



## AGROECOLOGY IN UGANDA: CEFROHT'S COMMUNITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH

### WOMEN LAND RIGHTS REDRESS MECHANISMS AND EQUITY ARE STRONGHOLDS FOR AGROECOLOGY SCALE OUT.

At the heart of CEFROHT's work with communities is the understanding that there is no agroecology without secure land tenure and user rights. In many African communities, land grabs, large land investments and corporate elites are illegally and unfairly chasing many vulnerable persons off land, with impunity!

CEFROHT is currently working with communities to claim land as a human right. Under the Human Rights Enforcement Law, vulnerable persons especially women can and have claimed and won back their land as a right. Intervening with a legal team who educate communities, local government leaders, and law enforcement judicial officers; there is now a tremendous and very quick redress process for the victims.

A total of 64 land cases finished in a very short time of three months with another 700 cases solved using non-contentious means in communities and empowering the women and youths on standing out for their ownership and user rights.

Land and natural resource governance are elements of Agroecology. CEFROHT therefore uses the Human Rights Enforcement Act (HREA) to pursue access to justice for women land rights.

*"I am a mother of two children who was evicted by my father-in-law from my husband's house and the land where I was farming. The land was my only source of livelihood. I approached the Community Advocacy Group chairperson who called CEFROHT for their legal support. I am now happy that court helped me get back my land. I can sustain mine and my children's livelihood". **Said Hellen, a beneficiary.***

The Community Advocacy Groups (CAGs) (who are community paralegals trained by CEFROHT) mediate and link communities who need legal support to court, local leaders and CEFROHT. The CAGs also cause social accountability meetings between leaders and communities. With CAGs, CEFROHT has carried out and organized several community barazas on land and adequate living issues.



*On the left, CEFROHT legal team at the Kiboga magistrate's court after securing a judgement for Nakiranda Hellen and on the right, the legal team at the CEFROHT Kiboga satellite office with Kizza Jane (in gomesi) after supporting her get back her land.*

## CEFROHT AGROECOLOGY KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND LEARNING CENTERS (CAKNOW)

CEFROHT works to promote adequate living, specifically the right to adequate food for smallholder women and youth farmers. This is done through promotion of Agroecology using the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) that entails seven (7) principles: Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Transparency, Human Dignity, Empowerment and the Rule of law.

As a principle of participation, all CEFROHT interventions are community driven. During the community barazas on agroecology, members disclosed that they did not have homogenous knowledge about their agriculture practice. Indeed, they also identified many gaps about agroecology. Therefore, CEFROHT and the community agreed to set up Community Agroecology Knowledge exchange and Learning Centers (CAKNOWs) to address this gap.

These have been set up in Kiboga, Wakiso, and Mukono districts where smallholder farmers meet occasionally to share knowledge on Agroecology practices and locally driven innovations.

At these centers, women and youth farmers are trained and share knowledge on farming Agroecologically in vegetables, staples, herbs, spices, coffee, trees, fruit trees etc, engage in goat rearing as a social enterprise, and beekeeping practices as ways of economic diversification and biodiversity conservation. The bees are not only efficient pollinators for crops but also indicators of a safe and healthy environment free from synthetics. We have connected 250 women farmers to earth markets where they sell their agroecological food products at premium prices and have had improved household incomes. Our target is to reach 10,000 women farmers.



Activity at our Wakiso Community Agroecology Knowledge exchange and Learning Center (CAKNOW).



Aspects of beekeeping and goat rearing as ways of biodiversity conservation and animal health and welfare at our Community Agroecology Knowledge exchange and Learning Centers (CAKNOWs).

## COMMUNITY EARTH MARKETS

CEFROHT engaged local government leaders on their legal obligation as duty bearers on promotion of safe food which led to the establishment of two levy-free markets: Kiboga and Wakiso earth markets. There has been growing demand for the agroecological food products at the earth markets since their establishment. Although this is the case these markets had gone low on supply from the women agroecology farmers.

### What we have done

With support from Agroecology Fund Business Planning Grants, CEFROHT carried out a study on the supply constraints Agroecology women farmers face that hinder constant supply to the earth markets.

The findings from the study on the supply constraints included: low soil fertility, limited or no organic inputs, limited access to land, long dry spells, pests and diseases, lack of knowledge on agroecology practices, limited access to financial services, little or no value addition opportunities, transport hardships to reach markets, limited political will/support towards agroecology.

We have developed a sustainability plan on the production and marketing of the

Agroecologically produced agri-food products. The sustainability plan encompasses; citizen agency, capacity building in sustainable Agroecology production, post-harvest handling principles, legal empowerment of women on land rights, local government, private sector integration, enterprise development, business plan development, market linkages development and strengthening.

We have carried out community validation exercise meetings with women farmer groups in the local communities on agroecological production, marketing methodologies, practices to validate our findings, and have community buy-in of the developed sustainability plan.



Our Wakiso community earth market located in Gayaza town.

## SCHOOL FEEDING GOVERNANCE

Children in Uganda suffer hunger in schools to a tune of over 60% spending whole day with out food. The local government has committed to implement Agroecology; other government agencies agreed to support public food procurement guidelines and the National Agroecology Strategy as solutions to school feeding.

CEFROHT is using a multi-sectoral approach to promote sustainable and equitable school feeding and its governance. CEFROHT has engaged Ministries of Education, Health, Local government, Trade, Office of the Prime Minister, National Planning Authority, and the National Coalition of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) who have agreed to incorporate a stand-alone pillar of food and nutrition in the National Development Plan IV.



*An inner multisectoral group meeting with Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, National Planning Authority, Uganda National Bureau of Standards, CSOs and academia discussing school feeding.*



## THE SEED QUESTION AND AGROECOLOGY

Seed is an embodiment of cultural heritage. The state has an obligation under objective XXIV of the constitution to promote and preserve the cultural values and practices which enhance the dignity and well-being of Ugandans, including seed.

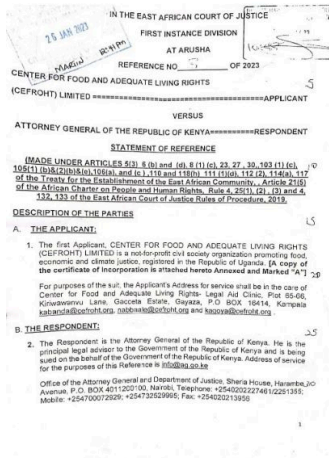
The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other people living in rural areas (UNDROP,2018) recognises the rights of peasants and rural people as fundamental human rights. This includes the rights to maintain, control, protect, and develop their own seed and traditional technology.

Local farmers' varieties have become increasingly vulnerable due to climate change, loss of small farms, market pressures, and seed privatization. Peasant farming communities have seen their local seed systems eroded, with grave repercussions on food production.

In our move to promote the right to seed, we filed a case in the East African Court of

Justice to challenge Kenya's lift on the ban on GMOs which are highly likely to cross to Uganda through the porous borders.

As we await hearing of the GMO case, we are empowering women small holder farmers at our Community Agroecology Knowledge exchange and Learning Centers (CAKNOWs) to preserve, multiply and exchange with farmers indigenous seed varieties and we are working towards supporting 12,000 local farmers in indigenous seed preservation and multiplication. This has promoted increased access to large diversity of locally adapted seed varieties and ultimately seed sovereignty.



On the left, is CEFROHT's GMO case that was filed at the EACJ and on the right, Indigenous seed variety multiplication at our Community Agroecology Knowledge exchange and Learning Centers (CAKNOW).

## A SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM: BLACK SOLDIER FLY (BSF) TECHNOLOGY AS A GAME-CHANGER FOR REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

All our community small holder farmers have decried reduced soil fertility. The integration of animal and poultry in farming is increasingly becoming impossible. So, in the knowledge exchange and learning community convening members requested CEFROHT to start and also teach them about the business of Black Soldier Flies.

More to that, CEFROHT conducted an agroecology business planning research as a community intervention to generate evidence for sustainable supply to agroecology markets. Findings from our study on supply constraints women farmers face included: low soil fertility, limited organic inputs specifically feeds and fertilisers.

CEFROHT entered into partnership with Ento-organic farm to train women farmers on BSF rearing and production and established a decentralised BSF production facility at our Mukono CAKNOW.

The BSF larvae decomposes organic waste building it's biomass which is used as organic feed for poultry and fish. As the larvae decompose the organic waste, a nutrient-rich compost, frass is produced that is used as a bio-fertilizer in the gardens and excess is sold off to boost household incomes.

The BSF facility projects to process 10 tonnes of waste per day and also improve

livelihoods of 10,000 farmers in 2 years by empowering them to produce and market BSF larvae feed and frass biofertilizer.



*The nutrient-rich biofertilizer that is produced can be used in its fine form or pelleted.*



*The BSF larvae rearing unit*

## **THE CULTIVATING CHANGE GATHERING IN ARUSHA, TANZANIA.**

CEFROHT joined the world at the "Cultivating Change Gathering" in Arusha, Tanzania from 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024. The gathering dialogued on regenerative and Agroecological food Systems transformation and philanthropy collaborative for fertilizer transition, mapping alignment for Global fertilizer transitions and collaborative action.

CEFROHT exchanged insights from ongoing transition processes and regional discussions, and built relationships and connections with Agroecology partners, within and between countries and regions involved in agroecological transitions.



*Dr. Kabanda David, E.D CEfroHT at the cultivating change gathering in Arusha, Tanzania.*



*Participants from all over the world at the Cultivating Change Gathering in Arusha, Tanzania.*