

## **ACTION RESEARCH TRAINING IN MOROTO**

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2008

**Venue:** Mount Moroto Hotel

**Facilitator:** Rita Aciro – ULA

### **Introduction**

An Action Research Training workshop was conducted by UGANDA Land Alliance in collaboration with Karamoja Agro-pastoral Development Program (KADP) funded by the Minority Rights Group (MRG). The main aim of the program was to engage community leaders from Community Based Organizations, Local Government, Women's Groups and Community Elders to reflect on the activities in which they have been engaged, in order for them to draw lines between their achievements and failures and lessons learnt in the process so that they are able to evaluate themselves and think of collective actions for better future performance in advocacy work.

The participants of the workshop included:

- Community leaders including LC1, LC2 and LC111 officials of Iriiri sub-county
- Community Based Organisation in Iriiri sub county. The CBOs represented were Christian International peace Service (CHIPS), Omani Man Community Development Initiative (OCODI) and Iriiri Farmers' Society (IFS) and religious Leaders from Iriir sub-county.
- Representatives of some non governmental organizations in Moroto. These included; Matheniko Development Forum (MADFO), RIAMRIAM Civil Society Network and the Center for Legal Assistance (CLA).

Out of the 30 participants who attended the workshop, 8 were women. The number of women is much smaller because of the literacy levels in Karamoja which is worse for women.

### **Training Objectives**

The following objectives were outlined as the action research training objectives:

1. To share information on actions undertaken to resolve community problems
2. To enable community reflect on the actions undertaken in order for them to plan for the future
3. To help community leaders develop confidence, critical thinking and reflection skills.
4. To enhance community leaders skills in Action Research to strengthen their advocacy skills.

The facilitator guided participants through the Training (Action Research) process under the following subtopics:

- Introduction to Action Research (Introduction and Background to Action Research, AR Process and Research Context)
- Goal of Action Research

- Introduction to Programme Evaluation – Purpose and Program Evaluation Standards
- Research - Purpose for Research
- Similarities and Differences between “Action Research”, “Program Evaluation” and “Research”.
- Benefits of Action Research
- Action Research Cycle
- Introduction to Advocacy – Definition, Problem Identification, Setting advocacy objectives, stakeholder analysis,, media strategies for advocacy, networking and coalition for advocacy and the key elements of advocacy.

At the end of every session, the participants were engaged in a self reflection exercise to enable them relate the discussed topics to their real situations. From this, the participants were able to understand the concepts discussed. In the discussions, participants were divided into two groups; one for community leaders and another for representatives of CBOs and NGOs. Each of these was found to have distinct activities that needed to be reflected upon. The following were the outcomes from the group discussions on actions undertaken.

Sector	Activities	Actions by the Community	What has worked (Successes)	What has not worked (Limitations)
<b>Community Leaders</b>				
Agriculture	Sensitising people on the methods of farming and selection of good seeds, early planting of crops and timely weeding	Attend community meetings  Raise concern over particular community needs	Active participation by the communities. Positive response from service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate seeds</li> <li>• Expired seeds</li> <li>• Poor timing</li> <li>• Inadequate extension staff</li> </ul>
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducting security meetings</li> <li>• Organizing drama for peace</li> </ul>	Meet LCs and clan leaders	Some organizations facilitated by providing transport e.g KADP	Peace didn't materialize
Water and Sanitation	Teaching people to maintain hygiene in their homes	Practicing and maintaining hygiene standards	Positive response by maintaining hygiene	
	Advocating for provision of safe water ie boreholes	Contributing money and labour. Cleaning and	Positive response by service providers ie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lack of trained pump mechanics</li> <li>-Lack of spares</li> </ul>

		protecting borehole, springs and dams	NGOs and Local Authorities	
Education	Conducting education campaigns	Sending children to school	Active participation by communities	Lack of supportive facilities in schools
<b>Community Based Organizations</b>				
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of farm inputs including seeds and pesticides</li> <li>• Training in agronomic practices</li> <li>• Seed loaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending community meetings</li> <li>• Applying acquired inputs and skills</li> </ul>	Dedicated staff to do the work	Inadequate funds to implement some programs
Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitization</li> <li>• Advocating for and promoting the rights of disadvantaged groups</li> </ul>	Positive response from the community	Good working relationship among stakeholders. Community participation	
Peace Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of peace committees</li> <li>• Training on conflict management</li> <li>• Conducting community dialogue meetings</li> </ul>		Community's eagerness to have peace. Participation of security organs	Political interference. Inadequate funding
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitation of dams (by CHIPS, DWD)</li> <li>• Borehole repairs</li> <li>• Training of water source committees and pump mechanics</li> </ul>	Protection of boreholes and dams	Good working relationship	Some degree of lack ownership by the communities.

The exercise helped the participants to reflect on the action that they have undertaken to help their communities and measure the results and outputs from these actions.

After the workshop the participants were able to reflect on what they have learnt and how it has impacted on their experiences and perceptions. One participant had this to say about the training.

*I very much appreciate the organizers of this program for initiating such an important thing in our sub-county and for teaching us very important issues for our lives. At first, I thought that since I was not educated, the training would not benefit me. But at the end I find myself in the way I look at things. I hope when I go back home, I will be able to manage my family better and contribute more to community activities. I have more morale of educating my children further. (Lorem John, Elder from Iriir)*

Other reactions from participants on the lessons from the workshop.

- *Acquired knowledge on new concepts ie Action Research, Program Evaluation, Planning, Reflection and critical thinking.*
- *Learnt to be more practical than theoretical this is more relevant to our situation.*
- *Participants have appreciated the advantages of working as a team (community participation)*
- *Have understood the steps to follow to achieve the objectives of a program.*
- *Have learnt that planning is a process.*
- *Monitoring and evaluation of a program should be external to avoid bias.*
- *Objectives of the program must be clear.*
- *Need for continuous reviewing of activities.*
- *The community should be accountable to all community activities.*
- *Learnt on how to reflect on our actions.*
- *How to develop critical thinking*
- *How to apply advocacy skills on a community problem / issue.*
- *How to reflect and plan.*