



6 Months Report Template.

The Project has three objectives which include;

- To increase Crop production of the 120 targeted farmers by 2024
- Improve income of the 120 targeted farmers by 2024.
- Increased awareness and prevention of GVB and teenage pregnancies by 2024

Achievement/successes experienced in the last 6 months;

- Increased crop yield by enlarging the area used for crop production. Farmers now get 10 acres instead of just 4 acres. Increased agricultural yields, including those of maize, are the outcome of this. 30 bags of maize are what some farmers hope to harvest from their crops.
- Farmers are getting more and more interested in farmer managed natural regeneration. The practise of conserving regenerating tree stumps and wild tree seedlings in gardens is now practised by about 80% of farmers. The trees that have been preserved are used for shade, fruits, and firewood.
- Compared to earlier months and years, there is less violence in agriculture. Currently, men and women work together on average. Unusual considering that men typically assume they are the ones to sell the harvest, 65% of farmers exchange ideas on the sale of produce and management of the food harvest in a household. Some men have started helping their wives launch businesses. Domestic violence between men and women has declined. Men are starting to include women in decision-making, and they are also starting to value education by enrolling their kids in school.
- Good agronomic methods are now being adopted more often. 55% of farmers have adopted and used conservation agriculture concepts, which include crop diversity, permanent soil cover, and minimal soil disturbance (garden trenches, mulching, intercropping, and crop rotation). Higher yields and fewer crops failing due to pests and drought were the results of this.
- DDS-NK honours qualities of communal sharing, such as individuals eschewing selfishness. Ignorance is not to blame; laziness is. "It was significant that we shared the little seeds with my

seven following farmers, and this favourably influenced their families during those trying days of Hunger, Armyworm, and drought." Seedlings were given to the head farmer, but he had to divide them with his neighbours.

Challenges DDS-NK faced in the last 6 months implementing the project;

- Savings throughout the past three months were somewhat less than they were during the same time in 2021. This was brought on by the limited labour sold and insufficient money for farmers to save.
- A two-day post-harvest handling course was cut short due to the unrest. There was an operation during the time it was put into place; about 90% of the males in the community were kidnapped by the UPDF, but some of them were group members and some have yet to be brought back, so there is concern among the members whose men have not returned about a heavy workload.
- There has been a protracted dry spell over the past three months. Some farmers as a result lost their harvest. Due to a dearth of seed and the fact that their only supply was season-specific seed that had been ruined by weather and army worm, some farmers were unable to replace their crops.
- The bird army worm has taken over. Farmers and organisations were unable to help with its control because doing so would have cost a large investment. Due to the fact that farmers could not offer rapid aid, this presented a big difficulty. Solutions made locally were ineffectual.
- Insecurity. The staff support schedule for farmers was impacted by this. The project's inclusion of Community Based Facilitators (CBFs) from the community was its lone benefit. In September 2022, the CBFs filled the void for a couple of weeks when the project officer was unable to travel because the security forces had cordoned off and searched the Lobanya neighbourhood. Boys and men who were supposed to help with harvesting were detained and transferred to Acholi by security personnel for inspection. A staff member of another project was assassinated by armed warriors as he was travelling to visit his family in Moroto. The death of their colleague is still deeply felt by the other staff.

Lessons;

- Compared to prior years, our target farmers' (project participants') attitudes toward agriculture and their means of subsistence have improved. Better farming techniques are being used by farmers. Farmers are now better able to withstand unanticipated shocks.
- Farmers have ties to a number of stakeholders, including the local government and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs), including Mercycorps, which provides financial support for

agricultural inputs. This offers the organisation optimism because of the partnerships with numerous NGOs.

- Farmers are currently saving in kind (crop harvests) as opposed to money. They set aside an amount of agricultural harvest, such as maize, sorghum, beans, and millet, according to the anticipated financial savings. These contributions-in-kind will eventually be sold.
- We expect that the exposure learning visit will encourage change and a shift in thinking among the farmers now that they have seen what other farmers do to enhance their living conditions. Farmers' interactions with outside farmers have changed their lives.

Contribution to the spiritual well-being of the communities;

- In order to improve the quality of life in the communities where we work, DDS-NK, the development arm of the Church of Uganda - North Karamoja and MCC, incorporates evangelism into our programme mission through brief script reading, straightforward opening prayers, and sharing biblical success stories (farming the Gods way). Through this, we empower project participants and alter their perspectives. Our contacts with the communities where we work are governed by these biblical human service and social transformation techniques.
- As a result of interactions between targeted and untargeted participants, the work we undertake unites individuals for the benefit of everyone's wellness. Targeted and untargeted participants alike gain valuable life lessons about coexisting by valuing one another, resulting in a harmonious neighbourhood.
- The social capital and welfare of the community have greatly benefited from our activities. Farmers show this through working together, helping those in need, and speaking out for community change.
- Our efforts have aided in changing men's perceptions. Today, both sexes labour in the home, tend gardens, and even hold leadership positions.

Photos of our work during the last 6 months.



Conservation Agriculture Garden of Agwelle Joseph Bilantis in Lobanya. Caption By Moris Ogwaria (PO)



Farmers cooling their compost manure. Caption by Akudo Jacob (CBF)



A follower farmer (Dodoi Maria) storing her proceeds in the improved granary (Local) in Lobanya. caption by Denis Lochu Adiaka (CBF)



Farmers in Napetakeru being trained on how to use Post-Harvest Handling materials by CBF (Adyaka Faustine on grey Shirt) Caption by Moris Ogwaria

A simple mindset change story.

Eight (8, 3 females, 6 males) farmers travelled to the TAF-assured mixed farm in Lira City on September 26, 2022, for a learning exchange visit. The members were very impressed with the farm because it appeared to be simple but actually housed a number of businesses, including those for crop production, orchard management, aquaculture, apiculture, goat and rabbit rearing, sharing ideas about market connections, poultry, and vegetable production.

Farmers also visited the progressing farmers of the farm and shared a lot about various undertakings on the different enterprises after being guided through the various enterprises on the farm by the farm manager. These lessons had a significant impact on the 8 farmers' mindsets because the businesses they engaged in were always commonplace to them.

After returning from the exchange learning visit, the 8 farmers shared the lessons they had learned with the other farmers. On October 10, 2022, they decided to build a fish pond in Lobanya, digging it with simple tools (hoes, pickaxes, and spades) without assistance from the organisation. This marked a significant mindset shift because they had previously relied on the organisation for handouts in order to complete their own tasks. The main issue is that they might require additional materials (cement) and expert assistance with regard to site selection and fish species that are within their range. This is a tale about changing one's mindset.