighbouring farmers and schools regularly visiting his farm to learn how locally available resources can replace expensive

While Kaszi had access to extension services, the advice largely relied on costly chemical fertilisers and pesticides (even for bananas) that were beyond his reach. Unable to afford these inputs, his soils became less productive and yields declined until GP-SAEP introduced affordable agroecological practices that made use of locally available resources.



A Talking Home That Speaks of Transformation



Just a kilometre from Buikwe Town, the home of Herbert Wanda and his wife, Nakiyimba Rehemah, tells its own story. A GP-SAEP signpost proudly identifies it as a “Talking Home”, a model household where every corner demonstrates agroecological practices that visitors can see, learn from, and replicate. Flourishing kitchen gardens filled with

tomatoes, cabbage, carrots, collard greens, amaranth and eggplants, thriving coffee, healthy livestock, and neatly managed compost pits showcase how knowledge has been transformed into everyday practice.

Before joining the GP-SAEP project, the couple farmed with limited technical knowledge. Although they

kept livestock, they did not know how to convert manure and crop residues into valuable organic fertiliser. Poor yields, pests, low incomes and high production costs made farming increasingly difficult. Through their Seruti Vegetable Growers Group, they received practical training, video-based learning and regular support from Rural Advisory Service Facilitators, enabling them to adopt kitchen gardening, organic manure, water harvesting, improved pasture, Black Soldier Fly (BSF), and better livestock management.

More than transforming their farm, agroecology strengthened their family bond. Working side by side, Herbert and Rehemah jointly plan, manage and invest in their farm, turning it into a shared family enterprise. The thriving kitchen gardens provide a steady supply of



fresh, chemical-free vegetables, while sales generate income that has empowered Rehemah to contribute to household expenses and save towards purchasing land of her own. Their children also participate in the gardens, learning healthy farming practices and appreciating safe food from an early age.

They have also adopted water harvesting, with a properly cemented pit in their garden that collects running water during rainy seasons. They use this water for irrigation, especially for vegetables during the dry season. They have also dug trenches throughout the garden to control soil erosion during rainy seasons and to retain water in

the soil.

Their Talking Home has become a learning centre where neighbouring farmers visit to observe agroecological innovations firsthand. As members of an active farmer group, they also support one another through weekly meetings, savings and joint demonstration gardens, reinforcing that agroecology grows stronger through collective learning.

"We were trained, and we chose to put the knowledge into practice together. Our home is happier, our family works as one, and anyone who visits can see the difference."

– Nakiyimba Rehemah



Breathing New Life into the Soil with Biochar



For a long time, Nabirye Hasanati, a smallholder farmer from Nabigingo A Village in Bugiri District, struggled with declining soil fertility, pests, unpredictable weather, and low harvests. Like many farmers in her community, she relied on expensive chemical inputs that gradually degraded her soils while yielding little return.

Her turning point came through when, as a member of the RUMLA group, she attended an Access Agriculture video screening on biochar. Inspired by the simple technology, she began applying biochar together with compost on her farm. The results were remarkable. Her soils became more fertile, crops healthier, pests and diseases reduced, and yields increased enough for her to sell surplus produce and earn a reliable income. Nabirye further strengthened

her farm's resilience by combining biochar with trenches for water management and using biochar as mulch to conserve soil moisture. These practices helped her cope better with droughts and floods while improving the health of her soils.

Today, her farm serves as a demonstration of agroecology. She actively trains fellow farmers on biochar production and use, becoming a local champion for sustainable agriculture. Although access to biochar production equipment remains a challenge. Her learning group shares a single drum; she remains determined to expand the practice.

"I couldn't believe the difference biochar made on my farm. My crops became healthier and produced higher yields. I am grateful to

GP-SAEP for introducing me to this innovative practice."
– Nabirye Hasanati

When asked if she would recommend the innovation to other farmers, Nabirye's response was a resounding yes: ***"I have seen how biochar has transformed my farm, and I would highly recommend it to other farmers. It is a sustainable and effective way to improve soil fertility and increase crop yields,"*** she says.

Breathing Easier with Lorena Stoves: Madina's Story



L: Traditional cooking stones



R: Women constructing the Lorena stove

For years, Kituyi Madina, a mother of five from Nabigingo A Village in Bugiri District, relied on a traditional three-stone fire for cooking. Collecting firewood was physically demanding and time-consuming, while constant exposure to smoke affected her health and discouraged her daughters from helping in the kitchen. The dependence on firewood also contributed to deforestation in her community.

Madina's life changed through the GP-SAEP project after participating in an Access Agriculture video screening on Lorena stoves. Inspired by the technology and with support from the area Rural Advisory Service Facilitator, she constructed

an energy-efficient stove that significantly reduced firewood consumption, eliminated smoke from her kitchen, and made cooking faster and safer. The time and money she saved enabled her to start a small poultry enterprise, while her daughters became more willing to assist with household chores in the cleaner cooking environment.

Beyond improving her family's wellbeing, Madina became a local champion for clean cooking technologies. She has helped other households construct Lorena stoves, with community members contributing a small fee that supports group development. Combined with other agroecological practices such as crop

rotation, intercropping and agroforestry, the adoption of Lorena stoves has also contributed to environmental conservation by reducing pressure on forests.

Although the lack of a mixer machine limits faster construction of additional stoves, Madina remains committed to promoting clean cooking and sustainable farming within her community.

"The Lorena stove has made my life much easier. I no longer spend hours collecting firewood, my family breathes cleaner air, and the best part is that my daughters now willingly help with the cooking."

– Kituyi Madina

From Homemade Concoctions to Healthy Harvests: Grace's Story



the food she grows is safe for her family and customers. Although prolonged dry spells and limited access to enough organic materials still present challenges, she dreams of expanding both her tomato garden and poultry enterprise. She thanks GP-SAEP for the confidence that solutions to many farming challenges can be found within her own environment.

“Organic pesticides have reduced my costs, improved my harvests, and given me a reliable source of income”
– ***Iyura Grace.***

In Oduka Village, Arabaka Parish, Soroti District, Iyura Grace can often be found tending to her tomato garden, carefully inspecting the plants before harvest. Just two years ago, this same garden told a very different story. Pests frequently destroyed her crops, the soil had become exhausted, and every planting season meant spending money on chemical pesticides and fertilisers that she could barely afford. Despite all the effort she invested, farming was no longer providing the reliable income her family depended on.

Everything began to change when Grace joined the GP-SAEP project in 2024. Through training and watching the group videos, she discovered that many of the plants growing around her homestead could become powerful crop protectants. She learnt to prepare organic pesticides using neem leaves, red pepper, black jack, Mexican marigold, turmeric, garlic, onions and soap—

ingredients that were readily available in her community. At the same time, she began making compost from poultry manure, goat droppings and crop residues, while choosing tomatoes as her main income-generating enterprise.

Today, Grace no longer depends on expensive agrochemicals to protect her crops. Instead, she confidently prepares her own organic pesticides and fertilisers, reducing production costs while producing healthy tomatoes that fetch a good market. From one tomato harvest alone, she earned UGX 800,000, which she invested in building materials for a better home and expanding her poultry enterprise. Sales from her tomato garden continue to provide income for school fees and household needs.

Grace takes pride not only in the income she now earns, but also in knowing that the pesticides are not harmful to human life and the environment, and that

Constraint addressed

High production costs, declining soil fertility, crop pests, and low yields, reliance on expensive synthetic fertilisers and pesticides, coupled with limited knowledge of affordable agroecological alternatives

Early result:

Grace adopted homemade organic pesticides and compost and improved tomato yields that fetched her UGX 800,000 from one harvest, and this has increased confidence to expand arming enterprise.

Turning Waste into Wealth: Susan and Peter's Black Soldier Fly Journey



In Kokumu Village, Soroti District, Susan Asio (60) and her husband, Peter (63), have discovered that one tiny insect can make a big difference. After joining the GP-SAEP project through the Kokumu Women's Health Group, the couple embraced Black Soldier Fly (BSF) farming as an affordable and sustainable source of feed for their poultry.

Before the project, their chickens grew slowly, were frequently affected by disease, and depended on expensive commercial feeds that strained the family's finances. Through GP-SAEP training, demonstrations and Access Agriculture videos, they learnt how to rear Black Soldier Fly larvae, which they now mix with maize bran to produce a nutritious, low-cost feed. During planting seed, Susan gave an example of how they used to just throw seeds during sowing, and these could easily be washed away by rain. Now they plant in lines. The couple also adopted kitchen gardens, organic manure and pesticides, but BSF has become the innovation that has transformed their livestock enterprise.

Today, their poultry grows faster, is healthier and fetches better prices in the market. The family also earns additional income from selling surplus vegetables and small

quantities of BSF larvae to neighbouring farmers. Inspired by these results, Susan and Peter plan to expand their BSF unit so they can supply larvae and eggs to other farmers, helping more households reduce the cost of livestock production.

Transitioning to agroecology does not come without challenges. Establishing a larger BSF facility requires additional investment. Despite the use of organic pesticides in the vegetable gardens, some pests are still resistant: "...at times we are wondering whether we can use other chemicals other than the organic pesticides in case it's beyond?" Susan questioned. Nevertheless, they are trying to find more effective natural resources to produce more effective pesticides. They remain committed to agroecology and continue working closely with Rural Advisory Service Facilitators to improve their enterprise.

"We have seen the value of Black Soldier Fly farming. Our poultry grows better, our feeding costs have reduced, and we are determined to expand so other farmers can benefit too." – Susan Asio

The Tree Lover's Story: Emmanuel Grows Biodiversity at Home



In Apopong Village, Soroti District, the homestead of Ediu Emmanuel (38) and his wife, Alieri Naume, offers a striking picture of agroecology in practice. Orange trees grow alongside maize and groundnuts, kitchen gardens surround the home, and cattle, goats, sheep and pigs form part of a well-integrated farming system.

Before the project, Emmanuel used to do his farm work with the little knowledge he had. He was aware of some practices, such as agroforestry, and had already established an orange garden alongside other crops, but he lacked deep knowledge and insight

into agroecology. He used to apply synthetic fertilisers and manure to his crops, but he realised that these were harmful to his health. These were also expensive for him to manage.

The fact that the GP-SAEP project practices are user-friendly and safer are the reasons he was motivated to adopt them.

He has since adopted several practices, including agroforestry, kitchen gardening, Black Soldier Fly production, organic fertilisers and pesticides, water harvesting, line planting, and improved livestock management. He has also established coffee and banana, which are still relatively new enterprises in his area in Northern Uganda.

Emmanuel now earns about UGX 5,000–15,000 from vegetable and fruit sales in a good week, while his family enjoys a more diverse and reliable food supply. By producing his own organic inputs and mixing Black Soldier Fly larvae with maize bran for poultry and pig feed, he has reduced production costs and improved livestock growth. His attractive, green homestead has also become

a learning site for farmers, researchers and agricultural organisations.

Challenges remain, including resistant pests and prolonged dry seasons. Emmanuel has dug a water source for irrigation and livestock, but he still needs a safer and more efficient irrigation system. He also hopes to expand his Black Soldier Fly and poultry enterprises.

"We are not doing this because UFAAS is seeing us, but because the project benefits us."

— Ediu Emmanuel

Constraint addressed

Limited agroecological knowledge, unreliable water supply and declining farm productivity.

Early result:

Greater crop and livestock diversity, improved household nutrition, and a biodiverse farm that now serves as a community learning site.



Restoring Soil Fertility with Jack Beans: Aremo's Journey



other farmers on how to plant jack bean. Today, Aremo's farm has become a learning site where fellow farmers visit to see how cover crops can regenerate soils while generating income. He is committed to expanding his banana-coffee enterprise and continuing to promote jack beans as a practical agroecological solution.

Constraint addressed

Declining soil fertility and low crop productivity caused by continuous traditional farming practices.

Early result:

Jack beans restored soil fertility, improved crop performance, generated additional income.

For over 35 years, Aremo Fastino (53) from Apotwic Village, Lira District, struggled with declining soil fertility and poor crop yields. Traditional farming practices left his land exhausted, limiting production and household income. His turning point came when he joined the GP-SAEP project through the Agali Farmers and Credit Group. Through training, videos, and continuous support from Rural Advisory Service Facilitators (RASFs), Aremo discovered the soil-restoring benefits of jack beans. He integrated jack beans into his farming system alongside bananas, coffee, cassava, maize and other crops, while adopting organic manure, agroforestry, row planting and improved poultry management. The impact was immediate. Areas where jack beans were planted showed visibly healthier soils and stronger crop growth.

Crops planted there are looking so well.
— Aremo Fastino

Beyond restoring soil fertility, jack beans became a profitable enterprise. From just 2 kg of seed, Aremo harvested 100 kg, selling each kilogram for UGX 10,000. The income enabled his family to start a small value-added simsim business, while organic manure from his improved poultry unit further boosted the productivity of his banana and coffee plantation. He also trains

"Where I planted jack beans, the soil is really so different from where I haven't planted."



“The Project Has Really Shaped My Home”: Daudi Odongo’s Agroecology Journey



At 39, Daudi Odongo had always depended on farming to provide for his family, but low yields, declining soil fertility and limited technical knowledge kept his household trapped in subsistence production. Everything changed when he joined the GP-SAEP project through the Parakaka Youth Group in Lira District. Through trainings by the RAS facilitator Jeniffer, Access Agriculture videos and regular support from Rural Advisory Service Facilitators, Daudi discovered practical agroecological solutions that transformed not only his farm, but also his family’s outlook on life.

Together with his wife, Leah and four children, they adopted a range of practices including Black Soldier Fly (BSF) larvae for poultry feed, organic fertilisers and pesticides, mulching, agroforestry, crop residue recycling, row planting and kitchen gardening. The project also helped the family develop a family development plan, enabling them to set clear goals and view farming as a business rather than simply a means of survival. This has also brought him closer to his family, he says.

Leah shared a story about video sessions that taught her how to control cassava mosaic, yet cassava is the staple food. She is deeply proud that her home now stands out from the others in the community, a transformation she attributes entirely to the project. ‘The project has really shaped my home. It is now a loving home’ she says.

Surrounded by trees, productive gardens and healthy livestock, the farm has become a model of agroecology in the community. The family now earns some income from selling surplus vegetables, eggs, maize and cassava, while improved poultry feeding with BSF has resulted in healthier, faster-growing birds. His wife credits the project with helping the family improve nutrition, control cassava mosaic disease and build greater food security. For farmers like Daudi, the change is visible. Land that once lay barren now produces food and even grass to feed their goats. Their story shows what transitioning to agroecology can mean for productive farmers: restored land, stronger yields, more reliable food production, and renewed confidence in the future.

Although prolonged dry spells and pests such as safari ants affecting his BSF unit remain challenges, Daudi continues to expand his agroecological enterprise with tree nurseries (seedlings seen in the nursery bed), a coffee-banana plantation, and plans to improve irrigation. He hopes to receive more training and support to scale up these innovations.

“Even if it ended today, I can survive. Anyone who enters my compound can see the difference, and it is all because of what we learnt through GP-SAEP.”

– Daudi Odongo

The Kony Wadwu farmers reap the benefits of engagement in the GPSAEP Project



Under the GP-SAEP project, farmers are learning through demonstrations, videos, peer exchanges, and continuous advisory support, enabling them to adapt innovations to their own farming systems.

One such success is the Kony Wadwu ("Help One Another") Farmers' Group in Lira District in Northern Uganda. With about 120 members, the group member are taking steps towards agroecological practices including kitchen vegetable gardens, locally made concoctions for fertiliser and pesticide, agroforestry, water harvesting, and Black Soldier Fly production. For Ojok Peter (57), previously, he grew vegetables such as cabbage and tomatoes alongside maize and cassava, but limited technical knowledge, degraded soils, and the high cost of conventional pesticides resulted in low yields and unstable income. His earnings from half an acre of cabbage never exceeded

200,000. Through GP-SAEP, Okot received continuous technical guidance from the Rural Advisory Service Facilitator (RASf), covering nursery establishment, transplanting, crop management, and advice on what, when, and how to plant. By adopting practices such as organic manure application and line planting, his cabbage yields and productivity have increased significantly. From his most recent harvest, he earned UGX 800,000 from just half an acre, four times his previous income from the

same land. Jennifer Adong (36) credits the project with strengthening farmers' ability to manage pests using locally made organic solutions. "The backbone of Uganda is agriculture, and this GPSAEP project has built our capacity to manage notorious pests that used to disturb our crops, and we are using the materials around us"

She also experienced remarkable returns after using organic manure:

"For the first time, I used



organic manure in my garden, and I received about UGX 30,000 from a few tomato plants in the backyard. I received more money than ever before."

For Veronica Atino (43), kitchen gardening has improved household income while inspiring her children to embrace farming. *"Pur en lonyo" "farming is wealth."*, she says.

Younger farmer **Okot Walter (28)** is one of the youth whose livelihood has been transformed through the GP-SAEP project. Once dependent on his parents for survival, he lacked the knowledge and confidence to make farming profitable. Through the GP-SAEP project, he acquired practical skills in establishing and managing vegetable gardens. The project has also strengthened

his confidence and motivation to farm, and he now encourages fellow young people to embrace agriculture and agroecological practices. Grateful for the positive impact on his livelihood, Okot is committed to continuing the GP-SAEP innovations he has adopted.

Beyond individual households, Kony Wadwu Farmers' Group reports stronger cooperation, healthier soils, improved yields, increased savings, and greater community recognition.



3.2 Master Trainers

Guiding the Learning Journey



The Master Trainers were the anchors of GP-SAEP implementation across Uganda's five learning clusters. They mentored facilitators, strengthened partnerships with district local governments, coordinated learning activities and ensured that agroecology principles were translated into practical action. Their leadership shaped not only project implementation but also a new culture of participatory extension where learning flowed in every direction. They shared experiences of their engagement, summarised below

Master Trainers' Database

Name	Cluster	Email Address
Andrew Munyole	Buikwe Cluster	munyoleandrew12@gmail.com
Isaac Awany	Lira Cluster	awaisaac86@gmail.com
Lydia Adong	Soroti Cluster	adongolydia2012@gmail.com
Zebron Omalla	Bugiri Cluster	omallazebron@gmail.com
Gerald Kasiita	Sembabule Cluster	kasiita12gerald@gmail.com



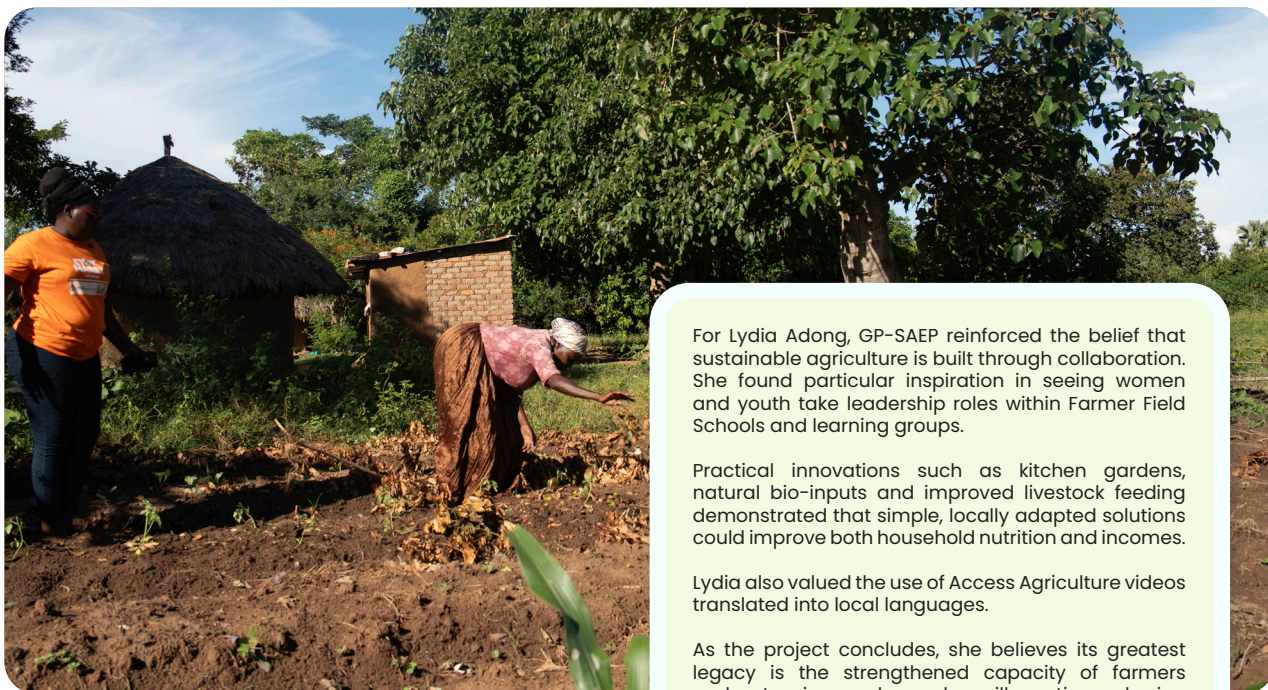
One of Andrew's most rewarding experiences was watching farmers who were initially sceptical become confident advocates for agroecological practices.

Balancing project activities with the competing responsibilities of extension workers required careful planning and teamwork. Through strengthening collaboration among RAS facilitators, cluster leaders and farmer groups, Andrew ensured that learning continued despite these hiccups.

Reflecting on the project, Andrew believes GP-SAEP's greatest achievement was changing the mindset of extension, from telling farmers what to do, to learning alongside them. He remains committed to promoting participatory advisory approaches and supporting communities to continue their agroecological journey.

"Communities already have knowledge. Our role is to create opportunities for that knowledge to grow."

Andrew Munyole, Buikwe Learning Cluster



Lydia Adong, Buikwe Learning Cluster

For Lydia Adong, GP-SAEP reinforced the belief that sustainable agriculture is built through collaboration. She found particular inspiration in seeing women and youth take leadership roles within Farmer Field Schools and learning groups.

Practical innovations such as kitchen gardens, natural bio-inputs and improved livestock feeding demonstrated that simple, locally adapted solutions could improve both household nutrition and incomes.

Lydia also valued the use of Access Agriculture videos translated into local languages.

As the project concludes, she believes its greatest legacy is the strengthened capacity of farmers and extension workers who will continue sharing knowledge within their communities.



Isaac Awany, Master Trainer Lira Cluster

For Awany Isaac, GP-SAEP became more than a project, it became a career-defining journey. Among Isaac's most memorable experiences was the Master Trainers' training programme, facilitated by Dr Hlami Ngwenya and Dr Lilian Lihasi, which inspired him to pursue a Master's degree in Agroecology. The project strengthened not only his technical skills but also his conviction that meaningful change begins with listening to communities.

Despite the challenge of coordinating facilitators with competing professional responsibilities, Isaac maintained strong teamwork through mentoring and careful planning.

He believes the project's greatest contribution was empowering both farmers and extension workers to learn together. Isaac plans to continue promoting agroecology through community learning, mentorship and the use of digital advisory tools.

"Agroecology is now part of my DNA. Let us keep the candle burning." Isaac Awany



Omalla Zebron, Master Trainer, Bugiri Learning Cluster

For Omalla Zebron, GP-SAEP strengthened extension by bringing Rural Advisory Service Facilitators and farmers closer together through continuous learning and practical engagement.

One of his most memorable experiences was co-creation introducing biochar as a practical solution for improving soil fertility. Demonstrating how farmers could produce and use biochar from locally available materials inspired many to adopt more sustainable soil management practices.

Although some farmers were initially hesitant to try new technologies, regular demonstrations and follow-up visits gradually built confidence and encouraged adoption.

As the project concludes, Zebron remains committed to promoting agroecological practices, convinced that restoring soil health is fundamental to resilient farming and sustainable food systems.

"Agroecology is the master key for environmental restoration."



For Kasiita Gerald, GP-SAEP stood out because it placed farmers at the centre of learning. One of his most memorable experiences was seeing farmers confidently adopt agroecological practices after witnessing the success of Tumbukiza-established improved pastures, which remained productive even during prolonged dry spells.

Although varying resource levels initially slowed adoption, he overcame this through continuous mentorship, practical demonstrations, and regular follow-up visits. Going forward, Kasiita is committed to strengthening farmer-centred agroecology by continuing to promote demonstration-based learning and documenting local innovations using low-cost digital tools.

"Empowered farmers are the strongest foundation for resilient and sustainable food systems." – Kasiita Gerald

Kasiita Gerald, Master Trainer Sembabule Cluster





3.3 Rural Advisory Service Facilitators (RASf)

Walking Alongside Farmers



If the Master Trainers designed the learning journey, the Rural Advisory Service Facilitators walked every step of it with the farmers in the five project clusters. They traveled from village to village, established demonstration sites, facilitated Farmer Field Schools, organised learning groups and provided continuous technical backstopping. More importantly, they built relationships of trust that encouraged farmers to experiment with agroecological innovations and share their experiences with others. Below they shared highlights of the project, in their experience.

Database of RAS Facilitators

#	Name	Gender	Sector	Mobile Telephone (+256)
1	James Kayondo	M	Buikwe	756350359
2	Yasin Semakula	M	Buikwe	
3	Vincent Andima	M	Buikwe	759900105
4	Nicholas Waiswa	M	Buikwe	709314310
5	Kabagambe Mubarak	M	Buikwe	
6	Jingo Joseph Nkumbi	M	Buikwe	701985474

7	Peter Kiirya	M	Bugiri	703868876
8	Ratifu Kasamba	M	Bugiri	705503792
9	Rebbbecca Kalinaki	F	Bugiri	701476141
10	Mudhambi Bernard Mageni	M	Bugiri	752449010
11	Kenneth Mwanja	M	Bugiri	750822033
12	Omalla Zebron	M	Bugiri	703928094
13	Hamir Okao	M	Lira	775962009
14	Jennifer Akullu	F	Lira	777901482
15	Francis Ogwali	M	Lira	775734426
16	Okello Cyprian	M	Lira	392991395
17	Adongo Patricia	F	Lira	772247088
18	Sam Newman Bua	M	Lira	786670058
19	Rebbbecca Tino	F	Soroti	781454014
20	David Ambrose Ejuku	M	Soroti	772325397
21	Miriam Asingo	F	Soroti	755761980
22	John Francis Asau	M	Soroti	785020494
23	Ruth Acam	F	Soroti	789760273
24	Aaron Edonyu	M	Soroti	783688721
25	Achillies Bulwanyi	M	Sembabule	752490728
26	Francis Musoke	M	Sembabule	755628112
27	Alex Ssemamanda	M	Sembabule	750656453
28	Patrict Balikuddembe	M	Sembabule	753311686
29	Margaret Nalubiri	F	Sembabule	703625317
30	Annet Namazzi	F	Sembabule	756721099



Jennifer Akullu, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Lira

Turning Demonstrations into Lasting Change

Jennifer Akullu believes that farmers are most convinced when they see results with their own eyes. Throughout GP-SAEP, she used practical demonstrations to introduce innovations such as kitchen gardens, black soldier fly production and agroforestry, creating opportunities for farmers to learn by doing.

One challenge she encountered was the growing demand from communities that wanted to join the project. Rather than turning interested farmers away, Jennifer extended training sessions to neighbouring groups, ensuring that knowledge reached beyond the project's immediate beneficiaries.

As GP-SAEP comes to a close, she is committed to continuing to promote the agroecological practices that have transformed both farms and households.

"Sustainable land use management practices are the foundation of resilient farming."



Taking Extension to the Last Mile

For Francis Ogwali, GP-SAEP strengthened what he considers the most important principle of extension—reaching farmers where they are. Through the Farmer Family Learning approach, he worked closely with households, making extension more practical and responsive to local needs.

Climate change remained one of the biggest challenges facing farmers in his area. Francis responded by promoting climate-smart agroecological practices, including Black Soldier Fly technology, that helped farming families become more resilient.

He plans to continue providing extension services using the participatory approaches introduced by GP-SAEP.

"GP-SAEP showed that effective extension starts with reaching the last mile."

Francis Ogwali, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Lira



Okao Hamir, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Lira

Learning Together, Growing Together

When GP-SAEP began, Okao Hamir admits that agroecology was still a new concept to him. Continuous training and mentoring changed that. Today, he confidently promotes innovations such as Black Soldier Fly production, Azolla, biochar and organic bio-inputs, while encouraging farmers to integrate sustainable practices into their farming systems.

He recalls that many farmers initially expected free agricultural inputs. Through continuous dialogue, he helped them appreciate that the project's greatest investment was knowledge – knowledge that enables communities to solve problems using locally available resources.

For Okao, the greatest reward has been seeing farmers improve their livelihoods while becoming more confident in experimenting with new ideas.

“GP-SAEP is about improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers through knowledge.”

Making Learning Practical

For Acam Ruth, one innovation stood above the rest: using videos to stimulate learning. Community video screenings introduced farmers to practices they had never seen before, making technical concepts easier to understand and discuss.

She particularly remembers the excitement around Black Soldier Fly production, where farmers quickly recognised its potential as an affordable source of livestock feed while using the residue as organic fertiliser.

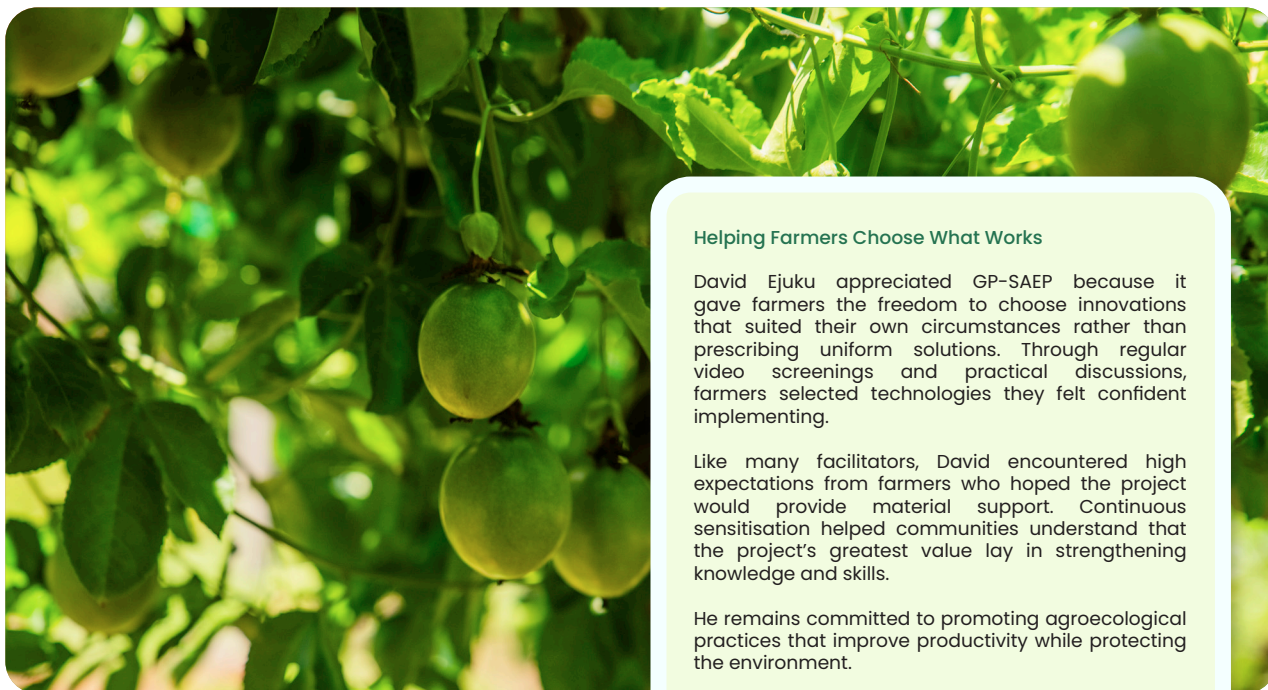
Although attendance at training sessions was sometimes low, Ruth worked with farmer groups to reschedule meetings around their savings group activities, ensuring more people could participate.

She plans to continue promoting Black Soldier Fly production and kitchen gardening within her community.

“Simple innovations become powerful when farmers can see them for themselves.”



Acam Ruth, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Soroti



Helping Farmers Choose What Works

David Ejuku appreciated GP-SAEP because it gave farmers the freedom to choose innovations that suited their own circumstances rather than prescribing uniform solutions. Through regular video screenings and practical discussions, farmers selected technologies they felt confident implementing.

Like many facilitators, David encountered high expectations from farmers who hoped the project would provide material support. Continuous sensitisation helped communities understand that the project's greatest value lay in strengthening knowledge and skills.

He remains committed to promoting agroecological practices that improve productivity while protecting the environment.

"Farmers succeed when they adopt what works best for them."

David Ejuku Ambrose, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator, Soroti



Knowledge that Inspires Confidence

Miriam Asingo describes GP-SAEP as one of the few projects where learning became genuinely interactive. Video screenings helped farmers visualise agroecological practices, making training sessions lively and easier to understand. She also credits the project's investment in capacity building for increasing her own confidence in public speaking, facilitation and farmer engagement.

Introducing unfamiliar practices was not always easy. Some farmers expected quick results and were hesitant to move away from conventional farming methods. Through demonstrations, regular follow-up visits and encouraging early adopters to share their experiences, Miriam gradually built trust within the communities she served.

As she reflects on the project, she believes its greatest legacy lies in empowering both extension workers and farmers to continue learning together.

"When farmers learn, adopt and share sustainable practices, the whole community grows."

Miriam Asingo, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Soroti



Nicholas Waiswa, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Buikwe

From Teaching Farmers to Connecting Farmers

Nicholas Waiswa believes GP-SAEP changed the role of extension workers. Rather than simply delivering advice, facilitators became connectors who linked farmers to one another, to Master Trainers and to practical agroecological innovations.

One of his proudest moments came when a farmer group successfully adopted Black Soldier Fly technology and later trained a neighbouring group without his assistance. For Nicholas, this was clear evidence that knowledge had taken root within the community.

Although farmers were initially reluctant to move away from conventional practices, demonstration plots and peer testimonies gradually convinced them that agroecology could deliver lasting benefits.

"Extension is beyond teaching farmers. It is about helping them teach each other."



Kenneth Mwanja, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Bugiri

Finding Value in Local Resources

Kenneth Mwanja was inspired by the project's emphasis on making better use of locally available resources. He introduced communities to innovations such as biochar, Lorena energy-saving stoves and organic fertilisers, encouraging farmers to recycle farm residues instead of relying solely on external inputs.

Personally, he applied the same principles to his poultry enterprise, using herbal concoctions to improve the health of his birds. The experience convinced him that agroecology is not only environmentally sustainable but also economically rewarding.

Even when communities beyond the project's target groups requested support, Kenneth welcomed them to practical demonstrations, ensuring that the knowledge reached as many farmers as possible.

"Agroecology has made me multidimensional in the way I farm and serve my community."



Jingo Joseph Nkumbi, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Buikwe

Making Agroecology Practical

For Jingo Joseph Nkumbi, the strength of GP-SAEP lay in its practicality. Rather than relying on classroom instruction alone, the project created opportunities for farmers to see, test and adapt agroecological innovations within their own communities.

Through demonstrations, Farmer Field Schools and regular follow-up visits, he watched farmers gradually gain confidence in practices that initially seemed unfamiliar.

Jingo particularly appreciated the participatory nature of the project. Every training session encouraged dialogue, allowing farmers to share indigenous knowledge alongside new ideas. This created a learning environment where everyone contributed, and solutions reflected local realities.

As he reflects on the journey, Jingo believes the greatest lesson is that lasting agricultural transformation begins when farmers believe in their own ability to innovate.

“Knowledge becomes meaningful when farmers can immediately apply it in their own fields.”

Supporting Farmers Beyond the Training

For Semakula Yasin, extension does not end when a training session concludes. Throughout GP-SAEP, he remained closely connected with farmer groups, providing continuous technical guidance as they established demonstration plots and experimented with agroecological practices.

He recalls that many farmers were initially uncertain about reducing dependence on purchased farm inputs. Through repeated demonstrations and regular follow-up visits, they gradually discovered that locally available resources could improve productivity while lowering production costs.

Semakula believes one of GP-SAEP's greatest achievements was strengthening farmers' confidence to continue learning together even without constant supervision.

“Our responsibility was not simply to train farmers, but to help them believe in their own solutions.”



Semakula Yasin, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Buikwe

Learning Through Experience

Working closely with Farmer Field Schools, Kabagambe Mubaraka encouraged communities to compare different practices, observe results and make informed decisions based on their own experiences.

He particularly values the relationships built throughout the project. Farmers became increasingly willing to share both their successes and failures, creating an atmosphere where continuous improvement replaced fear of making mistakes.

As implementation concludes, Kabagambe promises commitment to promoting agroecological practices that strengthen household resilience while protecting natural resources.

“Every demonstration plot became a classroom where everyone learned together.”



Kabagambe Mubaraka, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Buikwe



Kalinaki Rebecca, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Bugiri

Creating Opportunities for Women to Lead

Rebecca Kalinaki witnessed the confidence of women farmers grow steadily throughout the project. Through creating opportunities such as inclusive learning spaces, GP-SAEP encouraged women to participate actively in demonstrations, discussions and farmer exchange visits.

She particularly appreciated the practical nature of agroecological innovations, many of which responded directly to household challenges such as soil fertility, livestock feeding and family nutrition. Watching women confidently explain these practices to fellow farmers became one of the highlights of her experience.

Rebecca believes the project's greatest legacy lies in empowering communities to continue sharing knowledge long after formal project activities have ended.

“When women gain knowledge, the entire household benefits.”

Connecting Farmers Through Knowledge

Kasamba Ratifu believes GP-SAEP fundamentally changed how agricultural knowledge is shared. Through Farmer Field Schools, demonstrations, and Access Agriculture videos, farmers became active participants in generating and exchanging practical solutions rather than passive recipients of information.

One aspect he particularly appreciated was the use of locally translated videos, which made complex agroecological concepts easier to understand and stimulated lively discussions among community members. These sessions often extended beyond the scheduled training as farmers exchanged ideas and related the practices to their own experiences.

Looking ahead, Kasamba intends to continue promoting farmer-to-farmer learning and encouraging communities to document and share their own innovations.

"The most powerful lessons came from farmers learning from fellow farmers."



Kasamba Ratifu, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Bugiri

Building Resilient Farming Communities

Patrick Balikuddembe worked in one of Uganda's important livestock-producing districts, where farmers increasingly faced the effects of prolonged dry spells and declining pasture productivity. Through GP-SAEP, he introduced practical innovations such as improved pastures and soil and water conservation practices that helped farmers strengthen the resilience of their farming systems.

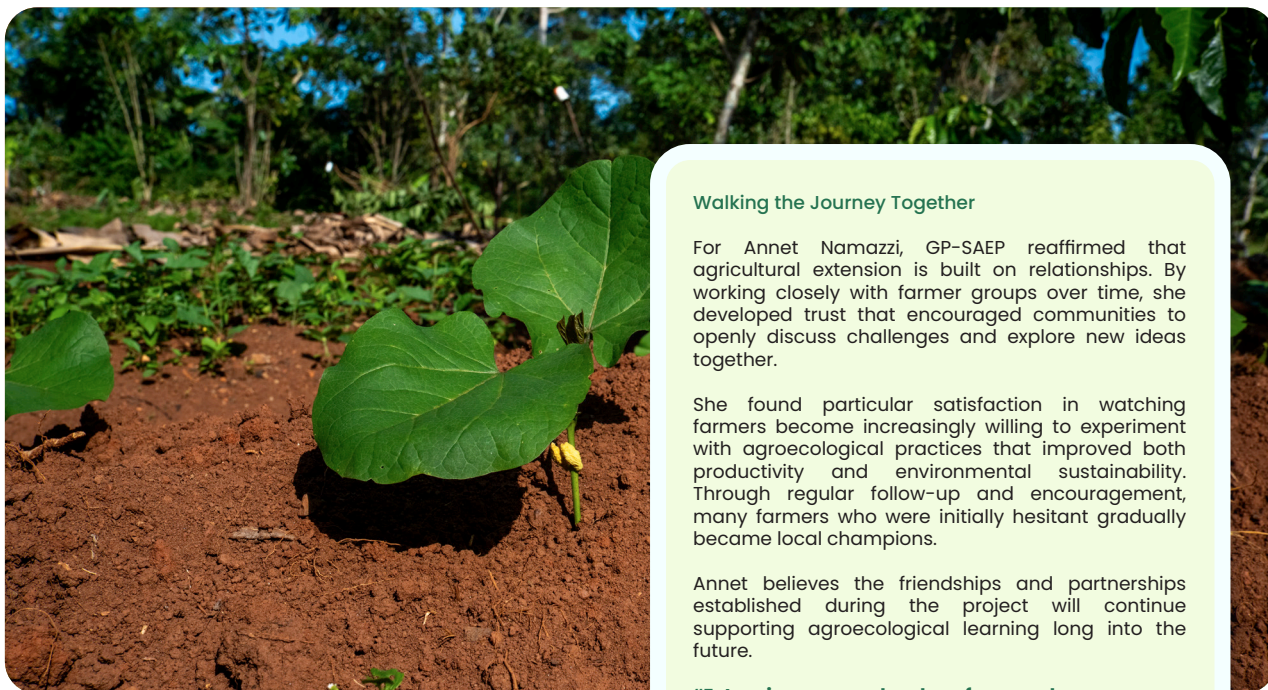
He recalls that practical demonstrations and peer learning played an important role in encouraging adoption. As farmers observed improvements in pasture availability and livestock performance, interest in agroecology continued to grow across neighbouring communities.

Patrick believes sustainable agriculture depends on continuous learning and local adaptation rather than fixed recommendations.

"Farmers become confident when they see change happening in their own communities."



Patrick Balikuddembe, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Sembabule



Annet Namazzi, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Sembabule

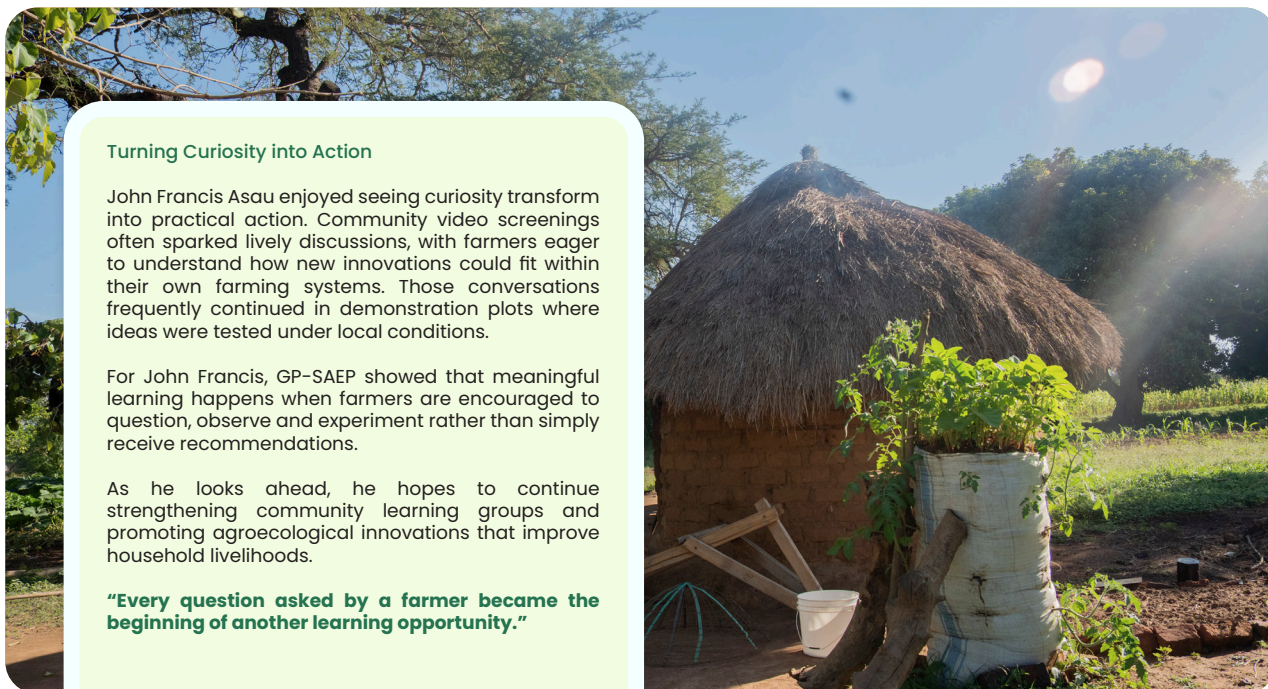
Walking the Journey Together

For Annet Namazzi, GP-SAEP reaffirmed that agricultural extension is built on relationships. By working closely with farmer groups over time, she developed trust that encouraged communities to openly discuss challenges and explore new ideas together.

She found particular satisfaction in watching farmers become increasingly willing to experiment with agroecological practices that improved both productivity and environmental sustainability. Through regular follow-up and encouragement, many farmers who were initially hesitant gradually became local champions.

Annet believes the friendships and partnerships established during the project will continue supporting agroecological learning long into the future.

"Extension succeeds when farmers know you are walking the journey with them."



Turning Curiosity into Action

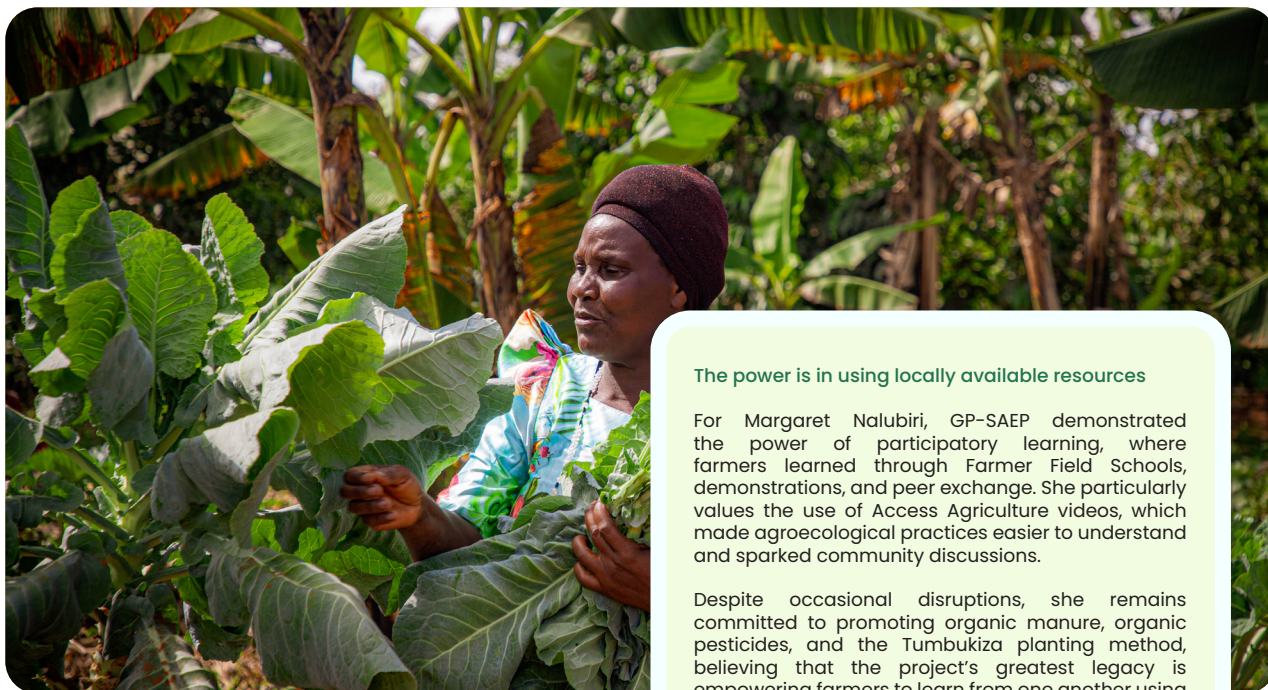
John Francis Asau enjoyed seeing curiosity transform into practical action. Community video screenings often sparked lively discussions, with farmers eager to understand how new innovations could fit within their own farming systems. Those conversations frequently continued in demonstration plots where ideas were tested under local conditions.

For John Francis, GP-SAEP showed that meaningful learning happens when farmers are encouraged to question, observe and experiment rather than simply receive recommendations.

As he looks ahead, he hopes to continue strengthening community learning groups and promoting agroecological innovations that improve household livelihoods.

"Every question asked by a farmer became the beginning of another learning opportunity."

John Francis Asau, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator | Soroti



Margaret Nalubiri, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator, Sembabule

The power is in using locally available resources

For Margaret Nalubiri, GP-SAEP demonstrated the power of participatory learning, where farmers learned through Farmer Field Schools, demonstrations, and peer exchange. She particularly values the use of Access Agriculture videos, which made agroecological practices easier to understand and sparked community discussions.

Despite occasional disruptions, she remains committed to promoting organic manure, organic pesticides, and the Tumbukiza planting method, believing that the project's greatest legacy is empowering farmers to learn from one another using locally available resources.



Asau John Francis, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator, Soroti

For Asau John Francis, GP-SAEP empowered farmers to choose agroecological enterprises that best suited their needs. He found video-based learning particularly effective in mobilising communities and demonstrating practical innovations, overcoming the initially low turnout. He remains committed to promoting organic manure and the recycling of farm resources as cost-effective agroecological practices.

"Videos are so good. The community loved them." – Asau John Francis



Kayondo James, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator, Buikwe

For Kayondo James, GP-SAEP demonstrated the power of peer learning and communities of practice. Through demonstration gardens and continuous farmer engagement, he helped overcome low adoption of agroecological practices. He is particularly proud that the Seruti Agali Awamu Vegetable Group has grown into a “Talking Home,” using proceeds from kitchen gardens to start a savings scheme while improving household nutrition. The project also inspired him to enrol for a Masters degree in agroecology. Going forward, he remains committed to promoting kitchen gardening and farmer-led learning



Rebecca Tino, Rural Advisory Service Facilitator, Soroti

For Rebecca Tino, GP-SAEP showed the power of video-based learning in improving household incomes, nutrition, and farmers’ confidence to invest in enterprises such as poultry. Although delayed payments and slow technology adoption posed challenges, she responded by strengthening her own poultry enterprise and giving farmers more flexible time to learn. She believes the project taught her the value of producing high-quality organic products and using agroecology as a unifying force within farming communities



3.4 Agroecology Fellows

Young Leaders Shaping the Future



GP-SAEP deliberately invested in young professionals through the Agroecology Fellowship programme. Young people are often described as the future of agriculture, but GP-SAEP invested in them as leaders of today. Through the Agroecology Fellowship Programme, emerging professionals gained practical skills, confidence and experience to champion sustainable agriculture within their communities.

Working alongside Master Trainers, Rural Advisory Service Facilitators and farmers, the Fellows learned that meaningful extension is built on participation, local knowledge and farmer-to-farmer learning. Beyond the project, they are taking these lessons into their organisations, communities and careers, ensuring that the impact of GP-SAEP continues to grow through a new generation of agroecology champions.

Data base for the Agroecology Fellows

Name	Sex	District	Email address
Ajuna Tadeo	Male	Bugiri	tadeo.ajuna@ypard.net
Mufuruki Frank	Male	Sembabule	mufurukifrank@gmail.com
Nabulime Deborah	Female	Buikwe	nabulimedebi19@gmail.com
Emiru Jacob	Male	Soroti	emirujacob169@gmail.com
Okello John	Male	Lira	okellojohn596@gmail.com



Emiru Jacob, Agroecology Fellow | Soroti Learning Cluster

Growing with Communities

For Emiru Jacob, GP-SAEP showed that successful extension starts with people rather than technologies. Working with farming communities in Soroti, he saw how demonstrations, dialogue and collective learning encouraged farmers to confidently test new agroecological practices.

One of his greatest lessons was the importance of patience. While some farmers were initially reluctant to adopt unfamiliar practices, continuous engagement and practical demonstrations gradually built trust and confidence.

The Fellowship also strengthened Emiru's skills in community mobilisation and participatory extension. As the project concludes, he remains committed to promoting climate-smart agriculture and farmer-led learning within his community.

"Empowering farmers through knowledge, participation and resilience creates lasting change beyond the life of a project."



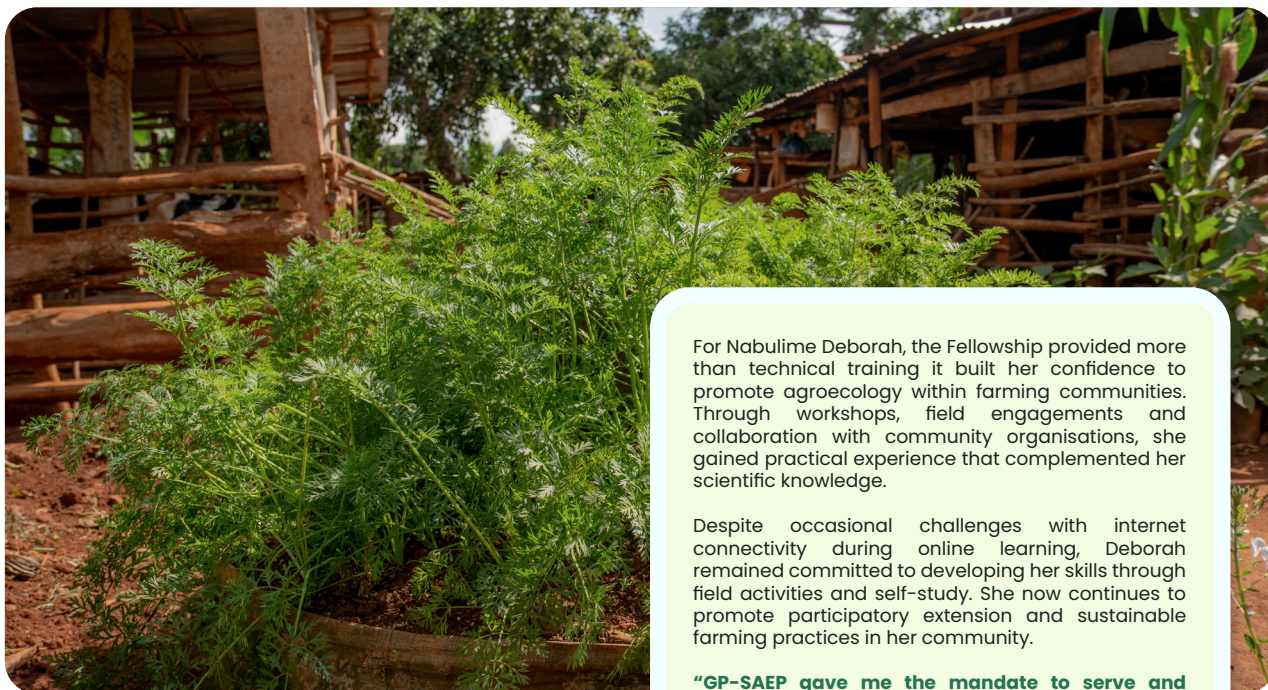
Ajuna Tadeo, Agroecology Fellow | YPARD Uganda

Youth Driving Change

Ajuna Tadeo values GP-SAEP for creating meaningful collaboration between youth, farmers and extension professionals. Through initiatives such as the YPARD Agroecology Cafés, he experienced the power of intergenerational learning and knowledge sharing.

Inspired by the project, Ajuna established an agroecology demonstration farm and transformed his own home into a "Talking Home," where sustainable farming practices are showcased to neighbours and visitors. These practical actions reflect his commitment to carrying GP-SAEP's lessons beyond the project.

"Co-creation with farmers and fellow extensionists has been at the heart of this project. Talking Homes are the true definition of agroecology."



For Nabulime Deborah, the Fellowship provided more than technical training it built her confidence to promote agroecology within farming communities. Through workshops, field engagements and collaboration with community organisations, she gained practical experience that complemented her scientific knowledge.

Despite occasional challenges with internet connectivity during online learning, Deborah remained committed to developing her skills through field activities and self-study. She now continues to promote participatory extension and sustainable farming practices in her community.

“GP-SAEP gave me the mandate to serve and turned science into action in my community.”

Nabulime Deborah, Agroecology Fellow | YPARD Uganda

3.5 Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs)

Bringing Learning to Life Through Video



For many farmers, their first introduction to a Black Soldier Fly unit, biochar production or Azolla cultivation was not through a classroom—but through a video projected beneath a tree in their own village. Behind these learning sessions were the Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs), community-based facilitators who used Access Agriculture videos translated into local languages to stimulate discussion, encourage experimentation and connect farmers with practical agroecological knowledge

Sometimes, the most powerful lesson begins with a simple question: “Can we watch that video again?”

That question echoed across many GP-SAEP communities as farmers gathered beneath trees, in churches, community halls and demonstration sites to watch Access Agriculture videos translated into local languages. These sessions did more than share information. They sparked conversations, encouraged experimentation and inspired farmers to see what was possible using resources already available in their own communities.

At the heart of this innovation were the Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs). Equipped with portable Smart Solar projectors, locally translated videos and a passion for community learning, they transformed extension into an engaging, interactive experience. They facilitated discussions, documented success stories, linked farmers to advisory services and encouraged peer-to-peer learning that continued long after the video screenings ended.

The ERA model demonstrated that technology is most effective when it strengthens human interaction rather than replacing it. Their work leaves behind a legacy of knowledge that communities can continue sharing for years to come.

Database for Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs)

#	ERA Name	Sex	District	Mobile Telephone (+256)
1	Amon Tumukunde	Male	Sembabule	755606698
2	Atwine Dan	Male	Sembabule	752503906
3	Namalwa Consolate	Female	Sembabule	751991863
4	Nkabuzaranwa John	Male	Buikwe	754858176
5	Kyobe Jordan Micheal	Male	Buikwe	791146220
6	Ruth Akuo	Female	Buikwe	758417566
7	Mukuve Ivan	Male	Bugiri	774739722
8	Nansubuga Safiyat	Female	Bugiri	763117499
9	Mali Ronald	Male	Bugiri	761104604
10	Kasamba Salim	Male	Bugiri	702290081
11	Namusoby Farida	Female	Bugiri	774672462
12	Opiding Bosco	Male	Soroti	753921062
13	Esuju James	Male	Soroti	789045484
14	Akise Mary	Female	Soroti	785694271
15	Ateo Janet Eunice	Female	Lira	775478032
16	Akello Sarah Hope	Female	Lira	760347183
17	George Folta Abuc	Male	Lira	772353809
18	Abura Charles	Male	Lira	760898869
19	Ochen Umar Bashir	Male	Karenga	789438538
20	Ahabwe Canary	Male	Sheema	705395909



Charles Abura, Entrepreneur for Rural Access | Lira

Looking at Farming Through Scientific Goggles

Charles Abura believes GP-SAEP changed the way extension is delivered by combining video-based learning with practical demonstrations and locally available resources. For him, this approach helped farmers appreciate that sustainable agriculture is both achievable and affordable.

His most memorable experience was watching farmers engage with videos that introduced new ideas while encouraging them to adapt the practices to their own environments. Although operational challenges such as unpredictable weather, limited translated videos and knowledge gaps occasionally slowed implementation, continuous support visits kept learning on track.

Charles says one lesson he will always carry forward is the importance of wearing "scientific goggles" and documenting his experiences, carefully observing, questioning and learning alongside farmers before recommending solutions.



Ivan Mukuve, Entrepreneur for Rural Access | Bugiri

Making Knowledge Visible

For Ivan Mukuve, GP-SAEP demonstrated that seeing a practice often convinces farmers more than simply hearing about it. Through locally translated Access Agriculture videos, he introduced communities to practical agroecological innovations that farmers could easily understand and replicate.

One experience that remains close to him was documenting the journey of Farida Akwi, whose adoption of SAC mounds, improved poultry management and energy-saving stoves illustrated how knowledge can transform livelihoods. Stories like hers reinforced his belief that agroecology is most powerful when farmers become examples for others.

Although reaching remote communities was often difficult because of transport constraints, Ivan worked closely with local leaders and farmer groups, combining follow-up visits with video screenings to maximise every field trip.

As the project concludes, he plans to continue using videos and farmer-to-farmer learning through Bugiri Crop Kings Investments to expand access to agroecological knowledge.

"Knowledge shared through practical demonstrations transforms communities and creates lasting change."



Amon Tumukunde, Entrepreneur for Rural Access | Sembabule

For Amon Tumukunde, one simple tool transformed extension work – the solar-powered projector. By bringing agroecology videos directly into rural communities, he created opportunities for farmers to discuss innovations together and immediately relate them to their own farms.

Working across Sembabule's expansive rural landscape presented logistical challenges, particularly the high cost of transport. To maintain regular community engagement, Amon invested in a personal motorcycle, enabling him to reach more villages and sustain follow-up visits.

The experience also reinforced another important lesson: every extension activity should be viewed through "scientific goggles," using observation, evidence and continuous learning to guide practice.



Canary Ahabwe, Entrepreneur for Rural Access | Access Agriculture

Working at the national level with Access Agriculture, Canary Ahabwe saw firsthand how videos can bridge knowledge gaps across diverse farming communities. Through supporting community screenings and promoting experience sharing, the project made agroecology accessible to farmers regardless of literacy levels.

One challenge was mobilising communities for video screenings, which required close collaboration with district agricultural officers and local leaders. These partnerships strengthened participation and ensured that more farmers could benefit from the learning sessions.

As GP-SAEP comes to an end, Canary remains committed to expanding the use of educational videos as an affordable and effective extension tool for reaching even more communities.

"Agroecological practice begins with knowledge that everyone can access."



Kasamba Salim, Entrepreneur for Rural Access (ERA), Bugiri

GP-SAEP enabled Kasamba Salim to transform digital agroecology training into a sustainable rural enterprise. Using solar-powered projectors and localized Access Agriculture videos, he made practical agroecology knowledge accessible to off-grid farming communities. His greatest achievement has been proving that farmers are willing to pay for high-quality, practical training.

Today, his training centre continues to operate successfully, combining video-based extension with produce aggregation and marketing. He remains committed to expanding farmer training while strengthening market access for smallholder producers.

"When knowledge is practical and accessible, farmers are willing to invest in their own growth."
– Kasamba Salim



Micheal Jordan Kyobe, Entrepreneur for Rural Access, Buikwe

For Micheal Jordan Kyobe, GP-SAEP demonstrated the power of combining digital learning, practical demonstrations, and farmer participation to promote agroecology. Although changing farmers' mindsets was initially challenging, continuous engagement and peer learning built confidence and encouraged adoption. He remains committed to promoting participatory extension approaches that place farmers at the centre of learning and innovation.

"Seeing is believing, but doing together creates lasting transformation."



For Mali Ronald, GP-SAEP demonstrated the power of translated agroecology videos in delivering practical knowledge that farmers could immediately apply. One of his proudest moments was seeing farmers confidently produce their own organic fertilisers after watching the videos. Despite occasional technical challenges, such as equipment failure during community screenings, he remained committed to ensuring farmers received timely training. Going forward, he hopes to strengthen partnerships with agribusiness organisations to expand agroecology while continuing to provide farmers with accurate, timely knowledge that leads to better harvests.



Mali Ronald, Entrepreneur for Rural Access (ERA), Bugiri

3.5 Rural advisory Service Producer Organisations (RASPO)

The success of GP-SAEP extended beyond individual farmers to the institutions that support them. Rural Advisory Service Provider Organisations (RASPOs) played a key role in translating agroecology into action by coordinating training, mentoring extension workers, strengthening partnerships with local governments, and embedding innovations within their own programmes. Through these institutions, the project built local capacity, strengthened advisory systems, and laid a foundation for sustaining and scaling agroecological practices long after the project's completion. The stories that follow illustrate how RASPOs have become catalysts for institutional change, research, innovation, and farmer-centred extension across Uganda.

Database of Rural advisory Service Producer Organisations (RASPO) Contact leads

Name	Sex	District	Organisation	Role	Email
Simon Byarugaba	Male	Sembabule	Sembabule District Local Government	District Production Officer	byarugabasimon@gmail.com
Owidi Osman	Male	Lira and Soroti	Facilitation for Innovations and Sustainable Productivity (FINASP)	Programmes Manager	osman.wyne@gmail.com
Makaka Moses	Male	Bugiri	Bugiri Agribusiness Institutional Development Association (BAIDA)	Centre Manager	mosesmakaka@gmail.com
Vincent Kanyanja	Male	Buikwe	Buikwe District Local Government	District Production Officer	vincentkanyanja@gmail.com



FINASP: Building on the GP-SAEP Legacy



Osman Owidi
Manager FINASP

“When FINASP joined GP-SAEP as the Rural Advisory Services Producer Organisation (RASPO), it was a perfect match. The project’s vision aligned with who we are as an organisation. We work with smallholder farmers to use locally available resources to improve livelihoods, so agroecology fitted naturally into our work.”

Through GP-SAEP, we strengthened the capacity of our Master Trainers and Rural

Advisory Service Facilitators, introduced innovations such as Black Soldier Fly (BSF) and Azolla at our Innovation and Technology Centre, and we strengthened how we deliver extension services.

The project also enabled us to build and strengthen stronger working relationships with district local governments in Lira and Soroti, as well as UFAAS. Now most of our staff are members of UFAAS. These partnerships will definitely continue beyond the project

One of the things that excites us most is that the project has not ended with the funding. We have already integrated GP-SAEP innovations into our other programmes and retained the video-learning approach by bringing Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs) into our system. That means more farmers will continue to benefit from these approaches long after the project has ended.

The positive response from farmers has also challenged

us to do more. For example, many farmers reported better poultry performance after adopting Black Soldier Fly. Rather than stopping there, we are now conducting research at our Innovation Centre to better understand how BSF reduces feed costs and contributes to increased egg production. We want our extension messages to be evidence-based.

Going forward, our focus is to continue strengthening our extension workers, deepen collaboration with local governments, and scale out proven innovations such as BSF, Azolla, kitchen gardens, organic bio-inputs and agroforestry to reach many more farmers.

“My advice to fellow organisations is simple: don’t only rely on what you learnt in school. Go to the farmers, understand what they already know, and build on it. When scientific knowledge is combined with farmers’ experience, the results are far more sustainable.” –
Owidi Osman, Programmes Manager, FINASP





On a GPSAEP case story documentation visit to Sembabule Cluster, Elizabeth Asiimwe (EA), Communication and Knowledge Management Consultant at UFAAS, caught up with Mr. Simon Byarugaba (SB), the Sembabule District Production Officer, to reflect on the 3-year Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP) in the area. Throughout the conversation, Mr. Byarugaba spoke passionately about the transformation he has witnessed among farmers and extension workers alike.

(...Pleasantries, introductions...)

Elizabeth Asiimwe (EA): Before GP-SAEP came to Sembabule, what was the situation like regarding agroecology practices?

Simon Byarugaba (SB):
(Pauses)

Agroecology practices were there... but at a very low level. Farmers were doing a few things naturally, but they didn't really understand them as agroecological practices. Today, I can confidently say there is a big change, not only in what farmers are doing, but also in how they think about farming.

The GPSAEP project strengthened our capacity to deliver extension in a different way. We introduced video learning sessions [I think we have conducted over 80 video sessions since the project started]. Then there were the Farmer Field Schools, demonstration sites, and peer learning. All these approaches complemented one

another.

(Smiles.)

Did you notice something else? The GP-SAEP groups have many more women and young people than our usual farmer groups. That was also quite encouraging to see.

EA: Yes, we certainly noticed that. We also saw many demonstrations, especially the Tumbikiza pasture establishment. Farmers spoke very highly about it. Before the project, your department was already supporting farmers. What changed because of GP-SAEP?

SB: The frequency of our visits! Sometimes the farmers would even joke and say, "These people are disturbing us with too many visits!" (laughs)

But honestly, that regular interaction made all the difference.

The project provided us with fuel and field allowances, allowing our extension workers to spend much more time with farmers. GPSAEP staff were constantly on the ground, training, monitoring, following up, and solving problems as they emerged.

The ordinary government extension workers also visit farmers, but not as frequently because of resource limitations. GP-SAEP gave us the opportunity to stay close to the farmers, and they really appreciated that support.

EA: When we visited Mariam and the other livestock farmers, they were excited about

the improved pastures and confident that milk production would continue to increase.

Their main concern, however, was transporting the fodder from the pasture fields to the zero-grazing units. They hoped that access to a feed chopper would make harvesting, chopping, and transporting the feed much easier. Does your office have any support for this?

SB: (Nods.)

That is something we can address. The sub-county extension workers only need to submit the names of active farmers, and we shall prioritise them for support under the other district programs.

Through the Government Development Grant, we procure demonstration equipment such as feed choppers, with priority given to farmers who have already embraced the technologies. Since those farmers have demonstrated commitment to agroecology, they stand a good chance of benefiting from that support.

EA: How often would extension workers visit farmers? How frequent were the visits (on average) in a month?

SB: On average, the government is facilitating us to reach four farmers per week, so those are about 20 farmers in a month. But under GP-SAEP we worked largely through groups.

So, how many groups did you visit if you are visiting a group of 15 or 30 members, and you are reaching them more than twice a week? So, the frequency was a bit higher, and the numbers there were many, because we almost had over 10 groups in December each with over 20 people.

Imagine visiting one Farmer Field School with 20 or 30 farmers, and returning more than once every week. You are reaching many more people at once, and the learning becomes continuous rather than one-off.

EA: How did GP-SAEP align with the district's agricultural priorities?

SB: Do you mean this department or the district-level government activities?

EA: You could actually share from both perspectives- department level and district level.

SB: Very well.

GPSAEP is well aligned, for example, in the priorities and plans. For example, under the smaller-scale irrigation project, we are now promoting farmer field schools. The approach we are using is the farmer field school, which GPSAEP is also using.

Then we have the Climate Smart Agriculture Transformation Project, which could take over some of GPSAEP's activities after GPSAEP phases out. It is also using a group approach, along with affordable technologies and pasture production at our level.

At the department level, using government funds from the grant we received, we promote further production and organic farming. All these functions are within our mandate as a district. GP-SAEP complemented all these, and lessons learned from GPSAEP are included in the planning.

EA: Have you noticed a shift towards agroecology by the farmers?

SB: Oh yes... definitely.

Farmers are now embracing environmentally friendly practices much more than before. Organic manure, composting, using locally available resources, these practices are becoming common.

Many farmers learnt these ideas from the videos and the trainings of GPSAEP. I remember the farmer you interviewed yesterday... Mr. Lubwama.

(Nods.)

He explained something very important. Chemical fertilisers can give quick results, but after some time the soil becomes exhausted. Organic manure releases nutrients slowly, improves soil structure and keeps working season after season.

That is scientifically proven.

(Smiles.)

We are not saying farmers should abandon fertilisers completely, but we should integrate them wisely. Organic matter is the way to go because it is more sustainable and much better for the environment.

After all...

(Pauses briefly.)

...we have already destroyed much of our environment. Now we must protect what is left.



EA: So, how does your office track the adoption and impacts of agroecology in this District?

SB: We use several approaches. Personally, I make regular visits to the communities to see what is happening on the ground. I don't like relying only on reports. I want to see things for myself. (Smiles)
After every field visit, I write a monitoring report highlighting the progress, challenges, and what I have observed.

In addition, our extension workers submit monthly reports on the agroecological practices being adopted, the progress farmers are making, and any emerging issues. We intend to continue using this reporting system even after the project ends because it helps us track adoption over time. We also engage farmers through radio talk shows, where they call in to ask questions, share experiences, and seek advice. This keeps us connected with the wider farming community and provides valuable feedback on how farmers are progressing

EA: Has the GP-SAEP project in any way strengthened your department?

SB: Yes, and in many ways.

First, the facilitation allowed us to reach more farmers.
Secondly, we benefited from numerous trainings, including National Agricultural Extension Week. Even as extension workers, we learnt many new practices from the project videos.

Another thing I really appreciated was the interaction between farmers, extension workers and fellow trainers. Learning was happening in both directions.

EA: Capacity strengthening is one of the broader objectives for the people involved in this project. Do you notice any changes or any shifts in knowledge in the GPSAEP staff that you work with?

SB:
(Laughs softly.)

Yes... you can actually tell.

The staff who participated in GPSAEP are more confident, more active, and technically stronger in the the different focus areas. Those Master Trainer-led refresher courses, of one week or sometimes two weeks, really built their capacity.

And even me, I would participate for the five days we are having those trainers, trainings. They were very useful, and we appreciate the project. The methods of work that we are being given have been okay, as well as the reporting,

In fact, their reporting improved. Every week, they had to submit detailed field reports. And honestly...

(Smiling.) ...they knew if they didn't submit the reports, they wouldn't receive their facilitation! (laughs)

But beyond that, they developed a culture of accountability and professionalism that I would like the whole department to adopt.

Some team members who are not officially

part of the project were also interacting with the GPSAEP activities, they would attend video sessions and other trainings. I think they are going to adapt and continue doing whatever the project has been doing, and I'm seeing this in our department work plans.

EA: The GP-SAEP project is phasing out in a month's time. Do you think farmers will continue with agroecology practices, even when this project ends?

SB: Of course! They will continue with the practices. You heard from Lubwama, even the farmer from Kasalu. They already have these affordable technologies; if it means continuing with Tumbukiza and manure application now, we have a lot of cows here. Then we can always please continue advising them on the application. Extension workers who have been there are continuing, and we shall encourage all to continue and support them.

As a department, since I had already told you that we have them in our work plan, shall continue with them. On the video sessions, maybe the tool, but if we can also budget for the tools, then that would be better. As the project phases out, the project can leave us with those tools such as the smart projectors, so that we can use them as aids for extension. Those videos have completely changed how we deliver extension. Scaling up to other sub-counties is important.

EA: What elements of this project do you think are most likely to be sustained within this office or within the existing local government structure?

SB:

The Farmer Field School approach. Farmers learn by doing. They participate, they discuss, they observe results for themselves. That approach works very well.

We also want to scale up the demonstration sites, especially for fodder production and vegetables, in more sub-counties.

EA: What final message would you like to share with extension actors following?

SB:

(Smiles warmly.)

As Sembabule District, we are truly grateful that GP-SAEP chose to work with us.

We have learnt a great deal. Our farmers have learnt. Our extension workers have learnt.

The participating sub-counties have gained knowledge that will remain long after the project ends. We promise that we will upscale the good practices so that many more farmers can benefit from agroecology.

EA: Thank you very much sir, for your time.

04

Key Lessons From The GP-SAEP AERAS Project





1. Farmer-centred learning accelerates adoption

Farmers were more willing to adopt new practices when they learned through Farmer Field Schools, demonstrations, peer-to-peer exchanges and practical field experiences rather than classroom-style training. Seeing innovations work on neighboring farms built confidence and reduced the fear of trying something new.

2. Digital videos make agroecology easier to understand

The Access Agriculture video approach proved to be one of the project's most transformative innovations. Videos simplified complex concepts, reached farmers with low literacy levels, stimulated discussion, and created lasting interest in agroecological practices. Communities and extension workers alike called for the continued use of smart projectors after the project ends.

3. Locally available resources reduce production costs

One of the strongest messages from farmers was that agroecology helped them shift from dependence on expensive external inputs to using locally available resources. Organic manure, natural pesticides, Black Soldier Fly larvae, Azolla, crop residues and locally available plants enabled farmers to

lower production costs while maintaining or improving productivity.

4. Agroecology strengthens resilience to climate change

Practices such as Tumbikiza (zai pits), improved pastures, mulching, water harvesting, jack beans, agroforestry and organic soil management helped farmers cope better with prolonged dry spells, improve soil fertility, conserve moisture and ensure more reliable crop and livestock production.

5. Diversified farming systems improve livelihoods

Farmers who integrated crops, livestock, trees and enterprises such as Black Soldier Fly, kitchen gardens and improved pastures reported more stable incomes, improved household nutrition and reduced production risks. Diversification spread risk and created multiple income streams.

6. Continuous extension support drives behaviour change

The project demonstrated that regular follow-up, mentorship and advisory services are essential for sustaining adoption. Frequent visits by Rural Advisory Service Facilitators built trust, addressed emerging challenges and encouraged farmers to continue

experimenting and improving their practices.

7. Institutional ownership is critical for sustainability

The integration of agroecology into district work plans, RASPO programmes and innovation centres shows that lasting change depends on strengthening institutions, not only training individual farmers. Partnerships between UFAAS, district local governments, RASPOs and farmer organisations provide a strong foundation for scaling agroecology beyond the project's lifetime.

8. Learning should continue beyond project life

Nearly every participant- from farmers to Master Trainers and district leaders, emphasised the need for refresher trainings, continued mentorship, research and knowledge sharing. Agroecology is a continuous learning journey that benefits from regular technical updates and peer exchange.

9. Scaling agroecology requires investment in people and practical tools

The project demonstrated that scaling is not only about introducing innovations, but also about equipping communities with the right support systems. Investments in extension workers, Farmer Field Schools, digital learning tools, demonstration sites, feed choppers, irrigation, quality planting materials and local research will enable more farmers to adopt and sustain agroecological practices.

05

Other photos







Implementing Partners



Funded by:



Funded by
the European Union



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



Contact us

UFAAS Focal desk

C/O

Ms Beatrice N. Luzobe

Chief Executive Officer,

Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services

✉ ufaas2013@gmail.com

✉ [@ufaas13](https://www.facebook.com/ufaas13)

📺 <https://www.youtube.com/@ufaas8039>

🌐 www.ufaas-ugandacf.org

