



Recent additions update 2 April 2007

Books

Children and AIDS - a stocktaking report

New York, USA: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2007

This report assesses some of the most important actions and changes for children affected by AIDS that occurred in the first year of the global campaign Unite for Children. Unite against AIDS. This report assesses some of the most important actions and changes for children affected by AIDS that occurred in the first year of the global campaign Unite for Children. Unite against AIDS. Produced by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNAIDS and World Health Organisation (WHO), the report notes promising developments - increasing numbers of children receiving treatment, declining HIV prevalence among young people resulting from behavioural change, and the integration of children and AIDS into national policy frameworks. Yet it also highlights the huge gaps in progress that remain and seeks to explore how the campaign must move forward in 2007 in order to achieve its ambitious goals.

http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/ChildrenandAIDSAStocktakingLoResPDF_EN_USLetter15012007.pdf

Learning from experience : a manual for organising, analysing and documenting field based information

/ Chavez-Tafur, Jorge; Hampson, Karen; Ingevall, Anita; Thijssen, Rik

The Netherlands: ILEIA, Centre for Information on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture, 2007.

This manual is an attempt to develop a method which will help people to document their experiences. It builds on the work of those who have written about or been involved in the documentation of development initiatives for a long time. It presents a practical step-by-step method to help you describe and analyse your project, and thus document it fully. The method presented in this document is adaptable enough to be relevant in many different circumstances. It can be carried out by community based groups or organisations, NGOs, networks or large institutions.

<http://documentation.ileia.info/introduction/Documentation%20Manual.pdf>

An Introduction to sustainable development

/ Elliott, Jennifer A.
London: Routledge, 2006.

This book presents the concept and practice of sustainable development as a process that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This textbook examines the environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainable development by focusing on changing patterns of consumption, production, and distribution of resources. The impact of globalization and the role of the private sector including multinational corporations are discussed. Case materials include domestic and international initiatives and projects; protection of coastal wetlands; development of community-based water supply and sanitation systems; sustainable energy, forest, and industrial development. The new edition encompasses greater critical reflection on the motives underpinning and changes seen in the pursuit of sustainable development.

Policy engagement : how civil society can be more effective / Court, Julius; Mendizabal, Enrique; Osborne, David; Young, David
London : Overseas Development Administration (ODA), 2006

Civil society organisations (CSOs) make a difference in international development. They provide development services and humanitarian relief, innovate in service delivery, build local capacity and advocate with and for the poor. Acting alone, however, their impact is limited in scope, scale and sustainability. CSOs need to engage in government policy processes more effectively. With increased democratisation, reductions in conflict, and advances in information and communication technologies, there is potential for progressive partnerships between CSOs and policymakers in more developing countries. However, CSOs are having a limited impact on policy and practice, and ultimately the lives of poor people. In many countries they act on their own or in opposition to the state, leading to questions about their legitimacy and accountability. Their policy positions are also increasingly questioned: researchers challenge their evidence base and policymakers question the feasibility of their recommendations.

http://www.odi.org.uk/rapid/publications/Documents/Policy_engagement_web.pdf

The Millennium Development Goals Report 2006

New York, USA: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), 2006.

This report is based on a master set of data that has been compiled by an Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG indicators. This publication embodies the collaborative efforts of agencies and organizations within and outside the United Nations system, working through the Inter-agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators. Similar data will be collected and presented each year until 2015, the target date for the Millennium Development Goals, in an effort to give further direction and focus to international cooperation and national action. The present report shows that some progress has been made. This should provide the incentive to keep moving forward. But as the following pages also show, there is still a long way to go to keep our promises to current and future generations.

<http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2006/MDGReport2006.pdf>

Chronic emergency - health and human rights in Eastern Burma

Burma: Back Pack Health Worker Team, 2006.

This report is published with two intentions: First, to inform and urge sympathizers to participate in the effort to promote political change in Burma. Second, to invite humanitarian assistance in providing security and rehabilitation to the victims of the civil war.

http://us.share.geocities.com/maesothtml/bphwt/chronic_eng.zip

Women of the world: laws and policies affecting their reproductive lives - East and Southeast Asia
New York, NY, USA: The Center for Reproductive Rights, 2005.

This book reports document laws and policies which impact women's reproductive and sexual health and shape their reproductive choices. Reproductive rights are internationally recognized as critical to both advancing women's human rights and promoting development. In recent years, governments worldwide have acknowledged and pledged to advance reproductive rights to an unprecedented degree. Formal laws and policies are crucial indicators of government commitment to promoting reproductive rights. The Women of the World reports are the product of collaboration between the Center for Reproductive Rights and NGOs around the world.
http://www.reproductiverights.org/ww_asia_malaysia.html

Gender based violence and HIV/AIDS in Cambodia - links, opportunities and potential responses
Eschborn, Germany: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, 2005.

Cambodia is often cited as a country with the highest prevalence rate of HIV in Asia. Despite a decline in the current prevalence rate, recent projections by the Cambodian Working Group on HIV/AIDS suggest that nearly half of new infections involve husband to wife transmission. If transmission among married couples is the primary route it poses new challenges and requires new strategies for combating the spread of the disease. Gender based violence is equally rampant in Cambodia and ranges from sexual harassment to rape to domestic violence or intimate partner violence to trafficking.
<http://www2.gtz.de/dokumente/bib/05-0492.pdf>

Women political prisoners in Burma - joint report

Thailand: Burmese Women's Union & Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma), 2004.

Women have been at the forefront of the pro-democracy movement in Burma which began in 1988, many of whom were women students and women leaders within political parties. Women in politics must combat the cultural landscape marked by male dominated households and political offices, which place women in the role of passive observer. Women are able to discuss the basic social issues, yet often are prohibited from decision making. Political women and women political prisoners also face other dangers unknown to men, including sexual harassment, rape and reproductive health risks. Their experiences parallel the history of the democratic movement and exemplify the depth of the plight of those who fight for freedom and equality in Burma.
http://www.aappb.org/joint_contact.html

Return to scale : alternatives to globalisation / Simms, Andrew (ed); Conisbee, Molly (ed)
London: New Economics Foundation, 2003.

The theme of this book is scale. In an age of globalisation everything seems to float up to the worldwide level. But the authors here, writing on issues ranging from corporations, to food, energy, democracy, education, trade, work, health, money and to time itself, all argue that our well-being lies closer to home. Many of these chapters grew out of a collaboration between the New Economics Foundation (nef) and London's Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA). All the authors are leading

figures in their field. After high profile demonstrations at several big international conferences, critics of globalisation were attacked for having no alternatives. Nef and the ICA staged a series of debates to show that, far from there being no alternatives to business-as-usual, there are many. This collection gives a flavour of better ways to solve the world's problems.

DVDs

Iraq for sale : the war profiteers / Greenwald, Robert (Director)
Culver City, CA: Brave New Films, 2006.

This is the story of what happens to everyday Americans when corporations go to war. Acclaimed director Robert Greenwald (Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price, Outfoxed and Uncovered) takes you inside the lives of soldiers, truck drivers, widows and children who have been changed forever as a result of profiteering in the reconstruction of Iraq. Iraq for Sale uncovers the connections between private corporations making a killing in Iraq and the decision makers who allow them to do so.
<http://www.iraqforsale.org>

Thirst (DVD) / Snitow, Alan (Director); Kaufman, Deborah (Director); Snitow-Kaufman Productions
Oley, PA: Bullfrog Films, 2004.

Is water part of a shared "commons", a human right for all people? Or is it a commodity to be bought, sold, and traded in a global marketplace? THIRST tells the stories of communities in Bolivia, India, and the United States that are asking these fundamental questions, as water becomes the most valuable global resource of the 21st Century. A character-driven documentary with no narration, THIRST reveals how the debate over water rights between communities and corporations can serve as a catalyst for explosive and steadfast resistance to globalization.

Iraqi women speak out / CODEPINK
Deep Dish Television, 2007

In March 2006, CODEPINK invited eight Iraqi women to the U.S. to speak about their experiences under the U.S. invasion and occupation. They were doctors, engineers, professors, and journalists. Two of the women had their entire families killed by U.S. troops. They were denied visas to enter the U.S. on the grounds that they did not have sufficient family to guarantee they would return to Iraq. The six women who were given visas traveled separately to dozens of cities throughout the U.S., speaking with community groups, churches, veterans, and families of active duty GIs. They asked Americans to end the occupation and bring all the troops home immediately. Upon their return to Iraq they faced death threats, lost their jobs, and some were forced into exile. The remarkable courage of these women and the authenticity of their witness to the horrendous reality of the occupation challenges Americans to take responsibility for the actions of the U.S. government and force an end to the brutal, illegal, and immoral occupation of Iraq.

Articles

Halving world poverty: the need to change liberalisation policies and the world's distorted agricultural markets / Naranjo, Sofia

Third world resurgence, Issue 197, January 2007

If the world leaders are serious about halving world poverty and hunger by 2015 as envisioned by the UN's first Millennium Development Goal (MDG1), urgent policy changes are necessary to address the negative impacts of distorted markets and liberalisation measures on the developing world's rural population.

Thai Human Rights Commission attacks FTA with US / Smith, Sanya

Third world resurgence, Issue 197, January 2007

Thailand's proposed free trade agreement with the US will result in serious human rights violations, says the country's national human rights body. It will also affect the country's sovereignty; thus negotiations should not resume until a thorough review of its impact is undertaken.

Many to blame for war crimes against Congo's women / Ndibo, Judy Amunga

Third world resurgence, Issue 197, January 2007

In the fertile hills of eastern Congo Kinshasa (DRC), the region's women tell tales of war crimes crueller than others can imagine. They are angry with brutal rebel groups, the national army, mineral companies and the US, which they say supplied the arms. The greatest war crime of all, they warn, is not letting their voices be heard even today.

Linking Local Learners: an approach to knowledge management for rural development /

Lightfoot, Clive; Scheuermeier, Ueli

Rural development news, Issue 1, 2007

Linking Local Learners (LLL) is a knowledge management strategy which combines face-to-face action learning with online peer-to-peer sharing of ideas. The learning strategy focuses more on peer-exchange as opposed to instructive training by outsiders. Local learning groups of some ten to twenty people who live and work in the same place use this strategy to improve their own activities and realize their future visions. Collectively linked local learning groups form a virtual knowledge network. When applied to rural development, the LLL Internet platform has not only enable more farmers and service providers to talk to each other, but has also brought structure and focus to those discussions.

<http://www.agridea->

[international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Linking_local_learners.pdf](http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Linking_local_learners.pdf)

Approaches in rural development on the move - a field experience in Nigeria / Bachmann, Ulrich

Rural development news, Issue 1, 2007

Development is all about change; to bring about significant and lasting change for the betterment of the well being of people. There are key principles such as participation at all levels, a holistic view to development and incorporation of social, political, economical and environmental aspects, but there

are many approaches to initiate a process for change, but the "right approach" does not exist and it may vary based on the context and the resources available. This article describes the process of a faith-based NGO in Nigeria working in the field of rural development, searching for an appropriate approach to meet the challenges that were posed to the organisation in order to remain relevant and to offer high quality services.

[http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Approaches in rural development on the move.pdf](http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Approaches_in_rural_development_on_the_move.pdf)

Turning market-oriented organic agriculture upside down / Hauser, Michael; Delve, Robert
Rural development news, Issue 1, 2007

Market-oriented organic agriculture has the potential to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa. However, many initiatives still implement top down approaches when developing projects linking farmers to organic markets. Decisions on what kind of organic enterprises to develop are often prescribed by outside market facilitators, who have analysed independently of the farmers the organic market chain, and made recommendations to organize production to meet identified organic market demands. This paper describes an approach tested in Uganda that strengthens the capacity of farmers to identify market opportunities themselves and to develop organic enterprises and work up the organic market chain.

[http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Turning market-oriented organic agriculture.pdf](http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Turning_market-oriented_organic_agriculture.pdf)

Participatory research that builds on local innovation in beekeeping to escape poverty / Araya, Hailu; GebreMichael, Yohannes; GebreAmlak, Abera; Waters-Bayer, Ann
Rural development news, Issue 1, 2007

In Tigray Region, northern Ethiopia, apiculture is a good source of income for smallholder farmers, as both honey and bee colonies are in high demand. To increase the yield and improve the quality of honeybee resources in the region, the Tigray Government introduced modern (Kenya top-bar) beehives and accessories. However, because this equipment is relatively expensive to buy, most smallholders could not increase their income as had been expected. Some innovative beekeepers started to use alternative equipment and practices to manage their bee resources and to improve the quality of the products. They created their own innovations, primarily in beehive modification, honeybee-queen rearing and bee-forage management. This example from apiculture helps to illustrate how identification of local people's innovations serves as an entry point for institutionalising more participatory approaches to research and development (R&D) in agriculture and natural resource management.

[http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Participatory research that builds.pdf](http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Participatory_research_that_builds.pdf)

The Agricultural Knowledge System in Ethiopia Insights from a study in the Tigray region / Lemma, Mamusha; Hoffman, Volker
Rural development news, Issue 1, 2007

As a national vision for agricultural development, the Government of Ethiopia designed an overarching strategy known as the Agricultural Development-Led Industrialization (ADLI). The ADLI strategy focuses on improved agricultural packages, proper use of land and water resources, access to improved rural finance, better functioning markets, and better roads. Within the framework of this strategy, the Government adopted several policies, strategies and instruments. However, actual policy implementation is hindered by a lack of systematic coordination of different aspects of agricultural policy. Recently, new policy frameworks and institutional developments have taken place in order to coordinate and integrate the activities of various sectors at all levels of government. This requires knowledge of how the whole system operates and the frame conditions affecting it. The study aims to provide a systemic perspective for a better overview that highlights interactions and synergies between policy, service, support and client systems by looking at the history, current status and future direction of the Agricultural Knowledge System (AKS) in the Tigray region.

http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/The_Agricultural_Knowledge_System.pdf

The participation of the socio-political environment in water and sanitation / Heiland, Stephanie
Rural development news, Issue 1, 2007

Water and sanitation is still perceived as a predominantly technical sector, as an evaluation of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) shows, which has to open up far more to questions of poverty reduction, gender equality, conflict prevention and the participation of all social groups. So far, socio-political and socioeconomic factors are not sufficiently considered and current projects in water and sanitation do not correspond to the fact that the sector politics have become more important.

http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/The_participation_of_the_socio-political.pdf

The importance of sustainable building and settlement development to combat rural poverty / Schneider, Claudia
Rural development news, Issue 1, 2007

Building and settlement development in rural areas is an often neglected issue. How come? When we think of buildings and settlements, a spontaneous reaction of ours is that these concern only cities or urban agglomerations. But buildings and settlements, which form our built environment, are present in our every-day-life, whether we live in a city or in a rural area. We live in houses, our children spend significant time in school facilities, and we spend almost our whole working life within buildings.

http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/The_importance_of_sustainable_building.pdf

Plans or People: what are our priorities for rural development? / Barlett, Andrew
Rural development news, Issue 1, 2007

Why do so many development projects fail to achieve? This was the question that UNDP was asking itself in the late 1980's. To find an answer, a task force was created, consultants were hired and studies were carried out. The conclusion was that too many projects were badly designed. More specifically,

there were weaknesses in the project logic, the relationship between key elements of the project. Objectives were fuzzy and unrelated to clearly identified problems. Outputs were unquantified and not based on a thorough assessment of what should be produced in order to achieve the objectives. And decisions about budgets and activities were being taken before any serious consideration had been given to either objectives or outputs. UNDP's solution to this problem was something called the Project Formulation Framework (PFF), which became mandatory for all UNDP-funded projects in 1988. The article looks at examples of how projects succeed or fail over the last 20 years.

<http://www.agridea->

[international.ch/fileadmin/10 International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Plans or People.pdf](http://www.agridea-international.ch/fileadmin/10_International/PDF/RDN/RDN_2007/Plans_or_People.pdf)

The View from Iran / Brazier, Chris

New internationalist no. 398 March 2007

The drum beats of war are getting louder but the author argues that the west is getting Iran wrong. The west misconstrues President Ahmadinejad in many ways - maybe because he has a higher profile than any other Iranian leader since Khomeini, he is assumed to have a similar hold on power but this is far from the case. The underlying trend in Iran remains towards reform and greater democratic health.

The Case against the IMF, World Bank / World Development Movement

New African no. 458 January 2007

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) are a product of the 1940s with little relevance to today's world, and in this sense that patience with their efforts at tinkering and reform has reached the limit. The question is not whether there should be change but how argues the World Development Movement. There is no escaping that the structure and remit of the IMF means it is incapable of properly addressing balance-of-payments problems, that it creates and perpetuates massive debt, that the two combined have caused immeasurable suffering for millions of people.

No justification for dams / Schneider, Ann-Kathrin

Development and cooperation vol 34: 1 January 2007

If the government gets its way, five large dams will be built in Pakistan in the next ten years. President Musharraf says that this is the only way to solve the country's main problems. The World Bank is supporting his plans, even though no attention is being paid to poverty alleviation or resource conservation. In that respect, those in power in Islamabad today are no different from earlier governments. People afraid of being displaced by dams are now pinning their last hopes on civil-society networking.

Andean glaciers are melting away / Funcke-Bartz, Michael

Development and cooperation vol 34: 1 January 2007

The effects of climate change are already clearly visible in the mountains of Latin America. Negative impacts will affect sectors such as water supply, electric-power generation and agriculture. The region, which is poor already, is likely to face severe harvest failures in future.

NGO capacity building and sustainability in the Pacific / Low, Will; Davenport, Eileen
Asia Pacific Viewpoint vol 43:3 December 2002

As the work of NGOs broadens and becomes more complex, concerns about their capacity and sustainability will loom much larger and have more significant implications for development processes. The main issue addressed in this paper is how NGOs and donors variously view the relationship between capacity building and financial and organisational sustainability. To this end we firstly explore varying definitions of capacity building, highlighting distinctly Pacific perspectives of the concept and subsequently look at emerging practices used by Pacific NGOs to create sustainable organisations. The role of donor organisations in Pacific NGO capacity building is critiqued. We conclude that despite considerable rhetoric about the need for donors to adopt more coordinated approaches to capacity building, there is limited evidence to suggest that donors are prepared to act together to set up, for example, joint capacity building funds. Donors must accept that the long-term processes of development and the roles played by Non-Governmental and Community Based Organisations require a rethinking of the standard funding cycle and the focus on 'exit strategies'.

Collective action for biodiversity and livelihoods / Keizer, Menno; Kruijssen, Froukje; Giuliani, Giuliani
LEISA: Magazine on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture vol 23:1 2007 March 2007

The role of well-functioning markets for development is now widely recognised, but the challenge to make these markets benefit the poor and the environment remains. Increasing attention is being given to the potential role markets can play to conserve agrobiodiversity through product diversification and increasing competitiveness in niche and novelty markets. Bioversity International (formerly known as the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute) has undertaken several studies that explore the use of market-based approaches to on-farm agrobiodiversity management and livelihood improvement. This article presents some of the case studies developed on a range of species, all of which shown the importance of collective action.

The Lagos State Fish Farmers' Association / Basorun, Y.O.; Oladapo, Olakulehin John
LEISA: Magazine on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture vol 23:1 2007 March 2007

With more and more fish being brought into the state of Lagos to satisfy consumer demand, the Lagos State Agricultural Development Authority realised that fish farming could offer the possibility of increasing fish production, as well as creating employment opportunities and providing an additional source of income for urban dwellers. Fish farming was successfully promoted, but after some time fish farmers realised that they were at a disadvantage when working independently: they had limited access to extension services and prices were set by middlemen. In response, the Lagos State Fish Farmers' Association was started up in 2004 with less than 10 members and has since grown in numbers and influence, benefiting small scale farmers as well as other stakeholders in the local fish farm industry.

Development dilemmas and farmers' organisations / Newport, Jeyanth K.; Jawahar, Godfrey G.P.
LEISA: Magazine on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture vol 23:1 2007 March 2007

In the early 1990s, the Palli and Pattapu communities of Prakasam and Nellore in Andhra Pradesh (India) were facing a difficult situation for various reasons. The increasing presence of large-scale fishing interests and the depletion of the marine resources forced many Pattapu communities to shift completely to farming. And both the Pattapu and the Palli found it increasingly difficult to depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. This article describes the actions taken leading to the creation of the Samudra Theera Matsya Karmikula Union (STMKU). The resulting organisation, on the basis of their traditional leaders, has made the local inhabitants aware of their own strengths, potentials and limitations.

Building {Farmer Field School} FFS networks in East Africa / Braun, Arnoud R.; Okoth, James Robert; Khaamala, Habakkuk; Khisa, Godrick S.

LEISA: Magazine on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture vol 23:1 2007 March 2007

Even though the Farmer Field School (FFS) approach is not intended for creating long-term organisations, it has become apparent that after the season-long FFS process, most of the groups continue working together to address problems within their community. Whereas the season-long curriculum is developed around a technical component, other vital livelihood issues that affect the community are blended into the curriculum as special topics: HIV/AIDS issues, basic financial management, simple credit management skills or others. This responsiveness to immediate community concerns has facilitated a transformation of the FFS to a popular community forum in which farmers discuss problems within their own local context and seek solutions with minimal external support. This development has been a fundamental factor in building farmers' confidence to determine their own destiny. The first networks emerged in Western Kenya in the year 2000 as a result of exchange visits and communication between farmers, facilitators and trainers of different Farmer Field Schools. Similar networks have subsequently emerged elsewhere in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

Traditional farmers' groups supporting sustainable farming / Dollo, Mihin

LEISA: Magazine on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture vol 23:1 2007 March 2007

The traditional farmers' groups of the Apatani people, in the Arunachal Himalayas, India, have been successfully managing their natural resources for many years. However, in recent times, many of their traditions, practices and knowledge are in danger of being diluted or lost. The Apatani are known for their system of paddy rice and fish cultivation, which is a highly evolved indigenous farming system, producing enough rice to export after meeting local needs. The farmers themselves recognise that, without farmer groups, agro-ecosystem management could easily weaken, and the technical ecological knowledge which supports it could quickly erode. Their challenge is to maintain and preserve their production system and the knowledge and practices it is based on, when faced with changing conditions and outside influences.

The Malabing Valley Multipurpose Co-operative / Salvosa, Cristina R.

LEISA: Magazine on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture vol 23:1 2007 March 2007

The Malabing valley is found in the northeastern part of the Sierra Madre Corridor, in Nueva Vizcaya, the Philippines. Although maize and rice are still its major crops, citrus production has intensified since its introduction in the early 1980s. The mild climate, rich soils and forests provide unique conditions for the cultivation of various species of citrus, covering more than a thousand hectares. Citrus production is now the major on-farm income source for the valley population, and it

has also resulted in significant improvements in the community itself, bringing new infrastructure, facilities and services to a valley which was once inaccessible. Much of this has been a result of the Malabing Valley Multipurpose Co-operative.

Farmer organisation and market access / Hellin, Jon; Lundy, Mark; Meijer, Madelon
LEISA: Magazine on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture vol 23:1 2007 March 2007

Farmer organisation has been identified as a key factor in enhancing farmers' access to markets. In response, policy makers and development practitioners have focused on supporting small scale producers to associate, collaborate and coordinate in order to achieve economies of scale in their transactions with input suppliers and buyers. The enthusiasm for farmer organisations has, at times, obscured the fact that establishing viable organisations is not a simple process. There is, hence, a need to examine what we mean by farmer organisations and to understand better when farmer organisations make sense, when they do not and how they can best be established and maintained. More information is needed on: the most appropriate types of organisation if any; whether the public and/or private sector is best placed to support their formation; and the conditions necessary for ensuring their economic viability. We explore these issues in the context of high-value vegetables in Honduras and El Salvador, and commodity maize in Mexico.

Organised for preserving local seed / Mwangosi, Malamba Clement
LEISA: Magazine on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture vol 23:1 2007 March 2007

Farmers in Bwipa, a remote village in the district of Ileje, in the southern Mbeya region of Tanzania, regularly grow maize, bananas, potatoes and upland rice. The maize seed most often planted in this area is a high yielding hybrid type, but is prone to disease and pest attacks. Compared to the local varieties, hybrid maize is less tasty and more expensive – not only because of the price of the seed, but also because of the fertilizer it requires. Furthermore, because it is a hybrid, farmers need to buy new seed every year, or yields drop drastically. This general situation became even more complicated in 2003, when the seeds were not available in sufficient quantities. This led to the formation of a self-help group with the specific objective of ensuring the availability of good quality seeds.
