



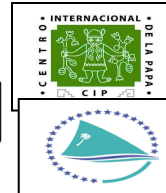
Newsletter

Newsletter N°17

www.kastomgaden.org

Donors and Collaborating Partners

Summary



- Editorial
- Partners News
- PMN News digest
- PMN Central Link News
- Farming Tips
- KGA News

Editorial

The Strengthening Food Security and Rural Livelihood Program, which was funded by AusAID through the Agriculture Livelihood Program (ALP) and implemented by KGA, had completed year one of the program on June 2010. It is pleasing to note, that despite the various challenges faced during the initial project start up phase, there is a significant increase in activities implemented by its 10 rural based partners, during the first year. This is a positive indication that the new approach of working with rural based partners as implementing agencies is an effective way of delivering services to the rural farmers.

For the second year, KGA will continue with the same arrangement to work with the partners with a possibility of one or two additional partners being involved in the program. The aim is to reach out more to the Planting Material Network (PMN) Members, which currently totals to 2,039 members throughout the country.

The diverse nature of the program and differing situations within the areas we've worked had enabled us to experience the realities of working in a rural setting. We had gained enough local knowledge and we are confident to move forward with the program in the second year and onwards. Though it is difficult to reach out to all our PMN members, the strategy to train more local based Trainers in related technical areas will enable the much needed knowledge to be spread out among the rural farmers. We hope to continue with this program to breach the knowledge gap and to invigorate the farmers' ability to achieve food security and be self-sufficient.

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 support agricultural exchange and collaboration. KGA team welcomes any positive comments from you...

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.

Calendar

24-27 August
2010

**Quarterly
Planning
Meeting-
Honiara**

4 Oct. 2010
**Quarterly
Planning
Meeting- Tulagi-
Gela**

1 Nov. 2010
**KGA to Join
SINPA**

Oct- Nov. 2010
**Reflection
w/shop**

Partners/ PMN News



Participants at 4th national PMN conference 2009 - Honiara

The Planting Material Network Member representatives had gathered in Honiara for a 3 days PMN National conference from November 11 – 13 November 2009. This event had bring in 66 selected PMN representatives from all provinces, to review the PMN services, share ideas, experiences and make recommendations for future directions, after being in suspense for 5 years, due to non availability of funds.

There is much enthusiasm among the PMN farmers at the meeting as they share their experiences and new techniques with each other. As part of the program, the members had also received brief trainings in various farming methods with a field visit to Zai Na Tina organic & demonstration farm and at Don Bosco Technical Institute – Tetere. During the visit to these sites, they were given briefings and advise by the host organisations on various methods and practices they had used. It has been a rewarding experience for many as they interact more with each other, especially the young farmers who were keen to learn more from the much experienced ones.

The hosting of the conference had also enabled KGA to brief the PMN members/ farmers about the current program “Strengthening Food Security and Rural Livelihood” new approach and how services will be delivered to members. Each Component Managers or Program Support Officers (PSO) including the Program Coordinator gave an overview of the functions and related activities of their components. The information session had also enabled the PMN members to ask questions, seek clarifications and interact with individual PSO’s on specific areas of interest to them.

At the conclusion of the conference, the members had made the following recommendations to KGA:

- Improve information/planting material sharing. Information shared to farmers must be accurate and consistent.
- Create a component for PMN- focus on members’ activity.
- Update PMN members- strengthen networking among members. KGA staff should know all the members and PMN members should know the members in their own area
- Training for members- trainers/facilitators- Identify potential trainers and facilitators to be PMN trainers in the village or Province
- Climate change be included in KGA program
- Commitment from KGA and members on the implementation of recommendation
- Partners to target members on catchment area and head office to work with outside partners.
- Individual membership fee remain \$15.00 dollars and associations or groups increase to \$20.00
- The meeting also nominated Frank Tabai and Catherine Pule as candidate to be board members of KGA which the board of KGA have the final decision.

More on the report, visit the KGA website: [www.http://kastomgaden.org](http://kastomgaden.org)

News from PMN member of East Kwaio (GOIKWAIASINGA village)

A Local farmer in East kwaio of Malaita Province finds something new after participating in an exchange program at Gwanafiu Farmer Field School, a KGA partner in Central Kwara'ae. Mr Patterson Andrew is a community leader in his village and had always wanted to help his people to improve their ways of doing things, especially in the mountains of East Kwaio. Thus by attending the exchange program which involved practical field trainings in related KGA activities at Gwanafiu, he had finally fulfilled one of his life time dream. The exposure had given him more confidence on how to improve his newly created demonstration garden in his village where other peoples/ farmers within the area could come and learn something new. The demonstration garden is meant to encourage farmers to do the same as he did, such as planting different plants and farming methods, which include short and long term crops that will lead to food security for their family.

One of Mr. Patterson's dreams is to bring formal education to his people and as everything else in life, this comes with a struggle. Soon a Kindergarten class will start when the building is completed. This will offer a fresh opportunity for their children's to attend classes to gain proper education as others.

Mr. Patterson said that they have cried for a long time and only KGA heard us. The politicians only came to our villages during the election period and government assistance is simply absent. However, KGA's involvement within our community will help us to go on in life. As a result, Patterson collected 30 farmers from east kwaio to become Planting Material Network members. The new PMN members will help Patterson to carryout their activities and involve in trainings provided by KGA at their place.

DON'T FORGET THE UNHEARD VOICES FROM THE LONELY MOUNTAIN OF EAST KWAIO, he lamented.



AN ACTIVE GERMPLASM CENTRE IN THE CENTRAL ISLANDS PROVINCE

Hanipana germplasm centre in Gela is one of the centres selected during the SEAREM Project in 2006.

With the completion of the project in 2009, Hanipana Germplasm centre has continued with the centre activities which include the bulking and distribution of root crops such as yam, pana, cassava and sweet potato varieties both local and SPC varieties. The centre has involved youth and women groups in the centre activities as well as awareness on food security and sustainable livelihood.

The centre had distributed lots of planting materials to local farmers, and semi- subsistence active farmers around Sandfly area, Gela. The planting materials include cassava, yam and potato vines both SPC and local varieties. In March 2010, some woman and youth groups were taught how to practice better land management, Fixed gardening and alley cropping at the centre. The centre had also established an emergency garden on wild yam called sebina and panatina.

As part of its reach out program, the centre had extended its program to Takuarodo where another PMN member Mr. James Takosi had established a swamp taro or kakakema garden. Mrs Nancy Pule said the centre is happy to involve in any activities that will bolster their capacity and meet the needs of its PMN members in the Central Islands Province.

Ms Selly Nato's Success Story

Ms Selly Nato is long time PMN member who has continually involved in KGA activities in Kolombangara Is, Western Province. She previously worked under the Sustainable Livelihood for Isolated Rural Areas project which was implemented by KGA. Currently Ms Nato operates her own poultry farm and vegetable garden with assistance from the Youth in Agriculture component.

It is through interest and commitment that she now enjoys the benefits and seeing her project progressing well. She use to sell eggs, hens & roosters to nearby villages every months, from her poultry farm. The demand for egg and meat was very high at the moment in her community. She is selling the eggs in dozens for \$24.00 per dozen, which is a good return for a local farmer, she said.

Ms Selly Nato who comes from Nusamahei village, Kolombangara Island was also a member of the Sausama youth marketing network. The network usually sell the members produce at Gizo market on Thursdays every week. In all, she had earned around \$250.00 each week for her poultry, root crops and vegetable sales. This is a good income for any one living in the village, so she is encouraging young peoples who might not have other paid opportunities to involve in self employment activities. After all, it is just money to meet our basic needs that matters and that can be created through simple farming activities, she commented.



Selly's renovated Poultry House & Vegetable garden

PMN Central Link News

The central link seed production is located at Burns creek near Zai Na Tina organic & demonstration farm. It is the centre where most members through out the country called in and collected their seeds. We send the seeds either through post or through our partners network whenever a member request them. The PMN also sell seeds to non members at \$5 a packet. For members the seed packets are free as part of their package for paying an annual membership fee of \$15 for individuals and \$20 for group membership.

We invite anyone with new varieties to send them to us so that we can replicate them and include them in our seed Bank now. So send seeds in to-day to renew your subscription fee, if you have a new variety.

Reminders for PMN members:

For those of you who have not renewed your membership fee, please send your \$15 subscription fee or the seeds/planting Material from your garden so that you can receive new seeds and the newsletter



Seed saving! Seed Bank! Seeds Available!

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

Variety name:

Lucy bean	Lettuce	Cowpea
Chai cabbage	Pumpkin	Peanut
Tomato	Okra	Ginger
Urban tomato	Green wing bean	Amarantha
Eggplant	Purple wing bean	Wema Melon
Yellow corn	Sweet basil	Snake bean
Ground cover bean	Coriander	Tumaric
Velvet bean	Melon pawpaw	Curry tree
Chillie	Tsoi sum	Saladia cabbage
Tumaric	Pachoi cabbage	Cucumber
Ping tung long eggplant		

Farming Tips



PLANTING MORE LEGUME PLANTS TO IMPROVE SOIL.

LEGUME Plants are a special group of plants. Most plants just take nutrients from soil when they grow, but legumes put nutrients back into the soil as they grow. This nutrient is Nitrogen. Nitrogen helps improve the soil health and is essential for plant growth.

Some examples of legume plants that people use in gardens are beans and peanuts. Legumes take in nitrogen from the air through their leaves and stem. Legumes have special nodules on their roots. The nodules are small balls that we can see when we pull up their roots. They put nitrogen from the plant into the soil. We can tell which plants are legumes by looking for those nodules and usually they have bean pods or tri leaves feathery leaves. Other example of legumes include: long beans, mug beans luceana trees, gliricidia trees, peanuts and cowpeas.

Legumes feed the soil, because they put important food (nitrogen) into the soil, so it is a good idea to plant legumes at different times. For example: You can plant legume on places where kumara or cassava were grown for a long period of time.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPOST

Compost is a heap of organic material that will rot and turn into a rich soil. There are different types of composts such as, worm compost, basket compost, hole compost and kitchen (sapa) waste compost. Kitchen waste or Sapa is where the rubbish from the kitchen was disposed everyday.

There are many good things about using composts as it contributes to soil improvement especially when the broken down organic matter feeds the soil and in turn improves the plant growth. It is simply a natural organic fertiliser that any body can make to boost the growth of plants.

Materials to be used in compost making:

- Rubbish - Banana leaves or other dry slashed leaves.
- News papers or unused papers
- Add soil and sawdust
- Add earth worms- a bucket full is recommended
- After adding the earth worms don't let the compost go dry.
- Water the compost when it is dry, because earth worms feed on soils when it is moist.
- Feed earth worms once a week on fruits like Pawpaw, Melon and cucumber (all fruits must be smashed).



A simple compost heap

Method:

Heap or pile all the materials that can breakdown and rot quickly inside the garden.

Add animal manures and food waste that can rot and turn into soil.

It is best to make these heaps or piles in different layers and mixtures of materials and organic matters.

How to apply compost in the Garden:

Screen and remove the worm from the compost soil, before applying the soil on your Garden.

THE BEAUTY OF LEGUME TREES

LEGUME TREES NOT ONLY FIXES NITROGEN, THEY BRING UP NUTRIENTS FROM BELOW THE VEGETABLE ROOTS ZONE ONTO THE TOP SOIL WHEN THE BRANCHES AND LEAVES ARE CUT AND USED AS MULCH. THIS IS DUE TO THEIR DEEP ROOTS WHICH TRAPS NUTRIENTS SUCH AS CALCIUM, PHOSPHORUS AND IRONS FROM BELOW.

So it is advisable for farmers to plant more legume trees such as gliricidia, casuarina (aru) luceana.

KGA News

Representatives of KGA's 10 rural based partners and farmers had ended a two weeks training program on Friday 4th June 2010. The Master Trainers training program was on Pest & Disease Recognition and the Principles of Organic Farming, were conducted respectively by Dr Grahame Jackson of Terracircle Inc. for the first week and by Dr. Shane Tutua of Zai Na Tina Organic Research & Demonstration Farm for the second week to Friday 4th June 2010.

According to Clement Hadosaia, the purpose of the training is to empower selected trainers from KGA's 10 rural based partners and Farmers to be trained in these specific areas to

gain the right skills and knowledge. In turn, these trainers were expected to impart the same knowledge to other farmers within their communities.

Basically, KGA recognises the need to increase the number of lead farmers with right skills and knowledge in the rural areas, hence the Master Trainer program is aimed to address this important need. We also recognise that it is difficult to train more people at the same time, thus it is preferable to have a Master's Trainer (TOT) Program so that the trainers will be able to meet some of the training needs within their own rural communities.

KGA is hopeful that with such training program, its rural based partners and active farmers will be able to fill certain gaps that exist in the rural communities within the country, especially the technical knowledge that is lacking among the farmers. KGA will continue to provide similar trainings this year, which will cover Livestock, Nutrition and relevant areas that are lacking among rural farmers. The workshop intends to provide a greater understanding of organic farming by going through the basic principles and practices of organic farming. The participants learn the rationale of organic farming and then delved into more detailed topics through presentation; handout notes, discussions, group activities and practical activities.

Most participants find topics to be very useful such as composting, soil organisms, soil management, crop rotation, biodiversity and climate change.

The 26 training participants come from Makira/ Ulawa, Temotu, Western, Guadalcanal and Malaita provinces. This includes 5 farmers from East Kwaio communities of Jordan, Bobota, Kwakwasinga and Derasaia villages and 2 from Burn Creek community in Honiara.

Small Livestock Component Activity Brief Update

Hello everyone

The livestock component is one of the components, that plays a major role in trying to work with the rural partners and build their capacity in improving the low management of pig and poultry.

The aim of the component is to establish small Livestock models in each partners within the Solomon Island. Currently, the component had completed the work on one of its planned models with the establishment a demonstration, research and training facility at Vanga Rural Training Centre on Kolombangara Island, Western Province. The facility will cater for pig, chicken and duck models and was completed around July 2010.



Currently , out of ten partners five had either commenced Working or completed their mini models within their partner site. The Vanga model will be similar to the Burns Creek poultry model. (seen in the picture here is the KGA Pig centre at Vanga with Michael Bilau (Livestock PSO) and two Vanga RTC students during construction.

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!

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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.