

## UGANDA

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### Local collaborating institutions:

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Mbarara Local Government

National Agricultural Research Organisation

### Description of Activity:

Recognizing the importance of agriculture to Uganda, fragility of her major land resources, and the pressure exerted by the rapidly growing population, a team of Uganda scientists joined UNU/PLEC project to study how the diversity of land management practices in the country could be used to halt current trends of land degradation. Within the goal of PLEC and under the umbrella theme of East African Cluster of PLEC (EAPLEC); Developing sustainable agriculture in diverse and dynamic ecosystems, the Uganda sub-cluster focused on hilly and mountainous areas of South Western Uganda. The aim was to develop models of acceptable agricultural practices that promote conservation ( i.e. enrichment and sustainable use) of useful biodiversity on farmland, for use in Uganda and other related agro-ecosystems.

Agrodiversity (landuse systems management practices biophysical resources e.g landscape and soil, biodiversity and socio-economic aspects) of the study area was assessed in three stages and levels:

- Rapid rural appraisal at regional level (Mbarara and Ntungamo districts)
- Landscape and community level of Mwizi and Kabingo , especially Bushwere and Kamuri (respectively) sites.
- Demonstration site level for Bushwere parish in Mwizi subcounty.
- In Bushwere, indicators were examined at landscape, household and plot levels.

A database was established, some available on PLEC website and demonstration activities conducted with expert farmers as trainers. Other collaborating farmers, local leaders and policy makers were trainees and evaluators. From collaborating farmers evolved 21 experimental farmers and three formal groups focusing on agrobiodiversity in development. Participation of local farmers in particular, local leaders, and Policy makers at local district and national levels and University graduates and students was emphasized throughout the project.

Involvement of other stakeholders was promoted at various sages, through net working meetings, workshops, exhibitions and mass media. PLEC scientists were facilitators in these processes.

Despite financial constraints, and transport problems in the first two years, progression of activities and involvement of all stakeholders has been good and productive. Impact has also been progressive and sensitization of general populace in Bushwere demonstration site specifically and decision makers at district and national level is satisfactory.

Bushwere was developed into a model parish for using agrodiversity to conserve biodiversity. Several models locally acceptable approaches on how to make agro-biodiversity improve livelihoods have been developed. These models however could be further evaluated. And disseminated to foster adoption. Some papers have been presented at national and International for a and a few of these published but only in scientific journals. Facilitation for translation into simple local formats is needed.

The cluster has initiated measures for continuity of PLEC work in Uganda, some of which require direct financial support.