



AFRICAN CONSERVATION TILLAGE NETWORK (ACT)

ACT TANZANIA HOST UGANDAN STUDY TOUR ON CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE



4th to 8th August 2015

By

Deogratias Ngotio

Program officer-Tanzania

1. Preamble

The purpose of the tour was to contribute and build the desired capacity and ability of commissioners, agricultural extension officers and farmers from Uganda in development and promotion of conservation agriculture (CA) technologies and agroforestry, thereby enhancing their ability to respond to their needs and for the community and spread the CA and agroforestry technology for improved soil fertility, productivity, improved environment and livelihoods in their country.

Other objectives of the tour was (i) to expose farmers, commissioners and extension officers from Uganda to CA and agroforestry practices (ii) To Provide them with a platform to share experiences on efforts and current developments on CA and agroforestry in Tanzania and (iii) To promote increase/wider uptake CA and agroforestry in the region. The tour will be hosted by African Conservation Tillage Network (ACT) in Tanzania. The tour was hosted by African Conservation Tillage Network (ACT) in Tanzania in collaboration with partners and farmers in Arusha and Manyara Regions. The tour was supported with two donors (FAO and UNDP Uganda)

2. Approaches/Discussion.

The team arrived Arusha on 4th August afternoon 2015. Program officer for Tanzania, then meeting with the group leader for program review, the program review and agreed. The delegation comprises of 5 commissioners from ministry of agriculture environment and fishers, 3 representatives from UNDP Uganda, 10 farmers and 6 extension officers, total were 24 participants. The team was accompanied with two personnel from ACT, (Robina Kibisa and Deogratias Ngotio), other partners involved are SARI, Babati DC, WADEC, RECODA, TuamkeTuamke group and two farmers (Richard Kipara and Thomas Loronyo).

3. Field visit to Ekenywa

The team visited Ekenywa village and meet *tuamketuamke* (wakeup-wakeup) group. The group invited the visitors followed with introduction from both sides. The discussion and exchange of ideas took about two hours. Then we visited the field for observation on how and where conservation agriculture works the benefits and the secret behind the technology. The chairperson and Mr. Richard Kipara were leading the discussion. Some of the key questions asked by the visitors are;

1. How could you manage the cover crops while you're keeping livestock?
2. Do you easily access inputs? Is there government subsidies?
3. How do you raise funds to contribute towards VICOBA? Specific to women
4. What are the benefits you had get from the group since you join the group? Specifically question to women.

Response

1. We left cover crops in the field as security, lablab beans can last in the field to the next season, and the evidence of banana plant as security was also shown. Also we have bylaws which guide us in the village.
2. Yes, we have access to input such as seed and fertiliser but very expensive in comparison with the, market value after harvesting crops, we are trying to add value to our harvests, for example we have sunflower pressing machine (though we can refine it) but at least we are now happier than before. Access to CA equipment is yet very clear in the local shop unless you press order tour local manufacturers like Nandra. Government subsidies was there for seed and fertilizer only but wasn't sufficient for all farmers.

3. In our group we have what we call revolving funds, you can take loan as well, and therefore we do petty business like buying and selling of farm products like beans and maize. Also we are doing conservation agriculture thus we are doing indoor livestock keeping, we got milk and sell, to raise 12,000TZS per week is not an issue for any member here.
4. Proudly, water was a problem but through CA and saving group we managed to build iron-sheet houses and put in place the rain water tanks, that's why nowadays we have ample time for doing petty business.



Figure 1 Dr. Robert (UNDP rep. stand ing left) Asking question during the discussion. Ms. Teopista (Standing right) farmer from Uganda ask fellow farmers question.



Figure 2. Discussion session at Ekenywa village

The participants got time for field observation and discussion with Tuamketuamke group. Some the issues raised how could control the straight line using ox-ripper and direct planter which was clearly answered

by the farmers. The benefits of lablab beans to the soil and the palatability were also discussed, during field observations.

4. Nanenane visit

Afternoon the delegates visit nanenane show (Themi ground), the first stop was Nandra Engineering were the managed to talk and discuss with local CA equipment manufacturers. Some of the displays at Nandra spot is the direct planter of different size ie. (Single row and double row tractor drawn direct seeder) also animal drawn direct seeder. Others were subsoiler and Magoye ripper.



Figure 3 Participants observing how direct seeder works at Nandra,

Also the delegation visited ministry of agriculture section at Themi ground, they managed to get some explanation on different technology, including research on conservation agriculture by (SARI), post-harvest techniques, and CARMATEC on duplication of two wheel tractors for direct seeding attachment and other implements.

5. Visit to Selian Agriculture Research Institute and WADEC

Day two the visit was SARI, the delegates meet with Director SARI Dr. January Mafuru, he gave some preamble about the institution and position of the institution on researching and promotion on conservation agriculture. He explain the coverage of the institution in the northern zone and how ACT have been working with SARI in promotional of CA. Further detailed information was presented by Marietha Owenya about CA SARD project and ABACO project, further Dr. Saria presented about FACASI project and the delegation managed to see the results/technology developed by CARMATEC as the result of project implementation at nanenane ground. The same applies to WADEC, the presentation was done by Ms. Hellen, and the focus was to scaling out best option by farmers in implementing SIMLESA project Karatu district.

6. Visit Thomas Loronyo farm.

The next day we visited Thomas Loronyo, a farmers and service provider in Arumeru district. The key component of observation and discussion at Thomas household first was the entrepreneur mind as a CA service provider to other farmers and institutions, second agroforestry and contour farming under CA farming system. At the farm Thomas planted maize intercropped with lablab beans which is well observed and cover the soil very well. The participant got an opportunity for practical session on using direct seeder and rippers.

7. Day three visit to Babati district council and Dodoma transport farm.

This was the last day we visited Babati DC, Elly Mbise was our host, we visited farmers training centre where we managed to see and discuss about agroforestry and land reclamation. The centre is well established with different CA plots with different treatment options. Most important question asked by the group was. Is termite a problem in retaining crop residues in the field? The response was very straight from the facilitator, “Termites can be only a problem if you remove all crop residues and left the soil bare, but with enough mulching the termites will turn them organic matter”.

Also we visited Dodoma farm estate, who producing various crops and fruits like mangos, pawpaw and bananas, other cereals and legumes like lablab beans and sorgume.



Figure 4. Participants listen careful to facilitator Elly Mbise the importance of fallowing.



Figure 5 Faidhebia trees at Waarangway farmers centre.

Conclusion

The Study tour went very well with good reception from our key partners, SARI, WADEC, farmers and farmers group (Thomas Loronyo and Tuamketuamke group), Babati DC-represented by Elly Mbise, Themi agriculture show and Dodoma transport estate. The participants appreciate the role played by ACT by taking them around learn and share experience with practitioners and farmers.

Due to changes of the program of the visitors, the mission doesn't went well as planned, thus we failed to visit TFSC and quality food product , Arusha DC and RECODA.