



Background information

The Agshare II / CoCIS / CAES project captured local indigenous knowledge which farmers employ in agricultural production. Students were posted in three districts; Hoima (Western region), Masaka (Central region) and Soroti (Eastern region) in June 2014 to gather, document, package and disseminate the findings to various stakeholders both locally and globally. Experiences presented were obtained on crop production, animal rearing and soil management.

Examples of Farmers' Application of Indigenous Knowledge

Red pepper mix for controlling coccidiosis

Farmers use red pepper mixed with ash and water which they provide in the drinkers, mainly a flat plate (Fig. 1), while others apply directly in the eyes (Fig. 2) to control coccidiosis in birds.



Fig. 5. Farmer in Soroti uses a granary to store maize & Cassava

Soil Fertility

Masaka farmers collect the urine from cattle, ferment and later apply to the banana plantation to enhance soil fertility (Fig.6). The urine is fermented for 3-4 weeks to prevent scotching the plants. The concrete sink is preferred to avoid leaching of the manure. Other farmers prefer using cow dung (Fig.7)



Fig.6.



Fig.7.

Control of Mumps

In Soroti, before the farmers apply the indigenous knowledge on cattle with the aim of controlling mumps, they ensure proper diagnosis (Fig. 3). Farmers said that cattle developed a swollen neck, a signal that they had contacted mumps. It is the responsibility of the farmers to closely observe the animals for this disease and then contain it before it spread to the entire herd. Generally, the control method of mumps is varied across the three districts. For example, in Hoima farmers use hot wood (Fig.4) while in Soroti and Masaka districts hot metal is used. While using this method care has to be taken not to use very hot wood or metal to avoid injuring the animals. In addition, the animal has to be re-strained for proper operation.



Fig.3



Fig.4

Control of Banana Weevils

Some farmers in Masaka collect human urine in the bucket placed behind the house and apply it to banana fields to control banana weevils as well as enhancing soil fertility (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. Human urine collected in a bucket

Food Security

Farmers in Soroti store grain and other related produce in granaries made out of mud (Fig. 5) purposely to keep food for the future. However, the farmers still face challenges related to rodents. To avert this, the granary is raised off the ground and proper shelter is assured to prevent the grain and other produce from rain.

Food Preparation

Farmers in Soroti still use the local grinding stones to make flour from the millet grains for family food, despite the introduction of new technologies in processing food. One of the female farmers said that this stone is cheap and always available. It is good for the rural people who have limited access to modern grain mills. Even men use this type of stone to mill sorghum for brewing purposes. However, because of the introduction of modernized milling machines, this type of stone has disappeared from many of the local families.

Conclusions and way forward >>>

The indigenous agricultural knowledge is common across cultures in the three districts. However, these practices are disappearing because of the introduction of technical foreign knowledge. This, therefore, calls for the proper documentation of local indigenous knowledge for future generations. It is further vital to provide indigenous knowledge in the local language for easy comprehension and implementation by farmers. This information is perceived by the farmers as being cheap and unproblematic to implement. Creating a forum or bringing farmers together to share traditional ways of dealing with livestock and crop based challenges is of paramount importance.