

# Monthly Narrative Report



The Centre for Land, Economy & Rights of Women

**Project Title:** Addressing Women's Livelihoods & their Rights through Gender Equality

**Reporting Period:** January 2009

**Recipient Organisation:** The Centre for Land, Economy & Rights of Women - CLEAR



A. Organizational Details

Name of Organization	CLEAR
Type of Organization	TRUST
Name of Project	ADDRESSING WOMEN'S LIVELIHOODS AND THEIR LAND RIGHTS THROUGH GENDER EQUALITY.
Country where project is based	KENYA
Geographical coverage of project	EAST AFRICA
Reporting period	January 2009
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B. Funding Status

Total Project Budget	€ 153,846
Total spent this month	€ 5,153
Funds remaining	€ 72,252

## **Introduction**

The Centre for Land, Economy and Rights of Women (CLEAR) is a Regional Trust Organization addressing social and economic justice, working with poor and vulnerable women and in solidarity with similar initiatives working towards improving women's livelihoods through secure and equitable access to and the utilization of land and other natural resources. Operationally, CLEAR's work is anchored on influencing policy, research, advocacy and networking, and capacity building on women's land rights. In collaboration with NEPAD, CLEAR is focusing as well on addressing women's livelihoods and their land rights through gender equality for a period of 3 years in the whole region.

This report describes the operations and implementation progress in the month of January 2009 of the program. It details the ongoing activities with CBO's already identified by CLEAR. In the reporting period, program activities focused on hosting one Nepad officer for a two day monitoring and evaluation visit, ongoing capacity building of CBO's and setting up of this year's action plans with the targeted CBO's and partners among others.

## **Major Accomplishments**

This section expounds the key activities undertaken during the period under review, and the associated accomplishments/progress realized from each of the components.

### **Component 1: Policy**

In this month, CLEAR did not conduct activities on policy as crucial stakeholders in the process were engaged in setting up organizational activities most of which will commence from next month.

### **Component 2: Advocacy and Networking**

CLEAR in this month did not conduct activities on advocacy and networking as well. In the month focus was put on re-evaluating our action plans, areas of collaboration with partners for the year, re-evaluating our log frames and targets for the year as well as prioritizing areas where emphasis will be put in the coming year.

### **Component 3: Capacity Building**

CLEAR through the NEPAD support aims at providing linkages between natural resource management, land and property rights, economic growth, inequality, poverty, peace, security

and sustainability and the need to formulate and implement policies, which are addressing livelihoods through gender equality. To this end, CLEAR continued its work with 2 CBOs in western and eastern provinces in Kenya respectively in building their capacity to bring about improvements in their livelihoods thus help play an active role in lesson learning and promoting exchange of experience among other women in the regions selected. In the period under review, CLEAR Uganda also continued its activities which focused on promoting socio-economic justice by working to improve women's livelihoods through secure and equitable access to and control over productive resources with women in Uganda. The main thrusts under this component in the period were as follows:

### CLEAR Uganda

Through its Local Action for Food Security (LOAFS) program, CLEAR\_Uganda continued to reach, mobilize and support the rural poor, including women, men and youth, who are the main producers of food but also the most food insecure to organize to produce more of the local foods to increase household food security.

Stemming from the WFD celebrations held in October last year, Clear Uganda in the period commissioned two important background papers on the *State of Food Security in Mbale District* and *Case Studies on the Challenges of lack of effective land rights faced by Women Farmers in Bungokho-Mutoto Sub\_County*. These papers formed the basis for discussions at the first-ever district women leaders' forum on food security which was organised by CLEAR.

The forum brought together close to fifty women leaders including district and sub-county women councilors and women leaders from CBOs and the NGO sector. The guest of honor at the forum was Mrs. Joyce Werikhe a key supporter of CLEAR Uganda's ideas concerning promoting increased food security through local action. Also present at the Forum was the lady Acting Mayor of Mbale Municipal Council.

The specific objectives of the Women Leaders' Forum on Food Security were:

To focus attention of women leaders on the need to priority food security concerns in the district and to address women's land rights issues;

To mobilize local action to promote the production of local foods;

To share experiences and best practices in order to scale-up actions towards household food security by 2015

State of food security in Mbale District

This background paper analyzed the state of food security and highlighted the changes and trends of food security in Eastern Region, in general, and Mbale District, in particular. The paper confirmed that the region is vulnerable to food insecurity with 53% of the population said to be highly vulnerable to food security while 3% of the population is said to be food insecure (WFP: 2005 Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis). The paper highlighted the following causes and contributing factors to food insecurity:

High population growth: Mbale district has a population growth of 4.3% which is higher than the national average of 3.3%;

High population density: Mbale has a population density of 486 people per square kilometer which is higher than the national average of 123.9%

Land fragmentation and miniaturization as a result of the prevalent land inheritance practices which has led to not only diminishing land holdings but also landlessness

Women's lack of secure land rights which have had direct implications on household food security

Lack of extension services for food security

Lack of good quality seeds and market information.

#### Case Studies on Women's Land Rights

The case studies on women's land rights documented the realities of five women in Bungokho-Mutoto Sub-county. The case studies highlighted the key challenges faced by women in their efforts to ensure that their families are fed. They brought out the fact that unless women are targeted for support, the policy goals of eradication of poverty and hunger are completely unattainable. The following cross-cutting issues emerged from the case studies:

The huge obligations on women which are not matched by women's capacity to fulfill them – women feel a sense of obligation to take care of their families but their capacity to meet these obligations are ever-declining. Women are increasingly unable to grow enough food for themselves and their families and yet the demand for them to do so is not becoming any less;

The Land Act is not working and women's land rights are not being protected. All the case studies indicated that women were failed by all the institutions which are meant to protect their land rights as citizens of Uganda;

Women's reproductive rights and their control over their bodies are minimal. Evidence of this is the fact that in all the case studies women had large families well into their old age and their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS is evident;

Women's labor is undervalued, the wages they get for a day's work are so meager that women cannot hope to survive on income from sale of labor and are clearly trapped in income poverty;

Domestic violence is common and all the case studies indicated that all the women were victims of violence.

#### Discussion and conclusions

The discussion which followed the above presentations covered a wide range of issues including the following:

Women need to be taught that we have rights too, especially in instances of sexual and domestic violence;

Family Planning is a critical thing to discuss as it impacts on food access and labor, planning for household security, as well as time available for self-improvement

As women leaders, we must come up and advocate for women to have a final say on what she has produced from her own labor in the garden.

Women are not empowered enough to speak out for their rights as this causes her to become a victim of violence when she speaks out. There is a need to teach the men too, so they get to know why the women's voice also needs to be respected;

When rights are asserted, there is also a need for leaders to build the institutions where the rights are then protected, supported and enforced. Local institutions especially those that are led by women, should be encouraged to be a part of this development

The need for forums that allow women to access information, that isn't just given but is NEEDED by them and therefore can be practically used.

The need for new technologies in agriculture to be shared with local women farmers. The knowledge shall help with changing climates and seasons as well as foods that are grown

Reclaiming the foodstuffs that are going extinct and are probably still public and common produce that can be developed.

The effects of Domestic violence or the woman's lack of general security (i.e. some women 'know' their marital homes may not be secure, and so do not try to develop their agricultural or material status) affects the ability to be Food secure

The migratory issues in some areas affect food security, where tribes that move in aren't agricultural or do not have land itself, especially in the Urban areas where the knowledge needs to be supported on even the basics of agriculture and land ownership.

The discussions concluded with a strong recommendation that Women councilors establish a regular forum where they come together as district and sub-county women councilors to discuss key issues that affect women and agree on a common position and agenda to be tabled for debate by the regular Council meetings. These meetings would provide a very important space for defining and spear-heading issues that empower women and address their needs through policy interventions at the district and sub-county local government levels. This would permit women councilors to rally around such a common agendas and be well-prepared to advocate for them regardless of their political affiliations.

### *Overall Outputs*

The following specific outputs have been achieved over the current reporting period:

#### *Farmers mobilised:*

By September 2009, CLEAR's target is to mobilise 10-20 farmers (mainly women small-holder farmers) in the villages of Makokha, Bunapongo and Bukisukye and help them to get organized in a CBO focusing on ensuring that there is household food security in their homes. At the time of writing this report, a total of 13 farmers (8 women and 5 men) and 4 youth in the villages of Makokha and Bukisukye make up the core group of farmers who are spear heading the local action on food security.

In addition, the spill-over effect as a result of the awareness raising which is beginning to emerge indicates that this goal is likely to spread to other parishes in Bungokho Mutoto and even throughout the district. During 2009, CLEAR Uganda will monitor this spill-over effect.

#### *Increased household food security:*

The goal under this item is to demonstrate a marked increase in household food security for participating farmers focusing especially on local foods known to protect households from hunger and food insecurity. At the end of 2008 all participating farmers reported increased outputs of local foods including millet and sorghum (which were grown for the first time in a very long time this year), beans, cassava and maize. This increased production was largely due to increasing the family labor input into food production and the use of improved seeds, particularly for millet and sorghum.

A number of these farmers have been able to produce enough to last them through the planting season which is the time when they have always experienced hunger. All the farmers also reported have depended less on the market for their daily food supplies which indicates that the actions they took to grow more food has cushioned them from the high food prices which characterized 2008.

#### Documentation of case studies and testimonies of women farmers

This item is intended to increase knowledge about the situation of women farmers and some of the challenges and constraints they work under in order to fend for their families. The case studies and testimonies are particularly meant to inform policy action and lobby for targeting women farmers and their priorities.

To this end, five case studies have been developed and the key messages emerging from the case studies have been presented to the Women Leaders Forum. Further analysis of the policy implications of the emerging issues from the case studies is being done after which the information will be packaged for policy advocacy and awareness raising.

#### Group Plans and priorities for 2009

The core group of farmers involved in the LOAFS program have met and shared their plans for 2009. A main goal of 2009 is to increase on the quantities of the crops that each farmer will grow. Arrangements have been made to invite resource persons from Serere Research Center to engage with the farmers on the growing of foods such as millet, sorghum, cassava, sim sim and ground nuts. The resource persons will also come with improved seeds for these crops.

#### Exposure visits, linkages created and follow-up action

The 2008 WFD celebrations were historic in that a group of women from Western Kenya travelled to Uganda to attend the event. This visit exposed the women of Kenya to the realities lived by their Ugandan counterparts. The Ugandan women were greatly inspired by the songs sang by their Kenyan sisters and resolved to compose songs which they will use to communicate their messages, entertain and build solidarity amongst them.

Strong bonds of friendship were established between the community based organizations in Uganda and Kenya. Both sides of the boarder were inspired by the visit and groups on both sides have made a commitment to put in place something to show in 2009 in terms of what they have grown. *Way Forward*

The above overview shows the progress CLEAR Uganda is making in its LOAFS program. Considerable momentum has been generated making the achievement of the set objectives in the anticipated period most likely.

## Work Plan January – December 2009

Year 2009	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Development of community level work plans for the 2009 planting season												
14 Sub-County Food Security Meetings (9 <sup>th</sup> – 13 February)												
Linkages with Serere Research Center, NAADS program and extension services												
Purchase and distribution of seeds												
Preparation of gardens and planting												
Follow-up on case studies												

including identification of entry points for targeting women farmers												
Storage facilities (granaries) – construction												
Weeding of gardens												
Monitoring visits												
Harvest, drying, storage												
2009 WFD celebrations												
Follow-up												

Bar Kobala Women’s Group

During the period, The Bar Kobala Women group were privileged to host Mr Kossi Toulassi from Nepad and share some experiences/ progress the group has made to date as an outcome of Nepad funding. Overall the group was extremely happy with Nepad to whom they have given credit for enabling them start improving their livelihoods and learn important business skills which will benefit them for a lifetime.

The group activities during the period were as follows:

Developing their action plans for 2009 – The group agreed that they were able to substantially increase their incomes and hence their livelihoods from the two selected activities in the

previous year – running a grains store and reclaiming land through enhanced food production. Although the crops planted, sunflower and chilies were severely affected by the poor rains, the group were optimistic that they could still do much by replanting the same this year.

The group thus focussed on identifying all the areas they would want to focus on during 2009 and would prioritise their activities based on potential income/profit to the group as well as ability to diversify activities to reduce reliance on rain for a good harvest. Some of the final activities the group identified that would focus on include:

Continuing to stock and run the grain/seed shop

Reclaiming and enhancing food production through production of sunflower and chillies in addition to planting hardier crops like millet and sorghum

Organising themselves to access financial support for purchase of a tractor to help in crop production. It could also be leased out to the wider community hence generate income to the women on the side

Organise to have linkages with suppliers of appropriate technology around the area to be able to benefit from tried and tested methods of working around the low rainfall volumes in the area

The activities of Bar Kobala were based on CLEAR's programme for reclaiming women's land rights, empowerment promotion, creating wealth and ending hunger at the household level.

### Kyaani Womens Group

During the period, the main activity with this CBO focused on ensuring sustainability of their sisal basket weaving activities in order to achieve maximum profits from the business.

CLEAR is confident that this group has learnt very fast the business skills required to run their venture. Their proximity to end markets contributed to their ability to source and lock in new markets for their product as well as obtain new inputs that are useful to redesign new products and penetrate new markets for handicrafts in addition to baskets.

**Table 1: Targets and Results Summary Table**

Results/ key deliverables	Targets	Results	Explanation
Kenyan and Ugandan CBOs continue implementing their action plans	3	3	-
Develop action plans for 2009 with all CBOs	3	3	-

**Challenges**

None.

**Next Steps**

The major activities for the following month are:

Activity	Month	
	February	Person Responsible
Baseline survey will be conducted for CLEAR Uganda to track progress made from their activities.	X	Program coordinator, Clear Uganda.
Kenyan and Ugandan CBOs continue implementing their action plans	X	ED, Program coordinator
Concretize forums and networking plans with partners and stakeholders	X	ED, program coordinator