

Passing on the Gift of Knowledge; The Story of a Farmer Trainer | Jane Kugonza

In Uganda, one of the implementing partners of EADD, The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), is working together with other development stakeholders like Namulonge Agricultural research institute and farmers to develop strategies and options for improved animal nutrition. Together with the partners, extension providers, farmer leaders and farmers, a number of farmer trainers have been identified, engaged and trained to train other farmers in improved fodder technologies.

In Mukono, one of EADD Uganda project sites, it is evident that the farmer trainers have picked up with zeal and are already training other farmers. One such successful trainer is 54 year old widow, Sara Kawere. Sara has trained over 30 farmers in a period of two months. She tells her story.

“As a widow, I have multiple tasks to perform in addition to being a farmer trainer. I look after two families, mine and that of my co-wife who died. This is a challenge but I have sacrificed time to train my fellow farmers on how to grow and manage fodder crops to increase milk production from our cows. I am motivated by the fact that being a farmer trainer has made me popular. I meet many people as they pass by my fodder demonstration garden, in church, in women groups and village meetings.

“Normally, I train these groups informally and my joy comes when I see them appreciate and take on the new fodder technologies to improve their milk production and income. Since I don't pay for the knowledge I receive as a farmer trainer, then I must pass it on as a gift for free” she says.

Sara acknowledges that she regularly receives advice and help from an extension worker, Mr. Enock Mukalazi and EADD staff. ‘They keep monitoring what I do on my farm and have encouraged me to improve my feeding practices,’ she continues.

Sarah says that she has faced a few challenges as a farmer trainer including transport limitations. She also finds a challenge in handling multiple tasks which she has tried to solve by involving other family members to assist her. Sarah's exemplary training techniques demonstrate that the use of farmer trainers is an effective approach of passing on new farming technologies to many farmers in a relatively short time and in a more cost effective manner. Farmers learn more from fellow farmers whom they easily identify with and whom they believe share similar problems and challenges. If Sarah is able to train 30 farmers in two months, it means that she can train 180 farmers in a year!



Sara (in the middle) shows EADD staff her fodder garden