



Newsletter

Newsletter N°16

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Summary

Donors and
Collaborating
Partners



■ Partners News

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Calendar

**Nov. 9- 13
2009
PMN
Conference-
Honiara**

**18 - 20 Nov.
2009
KGA program
Review**

**7 - 10 Dec.
2009
KGA Quarterly
Planning
Workshop-
Honiara**

Editorial

Fourteen years after its establishment, Kastom Gaden Association has been at the forefront to support rural farmers to develop their agricultural livelihoods and food security. This was achieved through various projects and mostly with the generous support of our donor partners. AusAID by far remained KGA's major donor, complemented by other donors for specific projects. The organization has evolved over the years but maintained its original mandate.

In May 2009, Kastom Gaden Association (KGA) and AusAID's Community Sector Program had entered into a landmark partnership agreement to provide "core funding" for the initiative in strengthening food security and rural livelihoods. The program has enabled KGA to implement its new approach of working with the rural partner organizations to deliver agricultural related services to the rural communities within the country.

To achieve this, ten rural partners were selected out of 87 existing organisational members/ partners. They were from Choiseul, Western, Makira/Ulawa, Guadalcanal and Malaita provinces. The selected partners represent a cross section of groups such as a women's association, farmers association, institutes with formal setups, farmer field school and family based committees.

To date, we are five months into the program and our rural based partners were committed to carryout their scheduled quarterly activities. KGA has deployed some of its senior staff to the partners to provide guidance and mentoring, as part of its ongoing support for the partners.

We are publishing this Newsletter to update you on these actions. We also hope that we can make use of this Newsletter as a vehicle to explore with you various ways and means to favour agricultural exchange and collaboration.

In the meantime do not hesitate to contact us at Kastom Gaden Association, Burns creek, Honiara or e-mail us at clementh@kastomgaden.org

From Clement Hadosaia, Program Support Officer (Inf. M&E) and Thecla Limai, PMN Coordinator.



First Partnership Consultation Workshop at Takwa Germplasm Centre (July 8th -10th 2009)

For many years, I have known of the good work of KGA especially on food security and agriculture livelihoods in the northern region of Malaita province. I had been a bystander for sometimes but when I attended one of their trainings, I realise the importance of it and eventually practiced it to the benefit of my family. Quote from an anonymous farmer- Takwa.

The Baetolau Farmers Association is made up of farmer members within the northern region of Malaita province. The region's population is one of the highest in Solomon Islands and therefore land use has been an ongoing issue for the people. KGA has been working with the group for the last couple of years on different projects, to address food security issues, agricultural livelihoods and sustainable land practices.

Baetolau Farmers Association was selected to be one of the ten partners that KGA will work with under its new program approach. On 8th July – 10th July, KGA held its first partner consultation & planning workshop at Takwa Germplasm Centre for the Baetolau Association. Board members and Committee representatives of Baetolau as well as key personnel's from KGA including a Terracircle Consultant Mr Tony Jansen attended. The workshop covers important areas of consideration under the new Program, as well as the partnership agreement. The partners had also completed their quarterly work plan and budget during the workshop. At the end of the workshop, a partnership agreement was signed between KGA and the Baetolau Farmers Association. Under the partnership, Baetolau Association is expected to deliver KGA services and activities to the farmers and PMN members within the northern region of Malaita.

Apart from the above, other partners had also concluded their partnership agreement with KGA.



PMN News digest

The PMN News is produced with the help of the Kastom Gaden Association. The PMN is a network of farmers; NGO's Government Extension Workers, Rural Training Centre's and Community Based Groups.

The PMN aims to:
Share planting Material among PMN members and interested village farmers
Conserve local planting materials for the future by farmers and for farmers.
Encourage crop diversity which leads to food security.



Kakake variety



Dried Seeds

Central link nius

New AVRDC varieties now available - Burns creek.

The seed bank now has many new different varieties of vegetable seed supplies from AVRDC project. The varieties are, tomato (big) sweet pepper, hot chillies, egg plant and yard long bean. Most of these are open pollinated varieties. It's easy for farmer to collect and save seeds. Those varieties can be grown on any soil except for the wet season. It could disturb the growth of plant and may produce less yield/ fruit. The varieties are producing high yields and quality fruits. The seeds are much better than other overseas seeds and are much similar to our locally varieties, which means that you can grow and save your own seeds for the next planting season. As you know, the seed varieties had already grown well locally and produced high yield.

Seeds Available!!

The following seeds are now available from PMN seed production and the seed bank. Please send in your requests to Ms Rita Amiki who is in charge of seed production and the seed bank.

PMN 1 Ground cover-long Bean Brown seed
PMN 2 Ground cover- long Bean Black seed
PMN 3 Sweet Basil
PMN 11 Snake Bean
PMN 17 Lucy's Bean
PMN 18 Red corn
PMN 26 Vudutaru Tomatos
PMN 28 Cow pea
PMN 30 Single yellow marigold
PMN 31 Velvet Bean
PMN 36 Mung Bean
PMN 38 Stripe eggplant
PMN 39 Purple long Eggplant
PMN 89 Sweet Peppers
PMN 93 Big red pepper
PMN 100 white Peanut
Island red Tomato
Yellow Corn

PMN active members attend Seed Production workshop hosted by AVRDC Solomon Island.

Three PMN active members attended a seed production workshop with AVRDC World Vegetable Centre - Solomon Islands. The workshop is about Sharing of knowledge and skills on seed production to farmers, based on seed processes, pollination, improvement of seed quality and production of quality vegetables by farmers.

The workshop participants were interested to learn different methods involved especially with vegetables that are easy

to adopt and grow. The workshop covers plant breeder, seed germination and floral biology of selected vegetable crops. After the workshop, one of the participants Mr John Sala commented; we had learned a lot especially on floral biology of vegetable plants and pollination. We are now confident to improve our seed production and storage in seed gene banks.

Recommended Varieties at KGA bulking sites available for distribution.

There are 33 varieties of sweet potatoes both SPC / local and orange varieties available to be distributed to the Germplasm Centres through out the Provinces.

Germplasm Centres	Province (Region)	Contact Person
Tepabakia (Mondo) Rannoga Island. -Lambulambu - Vella la vella. -Sausama kukudu - Kolombanagra Island -Ghatere Makira -Tetena, Toroa, Mouta Borooni Makorukoru	Western	Gibson Buka
	Western	Mazori
	Western	Frank Lave
	Western	Silas Kere
	Western	Puia
	Makira (star harbour area)	Francis Wehi
	Makira (Wainoni)	Miashark
	Ulawa	Satcliff Navo
	Makira (Arosi area)	Peter warito
	Makira (star harbour area)	Joseph Vale Brian Rore
Guadalcanal -Vuranini -Turusuala	Guadalcanal (west) Guadalcanal (weathercoast)	Peter Lianga
Talise.	Guadalcanal(weathercoast)	Paul
Monga	Guadalcanal (north east)	Nancy Pule
Hanipana	Central	Anituja Aujare
Tunabusi (kilokaka village, Hograno). Sasamunga.	Isabel	Linford Jajo
	Choiseul	



Sweet Potato at a KGA bulking site

Any PMN member living close to the above Germplasm Centres ,you are most welcome to go to your nearest centre to collect these planting materials . For those of you who are not accessible to any of these Germplasm Centres, you can call in at our Burns Creek office to collect them, whenever you happen to visit Honiara. Ask for our Root Crop Technician Mrs Verlyn Lina for more information about the Planting Materials available from KGA bulking site.

Active PMN members involve in KGA activities.

A local farmer in the weather coast of Guadalcanal Province is spending most of his time with KGA activity. Peter Lianga, a local farmer from Talise, weather coast of Guadalcanal has been a long time member of PMN. He has appreciated and embraced the work of Kastom gaden in the rural area within the country. Lianga said people in his area do not understand what Kastom gaden is doing, but now they realise the importance and benefits of growing different root crops and conserving planting materials as KGA had advocated.

Lianga had established a demonstration farm/ garden in his village for interested farmers to look and learn from. This is part of KGA's bulking and distribution activity, to enable easy accessibility of planting materials by farmers within the region. Lianga's farm had 10 plots where he planted different root crop varieties on each plot on a rotational basis. Pineapple was planted at the edge of each plot.

He also has collections of local varieties of wild yams and other wild edible crops at his place. Lianga is an active PMN member who has done a great work at the rural level, promoting Food security, organic gardening and substance Agriculture at Weather coast of Guadalcanal.

USING LEGUME AS A SOIL IMPROVEMENT COVER CROP.

Legumes are very important plants to improve soil fertility because they produce protein foods for plants. Most plants take nitrogen (plant food) out from the soil when these plants are grown. The soil becomes poorer, but legumes can fix the nitrogen back into the soil and improve it.

It is good to grow some of the legume plants because they are easy to grow and can grow quickly and improve our soil to produce healthy plants. Therefore we wish to encourage you to plant more legume cover crops such as beans, peanuts and velvet beans to improve and enrich your soil. When your soil is fixed, you can now sow a new crop to benefit from the natural nitrogen input.

Sausama Women Farmer's Network.. A successful model for rural community.

Have you ever heard of Sausama Women Farmer's Network group?

Well, if you happen to visit Gizo - Western Province, do not hesitate to meet these hard working woman's along the market area with their tally and market record books every Thursdays and Fridays each month.

Sausama Women Farmer's Network was established more than 10 years ago with 32 families as members. The network mainly facilitates marketing for their members and besides that they buy copra from other farmers. When asked about their network and what changes it brings to their lives, their response would always be "barava helpem mifala tumas". The network was able to purchase two big wooden canoes and an out board motor engine to transport their fresh produce to sell at the Gizo market.

The network has been admired by other women farmer's around the western Province, particularly Simbo, Kolombangara, Rannogga and Vella la vella, who had contemplated to form a similar group. When asked again about the network's success story their simple answer is this; good team work, women's involved are committed and trust worthy farmers who must be accountable and responsible to the network.

So, don't miss your chance to meet these women when you visit Gizo market.

About Kastom Gaden Association (KGA)

Quick facts

- Established in 1995 as an Agricultural Program of Appropriate Technologies for Communities and Environment (APACE).
- Registered as a local Non-Government Organisation in 1999, with KGA's office located in Burns Creek, East Honiara.
- Mission Statement: KGA Works with farmers at the village level, promoting self-reliance through strengthening food security and sustainable livelihoods development, to help improve lives of rural people.
- Current Trust Board Members: Joini Tutua – Chairman, Moses Pelomo – Vice Chairman, Josephine Teakeni – Secretary.
- Produced three assessment reports on food security and livelihood potential for Guadalcanal's Weathercoast "People Living on the Edge", Makira's Weathercoast "Extreme Living" and Malaita's East Kwaio & Central Kwara'ae regions called "Unheard Voices of the Bush".
- Had eighty seven (87) partners in the provinces.
- KGA's Planting Material Network (PMN) membership currently totals more than two thousand (2,000 plus) members throughout the country.
- Promotes sustainable agriculture development based on organic practices that enhances soil fertility for sustained food production and food security.
- Adopt and Practised Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA) approach.
- Develop innovative approaches and programs to improve food security, self-reliance and

sustainable village agriculture in Solomon Islands.

- Facilitate and participate in the formation of farmer organisations and appropriate farmer network.
- Facilitate farmer to farmer learning and sharing and build capacity of farmer organisations and lead farmers, especially those involving women.
- Practice gender equality by empowering and involving women in all KGA programs and activities.
- Provision of farmer services, information sharing, mentoring support and appropriate trainings.
- Bulking and distribution of introduced and local varieties of seeds and root crops to germplasm centres and rural farmers.
- Establish net houses (igloos) to preserve clean pathogen tested materials for propagation of sweet potato varieties.
- Enhance poverty reduction initiatives by providing opportunities for livelihood development in rural families.
- Encourage and promotes local food production and consumption for healthy living.
- Maintain close collaboration and networking with other partner organisations and donors both locally, regionally and internationally.
- Since inception, various donor funded projects had been successfully implemented throughout the provinces, including the most isolated areas.

KASTOM GADEN ASSOCIATION KEY STAFF

- Jack Kalisto, Program Coordinator
- Clement Hadosaia, Program Support Officer - Information & M&E
- Claudine Watoto, Program Support Officer - Capacity Building & Networking
- Andrew Nanau, Program Support Officer - Food Crops & Organic Farming
- Roselyn Kabu, Program Support Officer – Women & Nutritional Health
- Mary Esekana Timothy, Program Support Officer – Youth in Agriculture
- Michael Qwanafia, Program Support Officer – Small Livestock
- Ronstard Gapu, Program Support Officer – Marketing & Food Processing
- Susie Stanley, Finance & Administration Officer

What's on your mind?

With this issue we are initiating the Kastom Gaden Association Newsletter, as a tool to disseminate information on our and our partners' goings-on. But since we would like this Newsletter to be of service to you, we would like to know what you think and what you'd like to read next time, knowing that this will be issued once every three months.

For the moment this Newsletter has no pre-defined sections. Should you like to see specific segment appear regularly, do let us know! The "game plan" is to have an informative and comprehensive newsletter, while remaining brief.

So, send us your comments and suggestions to clementh@kastomgaden.org or theclav@kastomgaden.org

We are just a click away!

Contact:

Kastom Gaden Association
Burns Creek
West Honiara
Solomon Islands

Kastom Gaden Association supports and promotes local food production & consumption and agricultural livelihood development that address the main challenges related to food security and sustainable agricultural development in Solomon Islands. The head office is located at Burns Creek, west Honiara. It is situated next to Zai Na Tina Organic & Demonstration Farm.

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