



ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS TO TOBACCO GROWING AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION MEETING IN KAMPALA, UGANDA

CTCA

06-Feb-12

Background

The tobacco epidemic continues to be the leading preventable cause of death and disability in the world today. According to WHO, tobacco use causes 6 million deaths each year and is expected to cause approximately 10 million deaths by the year 2030, 70% of these in developing countries.

Research has proven that tobacco impact can be felt at both the societal and household levels, negatively affecting the health of populations, local and national economies, the environment, as well as societal and gender roles. Tobacco cultivation is a labour-intensive process that rapidly depletes soil nutrients and requires heavy use of pesticides and fertilizers. Farmers realize very little of the profits from the tobacco crop. Curing tobacco consumes an estimated 200,000 hectares of woodland each year. Women and children face major occupational hazards as they do the majority of the menial work on plantations and in smoke houses¹.

CTCA² aims at promoting economically sustainable livelihoods to tobacco growing in Africa as one of the policy and legislation outcome areas. The Centre will support African governments to identify and implement viable alternatives based on the available viable options.

In view of the aforementioned, CTCA in collaboration with WHO organized a consultative session with the following Objectives:

Objective

1. Appreciate health, socio-economic & environmental effects of tobacco growing and use to the population.
2. Share experiences and understanding on what partners and stakeholders are doing in relation to alternative livelihoods and environmental conservation.
3. Brain storm on the action plan for alternatives to tobacco growing and environmental conservation

The workshop brought together government officials from the ministries of agriculture, environment and trade, government agencies including National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO), National Forestry Authority (NFA) and Makerere University College of Agriculture and Environmental Science, Civil Society and Private sector. During the meeting, a presentation was made by the project leader on Bamboo growing in Kenya as an alternative to tobacco growing & Lessons Learnt. This was intended to share the practicability and Lessons learnt on transitioning from tobacco growing to another crop.

¹ http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-83317-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

² http://ctc-africa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=52&Itemid=73&lang=en

In all, five papers were presented to the workshop on:

- A case study of the bamboo growing in Kenya as an alternative to tobacco growing
- Mapping Tobacco Growing Areas and Alternative crops: Linking with the ecological zoning as well as ranking the crops.
- Marketing Strategy for alternative crops and value chain addition
- Environmental Effects and challenges of Tobacco Growing
- Communication and advocacy to Farmers in relation to alternative livelihoods

First Presentation: A case study of the bamboo growing in Kenya as an alternative to tobacco growing by Prof. Jacob Kibwage of South Eastern University College, a Constituent College of Nairobi University, Kenya.

During the meeting, a presentation to participants on the bamboo growing in Kenya as an alternative to tobacco growing & Lessons Learnt was shared. This was intended to share the practicability and lessons learnt on transitioning from tobacco growing to another crop. The meeting also benefited from testimonies from tobacco farmers and a documentary on tobacco growing in Uganda that was intended to highlight the plight of farmers in Uganda and the feasibility of adopting alternatives.

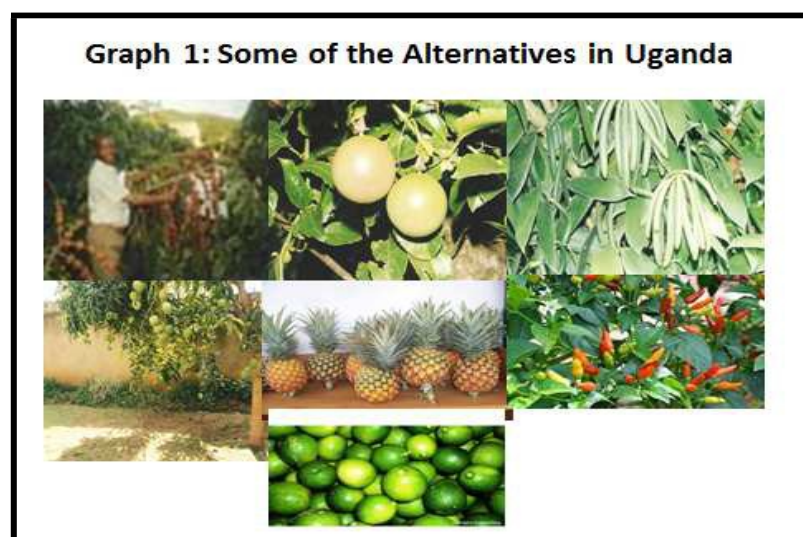


Prof. Jacob Kibwage of South Eastern University College, Kenya giving his presentation

Second Presentation: mapping of tobacco growing areas and alternative crops by Mr. Byantwale Stephen-Ministry of Agriculture, Uganda.

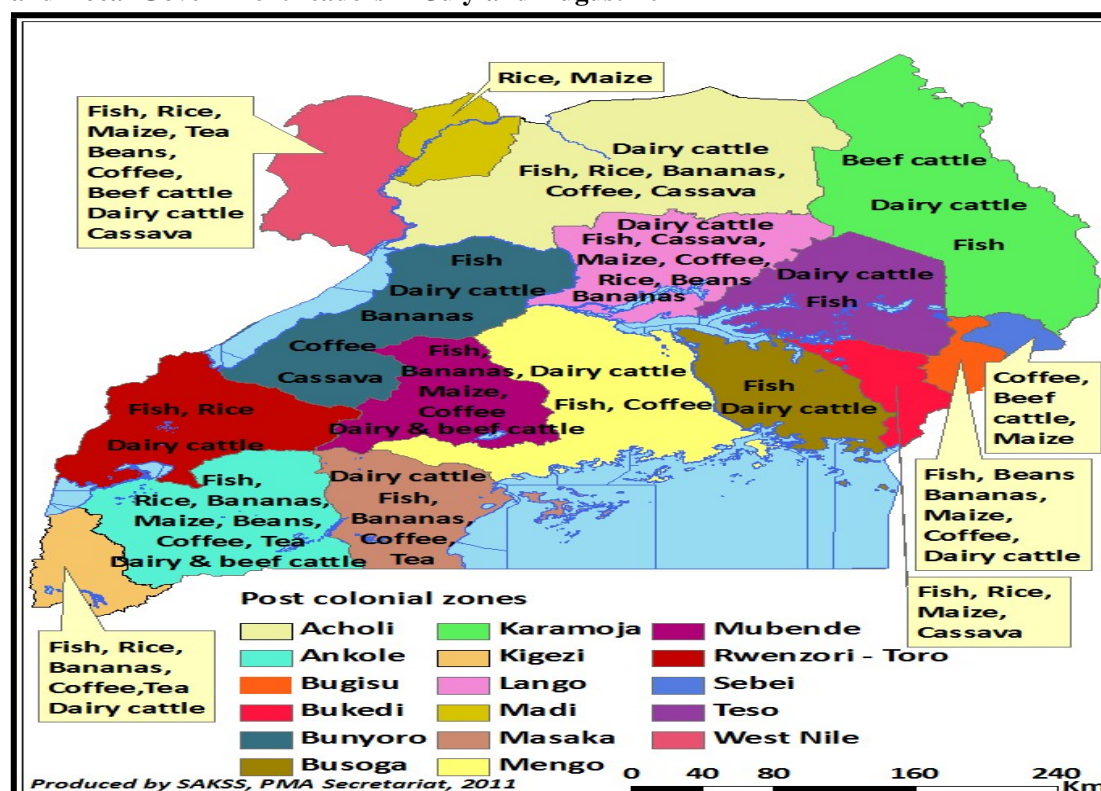
The main focus of this paper was to share the mapping for tobacco growing areas and alternative livelihoods identified as well as the zoning and ranking of the enterprises. The paper also highlighted 6 zoning principles used according to the National Agriculture Policy (2011), PEAP (Poverty Eradication Action Plan) the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA) and the Local Government Act, 1997. Principle no. 2 was the important one to note and it states, "Agricultural development will be pursued according to the agricultural production zones. Commodities that are best suited for each zone will receive public sector support for both food security and commercialization. Efforts will be made to support commodity value chain development of strategic commodities in the different zones in order to develop viable agro-industrial centers.

The presenter further highlighted that there are 10 agricultural zones in Uganda, which are well researched and documented. Some of the recommended alternatives being piloted in Uganda as shown in graph 1.



The ministry of Agriculture has gone ahead to select crops and analyzed their benefits and the model of intervention. The map shown summarizes the selected crops by region.

Map showing the selected commodities by Members of Parliament and Local Government leaders in July and August 2011



The key recommendations in this paper included:

The policy framework to promote alternatives is in place and is being implemented through the Agricultural Zoning Principle.

The adoption of alternative livelihoods should use the already identified and analyzed crops based on the zoning.

Third Presentation: Marketing strategy and value chain analysis by Mr. Bernard Tayebwa-Private Consultant

The major highlights for this paper were; tobacco is not profitable to the farmers compared to other crops; yet farmers continue to grow it as a cash crop in Uganda. The slow adoption of alternative livelihoods is due to inadequate guidance to farmers, and incentives extended to farmers by tobacco industry. Marketing strategy model has to be developed to support farmers' transit. The marketing model should focus on cheaper and available inputs, transportation and storage and value addition for instance employment creation. Key recommendations include:

support studies on comparative profitability across value chains for different tobacco growing areas Identify suitable collective marketing models for enterprises that have multiple benefits such as cash, food, environment conservation and medicinal.

Adopt already tested and proven approaches of marketing

Facilitate cooperatives to handle input and commodity marketing and value addition

Link farmers to other players like researchers, private sector, input dealers, and commodity exchange.

Fourth Presentations: Environmental effects of tobacco growing and challenges by Mr. Tom Rukundo National Forestry Authority, Uganda

The paper focused on tobacco and four key areas including: land degradation and deforestation, pollution, food production and climate change. The fundamental environmental issues raised in this paper included; loss of biodiversity due to tobacco growing, land pollution through the use of pesticides, as well as soil degradation, deforestation and water pollution, cost of degradation is between 4-12 %of Gross National Product (GNP) in Uganda and Uganda losses about 80,000 hectares of forest cover per year (NFA, 2011). Key recommendations included:

The government should balance between the short term need for revenue and employment opportunities that the tobacco industry offers and the unfolding environmental impact of tobacco growing.

Environmental impact assessment should be conducted to document the magnitude of the effects of tobacco growing on the environment.

Alternative wood for curing tobacco should come from exotic species particularly eucalyptus trees, which grow faster than the natural trees.

Fifth Presentation: Communication and Advocacy for tobacco farmers in relation to alternative enterprises by Jennifer Kalule-CTCA

The paper focused on how to effectively communicate with tobacco growing farmers. The presentation highlighted the key communication strategies to be used and how to reach the farmers for instance through: the farmers groups, the team leaders of the groups and radio which has a wider listenership.

The key recommendation was to;

Develop a communication plan to guide the communication activities.

The meeting also benefited from testimonies from tobacco farmers and a documentary on tobacco growing in Uganda. This was intended to highlight the plight of farmers in Uganda through sharing their experiences and review the feasibility of adopting alternatives enterprises. The testimonies of the two farmers can be summarized as follows:



“I and my family used to grow tobacco and I grew tobacco for 20years. Tobacco growing is a crop that is so involving and takes the whole year and the whole family to grow and harvest, you start in April till January hence very labour intensive. Tobacco growing has very low return to investment, one gets about 200,000/= Uganda shillings (equivalent to \$ 87) for a whole year harvest or season, this is not even enough to compensate for the labour costs. Then after harvesting the whole family would be sick, and all the money realized is spent on medication. The other effects of tobacco were on the trees, in my village all the trees were cut down to get firewood to cure tobacco. After I realized that tobacco was not beneficial I shifted to dairy farming and now my family has a good income, I educated my children and have food” (Mr. John Sengoma)

Mr. John Sengoma from Kanungu District



“Tobacco growing is very labour intensive and involves the whole family including children, However after harvesting the men control all the income leaving nothing for the family” They use the money to marry new wives” (Ms. Jessica Bagaru, from Arua District, Uganda)

Ms. Jessica Bagaru tobacco farmer From Arua District,

Issues raised during the meeting

The meeting generated a number of issues which are critical for implementation of articles 17& 18 of the FCTC in Uganda and Africa as a whole. The issues include:

1. The need for concrete information and or data on the situation. Specifically farm level data that can be used to quantify the magnitude of the key issues related to tobacco growing: number of farmers, total leaf production, total tobacco acreage, return per acre, leaf price and types of crops with similar returns. In addition the lack of a situation analysis for alternatives, where the selected alternative should be analyzed viz-a-vis the health, economic, environmental, labor, social, and marketing aspects. Similarly, the team raised the need for demonstrations or trials on alternatives to demonstrate feasibility.
2. Farmers should participate and be involved in the selection and implementation of alternatives.
3. Selected alternatives should be aligned to environmental protection requirements, hence the need for Environmental Impact Assessments.
4. Behavior change communication for the farmers on gender and occupational hazards for farmers and their families.
5. Tobacco growing has a dimension to food security hence selection of alternatives should take into account food security concerns.
6. Lack of best practices and success stories on alternatives and environmental conservation which are very important for scaling up.

Overall Recommendations



After the presentations, a plenary session was conducted to come up with a draft action plan. This was facilitated by Dr. Prasad Vinayak from WHO Geneva and Prof. Robert Machangu WHO-Capacity Development Team.

Action planning session facilitated by Dr. Prasad Vinayak-WHO Geneva

The meeting came up with short term and medium term strategies for the action plan for Uganda.

Short Term Strategies (6 months -1 year)

1. Form a Multi-Sectoral Task force on Alternative livelihoods & Environmental Conservation which should be a sub-committee of the Inter-ministerial National Tobacco Control Committee (NTCC). The former will be coordinated by Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries in liaison with Ministry of Health that is in charge of the NTCC.



Interim Task Force on Alternative Livelihoods with CTCA staff at CTCA Offices

2. CTCA should spearhead the process of collecting information and package it for advocacy with the policy makers and programmers at the ministerial level. This information will be used to develop policy papers and also build evidence for alternative livelihoods to tobacco growing. In order to accomplish this, CTCA should work with the Inter-University Council of East Africa, and partners. The key areas of focus should include;
 - Documenting the magnitude of tobacco in Uganda (number of famers, total leaf production, total tobacco acreage, return per acre, leaf price and types of crops with similar returns.
 - Analysis of the relationship between tobacco and Socio-economic factors, poverty, environment & health
 - Economics of tobacco growing including; production, distribution and sales, marketing modeling and value chain analysis, loan strategy, total exports and taxation.
3. CTCA should develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) or a manual or a framework to facilitate governments and other stakeholders in engaging policy makers, legislators, tobacco farmers at the community level and other stakeholders including extension workers, local government officials, media and & civil society. CTCA should work with farmers to transition from tobacco growing to alternatives. The framework should include among others steps in implementing alternatives, advocacy and communication, monitoring and evaluation and capacity building.

4. CTCA should work with Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to identify and implement pilot projects on alternatives to tobacco growing with farmers in the tobacco growing areas. The pilots will be used to demonstrate and provide information on the process of transition, which will be used for scale up.
5. CTCA should spearhead resource mobilization to facilitate the processes of transitioning to alternative livelihoods.

Medium Term Strategy (1year-3years)

1. The task force on alternative livelihoods and CTCA should start to engage the policy makers to get their buy-in using evidence generated from the research. This should be done through progressively bringing the relevant stakeholders on board and through existing processes at the ministry level including; writing cabinet memos and utilizing any fora such as technical working groups, annual and midterm reviews meetings.
2. CTCA should engage Members of Parliament from the tobacco growing areas through public dialogue meetings. This will increase their knowledge and subsequent support for alternatives to tobacco growing to be introduced in their respective constituencies.