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Website: www.cta.nl



In this issue

Avoid extremes, and achieve balance in all things human and agricultural - that is one of the messages of this edition of Spore. Even in the face of grossly unjust disregard for safety, it is important to keep the dialogue going between all parties: the result of consensus will be more effective than the original extreme demands of any argument. The same holds for one of those central features in everyone's lives, the market: either crumbling and thriving, or spanking new and empty, the markets of ACP countries deserve more balanced attention.

Our news items report on recent dialogues, debates and training sessions, as well as the usual dose of practical information, and announcements of books that stress pragmatism in the field and in the office. A viewpoint that starts with a shout, but comes from a voice that has coaxed consensus for decades in South Africa, reminds us not to throw away part of our pasts. A rich mixture, but all in all we hope another sixteen pages of your balanced Spore diet.



Illustration Marc Roesch

Occupational health and safety in agriculture

Safety can be the hardest word

Accidents in the field and on the farm require as much attention as the appalling lack of safety elsewhere in the food chain. For producers, processors and consumers worldwide, safety measures are often too little, too late and – for the unorganised – too far away.

We all need to eat, and we all need to live. Agriculture is what makes us what we are. Why then do we treat agriculture so badly? At one end of the food chain, in the consumer's shopping basket, there are shrill yelps about food safety. They are only part of the issue and, with all due respect, a small part of the safety equation. All along the food chain, from the plough to the plate, there is scant respect for the safety of those who produce and process food. Their health and safety is vital, and not only for themselves: without a safe production process, without safe producers, there are no safe consumers.

Agriculture is not a romance. Among everything else it means to us, it is a rough, tough world of injury, disability, disease and death. It is the third most hazardous 'sector' after mining and construction. About half of the world's 250 million workplace injuries are estimated to occur in agriculture. Each year, worldwide, according to estimates from the International Labour Office (ILO), 170,000 workers are killed in the agricultural sector. The sector employs half the world's labour force, with about 1.3 billion workers active in agricultural production. About 10 per cent (17,000) of these deaths take place in sub-Saharan Africa.



Photo IAO

A shining example of cleanliness and organisation. Tomato puree plant in Eritrea.

The agricultural labour force in ACP States and other developing countries is known for its high levels of self-employment, although overall half is in some form of waged employment. Self-employed or not, no worker deliberately injures himself or herself, although many people will take highly dangerous shortcuts in their work, under pressure to produce and earn marginal incomes. But danger there is, partly rooted in a lack of safety awareness and education, partly in incomplete training and instructions, and in part in the age-old predominance of 'gain over sane'.

Danger! Farmers at work

The high levels of fatalities and injuries in agriculture – twice as high as most other sectors – are due to its special conditions. Much agricultural work involves multiple tasks and multiple locations, most of them in the open air, exposing workers to climatic conditions. Much work is seasonal, with added urgency. Workers are in frequent or constant contact with animals and plants, and are exposed to bites, poisoning, infections, parasitic diseases, allergies and toxicity. The postures required in many agricultural tasks, coupled with ill-designed manual tools or mechanical equipment, lead to injury and disabilities.

The levels of exposure to pesticides and other chemicals are renowned – many small-scale farmers are unaware of the dangers of pesticides and have no practical access to either clear instructions or protective clothing. The safety position on formal, large-scale farms is often no better. The ILO reports many cases in Zimbabwe and Ethiopia where neither training nor protection is available to most workers, at least not to casual or temporary workers.

Away from the field, the lack of safety is equally alarming. Small, ill-lit, ill-ventilated workplaces with poorly-protected equipment are often the icons of agro-processing plants, at least in the informal sec-

tor. The risks for the safety of workers, and the hygiene of the end-product, are serious.

Read the rule-book

As production intensifies, the techniques for crop cultivation and livestock rearing, food processing and distribution become more complex. The introduction of more machinery and numerous chemical compounds, from fertilisers to cleaning agents, each bring potentially harmful human and environmental effects in their wake. And yet the sector, and those agencies and legislative bodies which provide its 'enabling environment', are failing to accompany these changes with appropriate information, training and, to be blunt, safety legislation. There are already about twenty conventions on occupational safety and health (OSH) which have been adopted by the governments, employers' and workers' organisations which comprise the ILO. Countries such as Sweden and Finland have ratified 85% or more; most ACP States between four and none.

Even where laws can be realistically applied, agriculture is often omitted from OSH legislation of many countries. In Kenya and Brazil, for example, labour laws apply to agriculture as well as to other industries but the laws of Ghana, Sierra Leone, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo exclude agricultural workers completely or partially. The legislation of yet other countries has a wider scope: in Fiji, Namibia and South Africa, employers are required to safeguard the safety and health of people other than employees who might be affected by the work of the enterprise.

It is the casual labourer and self-employed farmer who are least likely to be protected. In Ethiopia it is estimated that 80 per cent of national economic activity falls outside the Labour Code, consisting of small-scale and subsistence farming. Women often fall into these categories, working on self-employed smallholdings and as seasonal labourers. In all, more than 700 million agricultural workers worldwide, and more than 130 million in ACP countries, fall outside the theoretical or real protection of OSH legislation.

Where there is no enforcer

The well-known saying 'Safety begins at home' applies in agriculture as much as in any other sector. The unacceptable numbers of occupational fatalities and injuries in agriculture could clearly be substantially reduced by a more general 'safety'-mindedness among workers. This is a question of on-the-job training, to be

sure, but also of general education. One by one, the measures are easy enough to list. How about encouraging blacksmiths to add covers to chopping machines, or involving women in designing lighter hand tools which cause less muscle strain?

It is at the grassroots level that safety will take hold, but it is at other levels that it will be made possible. At a seminar on Safety and Health organised in Bamako, Mali, by the ILO, the International Union of Food workers (IUF) and the CTA in December 2000, participants called for action across the political and legislative stage, as well as by civil society and development bodies (more about this in *Spore* 92).

Safety in agriculture is, though, virgin territory in terms of development policies; it has, quite simply, been neglected by many bodies of national and global governance for decades. That could be about to change, with a Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention being presented for adoption to the general conference of the ILO in June 2001. It is ambitious, it is overdue and, praised be its designers, it is inclusive. It insists that the specific needs of self-employed farmers, women, seasonal workers and young workers be addressed, and that they enjoy protection equivalent to that provided to other workers in agriculture. It does not, however, cover subsistence farming, forestry or agro-processing, the latter being covered in principle by industrial conventions. For those accustomed to working in the formal sector, whether government inspectors or trade union organisers, this convention will challenge attitudes and ways of work. The task of getting it adopted is in itself a massive challenge, as the participants to the Bamako seminar affirmed. The harder, and even more necessary, task is to find ways and means to implement it. We all need to eat, and we all need to be safe.

See Links on page 10 for access to Safety and Health information

Among measures needed to promote occupational safety and health in agriculture:

- school curriculum development and media campaigns on safety awareness
- re-training of extension workers, agricultural engineers, government inspectorates and trade unions
- incentives (credit, awards, prizes) for safe tools and equipment
- promotion of safe use, storage and disposal of chemicals at all stages of agricultural production
- strengthening enforcement capacity of national safety bodies
- inclusion of national safety bodies in agricultural policy formulation and implementation
- overall legislative framework, adoption of ILO Convention

Diaspora investment

All that glisters is not gold

The flow of remittances from migrant communities into ACP countries was once seen as a key to the balance of payments. But how much do they, could they, mean to agriculture?

Posters and billboards advertising money transfers are now part of most urban landscapes in ACP countries, and quite a few rural ones too. The roadsides to and from the airport, not always the best indicator of a nation's financial welfare, are full of reminders that you can be sent money from anywhere in the world in fifteen minutes.

In call centres, telecentres, local shops and cafes in migrant communities in Europe, North America and Japan, companies such as Western Union and national banks invite, almost incite, customers to send money back home. They are perhaps unnecessary reminders of the international division of labour.

These transfers of a thousand or so francs, a couple of hundred dollars, carefully put aside during the month, to be shared with family at home, after perhaps iniquitous bank costs, just how important are they to a nation's development? Known to economists and fiscal specialists as 'migrant remittances', they have come to occupy a special place in international flows of money in recent years.

Migrant money matter

These remittances are now included in international statistics maintained by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) which monitors capital flows from North to South – though not in the opposite direction. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the major share of these flows was in the form of official development assistance, to which the OECD added the significant amounts being transferred by non-governmental organisations. In the early 1990s, partly because of cuts in aid budgets and partly because of rising private investment by both productive projects and by investment banks, the majority share of these flows was accounted for by private funds. Of these, about 15% was in the form of migrant remittances.

The total volume of migrant remittances flowing to ACP countries each year is estimated to exceed US\$ 25 billion. These sums come mainly from Western Europe (to Africa) and North America (to Caribbean and ACP States in the Americas), although there are also significant intra-regional flows from, for example, Gabon to various West African states, and to several states, notably Mozambique,

from South Africa. Recent measures against migrant labour in some of these countries has seriously reduced these regional transfers. Similar volumes flow into North Africa, South Asia and East Asia (but a large proportion comes from the Gulf oil states) and into Central and South America from North America.

Invest in food security

In some ACP countries, migrant money keeps the national economy afloat. The case of the African island archipelago of Cape Verde in the Atlantic Ocean is perhaps the most renowned. There it constitutes between 25% and 30% of the annual gross national product, according to reports on the *Nos ku Nos* phenomenon of the commonwealth of Cape Verdean peoples, which has its main external centres in the state of Massachusetts, USA, in the province of Zuid Holland in the Netherlands, in Portugal and in Brazil. In a special study by the Smithsonian Institute of Washington DC, USA, it is reported that there is a "proverbial contrast between a *carta de amor*, or love letter, in which a migrant family member includes a few dollars in addition to welcome news and photos, and a *carta sec*, or dry letter, which contains no money."

Similar scenarios – where remittances are a quarter or more of a nation's financial product – exist in the island states of the Pacific and Caribbean. One migrant observer of his native Haiti, Max Blanchet, wrote that "were it not for the remittances Haitians in the Diaspora send home, for all I know the Republic would have long vanished under the Caribbean Sea." With more of their population living abroad than at home, states such as Barbuda and Anguilla depend heavily on remittances, but at a price. Large-scale emigration may simultaneously raise living standards whilst undermining the local economies. "The labour decreases, and fields give way to cattle and coconuts; pasture succeeds tillage and wilderness encroaches on pastures" is one picture painted of Anguilla.

The investment potential of such funds is huge, and steps are being taken to encourage it. According to the International Finance Corporation, popularly

known as the 'bank of the World Bank', "In Eritrea, the services sector, which accounts for 60 per cent of gross domestic product, will play a critical role. Sub-sectors expected to expand rapidly include wholesale and retail trade, transport, communication, construction and financial services. These are driven by remittances from expatriates." In nearby Somalia, the investment picture is less rosy: "remittances far outstrip, by ten to one, international development assistance. Estimated at US\$ 150 million a year, they have tended not to be saved and there remains a shortage of investment capital".

Whether invested or not, few of these funds flow directly into domestic agriculture. In Western Europe much has been made of funds transmitted from migrant groups in, for example, the Paris area to village irrigation projects in Mali, Senegal and Burkina Faso, or from groups in London to food processing groups in Ghana.



Should the investor's money pull productivity up or be taken for a ride in a taxi?

In reality, much is made in the media about such small-scale initiatives, but little is made in terms of profit. Often such funds are used to cover operating losses or project shortfalls, rather than as productive investment.

Perhaps it is time for development projects to make themselves better known – in short, to sell themselves – to the diaspora communities. Should they not seek external involvement not only in terms of the morally correct solidarity funds of the North, but as an investment opportunity with a profitable, and morally correct, return in food security? And what better place to begin than with the folks from back home?

Market facilities

Taking the middle road to market

How markets perform depends a lot on their facilities. ACP countries have strengthened their efforts in the last decade, but most market facilities are inadequate, or non-existent - particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Newly built, reconstructed and deserted, or shambolic, overcrowded and lively, the fit is not yet right.



Photo Mark Edwards/Still Pictures

From the hustle of West Africa and the bustle of Sudan, to the revered edifices of Mozambique's Maputo, our lives revolve around markets

No lighting, no roofs, hardly any water taps, earth access roads... this is a typical African urban market. The lack of facilities is similar to the state of the road network (see *Spore* 77) and leads to similar bottlenecks in movements of people and produce in and around the market. There is a difference, of sorts, in the facilities

of official markets and informal ones, but the real difference is really a fiscal one of whether or not transactions are taxed. In organised markets, in principle, the council charges a duty on each stand, varying from 25 to 50 Euro cents, depending on its site, and provides maintenance and cleaning services. In the best cases the market hall is covered, there are storage sheds (in wholesale markets), there is a solid floor, electricity is laid on, there are fixed or mobile stalls, sanitation and water outlets. But that is in the best of cases.

When it rains in markets in Senegal, Mozambique or Côte d'Ivoire, people squelch around in the mud because there are no drains. In the Xipamanine market in Maputo, capital of Mozambique, the floor is made of trodden earth, and there are no toilets, no running water. And Xipa-

manine is by no means an exception. People point with pride to its 'formal' area which is partly covered and lit.

With inadequate facilities and overcrowded space, traders set up their stands willy-nilly, inside and out. It looks like - no, it is - mayhem: the market is choc-a-bloc with poorly sited traders, illegal vendors moving in and out, with tiny shops, street food stalls and all sorts of repair stands spilling out onto the road outside. Around this formal core, an informal belt of trade settles down in surrounding streets and alleys, as a parallel market with neither facilities nor semblance of organisation.

What a picture! Unhygienic and unhealthy conditions, no safety for traders or customers, problems of access, running conflicts about siting stands, endless stand-offs between traders and the local authorities, and vicious competition between illegal and 'legal' traders. Such scenes cause all sorts of problems, and it is no wonder that the last decade has seen a wave of projects to improve and renovate markets in the cities and at border trading zones.

Noble intentions

In two years' time, the fish market of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania will be replaced by a modern one. The plans are for improved hygiene, easier access for boats and better trading conditions for the potential annual catch of 730,000 tonnes of fish. In Burkina Faso moves are underway to expand trading with the renovation of three livestock markets on the borders of Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali. The costs of about

€ 40,000 will be met by the Permanent Interstate Committee for the Control of Drought in the Sahel (CILSS), with support from the UN Common Fund for Commodities. Each of the three markets will handle one to two thousand heads of cattle, brought in by truck. They will be enclosed and have watering and feeding points, proper sanitation, veterinary services, storage areas and accommodation. With these facilities traders will be able to buy and stock animals, keep them healthy and make use of various services including a management facility, provided by a professional association, to help with customs formalities. "By setting up these points of convergence we want to promote trading, and maximise the interface between importers and exporters", says Dramane Coulibaly, the CILSS officer in charge. "We also save the Burkinabé herdsmen all the hassles of the customs and transport costs."

In Bamako, Mali, large-scale market halls are under construction. Ultimately they will shelter a trading area of more than 2,000 stands, a wholesale zone with 120 outlets and a fresh food market of 3,000 stalls with fish, meat and cold stores. The city council has a set of four objectives in this project: eliminate the nuisances of the enormous *souk* market, which is an eyesore in the capital, where no market has been built since independence; create a trading area which will help to generate business and jobs; get a grip on - and increase - its



Informal sells better

Elsewhere in Cameroon, a new multi-storied market was built in the 1970s on the site of the old central market. It was a futuristic building and its circular form made it an architectural curiosity for quite some time. Traders fought to get stands in the market. Unfortunately, visitors balked at finding their way upstairs and preferred to do their shopping on the lower levels. Illegal vendors set up shop, as it were, on the big esplanade in front of the market building, grabbing customers as soon as they stepped out of their cars. The traders abandoned their stalls upstairs. The plots on the upper floors are dirty and smelly, and are used as storage space by the vendors from the esplanade and as home by the homeless. Down on the esplanade, business is booming and the grey concrete monster has taken on the allure of a white elephant.

The flower market with no florists

The residential neighbourhood of Bonapriso, in Douala, Cameroon, once had a thriving flower market with about 50 stands. With a monthly rental of € 45, they were filled with lilies-of-the-valley, lilies, roses and daisies. Several kilometres away, a busy antiques market was based on a football ground. The council decided to bring back football to the ground, as part of their policy of promoting sport in the city. Faced with a loss of their space, the antique traders gradually invaded the flower market. With rising demand, the prices soared and the traders were better off than the florists. As for them, they melted away, harried by the vendors of wooden masks and *djembe* drums, to sell their flowers on the roadside.

The keepers of the temple

The costs of maintenance and cleaning in a market can be expensive for traders when the work is carried out by council services. In Bobo, the costs of € 4,500 are shared out on the basis of the space occupied by each trader. In the Yeoville market of Johannesburg, South Africa, traders have banded together and formed an association. They take care of the maintenance and daily cleaning tasks, and manage the market, in consultation with consumers. The council, which used to perform these tasks, now provides technical support. The result: savings in costs, better allocation of stands and better security.

tax revenues; and, by providing good working conditions for traders, help them to increase their productivity.

Ambitious intentions

The question is, exactly what traders are being enticed to such markets? Only those who can afford to pay taxes, the costs of maintenance, entrance fee and investment, and to rent or buy a stand or lock-up. In Bamako, for a plot of 3 square metres, the bottom line is about € 1,100.

In Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, the city council had similar plans to renovate

“we have to find a way of dealing with this problem of informal traders; it has become a real thorn in my side (*uma pedra no sapato*)”. Thousands of individual traders are all vying for space in the Maputo market, whilst thousands of others, ‘legal’ ones this time, are having to be moved to make way for the construction of a shopping centre and the renovation of Xipamanine. The latter currently houses 1,180 traders in its formal area, with the same number of occasional vendors outside. The renovation project is being co-financed by the French development agency; designed by the Bergman Incgérop group, the building is planned to have two storeys. Officially there will not be any space for an informal section any more. A council working group is assessing the impact of the project. Isaac Ambasse, the traders’ representative, is concerned that the same thing will happen as with the renovation of an apartment block. “They tell the occupants that they will be rehoused, but then they find out that the rents are too high!”. As a result, a campaign has been launched to explain to some traders that they will not be housed in the new market. The director of markets and fairs in the council, Orlanda Fonseca, confirms this: “it will not be possible to include the thousands of informal vendors in the new market; they do not have the resources.”



Photo Claire Lanaud



Photo Erik Heijmans

the central market. It would have met the demands of both customers and traders for notable improvements in hygiene and security. The council wanted to put a proper organisation into place to run the market and manage the facilities, instead of the free-for-all that had established itself with uncontrolled transfers of rights, sub-letting, buyouts and bribes. As a result, Bobo’s market is the largest in all Burkina Faso, stretching over six asphalted hectares, with four distinct trading zones. It houses 5,000 plots, 4 water outlets for traders and 4 more for butchers, two toilet facilities in each zone and a telecentre. The project cost around € 750,000 and was co-financed 70% by the French development cooperation agency and by the traders themselves. The cost of the entrance fee fluctuates between € 350 for a shop of 4 square metres in a trading zone to around € 2,450 for a 9 square metre shop on the outside. Buyers get a renewable deed of co-ownership for 25 years. And who are the buyers? The vast majority are small and medium-scale traders who were already located in the formal part of the old market, and they live in Bobo. The other traders from the old market, too poor to buy into the new one, have obviously melted away and joined the throngs of informal and rejected vendors.

The numbers of rejected vendors is growing. In Mozambique, the mayor of Maputo was quoted in a national paper as saying

A virtuous circle

There are two major inputs can be used to arrive at a happy medium between overpriced and inadequate facilities are the funds of the traders, and the costs of construction and operation, without hurting either traders or consumers. In Senegal the *louma* (market) in Passy is sited at a geographical crossroads, between several large towns, and close to The Gambia. It is of a manageable size, and being a good meeting place for Gambian and Senegalese traders, it is a well frequented weekly market. It provides the town council of Passy with most of its tax revenues and these have been gradually re-invested in building covered areas of stalls which will form a belt around the market halls used by traders of second-hand clothes and vegetables. These areas have been built with the assistance of the council development agency (ADM) which is well-attuned to local needs and realities. The operating costs, which are essentially for lighting, are paid for in barter. The council thus does not suffer from the same problems of collection which other local authorities have with their tenants. And more and more traders are hoping for a place in the market. Already all the traders who had to leave to make way for the construction works have been rehoused, and there is still space for more. As the saying goes, why make a song and dance about it, when the solution is so obvious?



Photo Bernard Favre

AgroMali site is in business

■ The AgroMali internet site has been launched for local food enterprises. Set up by the Centre Agro Entreprise in Mali, which is co-funded by Mali and USAID, the site provides up-to-date local and regional market information on agriculture and food processing (cereals, livestock and alternative products), business opportunities, calls for tender, training proposals, a newsletter and a subscription service for email delivery of topical information.

✉ Email: cae@spider.toolnet.org
Website: www.agromali.com

Shrinking shrimps

■ The volume of industrial fishing of shrimps off Madagascar is lower than expected. The targeted level was 8,000 tonnes, but the current harvest has yielded less than 7,000 tonnes compared with the exceptional levels of 9,250 in 1998. The cause does not lie in the weather, which has been favourable, or in flagging efforts by the industry. Scientists say that the decline is the first sign of overfishing. We were warned.

Belize's agriculture on the map

■ Belize has started a programme on 'Data Collection and Analysis for a System of Agricultural Statistics', with a contribution from FAO of US\$ 384,000. The Belize Farms Register will contain basic data about all farms in the country, and develop models for estimating crop production and livestock inventories.

✉ Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Cooperatives
2nd Floor, West Block Building,
Belmopan, Belize
Fax: + 501 8 224 09
Email: mafpaeu@btl.net

Back to school

■ Looking for possibilities for a MSc or a PhD degree in agricultural development? A scholarship with the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) may be the answer. Successful candidates conduct research in line with IITA's agenda and their own country's agricultural priorities. Field research has to be carried out at an IITA station focusing on smallholder farming systems with cassava, maize, plantain, banana, yam, cowpea and/or soybean.

✉ IITA Information Services and Training
PMB 5320, Ibadan
Oyo State, Nigeria
Fax: +234 2 241 22 21
Email: iita@cgiar.org

New network, by gum

■ World consumption of arabic gum (see also the article on restorative trees) has risen fast in the last decade. Between 1991 and 1998 it rose by more than 25%, reaching 44,000 tonnes. Arabic gum is used in the food processing and pharmaceuticals industries and, using the code E414, as a replacement for animal gelatine (see *Spore* 85). Prices have also risen slightly and, depending on quality, vary between USD 700 and USD 1250 a tonne (€ 803 to € 1433). It is to be hoped, though, that prices do not rise much further for fear of the processors switching to starch substitutes. In any case, most of the profits in any price rise will not accrue to producing countries since most processing takes place in Europe where the value-added factor is between 100% and 180%. At present only the initial steps of processing – crushing and grinding – are performed in Africa, leading to an added value factor of 10%. Slowly, however, the arabic gum sector is strengthening itself, as



Photo: Ciraad/forêt

This sticky mass will find its way into dozens of foodstuffs, from ice-cream to biscuits

witnessed by the creation in May 2000 of the Network on Gum and Resins in Africa (NGARA). There are founder members from seven countries in eastern and West Africa in the network, which will serve for the exchange of expertise on production and marketing. A technical guide is in preparation for publication

during 2001, with financial support from the FAO and the Aidgum Association.

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Restorative trees revive farming



Photo: Isolina Boto

■ The traditional agro-forestry system of the Sudano-Sahelian zone of Africa based on the gum arabic tree *Acacia senegal* is on its way back, after several decades of neglect. The pressures of commercial single-crop agriculture, severe droughts and indiscriminate clearing had pushed *Acacia senegal* into the background. Its comeback is thanks to its ability to rehabilitate degraded lands during fallow periods and to mitigate

desertification, as well as its use for associated food crops and its value for the production of gum arabic. This prized export crop is grown throughout the Sahel, notably in Chad and Sudan, with the latter providing 80% of world trade.

The management of trees for farmland rehabilitation and development was the theme of a seminar organised jointly in Khartoum, Sudan, from 27 October to 7 November 2000

by the National Forests and Agricultural Research Corporations of Sudan and the International Foundation for Science, African Academy of Sciences, the UK agency DFID, the University of Helsinki and CTA.

With a programme full of practical case studies and detailed field visits, the seminar was rich in recommendations for policy-makers and legislators, ranging from registering local species of trees in biodiversity laws to land tenure issues. Gender issues were well promoted too. With a precision which is sadly rare for many agricultural and forestry meetings, the participants urged research organisations to collect and publish 'gender-disaggregated data' about activities around *Acacia senegal* and other species. Other seminars in other areas, take heed. To make a difference for women, we – men and women – need to know the differences in the data.

Conflicts of interest?

■ After the recent deluge of micro-finance, the hard lessons are pouring in. The original idea - to lend small sums to poor people who are regarded as 'unbankable' by commercial banks - has not led to the expected massive creation of new jobs, enterprises or productivity. What went wrong, why expectations were falsely high and how micro-finance can become sustainable were the key topics of a CTA study visit to South Africa in October and November 2000.

The participants came from finance institutions, formal and informal, from 13 countries of eastern, southern and West Africa. During visits with their South African peers, they studied the often confused transition of community organisations into caring local banks, lending where commercial banks did not dare tread.

The home truths were hard: you do not succeed by subsidising loans or targeting the truly poor, you must properly analyse risks and cover your costs, and you must separate poverty alleviation from wealth creation. If you want to be sustainable in finance, be a banker, not a drip-feed charity.

Between the lines of the visit's sometimes stark report ("most microfinance bodies are not sustainable") are early signs of the inevitable. The commercial banks and finance wholesalers, who have spent the last two decades warily watching upstart and start-up microbankers, are now preparing to move into the informal sector, in a macro way. By the time of the United Nations Year of Microfinance (yes!) in 2005, they will be there in swarms.

Fermenting for fertility

■ One way to maintain soil fertility when growing perennial crops is to apply liquid manure as a top dressing. You can mix animal dung with water and leave it to ferment, but if fresh water is scarce the following easy method from Sarah Kimaakwa of the Botswana Forum on Sustainable Agriculture (FONSAG) can be worth a try. Collect fresh leaves of herbacious plants, liking stinging nettle, comfrey, amaranths or wild sunflower. Put them in a bucket or container. Close it and the leaves will loose their sap and start to ferment. This liquid manure will be ready after a month.

△ FONSAG
Plot 545 South Ring Road Ext. 4
P/Bag 136
Gaborone, Botswana
Fax: + 267 307 506
Email: fonsag@global.bw

Pearls of wisdom?

■ The October 2000 issue of Tahiti-Pacific Magazine reports on clashes between villagers and the new owner of an oyster pearl farm on the atoll of Penrhyn in the Cook Islands. A recent judgement by the islands' High Court had declared all land in the area was liable for sale, but apparently not quite all.

Not wild about wildlife

■ As foreign tourists and investors pour into wildlife conservation areas in southern Africa, benefits for local communities are slow in coming. Having swapped traditional livestock keeping for service jobs in tourism, they need training to become wildlife stewards, according to participants in a CTA study visit to Botswana and South Africa in October 2000, plus a network on wildlife veterinary affairs.

Get real, get integrated

■ Hot on the heels of the Cotonou Agreement, which will help integrate ACP countries into the world economy, and in awe of the World Trade Organisation, a seminar on the agricultural aspects of globalisation was held in Dakar, Senegal, early in October 2000. On the agenda: improving competitiveness, developing regional markets, and being effective in world negotiations. With sixty-plus experts from West Africa, and support from a raft of donors, bankers and enablers (including CTA), the seminar was preceded by a similar exercise for southern Africa in 1998.

Extending extension

■ The self-help group of agricultural extension support agencies, known as the Neuchâtel Initiative, held its annual meeting in its Swiss birthplace in November 2000. Members reviewed new approaches and forms of finance for extension, and their 'vision' document entitled 'Guide for monitoring, evaluation and joint analyses of pluralistic extension support'. The discussion on how to use the Internet in innovation in linked local learning was led by CTA and the International Support Group of the Netherlands.

△ Neuchâtel Initiative
c/o Swiss Center for Agricultural Extension
Eschikon 28, CH- 8315 Lindau,
Switzerland
Fax: + 41 52 354 97 97
Email: eza@ibl.ch

Teak takes off

■ Teak is in fashion these days, with public and private bodies in several countries investing in plantations of the *Tectona grandis* tree and small farmers getting interested too. The tree grows easily: with a lot of light, and well drained soils, it produces a hard, rotproof wood for using in outside furniture, boat-building or as railway sleepers. What's more, the price is rising.

The volume of supply from the main source of south-east Asia is falling, with the exploitation of natural forests being severely restricted if not prohibited, except in Myanmar. Despite this, the countries of the region still have a quasi-monopoly on the export of teak logs to western markets, and of value-added products from their craft workshops. The burgeoning domestic market is being supplied by small diameter logs from Africa and Latin America, a phenomenon which explains the expansion of teak plantations in these continents.

Côte d'Ivoire is the major exporter of teak outside of Asia, exporting 130,000 m³ annually from its 52,000 hectares of

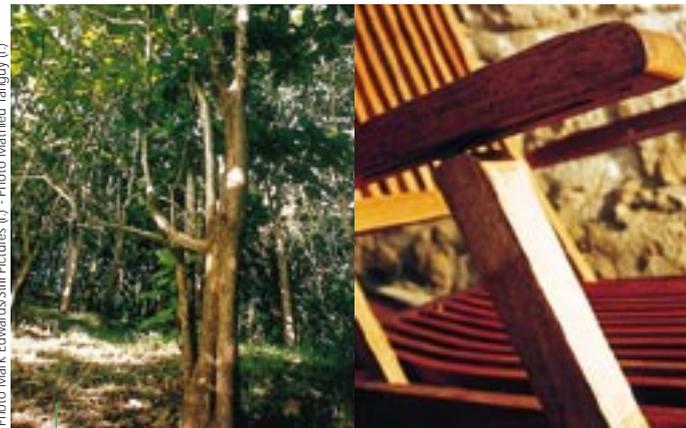


Photo Mark Edwards/Still Pictures (L) - Photo Mathieu Tanguy (R)

Sit down, I've got something to tell you

plantations which are 90% state owned. Togo is planning to use private investment to plant 4,000 hectares in the coming five-year period. In the Caribbean, there are plantations covering 8,000 hectares, in particular in Trinidad and Tobago.

People should not get carried away in their enthusiasm for teak however. Prices are rising (from USD 400 to 500 - € 459 to € 573 per m³ for mature logs), but the increase in supply will probably cause them to drop. Furthermore, investing in this type of plantation is a long-term affair with several constraints, most notably the prevailing land tenure system, and

several prerequisites for success: there is need for care in selecting the best varieties for the given environment and the site nearest to markets. As in Asia, processing the wood on the spot could add significant value to the product. The Teaknet network is a useful source of information and research results and provides for exchange of plant materials and technical experiences. A good lead to follow.

△ Mehm Ko Ko Gyi
TEAKNET Coordinator
Ministry of Forestry
Bayintnaung Road
West Gyagone
Yangon 11011, Myanmar
Fax: + 95 1 64336

Public debate on research priorities

■ How can agricultural researchers and civil society be more open towards each other, and how can the small farmer and the poor be listened to and heard? These issues were raised in a lively electronic conference held from 8 to 19 January 2001 by the NGO committee of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) centres.

Such conferences are exchanges of email where, with help from moderators, participants comment on each others' remarks. The impassioned and informed debate should reassure the CGIAR that it is right – and safe – to reach out to an interested world. But even the few hundred participants worldwide could only confirm the diversity of civil society and agree on broad statements: "Let us not be like the World Bank with its vision of poverty reduction which has become an all-encompassing mantra without a focus. The CGIAR should understand the cause of poverty, and focus on agriculture." Isn't that where it should have started?

Website: www.rimisp.cl/ngoc

Malawi's organic market

■ The Midlands Organic Growers Association (MOGA) of Malawi has established a market in the capital Lilongwe selling directly to consumers, with support from the German agency GTZ. The market is astutely located in a low-density residential area, a good catchment area for foreign residents. These customers, MOGA reports, are happy that prices are fixed and do not have to be negotiated as on other markets.

The 2,000 organic farmers in MOGA have to take turns to sell, with different farmers' groups taking a stand one day a week.

▲ F D P Banda
MOGA
PO Box 31131, Lilongwe 3
Malawi

A passion for juice

■ Around 1,000 farmers and labourers in Rwanda have now a stable income, thanks to the Aprozofugi farmers' organisation spotting the potential of passion fruit (*Passiflora edulis*). Their market survey and business plan showed a firm proposition, and with an injection of € 30,000 from the Dutch embassy, they set up a small plantation and a factory for making syrup from ripe passion fruits. Currently 35 tonnes of the fruit are being processed and sold monthly.

Sticky problems in sugar processing



A sure-fire way to lose quality, fast

Photo Peter Baker/Sunset

■ Recent project reports indicate problems with the quality of cane sugar in Mauritius. The rising cost of labour has led to some manual operations such as the stripping of the cane to be dropped. Machines do little better, since they capture not

just the canes but leaves, soil and stones as well. The resulting loss of quality has to be faced up however, to compensate for the losses incurred through the depreciation of the euro against the dollar, the freezing of sugar prices by the

European Union and the new arrangements for sharing sugar revenues between producers and processors. The total shortfall is in the region of € 8 million to € 16 million. Among the measures proposed to remedy the problem are cleaning plants, a bonus/malus system and the breeding of high yield varieties.

Similar problems exist in Fiji but for different reasons. The practice of setting fire to the sugar fields before harvesting into order to get rid of leaves and make cutting easier, is now estimated to reduce quality significantly; between 65% and 90% of the cane arrives burnt at the factory. The processors have urged for the practice to be stopped, but more and more farmers are using it.

No more pounding

■ Mechanics in Benin and Togo have adapted simple crushing machines, first designed in Europe, for small-scale food processing. There is a hand-driven mechanical one and an electric one, powered by a dynamo. They can be used by women to crush and grind 100 kg of *cassette* pods of yam or cassava in just a few minutes, instead of the six hours required for the traditional manual method. Each machine costs about € 530. More details from the address below.



Photo Philippe Vernier/Cirad

What would the safety inspector say?

Later in 2001 we shall carry several descriptions of locally-produced food processing machinery. We invite you to send details of such equipment to the Spore editors (address page 15).

▲ P Tchangai
ITRA
BP 1163
Lomé, Togo
Email: itra@cafe.tg

Tobacco earnings up in smoke

■ Tobacco prices have been taking quite a drubbing from the success of anti-smoking campaigns in the North. During 2000, they sank to their lowest level in a decade, causing great concern among African growers. Until recently tobacco had been a reliable cash crop with stable prices, with easy access to loans for the little investment required.

In Zimbabwe, Virginia tobacco is produced by 7,700 growers and gives employment to another 100,000 agricultural workers; it is dried in the open air. The country is now the second largest exporter in the world, with exports of USD 400 million (about € 458 million) earning one-third of Zimbabwe's foreign exchange. Neighbouring Malawi is the world's leading exporter of the Burley variety which is dried in special sheds. It is grown by 90,000 small producers and gives employment to some half a million workers. Export earnings in 2000 were USD 142 million (about € 163 million), representing 30% of domestic national product.

Falling prices are leading to serious consideration of substi-



Photo Gerard & Margi Moss/Still Pictures

Going, going, gone?

tion crops. In Malawi, paprika, macadamia nuts, cut flower and various spices are among the options. Paprika is probably the best option: it has an annual growth cycle and the method of cultivation is similar to tobacco. It also brings a direct return on investment and is easy to export. Estimates show that sales could grow to 10,000 tonnes a year from the current level of 3,000 tonnes. The tobacco producers being asked to make the switch will still need some assurances that, unlike cigarettes, paprika is not dangerous to your health...

Groundnuts, not tobacco

■ A high-yielding groundnut variety (ICGV-SM 90704) with good resistance against groundnut rosette has come within reach. Rosette is a devastating disease and is always present in the groundnut crop. A low incidence is usually

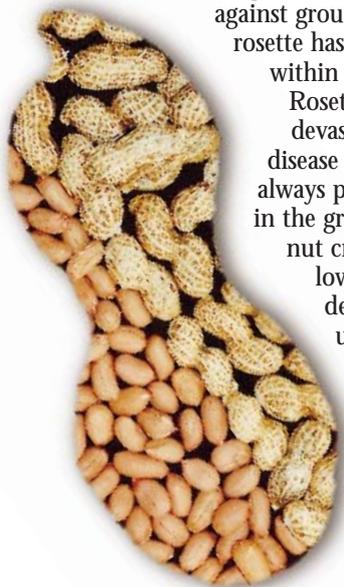


Photo ICRISAT/Malawi/Mathieu Tanguy

ages many farmers from growing groundnuts. Now ICRISAT scientists based in Malawi have developed several high-yielding breeding lines with resistance to rosette; in combination with early sowing, and at an optimal plant density, they give promising results. They have been released in Malawi and Uganda and are on their way in Zambia and Mozambique. The breeder seed production takes place at the ICRISAT station in Malawi, and foundation and basic seed production is done at commercial farms for sale to NGOs and farmers. The crop is regarded as a viable alternative to tobacco – a hot topic in the region. It thrives in the same poor soils and agro-climatic conditions and fixes nitrogen in the soil.

acceptable but in cases of epidemic outbreaks, which occur regularly in sub-Saharan Africa, it destroys the entire crop, causing average losses of US\$ 156 million yearly. This discour-

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Chitedze Research Station
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Lilongwe
Malawi
Fax: + 265 707 298
Email: p.subrahmanyam@cgiar.org

Do, do, do, do you remember?

■ When you listen to a lecture or a talk on the radio, the average person remembers just 20% of the message. When you see something happen, you recall 30%. When you read a leaflet (and – be honest now – perhaps even *Spore?*) you remember a mere 10%. But when you did something yourself, you recall 90%. This is just one of the striking examples given during a five-day regional seminar held in Trinidad and Tobago in September 2000, about farmer participation in training in ecological crop management, including integrated pest management (IPM). Among the applications current in IPM in the Caribbean are resistant varieties, biological control, cultural control systems, and minimal pesticide use.

“Practice what you preach” was clearly the motto of the week, with the seminar participants being thrown into a series of role-play run-ins, simulations, self-criticism sessions,

group dynamics and field work, as well as a tough programme of study of background papers which provide a detailed picture of agriculture in the region. By learning-by-doing themselves the 45 participants from 12 Caribbean nations got the message alright. They should soon be emailing each other to announce the much-improved rates of ‘take-up’ of integrated pest management techniques by the farmers with whom they will apply ‘participatory methods’.

Not that the seminar thought that it is just a question of farmer ‘take-up’. Policy-makers were expected to participate too, by shaping and applying IPM policies which ensure that the farmer is not always tempted by the quick returns offered by chemically-protected harvests.

The seminar was co-organised by CABI Bioscience, CARDI and CTA with additional support from the Swiss Development Cooperation.

Virtual trade in real coffee

■ Online trading is a booming business, although it hasn't yet caught up with conventional marketing. But what if trading partners shift their business and replicate conventional trading online? It has already started.

The partners in the eGreen-Coffee exchange (egreencoffee.com), which was launched in June 2000, include roasters Jobin and Lavazza, the supervisory Société Générale de Surveillance, bankers ABN-AMRO and Sucden. The



exchange has 200 members who handle over 60% of coffee consumed worldwide, although their current bids and offers on the exchange total only 200,000 tonnes.

Another player is Inter-Commercial Markets Corp (www.intercommercial.com), which was launched in late 2000. It has linked up with the New York Board of Trade, the Swiss Volcafe company and Folgers and Millstone, two major coffee operations of US-based multinational Procter & Gamble.

The aim of these and many other similar initiatives is to reduce the fragmentation of the geographically widespread coffee market and reduce the supply chain costs. By bringing aboard coffee producers, roasters, certifying bodies, insurers and financiers, trading can be streamlined.

The Association of Coffee Producing countries has welcomed online trade as a means of reducing intermediate costs, but argues that the volume is still limited and thus has had no impact on prices yet. In the long run e-commerce will bring about direct links between farmers and roasters and can help farmers if they embrace this technology.

Don't monkey with the forest

■ Guenon monkeys play an important role in the regeneration of the rain forest in southern Cameroon. These small monkeys eat a lot of fruit and excrete the seeds. It turns out that ‘monkey-passed’ seeds not only get more widely distributed but also germinate much faster and better. The monkey population is under threat due to logging in the area and to the fact that they are popular as bush meat with the local population. The monkey's role will be taken into account in the forest management plan, which is currently being developed for this area.

Ugandan women on the net

■ A good gateway to women's and gender issues is run by the Women of Uganda Network (Wougnet): research programmes, women's organisations, conferences, directories and news, including agriculture. Check it out!

Website:
www.kabissa.org/wougnet

Gendered worlds

■ One Wougnet partner is running an (actual) international conference on “Gendered Worlds: an African perspective”, in Kampala from 21 to 26 July 2002. The focus includes young voices and gendering women and men.

△ Women's Worlds 2002
Women and Gender Studies
Makerere University
P O Box 7062
Kampala, Uganda
Fax: +256 41 543 539
Email:
gendermu@swiftuganda.com
Website: www.wgs.or.ug

Development management

■ An intensive 11-week course in development project planning and management is being offered by the Selly Oak College in the UK, from 29 September to 15 December 2001 and again from 27 April to 13 July 2002. It is designed for people working in NGOs, international aid organisations and government departments. Course tuition fees are around £3,500 or € 5,000. The organisers can suggest sources of full sponsorship and part-funding.

△ Wendy Banner
Development Studies
The University of Birmingham
Selly Oak Campus, Bristol Road
Birmingham B29 6LQ, UK
Fax: +44 121 415 2296
Email: w.banner@bham.ac.uk
Website: www.bham.ac.uk/socsci/

Occupational health and safety

Safety of food workers

The relevant national authority for legislation on safety, health, hygiene and the working environment for agricultural and food worker is usually located in the ministry dealing with labour affairs.

In many cases, the national legislation is guided by a convention which has been adopted by the International Labour Office. A part of the United Nations system, the ILO is composed of representatives of national governments, and employers' and workers' organisations. There are about 30 such conventions, covering such aspects of work safety as the maximum weight a person should carry, or the provision of health services for workers. Many of these conventions have not been ratified by many ACP states but they provide useful guidelines, and an indication of reasonable safety standards. A new convention on the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in Agriculture is expected to be adopted by the ILO in June 2001, providing coverage for hundreds of millions of agricultural workers, although not in subsistence farming, forestry or agro-processing.



The ILO has priced publications on OSH in agriculture, including codes of practice for the use of tractors, the use of agrochemicals, maximum weights, and first aid, and several covering forestry work. The major 'gateway' to these services is through the International Occupational Health and Safety Information Centre (CIS), ILO, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Fax: +41 22 799 8516; email: cis@ilo.org

The CIS can provide contacts in each ACP country (it has collaborating centres in 22) and copies of conventions, and several publications, free through its online services on its Safework Website: www.ilo.int/public/english/protection/safework/cis.



More directly attuned to the interests of agricultural workers is the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), often referred to in agricultural circles as the International Union of Food Workers. The IUF supports national organisations in ensuring proper OSH protection, and can link you with national member bodies. Like the ILO, it is not too familiar with operating in the absence of effectively enforced legislation; as a federation of member organisations it cannot always be fully helpful to unorganised or subsistence farmers. Its information, however, as with that of the ILO, provides reliable material and examples of best practice. IUF, Rampe du Pont-Rouge 8, CH-1213 Petit-Lancy, Switzerland. Fax: +41 22 793 22 38; email: iuf@iuf.org. Its well-organised Website: www.iuf.org is in French, English and Spanish.

In the field of care of agricultural workers, the International Social Security Association (ISSA) has a section dealing with the prevention of occupational risks in agriculture: ISSA-Agriculture, Weissenstrasse 72, D-34131 Kassel, Germany; fax: 49 561 935 94 14; email: julia-sauerme@bv-lsv.de. Aware that social security rights are minimal in many countries, ISSA is organising a colloquium on *Prevention of occupational risks – a common challenge for developing and industrial countries*, in Tunis, Tunisia, from 1 to 4 October 2001.



For an overview of OSH activities in Africa, the thrice-yearly *African Newsletter on Occupational*



Having legal protection is only part of the story. Laws are hollow without enforcement.

Health and Safety is a regular and reliable source. Recent thematic issues have included Women at work, Chemicals and safety, Ergonomics, Dusts and Training and information sources. The September 2001 issue (2/2001) will focus upon Agriculture. Published by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health as part of the ILO-FINNIDA African Safety and Health Project, it is free, printed or in electronic pdf format, from FIOH, Topeliuksenkatu 41a A, FIN-00250 Helsinki, Finland. Fax: +358 9 4747 2490; email: Marianne.Joronen@occuphealth.fi; Website: www.occuphealth.fi/e/info/anl



One sub-regional OSH service, with a long history of cooperation with labour, agriculture and the informal sector, is the Training and Research Support Centre (TARSC) which provides services throughout the SADC region. TARSC, 47 Van Praagh Avenue, Milton Park, Harare, Zimbabwe. Fax: +263 4 73 72 20; email: icon.co.zw; Website: www.tarsc.org. Other regional and sub-regional services can be identified through the ILO-

CIS and IUF. In the overall field of safety, there is no effective world association of the 'safety profession' to go to seek local contacts.

One key way to minimise accidents, injuries and disability is in the field of ergonomics meaning safe equipment and workplace design which will "maximise productivity by reducing operator fatigue, discomfort and potential injury." A key source is the study on *'Agricultural implements used by Women Farmers in Africa'*, undertaken by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Agricultural Engineering Branch (AGSE) of the FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy. Fax: +39 06 5705 6798; email: agse-mail@fao.org. A more general set of *Guidelines on ergonomics in agriculture* is being prepared, in collaboration with the UK's Silsoe Research Institute, by Valentina Forastieri at the Safework-Agriculture desk in ILO, fax: +41 22 799 68 78; email: safework@ilo.org

This survey of information links does not cover the use or disposal of pesticides, or food safety. Detailed articles on these much-requested topics will appear in future issues of *Spore*.

Publications

Protect crops naturally

Like many of the plants to which it is dedicated, this book is a flowering perennial. The new edition of *Natural Crop Protection in the Tropics* bears little resemblance to its 1986 predecessor which came to occupy a well-deserved place on – and off – the shelves of farmers and their advisors.

This is a sturdy and accessible volume with an exemplary presentation of texts and illustrations. The same basic content has been retained and expanded. Having described the pests which afflict various crops it explains various methods of field protection, ranging from intercropping and protecting

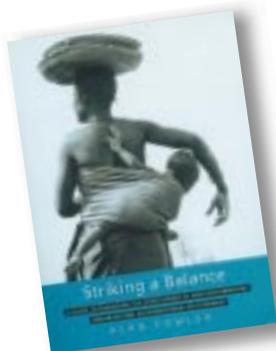
seedlings to plants which control insect pests, followed by storage protection steps such as prevention and use of animal substances and vegetable oils.

New to this edition are a glossary, Internet references, a detailed reading list and eight well-edited case studies which emphasise how to help farmers move to natural pest control. "Farmers," the author writes in her conclusion, "are no different from anybody else. They also strive for benefit and gain." It is with that basic realism that this book started out fifteen years ago; in its new rendition, it has a long and useful life ahead of it.



Natural Crop Protection in the Tropics. Letting Information Come to Life
By G Stoll. Margraf Verlag, co-publication Agricol and CTA, 2000. 386 pp. ISBN 3 8236 1317 0
Margraf Verlag, PO Box 1205, 97985 Weikersheim, Germany.
Fax: +49 7934 8156;
Email: margraf@compuserve.com
CTA number 1005. 40 credit points

Thinking on your feet

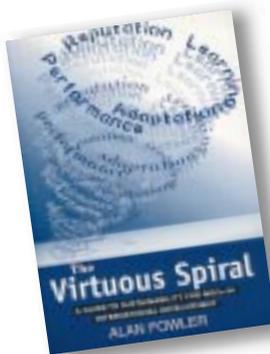


Of late, after research bodies and small businesses, it has been the turn of NGOs to be provided with management guides. One, *Striking a Balance*, is already a classic in its own time. It is a concisely written book from a no-nonsense author. It was first published at a time when NGOs were finally recognised as a force with their own values and needs, instead of the irritant or cheap delivery system that governments and the private sector had seen them to be in the past. Sorry, make that NGOs, as the author insists that this management manual is for people with a development mission who started out without thinking that they would need management tools to succeed.

It takes the common sense methods used for decades by businesses to survive and prosper, and adapts them to the special context of NGOs. Which the author, sort of admits, include the problems that arise from the high motivation of social profit and emotional rewards that drive many NGOs leaders. Frank, and without the condescension of many guides for NGOs, *Striking a Balance* is required reading for people striving to make their organisations as solid as a rock but as full of energy as a rolling stone.

What then is so special about Fowler's successor volume *The Virtuous Spiral*? Basically it gives you the reassurance that 'sustainability' is a question of confidence. In yourselves, in your partners, and – above all – their confidence in you. The book oozes with case studies, mainly of those adult NGOs which now form the establishment, explaining how they overcame multifarious problems and settled down into the path of success. With some excellent discussion of questions like 'should we commercialise?' and 'should we have private sector as partners?', it is less of

a guide than a collection of insights. For Fowler, sustainability is 'agility with insight', as simple as that. One wonders if his next book will be even less of a manual, and more of a set of reflections, a guide for the perplexed? Here's one, Alan: "Civil society is not a structure, it is an attitude."



Striking a Balance. A guide to enhancing the effectiveness of non-governmental organisations in international development
A Fowler, Earthscan, London, 1997. 313 pp. ISBN 1 85383 325 8
CTA number 970. 40 credit points.

The Virtuous Spiral. A guide to sustainability for NGOs in international development.
A Fowler, Earthscan, London, 2000. 238 pp. ISBN 1 85383 610 9
CTA number 1017. 40 credit points.
Earthscan Publications, 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN, UK
Fax: +44 20 7278 1142;
email: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk;
Website: www.earthscan.co.uk

Bees at work

■ A practical guide to the biology of pollination, methods of culturing and conserving bees, pollination requirements and recommendations for individual crops.

Crop Pollination by Bees
K S Delaplane & D F Mayer, CABI Publishing, 2000. 352 pp.
ISBN 0851994482
GBP 60 • € 94.25
CABI Publishing
Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8DE, UK
Fax: +44 1491 829 292
Email: publishing@cabi.org

Information support for natural resource management policy

■ Bilingual proceedings of a CTA workshop held in Wageningen, the Netherlands, 26 – 29 January 1999.

CTA, 2000. 254 pp.
ISBN 92 9081 2311
CTA number 1004. 20 Credit points

Agricultural engineering, environment and development

■ Proceedings on CD-ROM of the Southern and Eastern Africa Society of Agricultural Engineers (SEASAE) Conference held 2 - 4 October 1996 in Arusha, Tanzania.

Edited by N Hatibu, H F Mahoo, P J Makungu, V C K Silayo & O B Mzirai, 1999.
SEASAE, c/o Dept. Agricultural Engineering, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology,
PO Box 62000, Nairobi, Kenya.
Fax: +254 151 21 847
US\$ 10 • € 10.65 (+ P&P)

Are you ill, sugar?

■ For the latest on sugarcane diseases, here is clear and structured help: per disease, information on the causal agent, geographical distribution, symptoms, transmission, diagnosis and control.

A guide to sugarcane diseases
Edited by P Rott, R A Bailey et al., CIRAD & ISSCT, 2000. 339 pp. ISBN 2 87 614 386 0
FRF 490 • € 74.70
CIRAD
TA 283/04, avenue Agropolis
34398 Montpellier Cedex 5, France
Fax: +33 467 61 55 47
Email: librairie@cirad.fr

Workshop on Impact Assessment of Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa

■ Proceedings of an ECART/ASARECA/CTA workshop, held in Entebbe, Uganda, 16-19 November 1999.

CTA/GTZ, 2000. 141 pp.
CTA number 1000. 20 credit points

Two useful trees abreast

■ Proceedings (in French and English) of an international seminar on the drying and improvement of shea (karité) and canarium (called abel in Cameroon, aiele in Ivory Coast, elemi in Nigeria, bediwunua or eyere in Ghana and mwafu in Uganda), held from 1 to 3 December 1999 in Ngaoundéré, Cameroon.

International workshop on drying and improvement of shea and canarium

Edited by C Kapseu & J Kayem, 2000. 463 pp. ISBN 2 911541 10 3
Département de Génie des Procédés
École nationale supérieure des sciences agro-industrielles (ENSAI), 2000
Université de Ngaoundéré
BP 455, Ngaoundéré, Cameroon
Fax: +237 25 27 51

A wild vegetable on your farm

■ A practical guide to everything you need to know about growing eru, the climbing plant found in the rainforests of Cameroon and a highly consumed wild vegetable.

Guide on how to grow "eru", Youth Development Centre (YDC), Extension series no 1, 2000. 12 pp. US\$ 3 • € 3.20
YDC
PO Box 1321, Limbe, Cameroon
Fax: +237 33 23 76
Email: Mwene2000@yahoo.com

Let's breed adaptive taro

■ The taro root crop – a daily staple for 400 million people - is propagated vegetatively and thus adapts uneasily to changing environments. It has great genetic variability but breeding programmes are relatively undeveloped. This book will advance the cause.

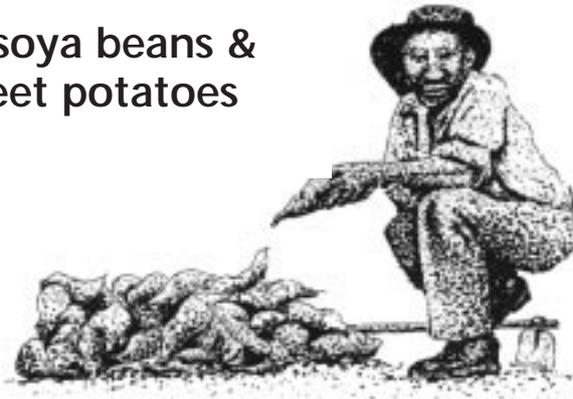
The genetics and breeding of taro
By A Ivancic & V Lebot, CIRAD, 2000. 195 pp. ISBN 2 87614 414 X
FRF 230 • € 35.05
For CIRAD's address details see elsewhere in this section

Integrate for quality

■ The quality of fruits and vegetables is determined and perceived differently by various stakeholders, all the way from production to consumer. This scientific publication describes the various stages and argues that they should be integrated for improved quality.

Fruit & Vegetable Quality. An integrated view
Edited by L Shewfeldt & B Brückner, Technomic Publishing Co. 2000. 309 pp. ISBN 1 56676 785 7
US\$ 99.95 • € 106.40
Technomic Publishing Co
Box 3535
Lancaster, PA 17604, USA
Fax: +1 717 295 4538
Email: customer@techpub.com
Website: www.techpub.com

Of soya beans & sweet potatoes



■ Is a harvest of 23 or more tonnes of sweet potatoes per hectare just a dream for you? Pius Ngeze hopes that his manual *Learn how to grow sweet*

potatoes will help farmers achieve this kind of harvest with minimum inputs. The booklet offers practical information about the plant's histo-

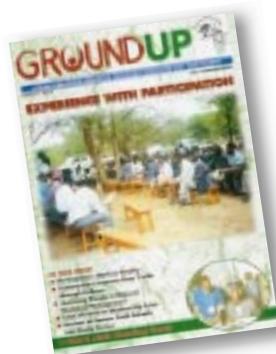
As good as one's word

■ Calling all researchers! Ever had trouble getting started on writing a research proposal for approval, for an assignment or for funding? The *Handbook for preparing and writing research proposals* is a step-by-step guide through this trying exercise. It deals with the formulation of key research questions, their prioritisation and scientific underpinning as well as the structure of the proposal. Its practical chapters explain how to make and present a research budget and a list of references, what type face and size to use, and when to use underlining, or put text in **bold** or *italics*. Although this manual comes from the Spe-

cial Programme for Developing Countries of the International Union of Forestry Research Organisations (IUFPRO), with many examples related to forestry issues, researchers from other disciplines could make good use of it.

Handbook for preparing and writing research proposals
By C P P Reid, IUFPRO-SPDC, 2000. 164 pp. ISBN 3 901347 23 2
US\$ 25 • € 26.60
US\$ 5 • € 5.30 for developing country scientists from IUFPRO member organisations.
Cheque payable to IUFPRO-SPDC must accompany the order.
IUFPRO - SPDC
Seckendorff-Gudent-Weg 8
A-1131 Vienna, Austria
Fax: +43 1 877 93 55
Email: spdc@forvie.ac.at

Ground Up takes off



■ The third issue of *Ground Up*, the quarterly magazine of PELUM (Participatory Ecological Land-Use Management) is off the press and the fourth is in the making. The 40-page magazine makes superb use of the PELUM network of some

120 local organisations from nine eastern and southern African countries, bringing together a huge variety of topics from the entire region. Some examples: community game management in Zimbabwe and Zambia, beekeeping in Malawi, AIDS widows' access to land, improved fallows to increase soil fertility, farm schools and farmers training themselves. There is a member profile, a section on global events and a conference calendar.

Annual subscription rate:
US\$20 • € 21.30
PELUM Association
Box MP 1059 Mt Pleasant
Harare
Zimbabwe
Fax: + 263 4 7444 70
Email: pelum@internet.co.zw

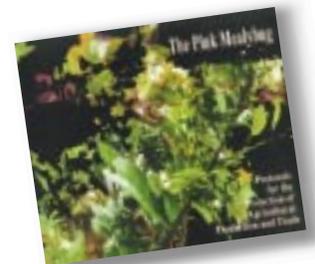
ry and typology, the different types of sweet potatoes, the soils and climates they favour, the nutrients they need, the diseases they loathe and much more.

After harvesting your sweet potatoes, start reading Ngeze's *Learn how to grow soya beans*, a similar kind of booklet on quite a different crop. Both guides are practical, well-structured and illustrated manuals, suitable for farmers, extension workers and students.

Learn how to grow sweet potatoes
P B Ngeze, Acacia Stantex Publishers/CTA/Friends-of-the-Book Foundation, 2000. 45 pp. ISBN 9966 917 11 x
CTA number 997. 5 credit points

Learn how to grow soya beans
P B Ngeze, Acacia Stantex Publishers/CTA/Friends-of-the-Book Foundation, 2000. 28 pp. ISBN 9966 917 12 8
CTA number 998. 5 credit points

Protection from the pink mealybug



■ The pink mealybug (PMB) has been a major agricultural disaster sweeping across the Caribbean in the past decade. The bug, *Maconellicoccus hirsutus*, has caused enormous damage to all kinds of crops, fruits, flowers and vegetables and it has brought international and inter-island trade in many products to a complete standstill. The *Pink Mealybug* manual discusses the integration of practices in production, harvesting and packaging necessary for quarantine security. Treatments include methyl bromide, hot water and magnesium phosphide.

The Pink Mealybug. Protocols for the Protection of Agricultural Production and Trade
By R D Gautam, R N Pilgrim & V E Stewart, CARDI & CTA, 2000. 60 pp. ISBN 976 617 007 x
CTA number 1018 . 5 credit points

Groundnuts in a nutshell

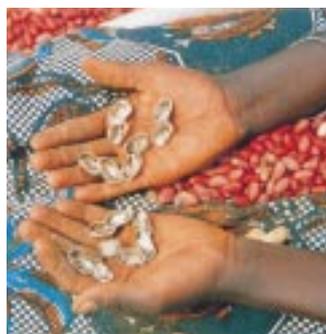


■ Among several recent announcements on groundnuts by ICRISAT-Africa are two sets of recommendations for improved groundnut production, in Zambia and Zimbabwe

respectively (see also the article on groundnuts in the news section).

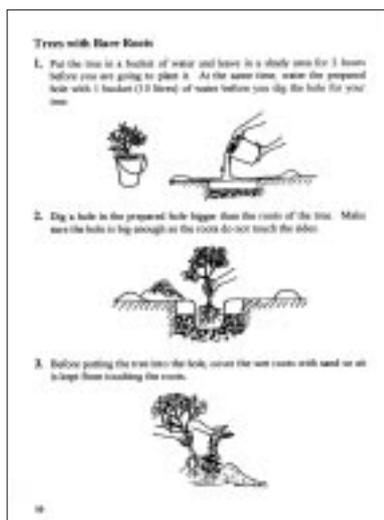
Both are country-specific practical extension handbooks. They deal with different varieties used in each country, local soil and climatic conditions and requirements for groundnuts, pests, diseases, recommended cultural practices and harvest and post harvest handling. Finally, they refer the reader to contacts for further information or practical assistance.

Recommendations for Improved Groundnut Production in Zambia
By B M Siamasonta, K Kanenga, J C Musanya & P M Hamazakaza, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Zambia & SADC/ICRISAT Groundnut Project, 2000. 20 pp.



Recommended Groundnut Production Practices for Smallholder Farmers in Zimbabwe
By P N Nyakanda & G L Hildebrand, Department of Research and Specialist Services and Seed Co Limited, Zimbabwe & SADC/ICRISAT Groundnut Project, 1999. 24 pp. Available at postage costs
ICRISAT
PO Box 776, Bulawayo Zimbabwe
Fax: +263 9 83 83 18
Email: icrisatzw@cgiar.org

Reap the fruit of indigenous trees



■ Morula, African chewing gum and Mmilo might not be such world famous fruits as oranges, pineapples and man-

goes, but they are as tasty, healthy and valuable. Besides, these indigenous fruits of southern Africa are fully adapted to local and sometimes harsh, and dry conditions.

Stanley Mateke of Veld Products Research and Development has compiled a series of five manuals on growing such fruits; getting started; propagation, care and harvest; pruning and thinning and post-harvest measures. One manual deals with growing both indigenous and exotic fruits in general. Specific titles

cover Mmilo (wild medlar or *Vangueria infausta*), Morula (*Schlerocarya birrea*), Mogorogwane (wild orange or *Strych-*



nos cocculoides) and Morojwa (African chewing gum or *Azanza garckeana*). Each booklet is around 18 pages and costs 5 Botswana Pula • € 1 (excluding packaging and postage).

Veld Products Research and Development
PO Box 2020
Gaborone
Botswana
Fax: +267 347 363
Email: veldprod@info.bw

How to obtain these publications



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subscribers. Subscribers can order publications on CTA's list up to the value of the credit points available to them. Subscribers can only request publications on the order forms provided.

Non-subscribers who wish to join the scheme should write to CTA for an application form. Applications will be considered from agricultural and rural development organisations in the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) Group of States; individ-

uals resident in ACP countries may also apply.

If you are not eligible for a free subscription to the PDS, or if you need publications beyond your free credit allocation, you may buy publications on CTA's list from our commercial distributor: *Triops, Hinderburgstrasse 33, D-64295 Darmstadt, Germany, Fax: +49 6151 314 048, Email: triops@triops.de, Website: http://www.triops.de*

Seed systems in Tanzania

■ Two publications, each containing proceedings of two workshops on seed systems in Tanzania held in Dar es Salaam in 1998 and 1999.

Seed systems, higher productivity and commercialization: Prospects for sorghum and millets in Tanzania, SADC/ICRISAT – Sorghum and Millet Improvement Program, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. 1999. 96 pp.

Seed systems for the new millennium: An action plan for Tanzania, SADC/ICRISAT – Sorghum and Millet Improvement Program, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. 1999. 88 pp. Available at postage costs
ICRISAT
PO Box 776
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
Fax: +263 983 83 18
Email: icrisatzw@cgiar.org

Getting warmer

■ By no means the first book on the topic, this is nonetheless a good overview of temperature change, carbon dioxide and radiation. Separate chapters on major cereal crops, soybeans, vegetables, root and tuber crops and grasslands.

Climate Change and Global Crop Productivity
Edited by K R Reddy & H F Hodges, CABI Publishing 2000. 488 pp. ISBN 0851994393
GBP 75 • € 117.80
(For CABI's address details, see elsewhere in this section)

Organic banana 2000: Towards an organic initiative in the Caribbean

Report of the international workshop on the production and marketing of organic bananas by smallholder farmers. 31 October – 4 November 1999, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Edited by M Holderness, S Sharrock, E Frison & M Kairo. IPGRI/INIBAP/CAB International/CTA, 2000. 178 pp. ISBN 2 910810 40 2
CTA number 1003. 20 credit points

Whose land?

■ A lexicon of the rich terminology of land tenure and ownership, customary and colonial law and accompanying socio-legal and cultural diversity in West Africa.

Land tenure lexicon. A glossary of terms from English - and French - speaking West Africa
Compiled by R Leonard & J Longbottom, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), 2000. 74 pp. ISBN 1 899825 46 0
GBP 12.50 • € 19.65
IIED Drylands Programme
3 Endsleigh Street
London WC1H 0DD, UK
Fax: + 44 20 73 88 28 26
Email: bookshop@iied.org

Spore salutes Mr Soares

Mr Álvaro Soares de Melo, the compiler of all 41 editions of our Portuguese-language edition, *Esporo*, retires with this issue. He has worked in agriculture for several decades; first in his native Azores Islands, where he ran rural radio services, and later in government service in Portugal, and in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau. Since the launch of *Esporo* in 1992 he has brought a farmer's wisdom, an agronomist's expertise and the steady walk of a mariner to his complex task. He has handed over to Mr António Vieira of Sintra, Portugal. We shall miss you, Mr Soares. Muito obrigado. Boa viagem!

Mr Soares (right) briefs his successor Mr Vieira



A world in your ear

You know that saying about how 'the pictures are always better on the radio'? Well, you might want to know about *Spore's* big sister on the radio, a sort of *Spore*-of-the-airwaves, the Rural Radio Resource Packs (RRRP) programme which is now entering its second decade of service. Each year, four packs of programme materials are produced for rural radio stations by WRENmedia for CTA; in 2000, the packs were used by about 250 radio stations.

Each pack is on a selected theme and contains several short recordings of interviews and sound items on broadcast quality tape, plus a full text transcript, technical information, cue sheets for broadcasters, and background information such as *Spore* articles and CTA publications. Most interviews are made with journalists and experts from ACP countries.

The RRRPs are distributed by CTA to rural radio stations on request. They are not available through the PDS subscription system with credit points. The programme materials are also publicly available as sound files on the Internet (www.agricta.org), and they can be downloaded for rebroadcast.

In 2001, topics to be covered include water rights, credit, farmers' organisations and land and agricultural reform.

Further reading:

Radio serving the rural areas of the ACP countries: Directory 1998. CTA, 1998, 319 pp, ISBN 92 9081 2052. CTA number 941. 20 credit points.

Photo Bernard Favre

Mailbox

Thank you to everyone who wrote to *Spore* with your kind wishes for the third millennium! May health and happiness be with you too.

How do you use *Spore*? In your field, garden, reading club, radio club, teaching room, office, conferences? How many people read this copy? What do you want *Spore* to do more of? Get your answers ready, because in *Spore* 92 we shall ask you about this in detail, and offer you some encouragement to write in.

Can't wait? Write in today with news, questions, comments; the addresses are in the green box.



Bees rising from the ashes?

■ Writing from **Wolaita Soddo** in Ethiopia, Alemseged Mengesha asks "Is there something secret? One morning I was called away from my breakfast and I left half a cup of tea on the table. When I came back after an hour, the glass was full of dead honeybees. I was going to drop them in the garbage but a passing farmer advised me to leave on the ash of firewood. I got some ash and left them on it. After just 45 minutes about 80% of the bees became alive and went away. I write to share my

experience, to encourage local knowledge and to ask you the secret behind this. Is it because of the absorption character of the ash or something else."

Participatory training for real!

■ **François Benao** of Léo, Burkina Faso, follows up a letter from Sirad Seied Yesut in *Spore* 83 about "how CTA should democratise (excuse my choice of word!) the seminars and training workshops it supports. Those of us working at the grassroots in isolated areas need to participate in these events

too so that the real people in rural communities can benefit. Yet *Spore* only tells us about them afterwards even though they are sometimes held in our area... If we were involved, we could share our thoughts freely with the authorities, from top to bottom."

Who knows best?

■ After ordering two books from CTA on 'Alternative Financing', **Malamine Kamara**, secretary of the credit and savings association of Sedhiou, Senegal, tells us "they have become valuable tools for our work. We have noticed how a lot of the experts we have had in the past to tell us about microfinance also use these books a lot – but they sometimes made us pay a lot of money for their advice!"

Grow your own, with care

■ **J J Kanjanga**, director of the Lipangwe Organic Manure Demonstration Farm in Matala, Malawi, writes about "LOMADEF's promotion of urban home gardening using organic farming principles. We would like to caution any agency seeing the sense of urban agricultural development as a potential strategy for ensuring food security never to encourage the use of dangerous synthetic chemicals. The reason? Obvious! The damning health and environmental hazards with the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides must be avoided.

Sharpening those tools

A good workman never blames his tools" – so goes the old (gender-specific) saying. In the field of agricultural information for practitioners and policy makers, several tools under development at CTA are now almost ready for use.

In the field of **agricultural policy networking**, a high-level seminar was held in Entebbe, Uganda, from 6 to 10 November 2000. The meeting, officially opened by the Ugandan Minister of Agriculture, Dr Kisamba-Mugerwa, was attended by 31 participants from all six ACP regions who represented a wide swathe of actors and stakeholders in agricultural policies: decision-makers, policy advisors, academics, researchers, statisticians, NGOs, farmers' organisations, donors and information experts.

With agricultural policy making being of concern at national and regional levels, the meeting studied papers on each region, plus national experiences from

Tanzania and Antigua and Barbuda. With the management of information and communication (ICM) being essential for policy making, the meeting recommended support to improving ICM at both levels, and strengthening ICM capacities. An underlying component here is the exchange of information and experiences - in short, networking. Increased attention should be paid, it was felt, to making more information available on best practices in policy processes in ACP countries and elsewhere, including guidelines, methodologies and networking.

The process of **determining priority information themes** in agriculture (PITA) at national level in all ACP countries will soon be aided by the publication of materials in printed, video and digital form (Website and CD-ROM). This follows a training workshop on the PITA methodology held at CTA in November 2000, where a team of seventeen trainers was set up, including a coordinator for each of the six ACP regions. The workshop was the

penultimate stage of several years of painstaking preparations for the methodology, which aims to embrace the full circle of agricultural stakeholders in defining priority needs.

With the development of **market information systems (MIS)** for small operators in the agricultural sectors of ACP countries being a key aspect of CTA's work in market-led development (itself one of the Centre's five current priority themes), a technical consultation was held at CTA in October 2000. Its task was to decide on 'best practice principles' for an MIS, drawing on experiences with pilot projects in Ghana, Kenya and Uganda. Integration is the key. At local level, the emphasis is on local information as well as punctual 'feeds' from other MIS. That local information should in turn be linked into national and regional systems. All in all, such structures will need alert and informed management, and well-selected and on-tap information – topics to be covered in future consultations.



We have a proverb in Malawi that 'we do not eat with both hands even when we famishing.' Away therefore with destructive agrochemicals which make the farmer an innocent murder."

More from maize

■ **Lennox Wilson A Chitsonga** of the Kaphiri-Kamodzi Farm in Felemu-Mwanza, Malawi reports that "the publication 'Maize' helped me know the reality about how far away my farm is in terms of maize production per unit area, how widely the crop is grown, and the level and sophistication of the technology applied in the physical processes of production, processing and marketing.

The publication also contributed significantly to a spectacular surge of production from the traditional 0.75 metric tonnes per hectare or thereabouts to 2.5 metric tonnes in the 1999-2000 season. This production came from the part of my subsistence farm to which I put maize and worked with my two hands. As long as I have this book and put it to such use, it will mean more maize, nsima maize flour and a cash surplus for investment.

Mr Chitsonga adds "in Malawi, people reckon that taking any snacks or supper without nsima is like sleeping without eating." He has written a description of its preparation, widely known in southern Africa. Readers can request a copy of this by writing directly to the address *Spore*-desk – note, not the usual address.

New life for plastic bags, and earth pots

■ Reader **Jean-Yves Clavreul** has dropped us (by email) a note and photo about simple methods of retaining water and earth around young plants, to encourage their growth. Put a used plastic bag (the ones that blow around everywhere) around a plant before putting in into the soil, and top it off with a small layer of earth. One variation is to use broken bits of plant pots around the plant, keeping the curved bit facing upwards, and covering with soil. Watering the plant once a week around its stalk will be enough to see it grow strong.



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Tshepo Khumbane runs her own farm just outside Pretoria, where she mobilises rural women around issues of household food security and indigenous agricultural practices. She has been associated with the Environment and Development Agency (EDA) since the 1970s, as an advocate of subsistence agriculture. She has also served on the board of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC).

Indigenous knowledge Subsistence lives!

In a world used to thinking in terms of historical epochs and timelines, South Africa is supposed to have made a clean break from its world-infamous apartheid rule. The truth is, the past of “New” South Africa is still very much alive. It has to do with people’s access to land and their hopes that land is the key to breaking the poverty cycle. Tshepo Khumbane has worked for decades to restore people’s links with, and love for, the land. She spoke with ACP journalist Dudley Moloi.

From their genesis in the early part of the 1800s to the mid-1980s, land policies had forcibly moved millions of black South Africans from their native lands and squeezed them into about one-eighth of the country’s total land area in overcrowded and agriculturally unproductive “native reserves” or homelands.

Shocked into agriculture

A typhoid outbreak in one such native reserve changed me into someone else. I was working in my first post as a social worker in a hospital in Hammanskraal. This largely rural black settlement north of Johannesburg was made up of people who had been evicted from their native land in an area called Walmansdaal. Soon after their arrival in Hammanskraal there was a serious outbreak of typhoid - one of the worst I’ve ever seen. The hospital needed long-term solutions as well as short-term ones.

And so one Saturday I said to the chief doctor, “lend me a driver and an ambulance, I am going to [neighbouring white] farmers to ask for seed.” And so I collected seeds by ambulance - emergency seeds. While the sisters dispensed drugs, I dispensed another kind of medicine - envelopes of seeds. There were many tuberculosis (TB) cases and I wanted to break the cycle, through preventative nutrition. I started a food gardens campaign, with women.

The agricultural approach was simple. There was little water infrastructure and so we relied on rain-water harvesting by building dams. We used all sorts of rubbish as fertiliser. I did not have the knowledge then but I had the passion, the consciousness and the drive. It was like fire and everyone was excited.

Stressing the “culture” in agriculture

In the olden days people produced their own food and had their own grain storage infrastructure to save food for bad times like drought. Traditionally people relied on dry-food production and their knowledge of wild plants for food and medicine. But this is all history. The knowledge is gone, only a few people still have it. Older people have not managed to transfer their knowledge and farming skills to the next generation because of the loss of land, loss of cattle, donkeys, goats and other simple means of production.

South Africa’s land legacy has not escaped the new government, whose land reform programme aimed at restoring or compensating communities for land lost under colonial and apartheid rule. It also hoped to distribute 30% of arable land to the landless. To date less than 1% of agricultural land has been distributed - an

initiatives and agricultural production. I don’t think I am anywhere near convincing people of this fact. Current government policies are not conducive to subsistence agriculture.

Food should come first - if you have food you have no worries and no stress. But you need to relinquish the voice that says you’re stupid and you can’t do it. We need to transform the extension service so that indigenous agriculture has the same status as commercial agriculture.

We need to rebuild what we have destroyed. We need to take people from one civilisation to the next and start looking at ourselves as human beings again. We need love and commitment if we are to get to that level - then we would have heaven on earth, plenty for everyone.

We need a food security strategy which begins with a concern when your neighbour doesn’t have food. You can’t quantify this in numbers and bags as agricultural scientists and economists do. And it is the

“ give indigenous agriculture the same status as commercial agriculture ”

excruciatingly slow pace. The major flaw is that the programme abandoned the idea of encouraging beneficiaries to use available land as a basis for food security and household-based poverty eradication. Instead it sought to turn the new landowners into small commercial farmers modelled on the 60,000 or so white farmers who are the backbone of the South African agricultural industry. This “market model” is making people ashamed of what they can potentially do best, namely “culture”-based food security

people who live below the poverty line who have to walk the road and discover it themselves. We can’t live off mono-cropping. We can’t eat just one crop. Diversity creates pleasure and sustainability. People have missed their priorities and have become greedy for money.

The opinions expressed in Viewpoint are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of CTA.