

# SAFE-World Project/Initiative Summary

**Country: Kenya**

Project/Initiative Title: PLAN International, Embu

Nos. farmers: 760

Hectares: 700

Improvement types

|    |   |    |   |   |    |   |   |   |
|----|---|----|---|---|----|---|---|---|
| 1x | 2 | 3x | 4 | 5 | 6x | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|----|---|----|---|---|----|---|---|---|

Success and Limits to spread

|          |        |
|----------|--------|
| Success  | Limits |
| 1b,1c,3c | 3b,7a  |

## A. Key Impacts

### ***A2 – Impacts on natural capital***

- ?? Less fertiliser is used;
- ?? cropping land is better conserved with improvements in soil structure in farms of very active farmers.
- ?? Inter-cropping and recycling of organic matter is now widespread. Active farmers have increased their diversity of both plant and animal species.

### ***A3 – Impacts on local community (social capital)***

- ?? Practising farmers better able to cope with drought and store food reserves and seed for longer periods.
- ?? Little attempt is made to reach vulnerable groups, the project works with community groups who request for training - demand remains high for the training.

### ***A4 – Impacts on households and individuals (human capital)***

- ?? Some mothers comment their children are sick less often and accrue this to access to more vegetables and fruits.

### ***A5 – Key changes in farm / regional system***

- ?? Increased crop yields, particularly relative increase of non-practicing neighbours in "dry" years. Maize, beans, cowpeas.
- ?? Approximately 50% trained farmers still using some techniques 5 years after start (i.e. 1994).
- ?? From 1991-1994 approximately 760 farmers adopted the same form of sustainable agriculture (approximately 60% of those trained), in small pockets within an area of 1600 km<sup>2</sup>.
- ?? Neighbouring farmers within the same total area have adopted and trained groups were encouraged to disseminate to them, but measurement of the extent was found difficult to do.

PLAN Embu runs many other projects in the area, including occasional relief. Changes in this topic cannot be accrued to the sustainable agricultural program. PLAN supported

micro-credit schemes and community organisation run separately- there is little integration.

Establishment of a 3 phase local training program over one year to supplement practical extension to groups.

Establishment of a monitoring and reporting system for the 5 extensionists to maintain records of individual farmer impact.

Attempts to integrate the extension program with all agricultural projects - tree nurseries, storage etc.

### **B. Types of Sustainable Agriculture Improvements**

Type 1: Better use of available renewable natural capital

Type 2: Intensification of single sub-component of farm system

Type 3: Diversify by adding new productive natural capital and regenerative components

Type 4: Better use of non-renewable inputs and technologies

Type 5: Social and participatory processes leading to group action for making better use of natural capital

Type 6: Human capital building through training-learning programmes

Type 7: Access to Finance

Type 8: Add value by processing to reduce losses and increase returns

Type 9: Add value by direct or organised marketing of produce to consumers

|                  | Yes/No | Narrative  |
|------------------|--------|--|
| Type 1           | x      | ?? Manure management and composting.<br>?? Contour farming.<br>?? Inter-cropping, cover crop and some mulching.<br>?? Soil conservation.   |
| Type 2           |        |  |
| Type 3           | x      | ?? Use of rhizobia for cowpeas and beans.<br>?? Integrated pest management.  |
| Type 4           |        |  |
| Type 5<br>Type 6 | x      | ?? Dialogue and observation with groups to understand the principles of organic matter recycling, diversity and ground cover e.g. using natural forest and the consequences of cleaning and mono-cropping as an example.<br>?? Starting from where farmers are and supplementing through training and practical field work. Encouraging farmers to try out new actions and compare with their own practices. |
| Type 7           |        |  |
| Type 8           |        |  |
| Type 9           |        |  |

### **C. Key Lessons: Success, Spread and Constraints**

#### ***C3 – Limitations preventing spread***

Organisational:

?? Quite inflexible and unwilling to facilitate fieldwork through adequate resources,

mobility etc.

- ?? No interest in networking within Kenya, difficulty for the program to share new experiences of others or to disseminate its successes/constraints.

Macro-economic:

- ?? Market prices tend to exploit subsistence farmers.
- ?? High levels of inequality - between rich and poor and in gender put heavy burdens - labour and finance on the resource poor.

National:

- ?? Support for sustainable agriculture is now growing fast, but many of it's proponents are lagging behind in using participatory approaches, and in considering the whole farm system (including the farmer) rather than simply introducing a few technologies out of the farm context, which is how it began in Kenya.

#### **D. Contact Point for Project/Initiative**

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