

Edition 4
June – Dec 2025

Newsletter



Accelerating agroecological
transformation via RAS



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Second National Experience-Sharing Workshop – GP-SAEP Programme: A Collective Commitment Toward Agroecological Transition | FCA

On **September 25, 2025**, the Menamasoandro Hotel in Morondava hosted the second **National Experience-sharing Workshop of the AERAS / GP-SAEP project**, bringing together partners from **AIM, CTAS, FCA, Access Agriculture, and YPARD**.

This event aimed to strengthen synergies and enhance agroecological practices through the exchange of knowledge and field experiences among the implementing partners.

The presence of Dr. Rosemirta Birungi, representative of AFAAS (African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services), added a strategic perspective to the discussions on disseminating agroecological techniques. She commended the collective progress achieved under the project's framework.

Good Practices and Lessons Learned from the GP-SAEP Partners



Fig. 1 | Image credits: FCA

Each partner presented key lessons and best practices drawn from the latest cropping season:

- AIM NGO emphasized the effectiveness of close support to bio-entrepreneurs and strong coordination among stakeholders (RASPO, FFS, producers, AERAS team). The ongoing implementation of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) and product specifications for agroecological produce will ensure quality assurance and sustainability of value chains.
- Access Agriculture highlighted its successful video-based knowledge dissemination approach, which increased producer engagement in Farmer Field Schools (FFSs). The valorization of ERA services contributes to the sustainability and quality of interventions.
- YPARD focused on the mobilization of youth through networking and exchange platforms such as YPARD Café and YCOP, promoting youth entrepreneurship and leadership in agroecological transition.

Effective Agroecological Techniques and Tangible Results

For FCA, the workshop was an opportunity to present results from the 2025 off-season campaign (April–September) across the project's three intervention districts. The findings confirmed the effectiveness of agroecological techniques promoted within the Farmer Field Schools (FFS).

Various innovative practices were tested, including composting, bio-pesticide use, and mulching techniques for soil moisture

improvement, all based on standardized experimental protocols. These trials led to:

- A significant improvement in soil fertility, thanks to the regeneration of soil microbial life ;
- Better quality harvests, both nutritionally and sanitarily, due to reduced chemical input use ;
- A reduction in production costs, achieved using natural fertilizers and pesticides.

The success of the agroecological transition lies in co-creating knowledge, valorizing and recycling local resources, and ensuring sustainable water management.

These results stem from rigorous monitoring and analysis of data collected in each FFS—from crop preparation, maintenance, and expenditure tracking, to harvest data and yield evaluation.

Performance of RAS Since Project Implementation

The workshop also provided an opportunity to share the performance progress of Rural Advisory Service (RAS) facilitators, based on Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices (KAP) assessments across six core competencies from the baseline.

Notable progress has been observed, particularly in attitudes, personal and team development, digitalization, and agroecological techniques. However, improvements are still needed in knowledge acquisition, communication, and organizational skills, with stronger advancement noted in Mahabo and Morondava compared to Miandrivazo.

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A study of adopters conducted after the main cropping season also revealed a steady increase in the adoption of agroecological practices among producers—motivated primarily by the search for higher yields, lower input costs, and greater climate resilience. Similarly, a satisfaction survey among FFS members showed that RAS services have significantly improved farming practices, yields, and farmer incomes, thanks to inclusive and participatory field support. However, sustainability of these achievements will depend on continuous technical reinforcement, training, and digitalization to maintain the momentum of agroecological transition.

It was noted that satisfaction levels are higher in districts with smaller cultivated areas and greater proximity to RAS facilitators (e.g. Morondava and Mahabo) than in Miandrivazo, where larger farm sizes make scaling up more challenging.

Model Farmers Honored

A highlight of the workshop was the recognition of ten model farmers from the three intervention districts.



Fig. 2 | Image credits: FCA

Selected by the RAS and MT teams for their high level of agroecological practice adoption—including cultivated area, crop diversification, and peer engagement—these champion farmers shared their success stories and tangible results achieved through training and field support.

Their special recognition symbolizes both the leadership role of producers in promoting best practices and a key milestone in accelerating agroecological transition in Madagascar.

GP-SAEP Q3 Quarterly Review Meeting: Effort to Strengthen agroecological transition in Madagascar | FCA

Each quarter, the partners of the GP-SAEP Programme — including AIM NGO, CTAS NGO, FCA, Access Agriculture, and YPARD — gather around the same table to review the project's progress, assess complementarities, and align strategies toward achieving the programme's common goals in Madagascar. For the third quarter of 2025, the following key findings and directions were highlighted:

Consolidation of Agroecological Blocks (BAE)

The project continues to consolidate Agroecological Blocks (BAE) — conceived as true territorial hubs for sustainable production and exchange.

These spaces structure agroecological activities around small rural enterprises engaged in the production of bio-inputs (seeds, biofertilizers, biopesticides), ensuring both their economic viability and institutional recognition.

Regulatory Adaptation and Quality Assurance

Partners stressed the need for a simplified and adapted regulatory framework that guarantees the quality of agroecological products without stifling small producers' initiatives. A more flexible system, supported by regional authorities (DRAE, CIRAE), would encourage rural entrepreneurship while maintaining reliable quality control.

Strengthening Local Seed Systems

To improve local seed systems, it was proposed to reinforce the role of Farmer Seed Multipliers (PMS) by limiting each producer to one variety and one species per declaration. This approach simplifies monitoring, promotes regionally validated seed production, and supports seed autonomy through the dissemination of Quality Declared Seeds (SQD) — a more accessible alternative to formal certification.

Establishing Standards for Bio-inputs

The discussions also emphasized the need to create a reference framework for bio-inputs, as no national standard currently exists. A participatory specification document, aligned with the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS), will ensure traceability, mutual trust, and recognition between producers and consumers.

Meanwhile, strict vigilance will be maintained regarding the sale of chemical inputs, which remains prohibited without proper training.

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Joint Capitalization and Knowledge Sharing

A joint audiovisual capitalization plan will be developed to document the project's success stories, innovations, and collaborations among partners. The co-production of videos and the creation of a unified Terms of Reference (ToR) for capitalization are scheduled for April 2026.

Youth Sensitization and Agroecological Education

The meeting also underlined the importance of raising youth awareness by integrating agroecological education into school programs. This initiative aims to promote the use of bio-inputs, healthy food consumption, and environmentally friendly farming practices.

It will be launched in November 2025, following the establishment of the agroecological market and the validation of its specification framework by AIM NGO.

A Shared Vision for Sustainable Agroecological Development

In summary, these orientations reflect a shared and ambitious vision: to build in Madagascar a sustainable, inclusive, and recognized agroecological ecosystem, grounded in innovation, adaptive regulation, and citizen education — paving the way toward resilient and regenerative rural development.

Exchange Visits among RAS – AERAS/GP-SAEP Project | FCA

Between 22 and 24 September 2025, the AERAS/GP-SAEP project organized exchange visits across its three intervention districts. The activity brought together 22 RAS facilitators, ERAs, YPARD Fellows, and the AERAS coordination team.

The visits aimed to promote experiential learning, cross-district sharing of good practices, and collective reflection on field results—serving as a practical complement to the National Workshop: **Miandrivazo District – Innovation and Local Practice Enhancement**

Field experiments demonstrated measurable productivity and sustainability gains:

Onion cultivation: Direct seeding outperformed transplanting under mulch. Improved seed varieties and well-prepared composts (solid and liquid) enhanced yield and reduced costs.

Bean cultivation: Successful adoption of natural biopesticides and biofertilizers (neem and compost) with local repellent plants such as Sarijamala and Tsipoapoaka. Pocket planting reduced seed use to 60 kg/ha (vs. 150 kg/ha conventionally).

Rice cultivation: Implementation of 25 cm direct seeding spacing, use of Sebota 70 seed, and improved post-harvest practices (sorting, drying, ventilated storage, chili use against insects).

Bagasse compost: Use of sugarcane residue improved soil structure, water retention, microbial activity, and cation exchange capacity.

Vegetables (green leaves, onions): Increased yields and reduced pest incidence with proper biopesticide dosing.

Market development: Structured commercialization through product data sheets, production inventories, and agroecological kiosks in Ambatomena and Miandrivazo, supported by AIM and the Productive Alliance.

Mahabo District – Technical Progress and Community Dynamics

Producers consolidated integrated agroecological practices:

- Mulching reduced irrigation needs and stabilized soil moisture, especially in tomato–basil intercropping systems.
- Use of stakes for tomato improved aeration, yield, and disease control.
- Widespread community adoption was observed, though some farmers still combine agroecological and chemical inputs for risk management.

Morondava District – Scientific Experimentation and Rigorous Monitoring

The district stood out for its systematic and analytical approach:

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Exchange Visits among RAS – AERAS/GP-SAEP Project | FCA (cont.)

- Soil analyses conducted with interns guided localized experimentation.
- Despite minor sowing delays, technical follow-up remained consistent and thorough.
- Local interest in agroecological products continues to grow, attributed to their durability and quality.
- The inclusion of traders as FFS members helps shift consumption behavior and strengthens market demand for agroecological goods.

Continuous Learning and Outlook

The inter-district exchanges highlighted strong motivation among RAS facilitators and farmers to deepen knowledge and refine practices.

Results confirm that local innovation, use of endogenous resources, and participatory learning remain central pillars of a successful agroecological transition in Madagascar.

Strengthening extension delivery under the GP- SAEP | UFAAS

The Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS) continues to make strides in strengthening extension delivery under the GP-SAEP initiative. Between June and October 2025, several capacity-building, partnership, and outreach activities were

implemented to enhance the quality and visibility of Rural Advisory Services in Uganda. The **main highlights include:**

Training of RAS Facilitators on selected innovations

Under this activity, 30 RAS facilitators were trained on different innovations that were selected within their district by the master trainers and hired experts in the areas of interest. These trainings were residential and the RAS facilitators had the opportunity to have hands on training. This was to provide them with the technical skills which they would use to transfer the technologies/innovations to famers.

In some districts, lead farmers were selected to participate in the trainings to train them to become model famers. some innovations selected includes:

- Azolla Weed (for improved animal feeding (Poultry, fish and rabbits)
- Bio-inputs -for soil improvement and plant and animal health eg. Biochar, natural pesticide
- Kitchen gardens -for nutrition and income improvement
- Improved Stoves -for energy conservation
- IMO-Indigenous Micro-organisms-for improved animal feeding and hygiene

Providing Agroecology RAS to farming families

Over 1,841 (1,020F,817 M) farmers were trained on the different technologies/innovations. The field team started the implementation of the innovations within their districts by setting up demonstration plots for the innovations.

The Physical meeting, monitoring visit, and introduction of the “Wearing the Scientific Goggles” model

The physical meeting and field monitoring created a valuable platform for joint learning, addressing field challenges, and strengthening collaboration between trainers and field implementers. The **“wearing of the scientific goggles” model** aims to strengthen the capacity of extension workers to think critically, observe and make evidence-based decisions within the Project. By adopting this model, participants are encouraged to approach every project as a science by documenting results, and drawing conclusions based on their field experience.

Past and upcoming events:

- Planning meeting for the implementation of the "Wearing Scientific Goggles model on 22 October 2025 [past event]
- The National Experience sharing on 23 October 2025 [past event]
- The **Uganda National Extension week 2026** from 20–24 April 2026.



Fig. 3| Image credits: UFAAS

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Second National Symposium on Soil Conservation Strategies | RELASER

More than 150 actors from the country participated in the Second National Symposium on Soil Conservation Strategies, organized by the #MAGP, through the Undersecretary of Family Farming and the District Directorate of Loja. With the support of @HeiferEcuador, @FAOEcuador, @utpl, @UNLoficial, and @RedRelaser with the Project AERAS, the event brought together authorities, academia, producers, and peasant organizations to develop policies and actions to halt soil degradation in Ecuador.

The objective of the symposium was to strengthen the intersectoral commitment to sustainable land management, a key resource for agricultural production, food sovereignty and security and resilience to climate change. In Ecuador, more than 50% of the territory is affected by erosion and degradation, which makes it urgent to articulate efforts between public institutions, academia and communities. During the symposium, topics such as the problem of soil degradation in the country were addressed, with emphasis on productive sectors such as coffee and cocoa, as well as adaptive responses from agroecology, peasant knowledge, biological rehabilitation of degraded soils and carbon reserves in livestock systems.



Fig. 4 | Image credits: RELASER

A key piece of information is that the Secretary of Family Farming, Santiago Páez, highlighted the role of Relaser and the AERAS Project in the development of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock's sustainability policies. Additionally, within the framework of the event, the launch of the Community of Practice for Soil Conservation in Ecuador took place.

Soil is life, taking care of it is a priority!

First International Congress on Sustainable Rice Production | RELASER

The First International Congress on Sustainable Rice Production had participation from more than 280 people, including producers and producer's associations, public and private officials, students from technical schools and universities, technical and professionals.

The participation of national and international experts allowed for discussions on public policies in sustainable production, the importance of using certified seeds, Agriculture 4.0, the development of sustainability indicators, certification of Good Agricultural Practices, and the topic of national and international markets for rice.

Within the framework of the Congress, a gastronomic festival was held that aimed to make the producers the protagonists. More than just a gastronomic event, it was a tribute to their work, culinary tradition, and the sustainable practices of cultivation.

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Training at the Agricultural Producer School with an Agroecological Focus: 2024-2025 Cycle in Manabí | RELASER

The Local Government of Manabí, through the directorate of productive development, strengthening the Manabí sustainable production local policy, and under the learning-by-doing and the AERAS methodology, has carried out 105 producer schools in different areas: beekeeping, cocoa, multicrops, irrigation approach, livestock, artisanal fishing, in the 2024-2025 cycle.

In the case of producer schools with an agroecological approach, cocoa producer school, and producer school with an irrigation approach, knowledge transfer has been provided in productive, entrepreneurial, and commercial aspects to 1,535 producers in 16 cantons, who today, in this event, complete their training process under the learning-by-doing methodology.

Training for ASOFRUNOR producers in San Vicente de Pusir, (Carchi) on the topic: Building Agroecology: Sustainable Development Goals | RELASER

A workshop was conducted in person with producers from ASOFRUNOR on agroecology topics, where data on the principles of agroecology towards more



Fig. 5 | Image credits: RELASER

sustainable agriculture were presented. The workshop was part of the training for GAP. Additionally, two eighth-level students from the Agricultural Engineering program at the Technical University of the North, Misses Johana Benalcázar and Sayda Cuasque, who are involved in the project, participated and contributed with a talk on this workshop topic.

The training talk covered topics such as:

- Introduction to Agroecology
- Principles of agroecology
- Sustainability and activities
- Challenges and opportunities

Farmer-made videos boost agroecology in Latin America | RELASER

In Costa Rica and Ecuador, a group of RAS facilitators is learning to tell their own stories for agroecology transition with local producers. Thanks to the partnership between Access Agriculture (AA) and the Latin American Network for Rural Advisory Services (RELASER), the AERAS Project (Accelerating Agroecological Transformation via Rural Advisory Services) has launched an



Fig. 6 | Image credits: RELASER

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Farmer-made videos boost agroecology in Latin America | RELASER (cont.)

initiative to produce locally made videos and technical content for social media platforms.

The goal is to bring agroecological knowledge closer to small-scale farmers through materials created by the very people working the land. Using smartphones and affordable equipment, these videos share sustainable practices tailored to each territory.

“We want RAS facilitators and farmers to become the narrators of their own co-learning,” explain representatives from RELASER. “These local productions strengthen rural identity, foster community pride, and spread practical knowledge that works in real contexts.”

Three sessions, one learning network, and a regional closing | RELASER

In September 2025, three virtual training sessions were conducted by Access Agriculture experts Kevin Mutonga and Jeff Bentley. Over the course of the sessions, more than 30 participants learned everything from basic filming and editing skills to scriptwriting for videos on agroecological practices.



Fig. 7 | Image credits: RELASER

Participants also explored EcoAgtube, a global platform where farmers can upload their videos and learn from one another. It will host 24 videos created by AERAS RAS facilitators from Costa Rica and Ecuador, documenting real experiences of agroecological transition within their communities. Producing local videos not only enhances digital communication in rural advisory services but also encourages empowerment and social innovation in the Latin American countryside.

Lastly, participants joined a regional webinar led by RELASER, which served as a closing event and exchange platform for experiences on creating technical content for social media — including Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and LinkedIn. The session also offered an opportunity to reflect on how to communicate agroecology effectively in digital environments and to strengthen cooperation among facilitators from different countries.

RELASER, Costa Rica and Ecuador country forums are excited about the development of these materials, with the aim to spread agroecology through the region.

Youth Voice Amplified at Africa-Wide Agriculture Extension Week in Malawi | YPARD

From May 12–14, 2025, the Africa-Wide Agriculture Extension Week convened in Lilongwe, Malawi, bringing together extension professionals, researchers, policymakers, and youth leaders.

YPARD Uganda Country Representative and GP SAEP Fellow, Ajuna Tadeo, participated in panels including “Accelerating Agroecological Transformation through Rural Advisory Services” and the RAENS Project session. At the Youth/YPARD Café, Tadeo highlighted YPARD’s contributions in capacity building, mentorship, digital innovation, and policy advocacy, while sharing his fellowship journey. The Café emphasized participatory learning, practical tools for agroecology, and the critical role of youth-led initiatives in advancing rural advisory services across Africa.



Fig. 8 | Image credits: YPARD

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Participation at the 2nd East African Agroecology Conference | YPARD

From March 25–28, 2025, YPARD Uganda Agroecology Fellows—Mufuruki Frank, Ajuna Tadeo, and Okello John—participated in the 2nd East African Agroecology Conference in Nairobi, Kenya. They contributed to plenary sessions, thematic discussions, YPARD Café, Youth Community of Practice (YCoP), exhibitions, and field visits.

At the Café, the fellows highlighted youth mentorship, networking, funding access, and mindset shifts toward agroecological entrepreneurship. During the YCoP, they facilitated discussions on climate resilience, sustainable soil management, market access, and policy advocacy. The fellows also visited the Seed Savers Network in Gilgil, gaining practical insights into seed sovereignty, biodiversity conservation, and farmer-led agroecological practices.



Fig. 10 | Image credits: YPARD



Fig. 9 | Image credits: YPARD

AE Fellows Join the YPARD Café at JERO Farm, Uganda titled ‘Roots and Flames: Traditional Knowledge Exchange’ | YPARD

On 17th September 2025, YPARD Uganda Agroecology Fellows—Nabulime Deborah, Mufuruki Frank, Ajuna Tadeo, and Okello John—hosted the “Roots and Flames: Traditional Knowledge Exchange” Café at JERO Farm, Uganda.

Bringing together over 50 participants, 60% women, the event blended traditional and scientific agroecology knowledge through interactive sessions and an evening campfire. Fellows facilitated discussions on climate-resilient practices, digital knowledge-sharing, mentorship, and peer learning. Participants shared organic pesticides, indigenous crop rotation, and soil fertility techniques. A guided farm tour showcased composting, soil conservation, and integrated pest management.

The Café highlighted youth leadership, collaboration, and grassroots innovation driving sustainable, resilient food systems.

Bugiri Youth Community of Practice Strengthens Agroecology Engagement | YPARD

As part of efforts to enhance youth participation in agroecology, the Bugiri Youth Community of Practice (YCoP) under the GP-SAEP Project LED BY THJE District youth Fellow convened youth practitioners to share knowledge and plan collaborative actions for advancing agroecological practices. The session featured a discussion on “Communication and Agroecology,” emphasizing how effective, participatory communication can improve the dissemination and adoption of agroecological principles among rural youth and farming communities. YPARD’s ongoing initiatives were highlighted, showcasing efforts to build youth capacity, promote knowledge exchange, and strengthen networks of young agroecology professionals across Uganda.

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Fig. 11 | Image credits: YPARD

GP-SAEP Scientific Goggle Training and Monitoring Visit in Bugiri, Uganda | YPARD

From 10th–11th October 2025, over 20 implementers gathered in Bugiri District for the GP-SAEP Scientific Goggle Writeshop and Project Monitoring Visit, organized by UFAAS in partnership with YPARD and Access Agriculture.

YPARD was represented by AE Fellow Tadeo Ajuna and District Ambassador Sanyu Shakirah. The two-day event introduced the Scientific Goggle Model, promoting participatory knowledge generation and structured project design. Field visits showcased youth-led agroecology innovations including biochar use, energy-saving stoves, sack mounds, and diversified sustainable farming. The engagement reinforced YPARD’s mission to empower youth through mentorship, knowledge exchange, and community-based agroecological transformation. **“We are proud that YPARD continues to be part of this beautiful transition, especially by championing youth engagement through our fellows and ambassadors,”** noted Mr. Ajuna Tadeo.

GP-SAEP Experience Sharing Workshop Highlights Youth Achievements | YPARD

In November 2025, YPARD Uganda Agroecology Youth Fellows participated in the GP-SAEP Experience Sharing Workshop and Scientific Goggle Writeshop at Arch Hotel, Kampala.

Fellows from Bugiri, Lira, Soroti, Sembabule, and Buikwe districts, alongside trainers and government representatives, showcased their achievements, including participation in YPARD Cafés at AAEW Malawi, EAC Kenya, and Jero Farm Uganda.

Presentations highlighted key lessons on integrating scientific and local knowledge, enhancing biodiversity, climate resilience, and youth empowerment. Mentorship sessions strengthened professional capacity, while field engagements and CoPs fostered participatory learning. The workshop reinforced youth led agroecology as a driver of sustainable, inclusive food systems



Fig. 12 | Image credits: YPARD

Leading the Shift Toward Organic Rice Cultivation: AE Fellows in Ecuador | YPARD

As part of the GP-SAEP Agroecology Fellowship, PLUAS Mora Héctor Alfonso has been actively engaging young farmers in Ecuador through a series of YPARD Café field sessions. These activities, carried out between January and March 2025, brought together farmers, government institutions, and private-sector partners to strengthen capacities in sustainable and organic rice production.

On 10 January 2025, Héctor Alfonso joined the delivery of technology packages— including bio-inputs— to members of the Asociación Agroindustrial El Rosario in Puente Lucía, Guayaquil. In collaboration with MAGAP and private-sector partners, the session trained 25 farmers in integrated organic rice cultivation, equipping them with practical tools to reduce reliance on synthetic inputs.

On 20 February 2025, he supported a socialisation event with DEL MONTE, where 15 farmers received training on integrated weed management for SFL-011 rice cultivation using a broadcast sowing system. The approach emphasized reducing chemical herbicides and improving soil preparation with organic amendments, encouraging more environmentally friendly farming practices.

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Leading the Shift Toward Organic Rice Cultivation: AE Fellows in Ecuador | YPARD (cont.)

Continuing this momentum, on 20 March 2025, Héctor Alfonso participated in the delivery of additional technology packages to the San Lorenzo Association in Lomas de Sargentillo. The session focused on foliar nutrition and the preparation of bioles and organic decomposers to enhance soil microbiology and organic matter—an important strategy for mitigating salinity and excess iron in local soils.

Across all three months, the YPARD Café activities demonstrated strong participation and growing commitment among young farmers. The integrated organic rice management trainings have not only expanded technical knowledge but have also accelerated the shift toward sustainable, resource-efficient, and environmentally responsible production. These efforts mark a meaningful step forward for healthier and more resilient rice systems in the region.



Fig. 13 | Image credits: YPARD



Fig. 14 | Image credits: YPARD

Youth Learning in Action: Costa Rica Fellow Leads YPARD Café at Sun Valley Farm | YPARD

As part of the AERAS Project, the Costa Rica Fellow Priscila Angulo Aguilar hosted a vibrant YPARD Café at Sun Valley Agroecological Farm in Copey de Dota. The gathering served as a dynamic space for learning, reflection, and exchange among youth clusters engaged in agroecology across the country.

The day began with an introduction to the AERAS Project and presentations from participants, setting the stage for collaboration and shared understanding. A guided farm tour followed, allowing attendees to observe more than a decade of agroecological practice across Sun Valley's 21 hectares. The diversified system—featuring figs, blackberries, kale, corn, beans, and more—illustrated how crop production and small livestock can be integrated to enhance self-sufficiency. Throughout the tour, participants identified key agroecological practices such as integrated soil management,

organic fertilization, crop rotation, cover crops, biological pest control, and the use of living barriers. They also learned how the farm conserves biodiversity through forest patches, water sources, and natural corridors that support species like pumas, tapirs, and quetzals. A group session offered space to exchange territorial experiences and link theory with practice, emphasizing agroecology's social, environmental, and economic dimensions. Youth Communities of Practice also shared national-level progress in training, communication, and youth engagement.

The YPARD Café brought together 29 participants—15 women and 14 men—representing diverse regions and disciplines. Their interaction strengthened collective learning and highlighted the central role of youth in advancing sustainable, regenerative agriculture.

Overall, the event reaffirmed the value of hands-on knowledge exchange and demonstrated how the AERAS Fellowship is helping young leaders drive transformative agroecological action in their territories.

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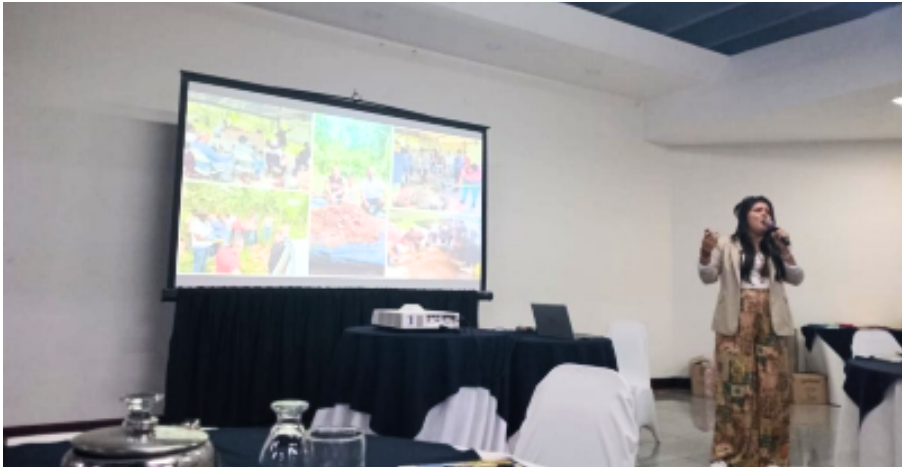


Fig. 15 | Image credits: YPARD

Building Collective Wisdom: Costa Rica AE Fellow Joins National Knowledge Exchange in San José | YPARD

Priscila Angulo Aguilar, AE Fellow in Costa Rica, participated in the National Meeting for the Exchange of Knowledge and Experiences of the AERAS Project, held on 27–28 November 2025 in San José. The event brought together clusters, trainers, extension workers, and young fellows to share experiences, identify lessons learned, and reinforce collaboration in supporting agroecological transitions across diverse territories.

The two-day meeting combined storytelling, group work, and participatory dialogue. Clusters presented their progress, reflected on field-level challenges, and shared key lessons from work with producers and extension teams. Participants also reviewed the project’s 2026 Annual

Operational Plan, discussed criteria for selecting national champions, and outlined upcoming knowledge products such as case studies and training materials.

A total of 44 participants joined the exchange, with a strong gender balance and representation from all project clusters. The TEC cluster—represented by its trainer, fellow, and five extension workers—contributed actively to collective reflections and strengthened coordination with national teams. The meeting reaffirmed the importance of adaptable, locally grounded strategies for advancing agroecology and sustaining long-term impact.

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About the GP-SAEP Project: Component 3 [ÆRAS]

The 'Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP)' project is a component of a broad funding initiative led by the European Commission (EC) and the Belgian Development Cooperation in collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Its primary objective is to overcome critical barriers hindering the adoption of agroecology and the transition to sustainable food systems among small-scale producers, including farmers and agri-food Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean (LAC).

The primary objective of the GP-SAEP program is to facilitate the transition of food systems toward agroecology.

Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), Access Agriculture, and Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) are responsible for **Component 3** of this project, namely: “**Increasing Access to knowledge and Empowering 10 000 Small-Scale Farmers in Agroecological Transition through Participatory Rural Advisory Services (RAS) and Farmer to Farmer joint learning**” or **ÆRAS**.

About GFRAS

The Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services GFRAS is about enhancing the performance of advisory services so that they can better serve farm families and rural producers, thus contributing to improved livelihoods in rural areas and the sustainable reduction of hunger and poverty. Rural advisory services help to empower farmers and better integrate them in systems of agricultural innovation.



AccessAgriculture

About Access Agriculture

Access Agriculture is a non-profit organisation that supports organic farming and agroecology. Their vision is to strengthen global and local communities by sharing agroecological knowledge and practices through video to make food systems more sustainable and healthy.

About YPARD

YPARD is a non-profit organization by Young Professionals for Young Professionals for Agricultural Development. YPARD has members across the globe in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe and the Americas. Their aim is to enable and empower young professionals around the globe to shape and transform our current food system.



The project is implemented in **four countries**, two in Africa (Uganda and Madagascar) and two in Latin America (Ecuador and Costa Rica). The GFRAS regional networks, African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) and the Latin American network for Rural Extension Services (RELASER) and the country fora in the respective countries are essential in the implementation of this project.

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- [FCA official website](#)
- [RELASER official website](#)
- [Access Agriculture official website](#)
- [Access Agriculture video platform](#)
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