



FINAL FARMER-LED DOCUMENTATION WORKSHOP

TSETSE
30 APRIL 2009

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP

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Appendix 1 - Attendance register.

1 BACKGROUND

PROLINNOVA put out a call for proposals from the country partners (CPs) to undertake farmer-led documentation (FLD) activities. The FLD activities were to involve the documentation of participatory innovation development (farmer-led joint investigation). PROLINNOVA South Africa submitted a proposal to undertake an FLD pilot in North-West (NW) Province in collaboration with the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) and the NW Department of Agriculture. The pilot will involve the documentation of joint experimentation activities being undertaken as part of an ongoing food security project of the ARC. The first phase of the project involved the evaluation of a number of varieties / cultivars of tomatoes, *amaranthus*, cowpeas and sweet potatoes on station. During the next growing season the farmers will be establishing cultivars that they selected from the first phase at their own homes and in their community gardens. The farmers that have been involved to date are known as "farmer trainers" and they have the responsibility to train other farmers in their villages on topics that they learn through participating in the initiative. It was anticipated that farmers' documentation of their activities would allow them to share their findings with the farmers in their groups, the farmer trainers from other villages, the ARC staff and staff from Department of Agriculture. The FLD pilot ran from August 2008 to May 2009, which covered the main growing season, allowing for a reflection workshop after the final harvest in April.

2 VENUE AND PARTICIPANTS

The meeting took place at the Tsetse Community Hall, a village outside Mafikeng. The participants initially met for tea at the house of Elizabeth Mmolotsi. They returned after the meeting for lunch before being transported back to the villages where they live by staff from the North West Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment (DACE).

The meeting was attended by:

- 12 farmers (8 women, 5 men) comprising 5 farmers from Tsetse village, 4 farmers from Ikopeleng, 3 farmers from Miga
- 6 officials (5 men, 1 woman) from the Department
- 1 researcher (male) from the NW University
- 2 NGO staff members (1 male, 1 female)
- 1 ARC staff member (female), and
- 1 representative from Red Cross (female).

3 SUMMARY OF THE WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

Elizabeth Mmolotsi opened the meeting with a prayer and facilitated a round of introductions by participants. Michael Malinga then ran through the agenda for the day and the process to be followed. Norman Thebe translated the agenda into Tswana.

Table 1: Agenda of the meeting

09.45	Tea
10.15	Welcome and introductions - Elizabeth
10.30	Run through the agenda and confirm the purpose of day - Michael
10.40	Farmers to set up their posters and tea break - Michael
11.15	Presentations by the farmers - Translate
12.45	Discussion about farmers' experiences, lessons learnt, etc - Translate
13.30	Way forward - Brigid
14.00	Hand-over of certificates - Ineke (ARC)
14.10	Lunch

3.1 Purpose of the day

Michael talked about the purpose of the day, which was largely to learn from the group's experiences with the use of cameras for documentation of their activities and to plan together the way forward.

3.2 Setting up posters

The farmers then spent time displaying their posters and other materials. They had been provided with cardboard and coloured markers at their villages the previous day so were able to prepare their posters in advance.



Figure 1: preparing posters and displays for the meeting.

3.3 Feedback on posters

The participant group then moved around the hall stopping at each poster so that the farmers could tell us about the photographs they had selected to display.



Figure 2: Participants give feedback to the group about the photographs on their posters.

Things that they had documented were:

- Work done since the previous year
- The own contribution they had made to buy seedlings
- The assistance from government with water provision and taps
- Being shown how to prepare soils
- Good crops
- Showcasing the vegetables they had sold
- Termites eating onions
- The harvest festival when they thanked themselves
- Disease in beetroot
- The covering used to prevent bird damage
- The effects of a shortage of water
- Donating vegetables to sick people at the clinic where they have their garden
- Keeping a record of activities so they do not forget
- Bird nets donated by Department of Health
- Onions with problems that were later replaced with another crop
- Demonstrating to someone else how to plant vegetables
- The water pump
- Visiting the local school
- Someone checking the donated pump
- Different cultivars of sweet potatoes
- The sharing of different methods
- Crops in the ground
- The effects of red spider mite in tomatoes which forced them to harvest early
- One members' sheep flock which had grown from 5 in 1985 to 130 currently
- Members of the group
- Described that she had started at 3 yards where the owners were not utilizing them fully
- Potatoes being planted for the first time
- Comparing good and bad cabbage heads
- The extension officer
- The Red Cross gardens where the member provides assistance
- Visit to another municipality
- An active member of the group at work preparing gardens
- Creative wire markers for marking different cultivar lines
- A child being taught to plant
- Craft items from the centre
- People helping in the garden during bad times
- Michael showing them how to use the watering can
- Making use of a chair seat to break the impact of the hose pipe and prevent erosion
- Younger people helping out older members
- Improving soil by making compost and then adding it to the soil

- The tunnel obtained after an application for funds was submitted to National Development Agency
- Showing crop rotation
- Right and wrong planting methods
- Tool used to make planting holes
- Receiving a trophy awarded by Department of Arts and Culture
- Peaches at a garden
- Receiving certificates (the manager of the project)
- End of year party.



Figure 3: Poster prepared by Mary Malebadi, Miga.

There was a query from the representative from the IKS centre at North West University regarding the choice of vegetables being planted. He asked why people were not planting indigenous vegetables. The farmers responded that while they know they are nutritious, many young people will not eat them. Michael talked about the man he met from Magogwane who is selling dried *morogo* to the local community.

Whilst showing their photographs, the participants also responded to other questions regarding their management systems, some saying that they use organic remedies for treating pests, others saying that they use Blue Death on cabbages because there are a lot of pests.

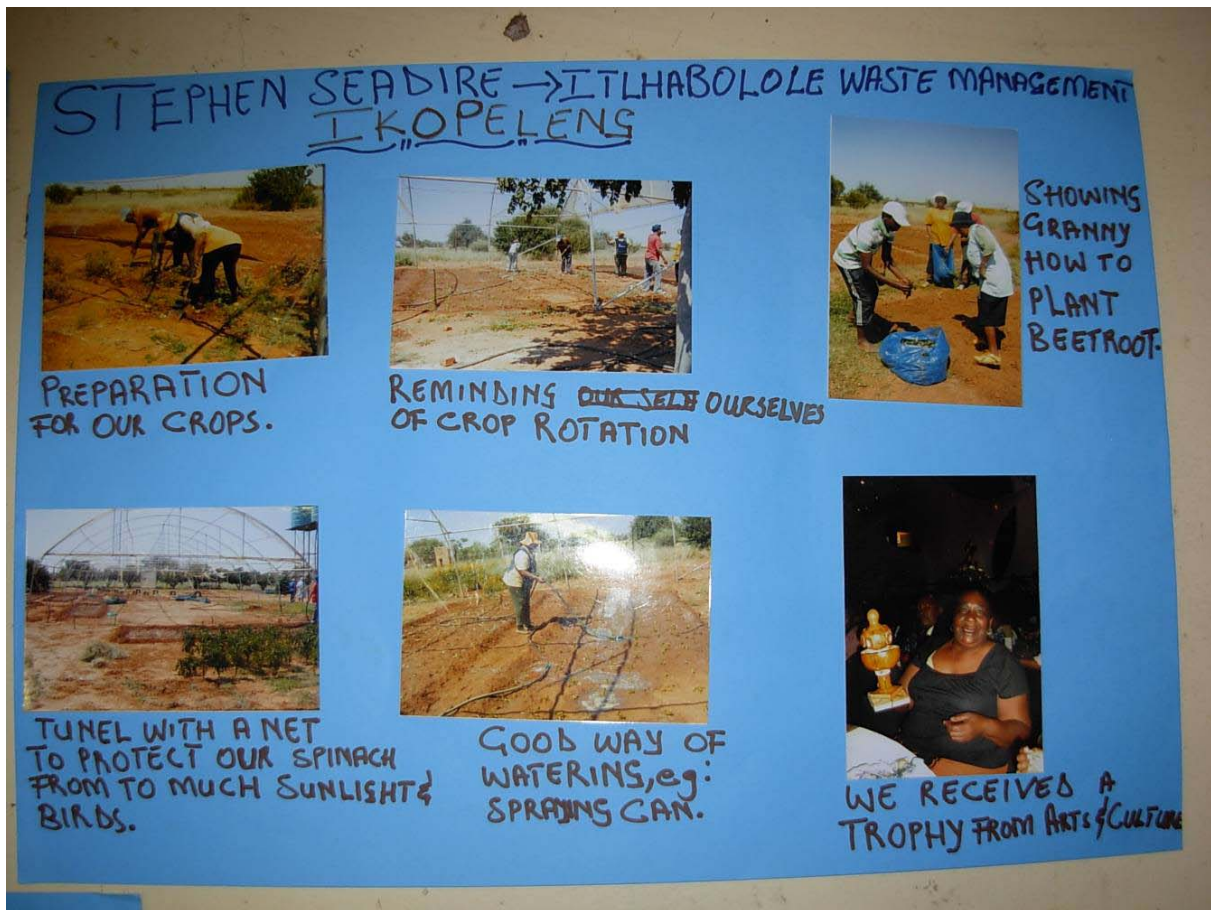


Figure 4: Poster prepared by Stephen Seadire, Ikopeleng.

3.4 Discussion about participants' experiences

This session was facilitated by Michael. Farmers responded in local language which was translated into English by Oscar Thafe, an official from the Department of Agriculture, for purposes of capturing. Much of the discussion related to the food security project rather than the documentation process or the use of cameras. While there may have been some confusion amongst the participants (including the facilitators) regarding the primary focus of the day, it became clear that the meeting provided an opportunity for farmers to report back on both aspects. Thus the FLD was seen as a means for being able to report back on the food security project rather than an end in itself.

Farmers said that they had learnt new production methods and had been exposed to methods used by people from different places. Another farmer, Gaaratwe Matane, said that while she started growing vegetables at school, she has met experienced people through the project,

including the extension officer, who organised for the ARC to come and work with them. She said that she has trained a number of other groups and asked that the Departmental officials be present when they train other groups.

Attempts were made to direct the discussion in an effort to obtain more information about the FLD aspects. Brigid asked the participants what feedback or advice they could give to Michael who had been involved in follow-up support to the groups. Ineke Vorster took the group back to the August workshop when they first received the cameras and learnt how to use them. She asked them what they thought of the whole process and how it could have been done better. They said that the initial training was enough to get started but that they had made use of the manuals to deal with some of the problems they encountered. Another person said that the photo documentation is more useful for old people because young people can just write things down.

Another farmer, Esther Montsho, said that she did not realise that the photographs would prove so useful in being able to give a presentation to others. She said she was grateful to have gone through the process and felt that it was advantageous to others. She said that "she thought she was playing but was actually building information".

One participant said that photographs can be used as evidence to show others that they have gardens and that it will be a way of developing interest. Elizabeth said that young people sometimes say that she will become ill because she works in the garden but now they can see that she is working with people (outsiders, people from other villages, school children) and that this is of benefit to the whole community.

Michael asked whether any participants had used their photographs. They said no, that they were still waiting to see how they could be used. He also asked whether people had taken photographs of other events but they said that they thought the cameras were only for use in their gardens. The point was made to the participants that the cameras belong to them and that they can make their own decisions about how they will use them.

Michael asked the Red Cross representative and the Departmental officials what they thought of the FLD process. The Red Cross representative said that she is very thankful that Gaaratwe is training Red Cross people.

Another farmer said that the photographs have allowed them to document their activities and have evidence of what they are doing.

Karado said that she would still like more training. She was in fact the only participant who had taken pictures for herself with the camera and had them printed herself in town, while the others had only had pictures printed when Michael visited the villages. Gaaratwe told everyone the process involved with taking the memory card to the camera shop, selecting pictures on the screen

for printing. She also told them what it cost to print pictures. This was an opportunity for farmer-to-farmer sharing and teaching.

3.5 Way forward

Brigid described which of the parties involved thus far (ARC, PROLINNOVA, Extension, NW University, etc) would be remaining to work in the community and which would not be involved beyond the time-frame of the FLD project. She highlighted that Ineke's involvement with the Food Security Project had come to an end and that Michael had only been involved while the FLD pilot was running. She said that there might be possibilities in future for the farmers to work with the IKS Centre and that there might also be opportunities for PROLINNOVA to partner with farmers, Extension staff and the IKS Centre and be involved in future activities.

The participants then broke into groups representing the three villages (Miga, Ikopeleng and Tsetse) to discuss how they would move forward in terms of the FLD aspects. After discussion they had the opportunity to give feedback to the meeting.



Figure 5: Group members from Ikopeleng discuss how they will continue with documentation.

Tsetse

Abner gave feedback on behalf of the group saying that they love taking photographs and will use it not only for vegetables but also to generate money for the group. They pointed out that the camera has a screen so they are able to show people straight away which creates immediate interest.

Ikopeleng

Stephen gave feedback, saying that they can generate money not just to buy vegetables but also to cover their transport costs to visit other villages. He added that if one person wants to use the camera they must sign it out from the office and then sign it back in.

Miga

Karado said that it would be nice to continue using the camera to document. She added that the responsibility lies between themselves about how to manage the camera. She said that they have a member of the community who does not charge them when he gives them lifts to town to print the photographs.

3.6 Closing the meeting

Brigid thanked all parties for attending the meeting, and the group for Tsetse for hosting it and providing lunch. Lesley gave feedback on behalf of the Department, thanking the participants and also indicating that they will be more active beyond 2010 when they are not as focused on the major 2010 projects.

Ineke explained that she will not be working with communities any more and explained that they are the last small-scale farmer groups she will be involved with directly. She asked them to continue sharing information and training others and also to keep trying out new ideas. She also asked them to maintain the resource centres she had initiated, keeping reports from the different people working in their communities as sources of information.

Ineke then handed out ARC certificates to farmers that had attended various training workshops that she had run as part of the Food Security project.



Figure 6: Esther accepts certificates from Ineke on behalf on the Tsetse group.



Figure 7: Departmental staff who attended the meeting.

Appendix 1 – Attendance list