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Jan- April 2026

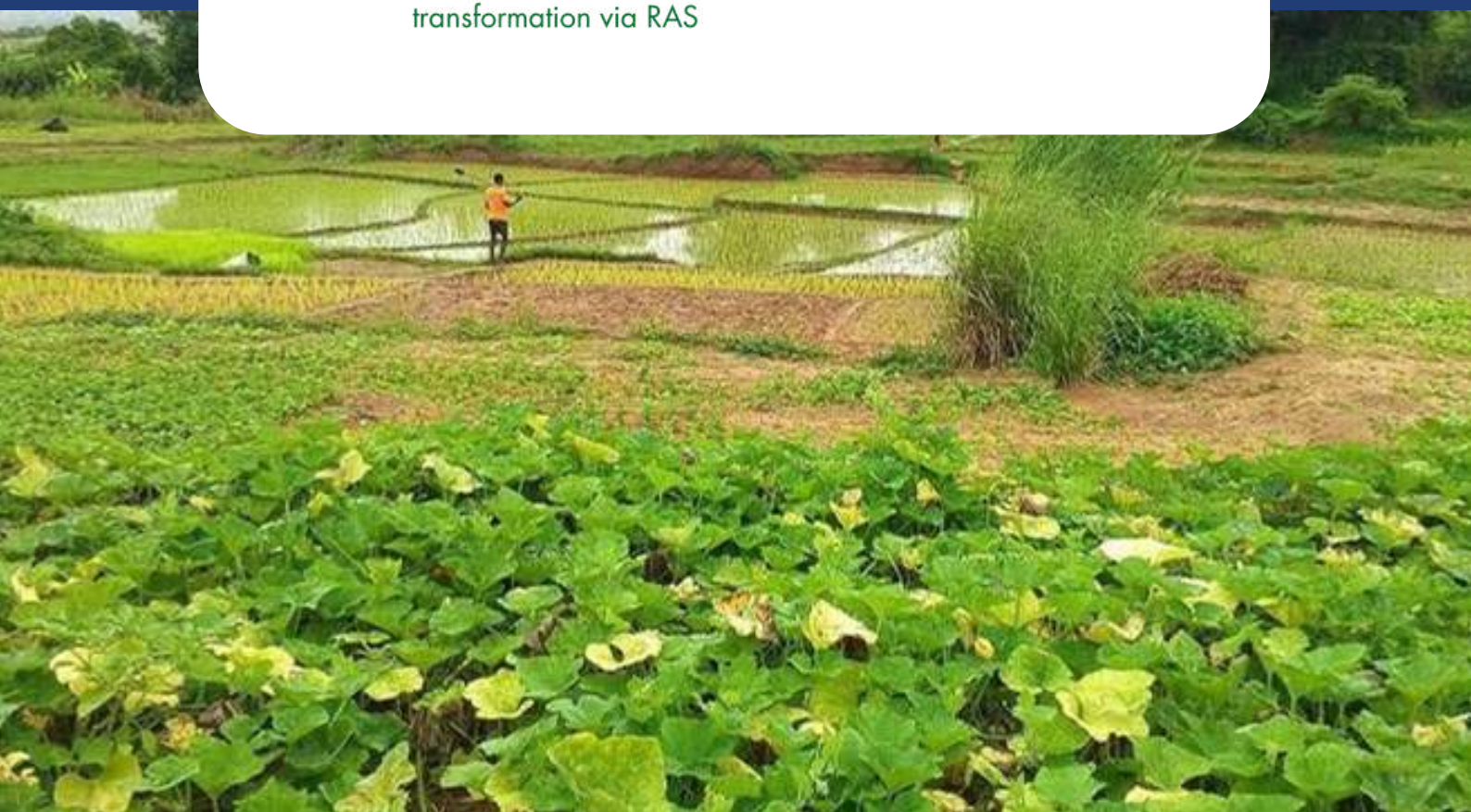
Newsletter



Accelerating agroecological
transformation via RAS



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Fig. 1

A Milestone for Agriculture Extension: Uganda holds a successful National Agricultural Extension Week

The **Uganda National Agricultural Extension Week**, held from 20th–24th April 2026, brought together over 200 in-person and 500 virtual participants to reflect on the future of agricultural extension and advisory services (AEAS). The week opened with **strong calls for breaking silos, strengthening coordination, and professionalizing the extension workforce** to support Uganda's agro-industrialization agenda. Across the sessions, participants engaged in high-level dialogues, exhibitions, and practical learning exchanges.



Fig 2

Day 2 featured thematic discussions on **scalable extension models, agro-industrialization, agroecology, AI in extension, and youth employability**, alongside experience-sharing from practitioners and institutions. Day 3 highlighted side events on private sector-led extension, agroecology experiences, and policy dialogues, followed by panel discussions on workforce professionalization and field-level learning from district officers. The extension week also showcased innovations across agriculture value chains, reinforcing **extension as a critical "first mile" connecting research, markets, and farmers**.

Key partners emphasized the need for **stronger linkages between science and practice**,

increased investment in extension systems, and adoption of emerging digital tools.

The week concluded with field visits and recognition of outstanding practitioners, celebrating excellence in extension service delivery. Overall, the event reaffirmed extension as a central driver of sustainable agricultural transformation in Uganda and beyond.

[Read More here...](#)

"The future of Uganda's agricultural sector depends not on any single actor, but on the power of collective action."

Ms Connie Nankya, World Vision Uganda.



Fig 3

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The Joint National GP-SAEP Workshop for knowledge and experience sharing and IFAD Mid-Term Review Mission in Uganda



Fig 4

This key event was held from 13th–16th April 2026 at Silver Springs Hotel in Kampala.

It convened key stakeholders to **reflect on progress and shape the final phase of agroecological transformation efforts in Uganda**. Organized by the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS) in collaboration with GFRAS, AFAAS, IFAD, Access Agriculture, and YPARD. The workshop brought together over 76 participants, including extension experts, youth fellows, researchers, and farmer representatives.

The event provided a platform to share lessons from the second phase of field implementation under the GP-SAEP. Participants

highlighted innovations, co-creation of knowledge with farmers, and the strengthening of Rural Advisory Service Provider Organizations (RASPOs). A strong focus was placed on **documenting practical experiences, assessing knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) among facilitators**, and refining knowledge products for wider dissemination.



Fig 5

Additionally interactive sessions, including panel discussions, partners presentations, fostered peer learning and critical reflection. The **IFAD supervision mission engaged directly with implementers as well as farmers in the field**, offering strategic guidance and assessing project progress.



Fig 6

A **field visit to Buikwe District showcased on-the-ground agroecological practices and farmer-led innovations**, reinforcing the importance of participatory approaches. The workshop concluded with clear action plans for end line assessments, final evaluations, and national and regional dissemination, as well as strategies for participation in Uganda's National Agricultural Extension Week 2026.

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Wearing Scientific Goggles: Advancing Practitioner-Led Innovation in AERAS project

The AERAS project is emerging not only as an agroecology and rural advisory services initiative, but also as a **living laboratory for innovation and co-creation**.

Some of the most valuable knowledge is locked in the minds of practitioners, in the adaptive decisions made in the field, the innovations born from local realities, the lessons learned through experimentation, and the countless moments where they solve problems

This project has hidden reservoir of knowledge and lessons that would ordinary not make it into the formal donor reports. This is not unique to the AERAS project. Realising this gap **Dr Hlamalani Ngwenya** introduced a groundbreaking concept of **Wearing Scientific Goggles (WSG)**.

WSG intentionally equips extension practitioners, facilitators, and country teams to move beyond implementation and become active knowledge producers.

“Wearing Scientific Goggles”



Through scientific reflection, structured documentation, and analytical thinking, practitioners are encouraged to capture hidden innovations, lessons, and evidence emerging from project implementation.

In collaboration with the **University of the Free State's Research Chair in Communication for Innovation**, GFRAS adopted the WSG to position the AERAS project from

a mere delivery into a knowledge-generating system. GFRAS officially launched this initiative through a **webinar**.

The **AERAS project is the first ongoing project to test the WSG model** and GFRAS availed financial resources to support the countries' documentation processes. Practitioners are being supported to generate diverse knowledge products, including case studies, videos, policy briefs, practitioner narratives, technical reports, and scientific papers.

By elevating practitioner voices, reducing knowledge loss, and strengthening the science of delivery, **Wearing Scientific Goggles demonstrates how AERAS can contribute not only to agroecological transition, but also to transforming development practice itself.**

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Access Agriculture at the National Agriculture Extension Week in Uganda & Madagascar

From 20-24 April 2026, Access Agriculture took part in **Uganda's National Extension Week**, which was organized by the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS), and was held at Silver Springs Hotel in Kampala, Uganda, under the theme Unlocking Uganda's agricultural potential: multi-actor agricultural extension services for resilient, digital, and market-oriented agri-food ecosystems.

During the extension week, Access Agriculture was represented by **2 ERA Coaches, Ezra Masolaki and Slyvia Nakanyike**, and **4 Entrepreneurs for Rural Access (ERAs)**. The team set up a pavilion where they **showcased Access Agriculture's extensive video library** and the work that the **entrepreneurs for rural access are doing with agroecology videos in local languages**.



Fig 8



Fig.7

Never shying away from business opportunities, 3 of the ERA teams seized opportunities they saw during the extension week when they hired out their smart projectors to the Hotel to be used for projections during some of the side events in the week.

"On the last day of the Uganda Extension Week, as Access Agriculture we received an accolade from the organisers for not only supporting the Uganda National Extension Week, but also for our work in digital advisory services provision, where we bring farmer-to-farmer agroecology training videos in local languages to farmers in rural areas through the smart projectors", said Ezra Masolaki, one of the Uganda ERA Coaches who received the accolade on behalf of Access Agriculture.

Access Agriculture also took part in Madagascar's first-ever Agriculture Extension Week, held from 17 to 20 February 2026 at the Carlton Hotel in Anosy, Antananarivo.

The event was organized by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock** in collaboration with the **Malagasy Forum for Rural Advisory Services (FCA)**. Held under Madagascar's National Policy on Rural Advisory Services (RAS) and Extension, the extension week focused on four key themes: **integrating research into extension, innovation and digitalisation in RAS, good practices in extension, and the role of private actors in RAS delivery**.

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Access Agriculture at the National Agriculture Extension Week in Uganda & Madagascar (cont.)

Over four days, leading stakeholders from the public and private sectors, international organisations, and farmer groups came together to share experiences and exchange ideas through conferences, workshops, and panel discussions. Exhibition booths also gave participants from the research and extension sectors an opportunity to showcase their work and interact with visitors.

As a key actor in digital RAS, Access Agriculture hosted a stand where the **Madagascar ERA Coach, Karine Rakotoniainasoa**, and 9 ERA teams represented Access Agriculture and showcased the impressive work they are doing in digital advisory working alongside RAS, especially using a smart projector kit to bring agroecology videos to farmers in rural areas.

Access Agriculture also delivered a presentation under the theme “Technologies and Innovative Tools for Extension” in one of the sessions during the week. Karine used the presentation to introduce the organisation’s work in Madagascar as well as its digital platforms, including the Access Agriculture website and a mobile app.

“Participants were particularly impressed to learn that the online library offers more than 6,000 agroecology training videos freely accessible worldwide, including nearly 200 videos translated into Malagasy” said Karine.” The ERA Coach especially **highlighted the ERA Teams and the smart projectors they use - which function offline and off-grid – to bring videos to farmers**, and the farmer-to-farmer learning video approach to demonstrate the effectiveness of Access Agriculture’s methodology. In this approach, farmers living in similar conditions and facing similar challenges are filmed while sharing practical solutions with other farmers across the Global South.

The **Madagascar and Uganda national extension weeks provided Access Agriculture with excellent platforms to raise awareness about the value of its digital tools and content in extension**, while creating valuable networking opportunities for the ERA Coaches and teams in both countries.



Fig 9

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Access Agriculture at the National Experience Sharing Workshop in Uganda

Access Agriculture recently took part in the GP-SAEP's National Experience-Sharing Workshop for Uganda, held at the Silver Springs Hotel in Kampala from 13th to 16th April 2026.

This was **Uganda's 3rd National Experience Sharing Workshop**, bringing together all GP-SAEP implementing partners, including **Access Agriculture and YPARD, as well as country fora (UFAAS) and regional networks (AFAAS)**, to share their experiences of implementing the project over the past year.

Access Agriculture was represented by the **GP-SAEP Project Manager, Blessings Flao, ERA Coach, Ezra Masolaki and representatives from 10 Entrepreneur for Rural Access (ERA) teams**.

In his brief remarks, Blessings Flao highlighted the importance of the **"collaboration between Access Agriculture, YPARD and UFAAS, which has allowed all of the implementers to be more effective by concentrating on what they do best"**.

Ezra Masolaki delivered a presentation for Access Agriculture, highlighting the wonderful work

that ERA teams are doing in the project districts as they work alongside Rural Advisory Services (RAS) Facilitators. "Some of our highlights include that the 6 ERA teams operating in Sembabule, Buikwe, Bugiri, Lira and Soroti, and 4 others operating in other districts have conducted a **total of 899 video sessions, reaching 12,737 farmers (8,069 female, 4,668 male)**, and we have translated 300 videos into 5 Ugandan languages on the project (Ateso 60 videos, Lusoga 60 videos, Luo 60 videos, Luganda 80 videos, and Runyakitara 40 videos) allowing for farmers to learn agroecology principles from the videos in their own languages", he said.

In their own presentations, the Master Trainers for the different

districts also commented on how crucial the ERA teams have been in working alongside them to deliver extension services to farmers.

While the first and second days of the Experience Sharing Workshop were spent indoors for the various presentations and discussions, day 3 was a **visit to the field**, where some of the participants visited the Buikwe Agriculture Office and farmers' fields to see first-hand the work by some of the farmers that have received extension services from the ERAs and RAS Facilitators.



Fig 10

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Fig 11

Access Agriculture at the National Experience Sharing Workshop in Uganda (cont.)

During the farm visit, it was wonderful to see the farmers, RAS Facilitators and ERAs all **speak highly of the central role that videos in local languages play in helping farmers learn better and practise what they see.**

“At present, the trainings are very hard to conduct without the videos; with the videos the farmers can easily see what they can do on their own farms,” said **Andrew Munyole**, the Master Trainer for Buikwe, during interactions with one of the farmer groups in the district.

Experiences shared by FCA Madagascar, the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services and Access Agriculture highlighted how Farmer Field Schools, Farmer Family Learning Groups, and Peer Learning Teams...

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MAGP promotes agroforestry systems to strengthen agroecology | Catamayo Ecuador



Fig 12

With the aim of promoting sustainable practices in family farming, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries (MAGP), through the Secretariat of Family Farming, **is implementing a model agroforestry farm in San Francisco community, Catamayo canton, Loja province.**

This initiative supports resilient production systems integrating crops, forest species, and fruit trees. Under the “Accelerating Agroecological Transformation in Ecuador” (AERAS) project, \$600 was invested in supplies to strengthen the demonstration farm.

An initial session **trained 15 local producers and 15 MAGP technicians** from El Oro, Zamora, and Loja on agroforestry management using an agroecological approach. Additionally, **50 forest plants (cedar, guayacán, lalame) and 50 fruit trees (avocado, key lime, mandarin) were distributed**, enhancing diversification and conservation. MAGP will continue training and technical support to scale this model nationwide.

Second National Symposium on Soil Conservation Strategies October 8, 2025

More than **150 actors from the country** participated in the **Second National Symposium on Soil Conservation Strategies**, organized by the MAGP and the AERAS Project in Ecuador, through the Secretariat of Family Peasant Agriculture and the District Directorate of Loja. With the support of Heifer Ecuador, FAO Ecuador, utpl, UN Loficial, and Red Relaser, the event brought together authorities, academia, producers, and peasant organizations to build policies and actions that stop soil degradation in Ecuador. Soil is life, taking care of it is a priority!



Fig 13

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Pichincha strengthens the agroecological transition of Family Farming with a session of the AERAS project

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries (MAGP) of Ecuador, through the Secretariat of Family Farming (AFC) and the Directorate of Ancestral Knowledge and Agroecological Production, implemented a **capacity-building session in Pichincha** under the AERAS project (Accelerating the Agroecological Transition in Ecuador) in April.

This initiative forms part of a broader institutional strategy to promote sustainable and resilient agri-food systems, with **Family Farming positioned as a cornerstone of national food sovereignty**. The session combined the **provision of incentives for establishing a demonstration agroecological farm with a specialized workshop on soil management and conservation**. A total of **50 agroecological producers** participated alongside **MAGP technicians from the Secretariat of Family and Peasant Agriculture and the Pichincha District Directorate**.



Fig 14

Participants strengthened their technical capacities through **hands-on training focused on practical tools for transitioning to sustainable production systems**.

The demonstration farm serves as a **strategic learning platform under the Learning Communities methodology**, enabling the application and validation of practices such as **sustainable soil management, use of bioproducts, soil cover, and productive diversification**. These spaces facilitate knowledge exchange and support the scaling of innovations to other Family Farming producers.

The workshop further addressed key soil conservation strategies, including **organic cover use, reduced tillage, and enhancement of soil organic matter**, while also examining challenges related to access to inputs, technical support, and differentiated markets. Overall, the intervention reinforces institutional efforts to advance agroecological innovation, strengthen local capacities, and build inclusive, resilient agri-food systems in Ecuador

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Training with the NATGO Platform



Fig 16

AGROAPOYO AND NATONAR, together with the AERAS Project, developed a platform to train the producers who supply raw materials to AGROAPOYO, with the help of the digital platform NATGO.

This platform allows the digitalization of field and collection records, supporting producers in production, harvesting, and collection. The benefits are: 1. having better control of their crops, 2. making better decisions, 3. planning production, 4. managing their work better. With this initiative, AERAS promotes the adoption of digital innovations in the project.

Strengthening Agroecological Extension in Indigenous Territories - Costa Rica

On March 13, 2026, in Limón, Costa Rica, a working session was held within the framework of the AERAS Project, **aimed at strengthening agroecological extension capacities in Indigenous territories.**

The activity **brought together extension agents from different institutions in a participatory space for knowledge exchange and critical reflection** on the use of technologies in extension processes. The importance of adapting **technological tools to local realities was highlighted**, prioritizing accessible solutions with low connectivity requirements and based on open-source software.

One of the central components was the **capitalization of experiences**, through which **field practices were analyzed to identify good practices, lessons learned, and opportunities for improvement** in territorial support processes.

The challenges of implementing agroecology in Indigenous territories were also addressed, recognizing the need for differentiated approaches and stronger inter- institutional coordination.

"We are in a continuous learning process, and these spaces allow us to join efforts to better support producers." **José Domínguez López**

The session generated key inputs for the development of the CAP component and reinforced the importance of inclusive, equitable, and context-adapted agroecological extension.



Fig 17

"This type of meeting enriches our knowledge and helps improve our work as extension agents." - **David Arias**

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Exploring Soil Microbiology in Coffee Systems - Costa Rica

On April 16, 2026, a **field day** was held in Vuelta de Jorco, Aserrí, Costa Rica, under the AERAS Project to **strengthen practical knowledge of soil microbiology among producers, technicians, and local actors**. Using a participatory, hands-on approach, participants explored soil as a living system through direct observation and application in coffee production systems.

Accessible methods were emphasized, including **basic microscopy, manual soil texture and pH assessment, and techniques for capturing soil microorganisms**, enabling learning without costly technologies. The activity translated technical concepts into practical tools for daily farm management and reinforced learning through real farm conditions. Overall, the initiative enhanced producers' autonomy, encouraged peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, and improved decision-making, contributing to more sustainable and context-specific agroecological practices.



Fig 18

Use of Microorganisms and Capacity Building in the Field—Costa Rica

On March 24, 2026, a **practical workshop was held at the Technical Professional High School of San Mateo, Alajuela, Costa Rica**, under the AERAS Project, focusing on the **use of microorganisms to improve soil quality and production systems**. Combining theory and hands-on learning, the activity strengthened participants' technical capacities through participatory methods and knowledge exchange.

The workshop highlighted **microorganisms as a cost-effective tool for enhancing soil fertility and crop performance** while promoting sustainable agriculture. It also demonstrated the effectiveness of experiential learning and sparked strong interest in replicating these practices. Overall, the initiative supports rural extension and advances accessible agroecological practices in Costa Rica.



Fig 19

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Regional Agroecology Community of Practice: First 2026 Session on Agroecology and Rural Extension | RELASER

More than 30 participants from Latin America and the Caribbean joined the **first 2026 session of RELASER's Regional Agroecology Community of Practice** on February 19 under the AERAS Project. Discussions covered **farmer field schools, soil management, bio-inputs, pollinators, and relational innovation** to understand factors influencing adoption of change. Launched in 2025, the platform promotes horizontal exchange among public and private actors, focusing on family farming, innovation, and agroecology.

Farmer Field Schools: diagnosis, planning, and cycle-based monitoring

Experiences from Mexico highlighted Farmer Field Schools as a structured pathway to agroecological transition, combining baseline diagnosis, participatory planning, and cycle-based monitoring of yields and costs. Soil management and reduced agrochemical use were central entry points, supported by continuous technical assistance. The approach also emphasized social dynamics, including household decision-making, gender roles—with women now

forming the majority—and cultural calendars. Practical innovations included bio-inputs, seed conservation, biodiversity, and pollinator management.

Innovation and relationships: what sustains adoption

Insights from Argentina underscored that innovation adoption depends on trust, networks, and local dynamics. Relational factors such as information flow, legitimacy, and stakeholder connections are critical, highlighting the need to identify actors who enable or hinder change.

Market and public policy:

Discussions noted limited price differentiation for agroecological products despite higher labor demands, affecting economic sustainability and policy engagement. Expanding actor networks to include market players was recommended.

Agenda for 2026

RELASER priorities include bio-inputs, digital extension, markets, youth engagement, and responsible use of digital tools.



First 2026 Session on Agroecology and Rural Extension

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Fig 20

Madagascar Holds its Inaugural Extension Week

The **first Agricultural Extension Week in Antananarivo**, held from 17–20 February 2026, marked a significant milestone in strengthening agricultural advisory services in Madagascar. Convened under the theme “**Effective and Sustainable Extension Services for Successful Producers**,” the event brought together over 200 stakeholders from government, research institutions, farmer organizations, development partners, and the private sector.



Fig 21

The four-day event served as a strategic platform to **address systemic challenges affecting agricultural extension**, including limited farmer inclusion, fragmented coordination, and unsustainable financing. Discussions aligned with the National Strategy for Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (SNVCA), focusing on farmer-centered approaches, innovation systems, and sustainable funding mechanisms. Key outcomes **highlighted the need to reposition farmers as active partners in innovation, strengthen linkages between research and practice, and promote context-specific solutions**, including digital tools and local knowledge. Stakeholders also emphasized the urgency of establishing diversified financing models and improving coordination across actors.

The event featured high-level panel discussions, technical side events, and field visits, fostering knowledge exchange and practical learning. It also exposed critical gaps, including low private sector engagement and underrepresentation of women and youth, signaling priorities for future interventions.

A key output of the Extension Week is a consolidated policy brief that outlines strategic and operational recommendations to guide the implementation of the SNVCA. Overall, the event strengthened multi-stakeholder collaboration and set a clear roadmap for transforming agricultural advisory services to enhance productivity, resilience, and market integration for farmers in Madagascar.

[Read More here.](#)

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Fig 22

Communities of Practice: Strengthening Local Capacities to Accelerate Sustainable Transition

In the Menabe region of Madagascar, the AERAS/GP-SAEP project **strengthened local Communities of Practice (CoPs)** in December 2025 to **promote agroecological learning and innovation among farmers in Morondava, Miandrivazo, and Mahabo.**

The initiative addressed limited technical knowledge, unsustainable farming practices, and heavy reliance on chemical fertilizers **through training on composting, vermicomposting, local biopesticides, Black Soldier Fly**

rearing, improved cropping practices, and climate change adaptation.

A total of **289 producers were directly reached**, including **57% women and strong youth participation.** Many farmers received their first formal training in sustainable agriculture and showed strong interest in reducing chemical inputs and adopting practical agroecological solutions. Despite challenges such as pests, climate impacts, and limited knowledge dissemination, the CoPs strengthened technical capacities,

encouraged peer-to-peer learning, and demonstrated the importance of collective action in building resilient and sustainable agricultural systems.

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Fig 23

GP-SAEP SUPERVISION AND SCOPING MISSION: Strengthening Achievements and Preparing the Sustainability of Agroecological Approaches | Madagascar

The **Mid-Term Review of the AERAS/GP-SAEP project in Madagascar** highlighted encouraging progress in promoting agroecology and strengthening agricultural extension systems.

Consultations with farmers, extension workers, project teams, partners, and the Ministry of Agriculture **showed growing adoption of agroecological practices**, with **farmers reporting improved yields**, lower dependence on chemical inputs, health benefits, and greater use of local knowledge.

Extension workers were recognized

for helping communities address climate change challenges, although market access remains a concern.

The review also revealed a **shift toward more participatory and farmer-centered extension approaches**, including peer learning, on-farm demonstrations, and the use of digital and video-based learning tools. Innovations such as neem-based biofertilizers, repellent plants, and crop associations have gained strong acceptance across intervention areas.

Collaboration between **FCA Madagascar, African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services, and Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services was identified as a key success factor**, alongside alignment with Madagascar's national agricultural extension strategy.. The review concluded that the project has established a strong foundation for a more resilient, professionalized, and sustainable agricultural extension system, while emphasizing the need to strengthen local ownership and ensure long-term sustainability beyond the project lifecycle

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AERAS/GP-SAEP Exchange Visits: Learning From Field Experiences to Strengthen Team Capacities

The **AERAS/GP-SAEP exchange visits** in Madagascar provided field teams with **practical learning experiences to strengthen their capacities as agroecology extension practitioners**.

Organized after the Agricultural Extension Week and outside the project's intervention zones, the visits **exposed participants to innovative agroecological practices and successful community-led initiatives**. At SAF FJKM in Soavina Ambanitsena, teams reviewed project achievements, identified operational challenges, and developed practical recommendations to improve farmer engagement and the adoption of agroecological practices.



Fig 25

In the Ambohidratrimo Eco-Village, **participants explored circular economy approaches**, including wastewater treatment, recycling of plastics and glass, vermicomposting, and the use of compost from dry toilets to improve soil fertility and environmental sustainability.

sustainable and economically viable farming systems can be built through efficient use of local resources. These exchanges reinforced the importance of experiential learning, observation, and adaptation in accelerating agroecological transition and improving farmer support services.



Fig 24

A visit to the **agroecological site in Antsirabe highlighted integrated farming systems** focused on moisture management, soil restoration, reduced chemical inputs, rainwater harvesting, crop rotation, and the use of service plants to improve productivity while protecting ecological balance.

Teams also met an agronomist promoting permaculture and organic agriculture, demonstrating how



Fig 26

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Fig 27

Strengthening Agricultural Advisory Services: Experiences from Uganda and Madagascar (November 2025)

At the **2025 Annual General Assembly of the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services in Dakar**, organized with **African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services, RESCAR-OC, and ANCAR**, agricultural advisory stakeholders discussed strategies to strengthen extension services and accelerate agroecological transition across Africa. During a side event on **“Competency-Based RAS Approaches for the Agroecological Transition,”** the AERAS Madagascar project was presented as an innovative model for agricultural transformation.

Experiences shared by **FCA Madagascar, Access Agriculture, YPARD and the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services** highlighted how **Farmer**

Field Schools, Farmer Family Learning Groups, and Peer Learning Teams promote knowledge co-creation between farmers and advisors. Reported impacts included improved household nutrition through home gardening, increased incomes from crop diversification, stronger adoption of agroecological practices, and higher motivation among advisors through performance-based incentives.

Madagascar’s KAP-based incentive system, focused on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices, attracted particular interest for strengthening facilitator engagement. Discussions with initiatives from Senegal, Nigeria, Zambia, Malawi,

and the Sahel emphasized the importance of local adaptation, digitalization, financing, governance, and climate integration. The event reinforced the need for competent, motivated, and institutionally supported agricultural advisors to build resilient and sustainable agricultural systems.

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YPARD Uganda members and GP-SAEP fellows at the Uganda National Agricultural Extension Week 2026

YPARD Uganda GP-SAEP fellows actively participated in the Uganda National Agricultural Extension Week 2026 in Kampala, contributing to discussions, rapporteurship, registration, and knowledge exchange on agricultural extension and agroecology.

Fellows including Ajuna Tadeo, Frank Mufuruki, Emiru Jacob, and Nabulime Deborah gained practical exposure to digital extension, agroecology, AI, and climate-smart agriculture while engaging with national and regional stakeholders.

[Read more here.](#)



Fig 28

Amplifying Youth Voices in Agroecology: Reflections from the YPARD GP-SAEP 2026 experience sharing Workshop



Fig 29

From 13–15 April 2026, stakeholders of the GP-SAEP convened at Silver Springs Hotel in Kampala for an **Experience Sharing Workshop**. The event brought together partners including **YPARD, GFRAS, UFAAS, AFAAS, Access Agriculture, IFAD, and representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries** to reflect on two years of project implementation.

YPARD was represented by Youth Fellows **Nabulime Deborah, Ajuna Tadeo, and Mufuruki Frank**, who shared experiences promoting agroecology through Youth Communities of Practice and YPARD Cafés. During the workshop, Ajuna Tadeo highlighted YPARD's role in advancing

Agroecological Rural Advisory Services through mentorship, capacity building, networking, and youth engagement platforms. Key achievements included increased youth participation in agroecology, stronger stakeholder networks, and enhanced youth visibility in policy spaces, despite challenges such as limited access to land and finance. The workshop concluded with a field visit to Buikwe District, where participants observed practical agroecological innovations including horticulture, Azolla production, kitchen gardening, and sack mound farming.

[Read more here.](#)

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YPARD GP SAEP Fellows at the National Extension Week 2026 in Antananarivo, Madagascar

From 17–20 February 2026, **YPARD Madagascar fellows Laricha Ambinintsoa, Mariano Tongamisy, and Fallet Nomenjanahary** participated in the National Extension Week in Antananarivo under the theme “**An effective and sustainable extension for prosperous producers.**” The event brought together key agricultural stakeholders to strengthen extension and advisory services in Madagascar. Fellows engaged in discussions on farmer-centered innovation, digital extension tools, and sustainable financing, while also showcasing YPARD’s youth-led initiatives under the GPSAEP project. A field visit on the mallholder Horticulture Empowerment & Promotion SHEP approach highlighted market-oriented farming practices. The experience enhanced the fellows’ knowledge, networks, and commitment to promoting sustainable, youth-driven agricultural transformation in Madagascar. [Read more here.](#)



Fig 30

YPARD Youth Fellows at the GP-SAEP Project Field monitoring Visits in Madagascar



From 20–22 January 2026, **YPARD GP-SAEP Youth Fellows Nomenjanahary Fallet Pierrot and Ambinintsoa Laricha** participated in **field monitoring visits in Miandrivazo and the Menabe region of Madagascar.**

The visits brought together **IFAD, FCA, AIM, CTAS, ACCESS AGRICULTURE, YPARD, and local farmers** to **assess agroecological interventions and strengthen learning among stakeholders.**

Farmers demonstrated practices such as the **use of organic fertilizers, biopesticides, integrated farming systems, and improved seed production**, reporting reduced reliance on chemical inputs, lower production costs, and improved market opportunities.

The visits also highlighted **Youth Communities of Practice (YCoP), Farmer Field Schools, and Village Savings and Loan Associations** as key platforms for agroecology learning and entrepreneurship.

The YPARD fellows actively engaged with farmers, documented best practices, and amplified youth perspectives, showcasing the growing role of young people in advancing sustainable and climate-resilient food systems in Madagascar.

[Read more here.](#)



Fig 31

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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.



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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Fig. 1: Group photo of participants during the Uganda Agricultural Extension Week (Photo credit: UFAAS). Below: Ezra Masolaki, ERA Coach for Uganda, receiving an accolade on behalf of Access Agriculture for the organization's contribution to digital extension during the Uganda Extension Week

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