



Networking for a greener Africa.

PARTICIPATORY ECOLOGICAL LAND USE MANAGEMENT (PELUM) KENYA

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EDITORS' NOTE



A warm welcome to our first edition of our e-newsletter for the year 2017.

We are delighted to share this edition with our development partners, Member Organizations, CSOs, farmers and all stakeholders.

Among the issues featured in this newsletter is the milestone that the pilot Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) by PELUM Kenya has attained. The article also lauds the good work done by Seed Savers Network; one of PELUM Kenya's MOs in promoting seed saving and sovereignty. Similarly, there is an article advising farmers on how best to price their farm products.

We are honoured to have you read through this article. Enjoy the reading.

Rosinah Mbenya,
Programme Officer– Research, Information Management and Marketing
PELUM Kenya

Do you want to learn more about PELUM Kenya? Do you want to partner and support PELUM Kenya in the accomplishment of its mission? Do you want to walk and accompany PELUM Kenya in its development journey? Then, visit our web site: www.pelum.net, or our facebook page [PELUMKenya](https://www.facebook.com/PELUMKenya) or our twitter handle [@PELUMKenya](https://twitter.com/PELUMKenya), Or write to us at pelumkenya@pelum.net;

NB: PELUM Kenya is a registered network in Kenya and receives support from partners, well-wishers and friends directly.

ABOUT PELUM KENYA

Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Kenya is a national network which currently comprises of 49 Member Organizations

Our Vision

Empowered and prosperous communities deriving their livelihoods from sustainable land use

Our Mission

To promote participatory ecological land use principles and management practices for improved livelihoods among small scale farmers and pastoralists in Kenya

Our Core Values

1. Commitment to networking and partnership
2. Transparency and Accountability
3. Innovativeness
4. Equity and Justice
5. Gender Sensitivity

Strategic Directions

The following are the set strategic priorities of PELUM Kenya for the next five years:

- ⇒ Climate Change Adaptation
- ⇒ Agro-enterprise and market development
- ⇒ Sustainable Natural Resource Management

PGS CERTIFICATE ISSUANCE

Under its Promoting elum and Networking for Livelihood Improvement (PENELI) II programme, PELUM Kenya piloted PGS certification process for four farmer groups working with their Member Organizations. The four farmer groups were Kamicha Kabondo Fresh Organic Cassava Farmer group, working closely with CREPP, Mukika SHG working closely with KOAN, Malando Cooperative Society working closely with NECOFA and Gacavari SHG working closely with ADS MKE. The process that began in Mid-June saw two farmer groups namely Kamicha Kabondo Fresh Organic Cassava and Mukika SHG were awarded PGS certificates for their organic value chains.



From left: Mukika SHG chairman receiving the PGS certificate together with PELUM Kenya staff; on the right: Mukika SHG secretary signing the letter of commitment to uphold organic standards



Kamicha Kabondo Fresh Organic Farmer's Group receiving the PGS certificate

SEED IS LIFE: #saveshareexchangeseeds

Access to quality seeds at an affordable price is a big problem facing smallholder farmers in Kenya. Farmers get their seed from agro vets, free from County governments, open markets, from previous season's crop and also from NGOs operating in the region. But the quality of the seeds remains a problem. Community seedbanks has has proved to be a good institutional platform for crop cultivation, seed production and conservation of locally adaptive biodiversity.

Nagum Water jars women Group in Gilgil, Naivasha with assistance from Seed Savers Networking have developed their own community seed bank. The seed bank has variety of beans, local maize (white and yellow), pigeon peas, peas and red sorghum. They have also saved Cassava and sweet potatoes tubers in their farms. After every harvest each member selects the best, healthy and quality seed and takes to the seed banks. The seeds are placed in different containers that are well labeled with member's name, membership number, the weight and the local name of the seed. To protect the seed from pests like weevils, the groups add natural Diatomaceous earth insecticide dust to the seeds. The natural insecticide is locally available from Kariandusi. The group shares seeds amongst the members and also with community at large.



The chairperson of Nagum Water Jars Women Group showcasing the different varieties of seeds



Mr. Wanjama, the Director of Seed Savers Network (in the middle) explaining about seed banking

While other farmers are forced to purchase seeds during the planting season, the case is different the members of Nagum water jar group, they collect their seeds from the seed bank.

A number of lessons are learnt from the community seed bank. The group has a better understanding of the local seed; the small holder farmers have ability to maintain local agricultural biodiversity on their farms, farmers can access and plant seeds of their choice and share their knowledge.

As civil society working with small holder farmers we have a role to facilitate accessibility, availability and benefit sharing of seed diversity and quality seed of preferred varieties to small holder farmers.

HOW CAN ORGANIC FARMERS SET MARKET PRICES?

By, Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN)



A farmer must set a price high enough to reward himself for his work; however this must be balanced with the needs of the customers who are looking for full value for their money

A. Pricing based on costs-"cost plus"

"Cost Plus" methodology should always be the basic basis of setting any price of the produce on the farm if a farmer is to run his farm as a business enterprise and profitably. If losses occur on the product at the farm, it would be very hard for a farmer to recoup that in any other pricing strategy that he may employ. "cost plus" model of pricing is highly dependent on the financial records to determine the cost of producing a product, packaging and marketing it, and delivering it to the market or to the consumer. The farmer then decides on the profit he would want to make and adds that amount to the other costs to arrive at the price he will finally charge for the produce.

B. Pricing based on perceived value

This pricing methodology is quite important to the organic farmers as it gives them room to take into account the intangible things valued by many customers. - farming synthetic chemical free food, for instance or the knowledge that a farmer practices environmental conservation on their farm or the farm offers a unique recreational tastes for agro tourists that no other farm can offer or match. These are things that would be very hard to quantify in terms of monetary value but customers may attach more value to the products and reward the farmer for growing the products in a caring manner and in line with their beliefs including religious and cultural ones.

C. Pricing based on relationship with the buyer

One of the most unique and important element of selling locally grown organic food products is the opportunity to build a relationship with customers and buyers. The strength and deepness of this relationship can have a great effect on the pricing of the products. For example farmers who are currently undertaking home delivery schemes or box schemes as they are generally referred to be able to share their production experiences with the buyers and some of the buyers may even offer free suggestions on how best the farmer can set her price. This model is rarely threatened by the market forces of demand and supply as there is usually a mutual understanding between the producer and the buyer.

"Pricing is always a huge concern for farmers and in general farmers quote a price they may want, if the price is too high we try to negotiate or try it out for a while, if it works fine, if it doesn't work we negotiate further with the farmer, this way we all benefit "; Ann Mbugua, Bridges Organic Restaurant