

# ADAPTING THE GENDER ACTION LEARNING SYSTEM (GALS) IN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES



**Models of Integrating GALS in Functional Adult Literacy,  
Agricultural Extension, Advocacy,  
Village Savings and Lending Associations**



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### **Front cover photos (left to right):**

1. Achuka and Lopech show off their Vision Road journey as adopted from the GALS methodology (PHOTO by Oxfam in Uganda).
2. Liberty Ruvuma, a farmer from Zombo district in Uganda conducts an individual reflection using the Vision Road Journey (PHOTO by Josephine Kasande).
3. Manzubu Maimouna (far left) a GALS Champion from Arua district presents her farmer group vision (PHOTO by Oxfam in Uganda).

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# ACRONYMS

<b>ARUDIFA</b>	Arua District Farmers Association
<b>BJC</b>	Bukonzo Joint Cooperative
<b>CAP</b>	Community Action Program
<b>CAPS</b>	Community Action Planning Strategy
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisations
<b>CBTs</b>	Community Based Trainers
<b>CEFORD</b>	Community Empowerment for Rural Development
<b>CLA</b>	Community Link Agents
<b>CREAM</b>	Community Organisation for Rural Enterprise Activity Management
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>ESAFF</b>	Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum
<b>FAL</b>	Functional Adult Literacy
<b>GALS</b>	Gender Action Learning Systems
<b>GENVAD</b>	Gender in value chain development
<b>GJR</b>	Gender Justice Review
<b>GMLT</b>	Gender Mainstreaming and Learning Trajectory
<b>HQ</b>	Head Quarters
<b>JENGA</b>	Joint Encouragement of New Gainful Activity
<b>LC1</b>	Local Council 1
<b>MDD</b>	Music Dance and Drama
<b>NAADs</b>	National Agriculture Advisory Services
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organisation
<b>NUSAF</b>	Northern Uganda social action fund
<b>PALS</b>	Participatory Action Learning
<b>PELUM</b>	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management
<b>PTA</b>	Parents Teachers association
<b>ROSCA</b>	Rotating Savings and Credit Association
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
<b>VEDCO</b>	Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns
<b>WEMAN</b>	Women's Empowerment Mainstreaming and Networking (WEMAN)

# FOREWORD

## The fight against poverty requires participatory approaches that promote gender justice, and equality.

**G**ender norms and stereotypes constrain the opportunities for both women and men. According to World Bank gender overview (2016)<sup>1</sup>, gender inequality has put females at a disadvantage with women facing legal and social barriers that prevent them from owning or inheriting assets, and accessing credit. In most parts of the world, women take on the burden of unpaid care work including fetching water, and generally domestic chores among others. According to UN women statistics, Gender-based violence is the most extreme constraint and human rights violation worldwide affecting approximately one in three women.

In the face of these and more challenges, achieving gender justice has become of great concern globally. As such, poverty eradication strategies must see women as active agents and not inherently vulnerable. Women make productive and essential contributions to their community and country.

There is quite some effort by a number of stakeholders at different levels to develop new methods of analysis and approaches to address the ever-changing facets of gender inequalities. As an organization devoted to the advancement of women's rights and empowerment, Oxfam is working with partners around the world on issues related to gender justice. Over the years, we have piloted and are scaling up inclusive methodologies and tools. The pilots are a basis for wider advocacy in policy and practice change.

One of such key methodologies that has been instrumental in our work with partners in Uganda is the Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) methodology. As a community-led empowerment methodology that uses participatory processes and diagram tools, GALS has proved to be effective in giving women and men more control over their lives as the basis for individual, household, community and organisational development.

GALS methodology, which has yielded positive impact in the areas where it was piloted over the years, also addresses power issues within households, between communities, religious & traditional authorities, private sector and Government actors through the use of a series of tools that enable household members to negotiate their needs and interests to find innovative, gender-equitable solutions in livelihoods planning and interventions.

In the global fight against poverty, much progress cannot be realised without addressing the key drivers of inequality, gender being one of them. This book is demonstrating that with methodologies such as GALS, achieving gender justice is possible. It details a contribution to current efforts to challenge and change gender inequalities in development programmes.

The result is a detailed description of 4 models of integrating GALS in Village Savings and Lending Associations, Functional Adult Literacy, agricultural extension and advocacy. When both men and women have equal access to services and resources, enjoy equal rights and get equal opportunity to develop capabilities, then the development of a country would be faster and more sustainable.

Together, I hope we can scale up such methodologies and others towards achieving gender justice and essentially inclusive development.

**Peter Kamalingin b.I**  
***Country Director - Oxfam in Uganda***

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/overview>

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We are hopeful that this publication will inspire individuals, government, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), private sector and other stakeholders to uptake the Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) methodology and integrate it in their work to enable men, women and children engage in gender justice contributing to better and happier lives.



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Vision Road Journey</b>	The Road Journey is the underlying change framework for most GALS processes. This tool allows participants to visualise their future and draw in concrete terms what they would like to achieve and the timeline. They also analyse their current circumstances/reality and map possible income generation streams or activities that they can engage in to achieve their vision. Setting of achievable targets that can be measured is a key element of the Vision Road Journey. Over time road journeys progressively develop into detailed and powerful strategic plans.
<b>Challenge Action Tree</b>	The Challenge Action Tree is a way of improving the planning on our Vision Road Journey. It is a version of the Problem Solution Tree with the notable difference being that in GALS, the emphasis is not on 'problems' but challenges that can be overcome through concrete action commitments. The Challenge Action Tree can be done for any issue once the basic principles have been learned.
<b>Gender Balance Tree</b>	The Gender Balance Tree tool analyses workload, expenditure, asset ownership between men and women at the household level. It maps out who contributes most of the household work and who benefits most from the income generated by the household. The tool is intended to increase participant awareness of who benefits most from the household income and the inherent gender inequalities in workload in relation to ownership and control of assets as well as decision making and authority, and based on that to identify what they want to change.
<b>Empowerment Leadership Map</b>	The Empowerment Leadership Map is a tool that seeks to empower farmers by analysing their relationships with other stakeholders that they interact with at the community level and within their households. The Empowerment Leadership Map is the link between the individual and collective change process. The analysis forms the basis for voluntary pyramid peer scaling up - that is, sharing with others, who in turn share with more people - motivated by 'enlightened self-interest' and leadership development. The aim is that the messages and methodology are disseminated exponentially to form a movement.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gender inequalities are often critical to understanding and addressing the ‘weakest links’ within development interventions and poverty reduction. The different structural roles of men and women coupled with their equally different and unbalanced roles at the household level have called for more strategic measures in dealing with gender inequality. Women bear the brunt of domestic tasks: processing food crops, providing water and firewood, caring for the elderly and the sick thus making the boundary between economic and household activity very fluid. This brings to light the problem of women’s overburden and the strong imbalance in the gender division of labor as one of the major contributors to poverty.

Because of the above challenges, there is an increasing need to develop and adopt household level gender mainstreaming approaches that can be used to improve livelihoods. One of such approaches is the Gender Action Learning System (GALS). GALS is a key methodology employed to challenge and address gender inequalities in households and communities and to change power issues between communities and service providers, religious and traditional authorities, private sector and Government actors. The methodology uses visual diagramming tools enabling people at different levels in the community to plan for livelihood improvements in ways which give most benefit to women and men; establish multi-stakeholder consensus on imperatives of promoting gender justice; mutually develop a collective vision with immediate and long-term strategies and plan for change.

Since 2011, Oxfam has worked with 5 partners in Uganda -Community organization for Rural Enterprise Activity Management (CREAM), Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD), Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns (VEDCO), Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers’ Forum (ESAFF) and Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Uganda to promote the use of the GALS methodology to address gender inequalities in various development interventions in the West Nile region of Uganda. These development interventions included Functional Adult Literacy (FAL), Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs), Advocacy and Agricultural Extension. Given the level of success registered in the selected development interventions, models of integrating the GALS methodology have been developed.

This publication shares 4 models of integration adopted by 4 Oxfam implementing partners including CREAM, CEFORD, VEDCO and ESAFF. The experiences shared in these models of integration are more of ‘*how we did it*’ rather than ‘*how to do it*’. These models of integration do not attempt to introduce each GALS tool in detail nor are they meant to act as GALS manuals. Rather, the step-by-step ‘*how to do it*’ can be found in the existing WEMAN GALS manuals as detailed in the appended ‘resources to use’ listed in the Annex section of this publication.

The documentation exercise used focus group discussions; photographic documentation and literature review to collect and synthesize information from smallholder farmers. The cases were reviewed and verified before publication.

Each model of integration broadly covers 5 thematic areas which include justification of integrating the GALS methodology in a particular development area, what worked well, the process involved, challenges faced and lessons learnt. Compiled as well are success stories from individual farmers and farmer groups.

The publication is divided into 6 main sections as follows;

- Introduction
- Functional Adult Literacy (FAL): A Platform for Social Transformation)
- Integrating GALS in Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs)
- Integrating GALS in Agricultural Extension
- Integrating GALS in Advocacy

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 *About the GALS methodology*
- 1.2 *History of the Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) methodology*
- 1.3 *GALS methodology integration in Uganda*
- 1.4 *Challenges and Lessons learnt from using the GALS methodology*
- 1.5 *Purpose of this publication*

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 About the GALS methodology

GALS is a community-led empowerment methodology which aims to give women as well as men more control over their lives and catalyse a sustainable movement for gender justice. Women and men develop their individual visions for change, with achievable targets and road maps to move towards these visions, based on analysis of their current situation, past achievements and opportunities/strengths and challenges.

The GALS methodology provides practical tools and an all-inclusive participatory process and platform for individuals and groups to analyse their livelihoods with a gender perspective and take practical steps to address gender inequalities such as the division of labor and household chores between women and men, decision making about income, expenditures and assets and reduction of alcohol abuse and violence (Reemer, 2015). A key focus is breaking through gender-based barriers at individual level and changing gender inequalities within the family as challenges which prevent both women and men from achieving their vision. Addressing first the things which are immediately under peoples’ own control forms the basis for identifying priorities and strategies for long term change at wider community, institutional and macro-levels. People draw their diagram plans in locally available notebook diaries and continually review and track their own progress as a process of reflexive learning based on their own planning needs.




People also identify other members in their own families and support networks who they have a self-interest in sharing the gender messages and GALS methodology

- either through love and a wish to help people who help them, or because without changing these people they cannot themselves advance. The methodology is thus scaled-up through voluntary marketing as the basis for identification and certification of the most effective community trainers to be paid to train in new organisations and communities.

The individual visions, plans, achievements and challenges together with peer sharing achievements are aggregated and analysed collectively within communities, groups, organisations and institutions to improve decision-making at all levels. Use of diagram tools as well as distinctive participatory principles enables inclusion of very poor people as informed and respected partners in participatory planning processes, even if they have not had the opportunity to learn to read and write.

The methodology also develops the conceptual, analytical, listening and communication skills of powerful individuals, institutions and policy-makers – as well as enabling their own personal planning. GALS tools and participatory processes can be adapted to promote gender transformation and gender mainstreaming in any issue including general life planning, livelihood and value chain development, financial services, environmental management, health, reproductive rights, literacy, civil society development, counseling and conflict resolution. The methodology can be used on its own or integrated into existing activities and programmes. The methodology forms a solid basis for enabling more inclusive, effective and cost-efficient democratic policy development and gender advocacy.

Table 1: The Gals simplified learning Cycle

		
A. Individual reflection, analysis and learning is done in diaries which each person keeps. The learning however mostly happens in the group meetings or when a trainer visits an individual.	B. Individual information is brought to the household level or group level for collective visioning and action. This is done in household planning or group regular meetings.	C. Group level information feeds up to higher levels of market research, advocacy and lobbying

## 1.2 History of the Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) methodology

GALS is a key part of Oxfam's Women's Empowerment Mainstreaming and Networking (WEMAN) programme for gender justice in economic development interventions, including market and value chain development, financial services and economic policy and decision-making. GALS is a community-led empowerment methodology aimed at 'constructive economic, social and political transformation on gender justice' (ON, 2014).

GALS has grown from a range of other participatory approaches and methodologies such as Participatory Action Learning Systems (PALS). Since 2007, the methodology has been progressively developed and implemented among partners in various countries such as in Africa i.e. Uganda, Rwanda, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Sudan, and Angola and 3 countries in Asia i.e. Pakistan, Vietnam and Laos with Linda Mayoux as the key facilitator. The methodology has proved to be extremely effective in changing gender relations in property rights, decision-making, household planning, violence against women and stopping male alcoholism.

From mid-2009 to mid 2011 Oxfam conducted a pilot with local organizations in Uganda to adapt GALS as a complementary methodology for pro-poor wealth creation and gender justice in value chain development (VCD). During the 2011-2014 GENVAD project, the capacity of four Uganda CSOs was built in using GALS in their livelihoods/value chain work. This enabled the implementation of the methodology at a larger scale through peer learning and sharing.

## 1.3 GALS methodology integration in Uganda

From 2011-2014, 10 Civil Society Organisations implemented an IFAD and Oxfam funded gender in value chain based project titled, *'Community Led Value Chain Development for gender justice and pro poor wealth creation'* which used the GALS methodology to address gender inequalities in value chains.

An end of project evaluation conducted in December 2014 indicated that GALS is a highly effective, hands-on gender analysis and transformation method which, when combined with livelihood initiatives, can increase participants' productivity by harnessing men's and women's capacities. GALS was introduced to over 36,356 women and 21,201 men which enabled them to make precise plans on how to develop their farms, save money and plan productive investments. Such improved strategic capacity led to increased productivity, savings and access to credit. The evaluation noted that the methodology is more effective than 'conventional' gender awareness-raising because it

enables households to recognize gender injustice as an obstacle to their shared vision for a better life. GALS was credited for helping households to recognize each other as intelligent actors and allies in joint efforts. Women and men were empowered to articulate issues, discuss constructively and make explicit, shared decisions.

At community level, the project realised increase in smallholder farmers' incomes from agricultural production where GALS was combined with efforts to develop the production and marketing of crops and produce that had been in high demand. For instance, in Uganda, smallholder farmers benefitted from a strong demand for sesame seed, maize and rice, especially where producers formed associations or cooperatives. Creating formal producers' organisations enabled farmers to pool resources and negotiate better conditions with traders and bulk buyers. Associations formed around specific value chains performed particularly well. Additionally, Arua district-based representatives of the international agro-business corporation Olam increasingly bought sesame seeds directly from farmer groups rather than local traders. Olam pre-financed harvests at prices that encouraged farmers to increase sesame production. All these benefits were made possible by using the GALS methodology to enhance collaboration between the smallholder farmers and 'big buyers' through constant communication and organised stakeholder platforms where win-win strategies were developed and implemented to improve the various value chains.

In Uganda, Oxfam and her partners CREAM, CEFORD, VEDCO, ESAFF Uganda and PELUM Uganda have actively participated in the promotion of GALS as a household level gender mainstreaming methodology. Using lessons learnt from the IFAD and Oxfam supported GENVAD project, the organizations went ahead to develop, pilot and test 4 models of integrating GALS in functional adult literacy, village savings and lending associations, advocacy and agricultural extension. The cases documented herein are therefore a demonstration of the adaptability of the GALS methodology and are aimed at inspiring others towards integrating GALS in their work. There is a primary focus on women's empowerment and gender equality in all the models of integration documented here.

## 1.4 Challenges and Lessons learnt from using the GALS methodology

In implementing the GALS methodology, the change in attitude regarding gender issues can take time and requires collective efforts especially from key influential people within the communities such as religious and cultural leaders. Furthermore, presenting plans in pictorial format may not be understood by others. One peer trainer who is also a local leader shared her experience on this explaining that, "when I took

*my pictorial Challenge Action Tree to the sub-county planning meeting, members told me to write it down because they did not understand it.”*

Nevertheless, many lessons have been noted from utilizing GALS. For instance, the methodology has been noted to be so dynamic that communities can modify it according to prevailing situations and how best they understand it. Similarly as a community-led approach, involving the local government and other actors at the beginning of the GALS integration process is vital for visibility and sustainability of the methodology as well achieving results. Allowing the champions (people who have excelled in their understanding and use of GALS

and willingly train others) to take lead in genders justice review processes, empowers them to own, sustain and take the process further.

## 1.5 Purpose of this publication

The purpose of this publication is to demonstrate how the GALS methodology has been integrated and utilized to address gender inequalities in 4 development interventions including; Functional Adult Literacy (FAL), Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs), Advocacy and Agricultural Extension both at household and community levels to empower women and men from the poorest and most vulnerable households.





# CASE 1: FUNCTIONAL ADULT LITERACY (FAL): A PLATFORM FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

- 2.1** *Introduction*
- 2.2** *About Functional Adult Literacy in Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD)*
- 2.3** *Why GALS in Functional Adult Literacy (FAL)?*
- 2.4** *Change story of Poroporo Multipurpose Group*
- 2.5** *Challenges of integrating GALS in FAL*
- 2.6** *Lessons learnt from integrating GALS in FAL*

## 2.1 Introduction

This model of integration specifically focuses on Poroporo Multipurpose farmers group based in Yumbe district (majority of families are polygamous), in the West Nile region of Uganda. The case discusses the GALS integration process and the transformation that took place in relation to empowering women, challenging existing gender norms, bringing men and youth on board as promoters of gender equality and working with various stakeholders for effective implementation of programs.

## 2.2 About Functional Adult Literacy in Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD)

The ability to read, write, calculate and use these skills to improve personal and community livelihoods is part of the Government of Uganda's poverty eradication processes (GOU, 2011). Despite significant decrease in illiteracy rates observed in the last two decades following the resumption of public literacy programs in 1992, 25% of Ugandans are still illiterate and significant disparities still remain between men and women. Moreover the rates may be even higher in some rural areas. In order to overcome this situation that hampers socio-economic development, the government set up an official program for the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) in 1997. Designed around the livelihoods and needs of learners, the FAL Program is currently being provided by the Government of Uganda with the support from various actors. It focuses on literacy and numeracy knowledge and comprises a strong business-specific component for learners geared towards making them understand how knowledge can improve their lives. It is in this context that Community Empowerment for Rural Development organization (CEFORD) supported this national program by setting up FAL groups in its areas of intervention in the West Nile region of Uganda, in Adjumani, Arua, Koboko, Maracha, Moyo, Nebbi, Yumbe and Zombo districts.

CEFORD's Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) programme started in 2003 with the aim of addressing the high levels of illiteracy especially among women. FAL is used as platform for group mobilisation and analysis of community problems and solutions. After a few CEFORD staff underwent training for two weeks in 2008 in Kasese (south-western Uganda) with Bukonzo joint Coffee Cooperative, they went back and introduced the methodology to other staff and board members. In turn, the methodology was incorporated in the organization's strategic plan, which has since been operationalised.

FAL was identified as an effective entry point for the integration of the GALS methodology because majority of the participants in this programme are very poor women and men. There was also the argument that because FAL classes are strongly embedded within the community (right at the village level), it allows for close links between the FAL instructor and the community, thereby facilitating community ownership of the programme and reducing on operational costs. Community link agents (CLAs) (who also doubled as FAL instructors) were identified and underwent one week training in GALS conducted by staff already introduced to GALS. CEFORD has facilitated the FAL process through training literacy educators, equipping learners with livelihood skills, conducting exchange visits among learners and leadership development.

## 2.3 Why GALS in Functional Adult Literacy (FAL)?

After years of implementing FAL interventions, CEFORD had recorded numerous successes. But in spite of these successes there still existed socio-economic and gender specific challenges such as school dropout of female participants, low participation of men in the interventions, costly processes and inability to roll out FAL to more communities. The reasons mentioned below prompted CEFORD to adopt GALS in FAL.

***The GALS methodology can be adapted to any local situation and the tools can be used by all people regardless of their literacy levels. GALS creates gender and livelihood changes very quickly because of the action oriented tools of analysis at individual level. And because it spreads very quickly through peer sharing, it creates a mass momentum that supports changes on a wider scale. This mass movement helps to check peer pressure especially among men.***



**Disadvantaged social economic position of the women:** There were evident social economic injustices that women were facing at household level though they could read and write. These included lack of decision making on household expenditure and income, limited ownership of property, heavy domestic and farm workload among others. According to Ajuga a FAL instructor in Yumbe district, “before the integration of GALS in FAL, at least 4 out of 10 women dropped out of the FAL classes due to lack of support from other family members and intimidation. Women missed out from taking leadership positions in formal and informal structures because of lack of confidence and education.” CEFORD also found out that women neither had adequate skills for livelihood improvement nor access to credit and control over what they produced.

**Inclusiveness:** There have been many questions around why a group of 30 who can now read and write, use

pictorial drawings in GALS? FAL is instructed in the local language and so a class of 30 must be speaking the same language. CEFORD was challenged to adapt innovative training ideas that would bring on board very poor men and women who had not had the chance to access FAL.

**Slow multiplier effect:** The FAL learning methodology relied on a few instructors, 90% of whom were men. This affected the FAL multiplier effect and made it very slow. This left CEFORD with the questions, “how do we reach non-FAL intervention members in the community and how can trained members train others? GALS provided an answer to these questions for everyone exposed to the methodology is encouraged to share their learnings with friends, peers and family members. This responsibility does not only lie in the hands of one ‘powerful’ trainer.



*Poroporo learners express joy during Womens' Day Celebrations*

## 2.4 Change story of Poroporo Multipurpose Group

### 2.4.1 Introduction

Poroporo Multipurpose group started as a Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) Group in March 2010 with the aim of empowering women with literacy skills. Due to cultural and religious practices of polygamy, the community did not value educating women and over 95% of them could neither read nor write. The first FAL group was in Kemeru village. It started on 15th March in 2010. It consisted of 12 women and 3 men who met twice a week for one and a half hours for a period of one year. The sections below detail how the group used the GALS tools.

To integrate the GALS methodology in the Poroporo Multipurpose group Functional Adult Literacy interventions, CEFORD used the Vision Road Journey, Challenge Action Tree, Gender Balance Tree and Empowerment Map tools as explained under the Glossary of terms section of this publication.

### Purpose

The FAL curriculum is intended to provide basic knowledge and skills integrated with literacy in three broad areas of; Agriculture, Gender Issues, Marketing Health; and Culture and Civic Consciousness. Specific GALS tools were used to enhance learners' critical analysis and to create awareness concerning the causes and possible solutions to the problems.

The curriculum enables learners to actively participate in their personal development and that of the community; improve their quality of life, provide integrated functional non-formal basic education through a problem-solving approach, promote wealth creation at household level and gender equality.

GALS was utilized to promote the use of participatory methods which encouraged participatory and practical learning. The local communities were encouraged to be involved in the production of materials which were relevant to their needs and related to their situations.

### 2.4.2 How did the group use the GALS tools and Why?

#### 1. Vision Road Journey

The vision road journey is a very detailed strategic planning framework for individuals and groups. As part of the FAL process, groups are supposed to come up with work plans so as to be registered at sub-county level. In other words after the FAL learning cycle of one year, the group evolves and develops social or economic work of their choice.



*Kubra Leti (RIP) presents the Poroporo group vision road journey (2012-2015)*

The Poroporo Multipurpose group instructor, Ahmed Ajuga first introduced the group to the Vision Road Journey. As part of the FALS sessions the group had identified some social problems such as poverty, lack of clean water and poor markets but did not develop these into realistic action plans with clear strategies and targets. With the introduction of the GALS tools, members laid out practical plans on dealing with the social challenges and achieving their visions.

The visioning tool helped the group to develop a strategic plan that would inform their work. They were also able to broaden the scope of their work to include the economic and social empowerment of women, men and households, something which would not have happened if they had not used GALS.

## Elements of the Poroporo three year collective Vision (2012-2015)

Vision	Opportunities
<p><b>Wealth creation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A group tractor to increase acreage which would help in ploughing thereby reducing on the workload. This would be hired by members</li> <li>■ Purchase a group lorry to transport bulk produce to markets such as South Sudan and Kampala</li> <li>■ Hire/purchase land to increase the group acreage</li> <li>■ Resource mobilization for the purchase of a simsim processing plant to add value and earn more profit</li> </ul> <p><b>Women's rights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Equal access and ownership of property especially land</li> <li>■ Education for both boys and girls.</li> <li>■ Increase women's access and control over land and money</li> <li>■ Increase women's position in leadership</li> </ul> <p><b>Peer sharing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Share GALS with spouses and co wives</li> <li>■ Share GALS with other friends and family members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Good collaboration with local government particularly at the sub county. They have been given an opportunity to share their plans for integration in sub county plans especially during the budget planning processes.</li> <li>■ Some of the group members are model farmers and have been visited by high ranking officials like the President. This recognition provides the group with more advocacy platforms and opportunities.</li> <li>■ Yumbe district closeness to South Sudan and Congo markets offers the group a wide range of market choices.</li> <li>■ Existing GALS skills already obtained by the group members and their families is a potential for rolling out GALS in later stages.</li> <li>■ Since the group had been trained in the FAL strategies of using their functional adult literacy skills and linking it with GALS in documenting and presenting their plans to other stake holders does exist. They just need support in how to do it without compromising the GALS action learning principals and process.</li> </ul>
Achievements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inclusiveness and prioritizing the needs of poorest and most disadvantaged members of the group was achieved through the household visions. Realizing that there were many widows in the group, three physically disadvantaged members and many women in polygamous relationships, members decided to take the planning process beyond the group. For example, for the married, the group decided to work with their husbands as a way of achieving change in their lives, groups and the community. To date, the Poroporo learning process involves husbands and co-wives even if they are not active group members. From this household centered action learning the group has developed more into a pressure group to fight violence against women and women's access to land.</li> <li>■ From the group visioning exercise, Poroporo developed into a community 'mouth piece'. Identifying community challenges from its members and using the data collected for local activism and campaigning for women's rights. In 2015 Poroporo led a community campaign involving local leaders to create awareness about the burden of care work that women face. Men and youth being challenged to contribute towards care work and farm labour while local government was tasked to provide the much promised bore holes to enable families have clean and near water sources.</li> </ul>	



### INNOVATIONS

With the adoption of GALS in FAL, the group has innovated ways of developing simple pictorial tools using locally available materials such as sisal bags. They are also creating community awareness through songs about the different tools. The songs are in the local language and some members frequently appear on local FM radios to share about the songs and GALS. One member (a blind man) was facilitated by CEFORD to record his song about GALS and men learning to listen.

## 2. Improving gender relations with the Gender Balance Tree



Although the group had a collective Vision that focused on equal access and ownership of property especially land, education for both boys and girls, increase in women's access and control of land and money and increase in women's position in leadership, it was still not clear how these would practically be achieved at individual level. This necessitated the introduction of the Gender Balance Tree.

The Functional Adult Literacy curriculum is intended to provide basic knowledge and skills integrated with literacy in a number of social economic areas such as gender issues, culture and civic consciousness aimed at addressing poverty. GALS tools especially the Gender Balance Tree (GBT) were integrated to critically analyse gender beyond just mentioning what women and men



do as was the case. The GBT helped the group identify gender imbalances at the household level that fuel poverty. Such imbalances included; women's heavy workload, inclusiveness in decision making on income expenditure, lack of control and ownership over resources by women. The analyses helped both men and women to develop realistic and concrete actions to address the issues.

The group's Gender Balance Tree (GBT) was developed in 2012. On the roots of a Gender Balance Tree, the work that takes up most of a person's time is circled. From all the GBTs that were drawn by the women in the group, domestic work was the most circled. The women's GBT roots were very crowded compared to men's.

Heavy household chores such as fetching water, harvesting food from faraway farms and looking for firewood dominated these roots. "I and my co-wives would spend over 5hours (from 6am-11am) looking for

water, then come back home to prepare lunch for the children and then in the afternoon, we would go to faraway farms to look for food (cassava, sweet potatoes) and firewood," says one of the female group members. These and other women had to travel long distances in search for food because nearby plots of land were 'owned by their husbands' who grew tobacco for commercial purposes. The men preferred nearby plots for easy farming and monitoring leaving the women with faraway fields; some of which would be hired for a season or two.

The introduction of the GBT enabled Poroporo Multipurpose group members to identify who (women or men) does most of the household work; spends most for the household income; benefits most from household income; and inequalities in ownership of property and decision-making. Members were tasked to decide whether the household trees were balanced or not and depending on the situation prioritize areas for improving the gender relations to balance the tree.

## TESTIMONY

### **My Gender Balance Tree Helped Me Change My Sons: *The Case Of Afisa Sika***

When she lost her husband in 2012, Afisa Sika was left with four children to take care of. Two of her eldest sons dropped out of school due to lack of money. At this time, Afisa realized that she had never trained her children in how to support her with domestic or farm work. This meant that the children were not in position to help with household chores.

Afisa decided to enroll the boys in Poroporo group where they were introduced to the GALS methodology. Soon, the family started sharing about GALS; developed a family vision and gender balance tree. *"I was alarmed to see how much work my mother was doing around and outside the house. I felt very sad when I realized that my mother was working even at night! Within a week of our first exposure to GALS, my brother and I made changes. We began fetching water every morning, helping mother with cooking, fetching firewood and farming on the family land,"* said the eldest son.

Within three months all her sons were working on the family land. In the first planting season following these changes, the family increased their farming land by half an acre and planted Simsim on this land. With the family harvest doubling from 2 simsim bags a season to 5bags, Afisa bought a bicycle to help with transporting the produce to the Poroporo group collection center. Her sons have shared GALS with more than 8 other boys in neighboring households; helping them to develop their own visions. Out of the increased family income her youngest sons have returned to formal education in a neighboring school.

### 3. The Empowerment Leadership Map; scaling up GALS to other communities



*Ajuga (FAL-GALS Facilitator) explains the group empowerment leadership map which details how GALS is scaled-up through the peer learning process.*

In order to reach more people in a cost effective but empowering way, especially those who could not be reached in the FAL program, the Empowerment Leadership Map was used to guide community outreaches at both individual and group levels.

Members used it to analyse relationships, map projected outreach, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach strategies used. For instance, the map was used to ascertain the people the GALS champions (people who have excelled in their understanding and use of GALS and willingly train others) shared GALS with and those the new comers shared with. This tracing of outreach was done until the fourth generation. In

turn, the message dissemination created a movement of GALS learners and practitioners.

The group has been able to reach local government leaders with requests for better service provision; schools to promote and encourage girl-child education, neighbours and friends to create mass awareness; peers leaders to influence them to challenge and change existing norms and practices that limit women and men from enjoying their rights.

Although the group started with few members in 2010, by early 2011 there was a surge in membership from 20 to 120 members. Original members dutifully used

#### **Working with Yumbe district Local Government to scale up GALS**

CEFORD has facilitated numerous engagements between Poroporo Multipurpose group and stakeholders such as the local government, private companies, marketing and cooperative societies. The engagements focused on a number of markets, price and farmers' infrastructural issues. The meetings led to win-win solutions such as better prices for simsim, better roads to ease transportation of produce and provision of water to rural communities. In turn, group members have stepped up and improved the quality of their produce. This has led to the awareness and respect towards local people's issues and an admiration of the GALS methodology by different actors. A number of actions have taken place notable among them; in 2014 Yumbe district local government council passed a resolution on scaling up GALS to all the sub counties in the district. Currently this plan is being implemented and the facilitators of the process are ordinary women and men from Poroporo and other groups.

the Empowerment Leadership Map to share GALS with various communities and as a result many women and men joined the group. To date, through this process, the group has reached over 3000 farmers; 60% being women. For management purposes, the group split into three apex groups of 30 members each.

Being a highly polygamous community, people first share with their co-wives and husbands and some of these have even joined the group as members. Some members have shared with relatives from other districts during family gatherings such as funerals and weddings.



### Wider societal awareness using Music, Dance and Drama

Music dance and drama (MDD) has been one of the ways to encourage more people to join FAL learning sessions and also GALS. MDD has been especially used to reach illiterate youth, men and poor women who shy away from FALS sessions. Nine members of Poroporo group who live in Gobiri Kochu village, Kuru Sub-County, Yumbe District formed the Gobiri jazz band in 2012. CEFORD facilitated them to record their music, which is often played on the local FM stations. a message in one of their popular songs is, "if a blind man can draw, do domestic work, market his produce, look after 8 children single handedly then how much more can those who can see do? (This song can be accessed through CEFORD). The group was founded by Ezale Swaiibu (Above: Front row yellow t-shirt) a 42 year-old father of 8 and a former soldier with the Ugandan army blinded in the early 90s during war. When he returned home in 1999, sick and blind, his wife left him with 8 children

## 2.5 Challenges of integrating GALS in FAL

- Whereas FAL imparted the learners with reading and writing skills, integrating GALS was seen as challenging the status quo and shifting the power balance. Many men who were in FAL were not comfortable and thought this was a trick to take their power. Testimonies from many men revealed that they only got interested in the process when they saw changes such as improved physical appearance, harmony in homes, increased confidence and increased harvest due to increased farm labour among a few men who were involved in the process.
- Convincing the literate and semi-literate to draw other than write is not easy. Some people kept on asking, why do we draw when we can read and write?

## 2.6 Lessons learnt from integrating GALS in FAL

- ***The strength of the GALS methodology lies in the fact that it is not an extra activity*** but rather a methodology that can be integrated with other activities already being implemented. It is therefore possible to use it in many situations;
- ***Ownership of the GALS methodology:*** this is one of the key elements of its effectiveness. Generally, GALS creates a sense of ownership given its inclusiveness nature where everyone participates in planning for their future. On the ground, it was noted that the use of this methodology by FAL trainers and the transformation that happened to their personal/professional life increased their motivation to communicate the same to the local communities and be role models.
- ***GALS does not require high levels of literacy*** yet is equally appealing to those who are literate. Hence, it can be used with someone with no education or with someone with a university degree. In some groups we found literate and illiterate women in the same group working together with great respect for each other.





## CASE 2: INTEGRATING GALS IN VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS (VSLAS)

### **3.1** *Introduction*

### **3.2** *What is a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA)?*

### **3.3** *Why GALS in Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs)?*

### **3.4** *Change story of Panyani Savings Groups*

### **3.5** *Challenge of integrating GALS in VSLAs*

### **3.6** *Lessons Learnt from integrating GALS in VSLAs*



### 3.1 Introduction

This case is a demonstration of how Community Enterprise for Rural Activity Management (CREAM) has integrated the GALS methodology in Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) to address underlying gender issues that constrain rural women from accessing finance. The experiences shared in this case are a culmination of CREAM's more than five years of innovating and using the GALS methodology as a gender justice intervention.

Since 2003, CREAM has been providing business development services to groups in the West Nile region with a major focus on mobilizing and training communities in VSLAs in all 8 districts of the West Nile region of Uganda (Arua, Nyadri, Nebbi, Zombo, Yumbe, Moyo, Adjumani and Koboko). To date CREAM has reached more than 40,000 people with 75% of those trained being female farmers. Members in CREAM's VSLAs are able to develop new skills in leadership, increase household income, wellbeing and savings.

In spite of the increases in incomes and savings, CREAM discovered earlier on that there were limited or no fundamental changes in the wellbeing of members. Women especially were often not the direct beneficiaries of their savings. Women did not own assets beyond chicken and goats which they often sold to repay loans. Even with growth in their savings, it was evident that women were not investing in profitable enterprises for they were not key decision-makers within the household. Some women would borrow money on behalf of their husbands (who were not group members) only to have challenges in repaying the loans.

In the west Nile region of Uganda, due to the local cultural norms, the burden of roles and responsibilities falls heavily on women. Women are restricted from making decisions concerning use of resources, thus affecting agricultural production and the welfare of the family. Because gender relations are determined by a broader societal context than family structure and are a result of complex interactions of numerous societal factors (cultural norms, public policy), it is a fact that gender dynamics strongly influence decision-making within the household and economic activities of West Nile households.

### 3.2 What is a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA)?

A Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) is a self-selected group of people, usually between 30-35, who pool together money into a fund from which members can borrow. The money is paid back with interest, leading to the growth of the fund. The regular savings contributions to the group are deposited with an end date in mind for distribution of all or part of the total funds (including interest earnings) to the individual members, usually on the basis of a formula that links pay out to the amount saved. This lump sum distribution provides large amount of money that each member can then apply to his/her own needs. From this perspective a VSLA is primarily a savings club, which has proven popular worldwide.

VSLAs are usually more attractive to participants because they offer interest on savings and provide loans in useful amounts, usually in excess of the borrower's savings and at times that are convenient to the borrower. In this way the funds are constantly working and earning interest. The loans allow the member to meet their small short-term financial needs without having to borrow from a bank or money lender, take an expensive supplier advance or rely on relatives. This offers a tremendous boost to social security and financing for agriculture. However, loans are complex to administer and require a system of record keeping.

CREAM adopted the VSLA model from the Mata MasuDubara (women on the move) or MMD project which was launched by CARE International in Niger. The goal was to help the women participants cope with the numerous responsibilities they faced in a challenging economic and social environment. MMD promotes local participants' savings and loan groups that build on the traditional Rotating Savings and Credit Association (ROSCA)<sup>1</sup> methodology. Kenyan Merry-go rounds and West Africa's OSUSUS are ROSCAs, as are Mozambican Xitiques and Ethiopian Iqubs.

All these models enable poor people to save enough money to buy useful items for the household and make opportunistic business investments but they have their limitations. While they provide a popular and simple means of savings, they tend to be rigid in the way they work, providing either pre-determined or unpredictable access to accumulated savings.

<sup>1</sup>ROSCA is a self-selected informal group of people who contribute equal amounts of money on a regular basis usually between 8-36 months. At each meeting, after the contributions have been made, the money is allocated to a single member, either through drawing lots or according to a schedule agreed at the start of the cycle. The money is not repaid.

### 3.3 Why GALS in Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs)?

Before GALS training was integrated in the Village Savings manual, most members would get their share of savings at the end of the year and then throw huge parties or buy household consumables. Men particularly went on beer frenzies while women spent almost all their savings on food because the food grown on family land would have been sold to pay off loans. In Panyani VSLA for instance, during their first cycle, half the total number of women sold all their produce in order to pay off loans.

It was during business enterprise trainings that CREAM realized that group members were not setting goals on how to invest savings and local investment opportunities were very limited. The few goals set were only benefiting one member of the family-usually the man even if it is the woman who had saved the money. CREAM realized that unless gender issues related to labor, decision making and control over resources were dealt with; members were unlikely to find sufficient money for savings.

For this reason, CREAM introduced the GALS methodology to the VSLA groups starting with the Gender Balance Tree (GBT) to enable men and women identify;

- Who contributes most work to the household?
- Who spends most for the household?
- Who benefits most from household income?
- Inequalities in ownership and decision-making over productive assets and other productive resources between women and men
- Priority areas for improving the gender balance tree so that it could stand up straighter and bear richer fruit equally for both women and men.

In only one month of introducing the GBT, at least 1/3 of men of the households were able to break some of the

gender norms around household chores and productive work such as collecting fire wood and water and doing farm work such as weeding. These are some of the most time consuming activities for women in Arua.

CREAM already had a team of 25 Community Based Trainers (CBTs) who were charged with training VSLA and other organizational programs. These were taken on board for GALS capacity building of VSLAs. A strategy to integrate GALS to already running VSLAs and those yet to start was adopted. GALS tools were introduced as 1-hour sessions in the savings and lending capacity building trainings, which took place once a week. In the first cycle of each VSLA, CBTS were paid by CREAM but neither managed the VSLAs nor accessed the association's money. CBTS were not members of VSLAs but lived within the same community as association members. Apart from VSLAs they also trained groups in other development areas deemed necessary. To-date, each group or VSLA has its own peer trainers who are members of the association and for the GALS training they are given some allowance from the group savings. CBTs and CREAM staff made innovations to tailor make the GALS methodology in a cost effective way. These included developing pictorial manuals on local sisal bags, composing songs to animate members and setting aside some savings to buy group learning materials.

They also concentrated on selected tools relevant to their case. Groups were introduced to the following tools;

- Vision road journey - a powerful planning and SWOT tool;
- The Empowerment and Leadership tool
- Market Maps were also integrated for better analysis and action around scanning current and possible opportunities for better markets and better service provision.
- The Gender Balance Tree was used to analyze and act around division of labor, access and control over assets and income dynamics. Through a process of stakeholder identification and analysis, poor women and men were able to gain negotiation skills and engage various relevant stakeholders to improve their production and marketing opportunities and access to better social services.

## 3.4 Change story of Panyani Savings Groups

### 3.4.1 Introduction

The Panyani (which means in search of survival) Savings Group (SAGS) was founded in 2008 by 30 members (18 women and 12 men) as a Savings and Credit group. By July 2014, the group had 90 members divided into 3 groups Panyani A, B and C. The group was divided into 3 groups in order to have a manageable small group of 30 members for the VSLA. Panyani is therefore an affinity of members from different interest groups. Group members volunteer to share the methodology with others who are not in the group. They use drama in churches and other community gatherings. Some members have even gone to other villages where they have been invited to introduce GALS. Therefore, apart from the 90 members who are using GALS, the group through their own efforts (and through members who have the time to train others) has been able to reach over 100 other people in the community.

The group has seen a significant increase of their savings since they started GALS in 2010. This is partly due to increase in the membership but also due to the increase in the savings value. Most members testified that previously, although they saved money, men (those

in the group) would spend most of it on things such as purchasing radios, marrying second or third wives, mobile phones and bicycles. Savings were not invested in assets or businesses that brought more money. On the other hand, women spent their savings on children school fees and food. After GALS training and being introduced to developing household visions, men and women were helped to have better cooperation, financial planning and management of savings. Before GALS training, couples in the group would plan and use their savings separately. Currently, couples save jointly and support each other in making sure that savings are spent on planned areas. They are also planning and making decisions together on how the savings are invested. Most have also developed joint family visions.

As such, the group has seen a reduction in the levels of drinking by men and subsequently reduced levels of domestic violence. The LC1 Councilor reported that there was a significant reduction in reported cases of domestic violence. As the one responsible for dealing with these matters, he used to handle about 20 cases reported in 2 days per week (Tuesday/Thursday) to the odd case maybe two per week. He is now dealing more with cases of animals destroying crops. There is an increase in the number of people joining the Savings Groups as couples.

## TESTIMONY

### I Increased My Savings When I Stopped Taking Alcohol: A Case Of Draleti And Margaret Natal

When Margaret Etomaru was introduced to GALS in 2011, her vision was to share the methodology with her abusive and alcoholic husband and brother-in-law. She felt they were the reason her household had no peace and was in poverty. After two years she achieved her vision.

Margaret Etomaru is 37 years old and married to Draleti Natal who is 39 years old. They and their 7 children live in Yivu Village, Ombavu parish, Arivu Sub-County and are members of Panyani VSLA group. The couple are smallholder farmers. *"My husband used to drink all the money he earned, but now we discuss what to do with it to make sure that we maximize its use,"* says Margaret. *"Our family expenditure priorities are reinvesting in farming, building our new house, sustaining ourselves and paying school fees for the children. Because of the change in my husband, our savings per week increased from UGX 1,000 to UGX 5,000. We have even acquired a motorcycle from the apiary business and a loan we got from the VSLA. We use the motorbike for various things but mostly to transport farm produce to the market."*

*"Saving money helps us to decide where to invest,"* says Draleti I. *"We have invested in farming and now most of the family's income is from it. We have a banana plantation with 500 plants, 27 beehives each producing approximately 3-5kgs of honey and bulk sesame and soya beans with others in the farmer group. I have a ready market for the honey at a local market in Ediofe at UGX 2,800 per kilogram and other markets in Juba and Kampala selling for UGX 7,000 per kilogram. Last season we produced 6 bags of ground nuts, sold the surplus and used the money to buy goats."*

CREAM integrated GALS in their existing VSLA manual .The table below shows areas of integration and the reasons why.

### An example of a schedule used to integrate GALS in VSLA specifically in Panyani VSLA, Arua district

STAGE	PURPOSE	GALS INTEGRATION (TOOL)
<p>Preparatory Phase: Awareness Rising.</p> <p>1.Introduction of VSL methodology to the Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A large, open gathering which is announced well in advance through the help of local leaders.</li> </ul> <p>2. First meeting with potential and newly formed VSLAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attended by people who are interested to be in a VSLA, and who have already gathered in groups of 10 - 25 people who know and trust each other.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To describe to a public gathering how the programme works and how people may get more information</li> <li>■ To provide a detailed description of how a VSLA works; what people have to do to</li> </ul>	<p>A one day event with the newly formed VSLA using the Gender justice diamond, to gain censuses on women and men's human rights and views on what they want to see as commonly shared rights.</p> <p>Specific indicators, for change were developed these included for women property ownership specifically land and goats , access to land and decision-making on expenditure and increased saving , investment on land and animals for men reduction of alcohol, increased participation in household farm labor, increased investments outside the home.</p>
Module 1 Groups, Leadership and Elections	<p>Individual self-selection Role of General Assembly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Roles of leaders</li> <li>■ Preparation for elections</li> <li>■ Elections</li> </ul>	<p>The vision road journey (part 2) what is our current situation</p> <p><i>The vision road journey in the CREAM VSLA training manual</i></p> <p>Most members set goals for asset acquisition, housing development and paying school fees among the top priorities.</p>
Module 2 Social Fund, Share-purchase and Credit Policies	<p>Policies and rules related to: The Social Fund Share-purchase Credit Loan repayment</p>	<p>The vision road journey (part 3) what opportunities and challenges exist</p>
Module 3 Development of Group Constitution	<p>Group governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Combining Module 2 policies and rules with</li> <li>■ governance decisions into single constitution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The leadership map-mapping leadership opportunities within and outside the group.</li> <li>■ At least 10 women in 2014 were appointed to leadership positions in local schools, religious institutions or the local sub-county. Testimonies from neighbors, community leaders (chiefs), and family members attested to their leadership skills and new status of respect in communities.</li> </ul>
Module 4 First Savings Meeting	<p>Supervision of first meeting in which cash is handled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Contribution to Social Fund,</li> <li>■ Share purchase</li> </ul>	<p>The challenge action tree-what challenges do we still face in Panyani SAGS Most group members used the challenge action tree to analyse the challenges of low crop production and the problem of gender based violence.</p>
Module 5 First Loan Meeting	Supervision of first loan disbursements	CAT continued
Module 6 First Loan Repayment	Supervision of first loan Repayments	Sharing success stories
Module 7 Action-audit /Share-out and graduation	Distribution of the Loan Fund at the end of the cycle	Achievement journey-what have we achieved and how? What do we want do directly in the next cycle



### 3.4.2 How did the group use the GALS tools and Why?

#### 1. Planning using the Vision Road Journey



*Members of Panyani Savings Group pose with their group Vision Road Journey*

Panyani Multipurpose group's quantified vision was developed in 2011 and shows among others that by 2015 at least half the number of the women in the group should be having full control of the land used to grow both food and cash crops; households should

have increased the sizes of land to grow more simsim and there should be zero violence against women. A Gender Justice Review (GJR) conducted in 2014 revealed that the group had achieved their vision 100%. This is because the group was smart enough to plan a few realistic goals that were achievable.

#### DEVELOPING A VISION ROAD JOURNEY

- The process of developing a group vision begins with individual road journeys drawn in the diaries of both men and women.
- They then, in a day's event develop a group vision based on their individual and group visions.
- The process is facilitated in a way that allows even the modest of visions to be respected rather than ridiculed.

## 2. The Challenge Action Tree



**Chandru Annet uses the Challenge Action Tree to analyse lack of access to property**

The Group used the Challenge Action Tree to analyze the root causes of challenges limiting the achievement of individual and group visions; possible solutions and smart actions that could be implemented. 90% of the women in the group had limited access to land. Most of the land was owned by men who grew the high-in-demand simsim crop that they sold with a promise to buy food for the family which sadly never happened. For example, using the Challenge Action Tree, Chandiru Annet (in the above picture) realized that because she neither had access to land nor control of the family produce, there was no food in her house. "A hungry mouth," she says, "cannot work hard to attain a vision". In her challenge action tree, one of the root causes was her husband's control of the 3-acre family farming land because culture gives him the power to own and control land.

According to Draleti Natal, a male member of the group, "the land was given to me by my father and so I regarded it a mine to own and control. I mainly grew tobacco which fetches a lot of money and also grazed my goats. I always thought we could buy food from the money obtained from the sale of tobacco. Unfortunately, I would relocate to town and drink excessively whenever I finished selling my crop. I ran away from my wife because she asked for food and yet I wanted to 'save' money to share with my friends in the local bar because when I had no money they too bought alcohol for me. I am now I changed person having utilized GALS methodology in my household."

## 3. The Gender Balance Tree



In 2011 the group was introduced to the Gender Balance Tree. The developed individual Gender Balance Trees, revealed that 28 out of 30 female members of the group had a challenge of accessing family land. Women and men had 'secret' gardens and/or pursued separate livelihood activities.



**Wadribo Joseph and his wife**

According to Wadribo Joseph a member of Panyani Multipurpose group, "my wife and I used to farm privately. When I found out about her 'secret' garden I chased her away not taking into account that having a secret garden was the only way she ensured that there was food in the house. I forgot that I used all the family land to plant my desired crops and never bought food. I only realized my mistakes after drawing the Gender Balance Tree. I made commitments towards creating a food secure household, improving relations with my wife and also allocating her land of her own for growing food crops. Today, my family has a family vision which is revised annually."



### 3.4.3 Peer Up-Scaling



*A peer educator (2nd from right) shares the GALS methodology with community members*

The term **peer sharing** refers to the process where learners are encouraged to share the individual visions and strategies with their families and other community members when they return back to their homes. The peer sharing process encourages learners to develop their own action learning process.

Peer replication has been a very good method to spread the GALS methodology to people who are not easily reached by staff. Voluntarily everyone who gets exposed to GALS is encouraged to share what they learnt with friends, peers and family members. This responsibility does not only lie in the hands of Community Based Trainers (CBTs).

#### **So how does CREAM do it?**

Using their note books and with reference to the change that is happening to them, trainees popularly known as '*champions*' in GALS share their changes to inspire others. CREAM staff facilitate champions to develop pictorial manuals (simple how to do it guidelines).

To date, CBTS have trained 56 VSLA groups with a total of 3,036 (1,135 men and 1,901 women). Through peer sharing, these members have trained another 2,336 (798 men, 1,538 women) mostly friends, neighbors and relatives.

#### **What have been the results?**

Using the Vision Road Journey, members set goals for asset acquisition, housing development and paying school fees among the top priorities. Specific indicators for change such as women property ownership specifically land and goats, access to land and decision-making on expenditure; increased savings; increased participation in household farm labor; and increased family investments were developed.

The Panyani Savings group has been fundamental in the spread of the GALS methodology within their community. Group members volunteer to share the methodology with others who are not in the group. They use drama in churches and other community gatherings. All the men within the group no longer mistreat their wives and have been able to influence over 150 other men within the community through peer sharing. According to Local Council I Councilor, there has been a significant reduction in reported cases of domestic violence within the community. As the person responsible for dealing with these matters, he used to handle about 20 cases every week but now it is about two per week. He is now dealing more with cases of animals destroying crops.



Some of the group members in Panyani are teachers from the primary and secondary schools in the community. Members reported that they are using the vision road journey to motivate their children both boys and girls to think on what they would like to become. They are also using the tools to empower and develop leadership skills of school prefects, especially girls, to make presentations during assembly. In secondary schools, the teachers are using the GALS tools for career guidance as a way of preventing school drop out of girls, encouraging girls to do mathematics and science. In 2014, about 10 women were appointed to leadership positions in local schools, religious institutions or the local sub-county. Testimonies from neighbors, community leaders (chiefs), and family members attested to their leadership skills and new status of respect in communities.

CREAM has had a very good experience working with GALS in relation to other private and government agencies in many ways; CREAM facilitated linkages between over 30 VSLA groups such as Panyani Savings group with private agencies such as Arua District Farmers Association (ARUDIFA). ARUDIFA is supporting the groups in improving their agronomic practices to enhance their

value chains. Improved farming is one of the ways of increasing production and productivity hence increased income once produce is sold. This would definitely increase group savings. No wonder it is a major item in the group's Vision Road Journey. ARUDIFA has actively participated in 4 sub-county level multi-stakeholder platform meetings where they interfaced with the VSLAs, discussed challenges and opportunities on both sides, developed and implemented actions to improve their working relationships.

The government agencies are also involved in the GALS processes. For example in the groups where GALS takes place (including Panyani), there are local government officials such as the Local Council I and III, Production Officers, Police Officers and civil servants. These are using GALS in their homes, offices and schools. They appreciate the GALS methodology and consider it as the most powerful methodology that is making change within the communities. The communities have equally been linked to government programs such as National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and Northern Uganda social action fund (NUSAF) so as to access other services like farmer training, supply of inputs and marketing opportunities.

#### 3.4.4 Single mothers using the GALS methodology to improve household and community livelihoods: The story of Aneti Alezo



Anneti Alezo is a young single mother and a member of the Panyani Savings Group. Anneti Alezo is from a polygamous family of three mothers and her mother is the first wife. They have a family of six members and stays with her parents. She attended school and up to the seventh grade and dropped out of school. She then ran away from home and only returned after falling pregnant when she was fifteen years old. Her mother said that she used to be a very stubborn child 'ajiyo' in their local language. She joined Panyani SAGS Group after getting the information from the CBT at church. She was very active, understood the methodology well and was passionate about sharing the tools with others. She was then identified and selected to be a Peer Educator for Panyani Group.

Before GALS training, Anneti used to stay with her parents. In 2009 she attended a GALS training and later shared the methodology with her family members. Currently, Anneti uses GALS tools in all her activities such as savings and training other group members. In

the first year Anneti was able to save Four hundred and eighty thousands Uganda shillings (480,000=), in the second year Five hundred thousand Uganda shillings (500,000=) and in the third year Five hundred and eighty thousand Uganda shillings (580,000=). All this income she has done a lot developments for her family.

First she constructed her own house where she stays, she bought goats which have multiplied up to 25 but eight died due to lack of veterinary service, she bought a tailoring machine for business and attended a tailor's course, she has acquired most of her essential household equipments and utensils for her personal use, she has a stalk of her own produce of beans of about 200kgs and maize of 300kgs for sale Her home is clean, good and food secure.

Annette's mother gave testimony about her life and how Anneti has helped the family and improved their livelihood. She plays a major role in the production of food crops for subsistence and for selling.



*Anneti on her sewing machine.*

### 3.5 Challenge of integrating GALS in VSLAs

Changes for both men and women in CREAM have not come easy. For others it took them between 1 year and 2 years to change. Most change when they see the change in others. GALS is a mass movement that many people are using it in the same locality so that those that are sceptical may have the support of others to change.

### 3.6 Lessons Learnt from integrating GALS in VSLAs

The methodology blends well with CREAM's core business of savings and lending. The GALS tools have significantly helped clarify individual and family road journeys as well as define the collective objective.

- GALS is only a methodology which needs to piggy back on an existing livelihood program.





## CASE 3: INTEGRATING GALS IN AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

### **4.1** *Introduction*

### **4.2** *About Uganda's Agriculture Extension service provision*

### **4.3** *Why GALS in Agriculture Extension service provision?*

### **4.4** *How communities are using GALS tools to address gaps in Extension work*

### **4.5** *Change story of Pur En Kwo group*

### **4.6** *Challenges of Integrating GALS in Agricultural Extension*

### **4.7** *Lessons Learnt from Integrating GALS in Agricultural Extension*

## 4.1 Introduction

This case shares VEDCO's experience in adapting the GALS methodology in providing gender sensitive extension services such as information, training, advice and farm implements among farmers of Apac district. The GALS methodology has enabled VEDCO to deal with hurdles that women and men face in accessing relevant and timely agricultural extension services. It provides a means for them to learn new and improved production techniques, receive training and advice, organize around critical issues and improve access to inputs and markets. This case also shares how the GALS peer learning process has enhanced the farmer-to-farmer extension approach.

Apac district is one of the districts in Uganda whose economy has suffered a number of setbacks. The district has a high percentage of very poor people most of whom are women. The district consists of a rural population that depends majorly on agriculture for its livelihood. Agriculture mechanisation is rare and the only productive assets which most households own are land, a few hand tools and for a few families livestock. Women own less productive resources, rarely make decisions on land and income distribution and the existing government extension services are not gender sensitive.

## 4.2 About Uganda's Agriculture Extension service provision

Agricultural extension is the provision of information, training and advice on agricultural production. It is one way to tackle the hurdles that women face in agricultural production, as these services provide a means for them to learn new or improved production techniques, receive training and advice, organize themselves and improve access to inputs and markets. Good and timely information on new technologies and techniques is essential for farmers when deciding whether or not to adopt an innovation, and agricultural extension can lead to significant yield increases.

With over 80% of Uganda's labour force employed in the agricultural sector, modernization of agriculture is central to fighting poverty (Government of the Republic of Uganda, 2000). Agricultural extension is the primary mechanism that Uganda can use to assist farmers in expanding their ability to adopt and implement new methods and to relay information concerning new technologies. Throughout Africa extension programs have the reputation of being largely ineffective (Dejene 1989; Gautam 2000), adding very little to

the productivity of farmers especially women who make up the majority of the farming community. This reputation is no exception in Uganda as evidenced by the Ugandan government's suspension of the National Agriculture Advisory Services (NAADS) in September 2007 on the grounds of implementation failures. Frustrated by the challenges in the agriculture sector, in June 2014, President Museveni decided to redesign the NAADS programme by deploying the military to Luwerro district and parts of Eastern Uganda on a pilot basis to carry out roles hitherto meant for NAADS. The outcome was that the military posted impressive results within just two years. Building on the success of that pilot programme in boosting agricultural production, Operation Wealth Creation was launched as a partnership between Makerere University College of Agricultural and Environment Sciences (CAES), NAADS and Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) to implement the new NAADS model.

## 4.3 Why GALS in Agriculture Extension service provision?

Even with its importance, agriculture extension provision in Uganda remains low for both women and men; with women throughout Africa extension programs have the reputation of being largely ineffective (Dejene 1989; Gautam 2000), adding very little to the productivity of farmers especially women who make up the majority of the farming community. Even with the development of a number of innovations in extension such as farmer field schools, poor women and men are still not selected because of their inability to provide the necessary resources required to establish demonstrations.

Civil society organisations such as VEDCO have a mandate to complement government programs for effectiveness and efficiency. One of VEDCO's objectives is to increase farmers access to extension services: through training female and male community based extension workers, providing them with toolkits and training staff on extension service delivery. Since 1986, VEDCO has been working towards empowering small/ medium holder farmers for food security and nutrition, agricultural trade and institutional development. VEDCO directly works with organised groups of small holder farmers, providing agricultural extension services and enabling their collective marketing. VEDCO also has an advocacy desk that supports farmers to engage with policy makers on issues that affect them.



## 4.4 How communities are using the GALS methodology to address gaps in Extension work

In Apac district the GALS process is being implemented in six farmer groups who grow soybean and sunflower. VEDCO started working with farmers in Apac district at the time when they were being resettled from the camps after the LRA<sup>2</sup> war. As people were resettled in their communities following the LRA war, it was difficult for them to access inputs so they were organised into small groups of 30 people. Different stakeholders would provide equipments in form of aid. However, VEDCO's approach was to assist the groups to adopt a more sustainable approach. The groups strengthened and overtime they started producing cash and food crops.

However, even with increased production and marketing, the benefits were not defining the household welfare improvement. Households were still miserable with poor living conditions stipulated by household indicators.

- A number of conflicts existed in the targeted household with gender inequality against women (too much work by women, inequitable and lack of joint decision making on use of proceeds)
- Production was not directed by fulfillment of household needs.
- There were no household plans.
- There were no healthy discussions among the value chain actors. Farmers were only resolving production and marketing challenges at the farmer level. There was no analysis of the gender issues affecting the performance of the sunflower value chain among farmers.
- VEDCO introduced GALS to help men and women plan together at household level and agree on actions to improve their general welfare, extension services and the value chain.

## 4.5 The Case of Pur En Kwo group

### 4.5.1 Introduction

Pur en kwo group was started in 2011 with 46 members(38 women and 8 men). The group specializes in soybean and sunflower value chains. VEDCO has supported the group in provision of seeds, improved

technology, establishing food crop demonstration gardens, access to markets, linkages with chain actors and provision of market information.

VEDCO introduced GALS to this group in order to address challenges that were limiting women to access and effectively use agricultural information, trainings and farm inputs including improved seeds.

To integrate the GALS methodology in Pur en Kwo group, VEDCO followed the following steps.

- Trained 21 rural development extensionists in GALS. These trainers were already offering extension services to groups in an on-going food security and nutrition project. They in turn trained Pur En Kwo group in GALS but with a focus on the Vision Road Journey, the Challenge Action Tree tools.
- Together with the trainers developed simple pictorial manuals to ensure that all community based trainers ensured quality control.



*Farmers pose with seed distributed by VEDCO.*

<sup>2</sup>The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has been active since 1986, making it one of Africa's oldest, most violent, and persistent armed groups. The LRA was formed in northern Uganda to fight against the Government of Uganda, and operated there from 1986 to 2006. At the height of the conflict, nearly two million people in northern Uganda were displaced. Lacking public support, the LRA resorted to forcible recruitment to fill its ranks. Under increasing pressure, LRA's leader Joseph Kony ordered the LRA to withdraw completely from Uganda in 2005 and 2006 and move west into the border region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), and what would become the Republic of South Sudan. The LRA has continued to operate in this border region to date. (source: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/>)

## 4.5.2 How did the group use the GALS tools and Why?

### The Vision Road Journey



*The Group Vision Road Journey (see table below for the narrative)*

The Vision Road Journey was used by the group to establish their current situation, map out opportunities and challenges and develop a detailed plan to achieve their vision. The process began by each member drawing their vision in their individual diaries. These

were then shared in a plenary and used to develop a group quantified vision. The Group Vision Road Journey is therefore the total sum of all members' visions; quantified and disaggregated by gender.

### Narrative to the Group's Vision Journey

Vision	Current Situation	Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Both women and male Farmers to attain modern knowledge and skills in farming.</li><li>■ Partnerships with farm input companies for free seedlings.</li><li>■ Men and women bulking produce together for collective marketing.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Very limited extension services and access to improved seed varieties</li><li>■ Lack of availability of land for food cultivation,</li><li>■ Very low crop per acre</li><li>■ Isolated marketing by members each one selling on their own, men selling in far markets while women sell from home.</li><li>■ Savings by members</li><li>■ Group able to produce seeds and seedlings for sale to other farmers in the community.</li><li>■ Women overworked both on farm and at home</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Group is united.</li><li>■ Support from VEDCO.</li><li>■ Political security and stability.</li><li>■ Good climate.</li><li>■ Availability of improved seeds for planting on the market.</li><li>■ Government agricultural programs for northern Uganda.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Very few farmer training opportunities</li><li>■ Domestic violence against women</li><li>■ Poor planting seeds</li><li>■ Very low price for their crops</li><li>■ Low crop yield per acre</li><li>■ Heavy work load for women</li><li>■ Alcoholism by men</li></ul>

From the group's Vision Road Journey, the group developed indicators of change as shown below

- Improved livelihoods through improving food security and increasing control over incomes and assets for women and men.
- Increased life choices and voice for women in decision-making at personal, household and community levels.
- Members of Pur En Kwo farmer group draw the Vision Road Journey.
- Increased harmony in homes and the community.
- Reduced incidences of violence against women and Gender Based Violence.

### The Challenge Action Tree

The group used the Challenge Action Tree to analyze the root causes of challenges related to agriculture extension service provision. The tree was developed from a collection of individual challenge action trees. In their individual note books, most women identified poor attendance in trainings on agronomic practices as a major challenge, while most of the men said that production of crops per acreage was very low. The group decided to analyse the women's challenge because they felt it was the most common among them-including the men. The challenge was analyzed using the challenge action tree and the question asked was, why do few women attend farming trainings?

#### Identified causes of female farmers' not attending farmer trainings on agronomic practices

In their analysis, the group identified causes of female farmers' not attending farmer trainings. These were placed on the roots of the Challenge Action Tree.

- Trainings were held very far away from their homes. With one government extension worker per sub – county, trainings for farmers are organized in centralized places at Parish Level. This arrangement makes it very difficult for women to attend such trainings. According to a female participant, *'with too many household chores, it is difficult for me to find time to attend the trainings.'*
- Illiteracy. Handouts and market information brochures distributed during the trainings were in English. With high illiteracy rates, both men and women did not understanding the content.
- Poor awareness for the trainings. Information to attend the trainings was given to one farmer who was told to tell other farmers. This was not an effective mobilization method.



*Members of Pur En Kwo farmer group draw the Vision Road Journey*

#### Possible solutions to the identified causes of the challenge

Possible solutions to the identified challenge and causes were placed on the branches of the Challenge Action Tree. Solutions included;

Promoting more female farmer trainers to liaise with extension workers to reach as many farmers as possible.

- Advocating for on-site farm trainings that all men and women can attend.
- Inviting extension workers to villages instead of extension workers inviting farmers to the trading centers or local government centers.
- Promoting women's access and ownership of land through negotiation with their spouses. This would enable women to also be selected for farmer field schools.

#### Actions and Outcomes

- **Developing women led farmer field schools**  
Pur En Kwo has two farmer field schools. To date, over 1000 farmers (70% women) have received trainings from the farmer field schools.
- **Engaging powerful stakeholders to negotiate better prices**  
To date, VEDCO has facilitated sessions between farmers and value chain actors to negotiate favourable terms for their soybean and simsim crops.



During the stakeholder engagements, farmers presented their Challenge Action Tree on low prices for produce and buyers occasionally paying them with counterfeit money. The buyers' Challenge Action Tree indicated that farmers give buyers poor quality crops. Both parties made commitments to make positive changes. Farmers committed to improve the drying process (from drying on soil to drying on tarpaulin) and marketing collectively to control the quality of their members' crop. Buyers agreed to pay farmers through the bank to avoid counterfeit money.

#### 4.5.3 How did the group promote Farmer-to-farmer Agriculture Extension?

In the past, selection of farmers to participate in farmer field schools was based on farmers who were more likely to adopt modern innovations. For instance, farmers with sufficient land and financial resources in easily accessible areas were the first to be considered. This left out poor women and men.

Using the GALS peer sharing approach, farmer-to-farmer extension was promoted. Through the approach, extension services were extended to the group's 215 farmers (161 women, 54 men). The group used the Vision Road Journey and the Empowerment Leadership map to plan, identify and monitor people reached. Each of the already trained 215 farmers managed to reach at

least 10 other farmers, making a total of 2,150 in the first year (2012). The new trainees were also encouraged to share with at least 3 other farmers making a total of 10,750 by 2015.

#### 4.6 Challenges of integrating GALS in agricultural extension

- Integration of gender issues at local government level especially among extension workers is not prioritised. The extension workers do not see it as a need.

#### 4.7 Lessons Learnt from integrating GALS in agricultural extension

- Farmer-to-farmer extension through farmer schools still remains the best approach in which to promote GALS in agricultural extension. Farmers have enough time for each other and learn best from each other.
- In order to provide effective services to farmers, all stakeholders need to embrace the GALS methodology.
- It is important to ensure buy-in of the methodology at local government level. If GALS is not appreciated at this level, it is very difficult to ensure that it is widely spread and up-scaled.
- The GALS methodology can be used to operationalise gender-sensitive policies such as the National Agriculture Extension Policy.



## CASE 4: INTEGRATING GALS IN ADVOCACY

### **5.1** *Introduction*

### **5.2** *What is Advocacy?*

### **5.3** *Why GALS in Advocacy?*

### **5.4** *Change Story of Ayiwala Women's group*

### **5.5** *Challenges of Integrating GALS in Advocacy*

### **5.6** *Lessons Learnt from Integrating GALS in Advocacy*

## 5.1 Introduction

This case details how the GALS methodology has contributed towards an all-inclusive community led advocacy approach and empowering vulnerable women and men to access better social services from government. The case demonstrates how specific GALS tools have been adapted by Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) to develop action learning skills of women and men. The case is based on experiences of smallholder farmers from the districts of Zombo, Nebbi and Adjumani located in the West Nile region of Uganda.

ESAFF facilitates processes through which smallholder farmers' development concerns can be solicited, articulated and ultimately addressed through informed and focused community-led advocacy. Through the GALS methodology the skills of poor men and women have been built to organize collectively and articulate their issues in various existing forums at district and national levels.

Farmers, both men and women, have been able to use GALS tools to come up with existing problems, strategies to deal with the problems, key stakeholders that can offer support in dealing with the challenges and sharing advocacy skills with peers to establish mass support.

## 5.2 What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is the process of working with and/or on behalf of clients (1) to obtain services or resources for clients that would not otherwise be provided, (2) to modify extant policies, procedures, or practice that adversely impact clients, or (3) to promote new legislation or policies that will result in the provision of needed resources or services (Hepworth and Larsen, 1993).

Advocacy promotes equality, social justice and social inclusion. It empowers people to speak up for themselves; become more aware of their own rights, exercise those rights and be involved in and influence decisions that are being made about their future. Advocacy is a crucial element in achieving social justice. It is a way to ensure that everyone matters and everyone is heard – including people who are at risk of exclusion and people who have particular difficulties in making their views known (SIAA, 2010).

## 5.3 Why GALS in Advocacy?

Before the introduction of the GALS methodology, farmers were able to identify their problems and advance them to the district. However, there was no clear coordination of stakeholder identification, engagement, follow-up and accountability. Generally, farmer groups and individuals lacked knowledge of the existing support systems and the spirit of working together to achieve goals was so low.

Some farmers felt that with their ignorance of the existing government planning processes and a lack of effective government systems and structures, these plans only remain on paper. "Whenever I went to the district with the farmers' work plans, I was told that there was no money. At one time, a district official informed me that we(farmers)develop and submit work plans when it is too late.He advised us to participate in the local level government planning processes so as to integrate our plans in the overall sub county plans," commented the ESAFF Zombo District Coordinator.

Since 2011 ESAFF promoted the GALS methodology in various communities as a way of helping farmers to overcome most of the above challenges. Farmers were empowered to collectively identify their needs, develop actions for dealing with them, understand the government systems and structures and to collectively articulate and demand for their issues to be addressed while fulfilling their responsibilities as members of the community. Through win-win negotiations with local government leaders, farmers have been able to achieve success in their advocacy efforts.

### **To be able to achieve the above, farmers' skills in advocacy were enhanced through training and individual learning processes**

This process led to the emergence of women leaders, personal empowerment and skills in organizing communities around a common issue. Personal empowerment helped members appreciate themselves as assertive citizens who could contribute to the development of their communities through awareness and participation. As a result, there was an increased number of farmer groups began actively participating in community-led advocacy.



## 5.4 Change story of Ayiwala Women's group

### 5.4.1 Introduction

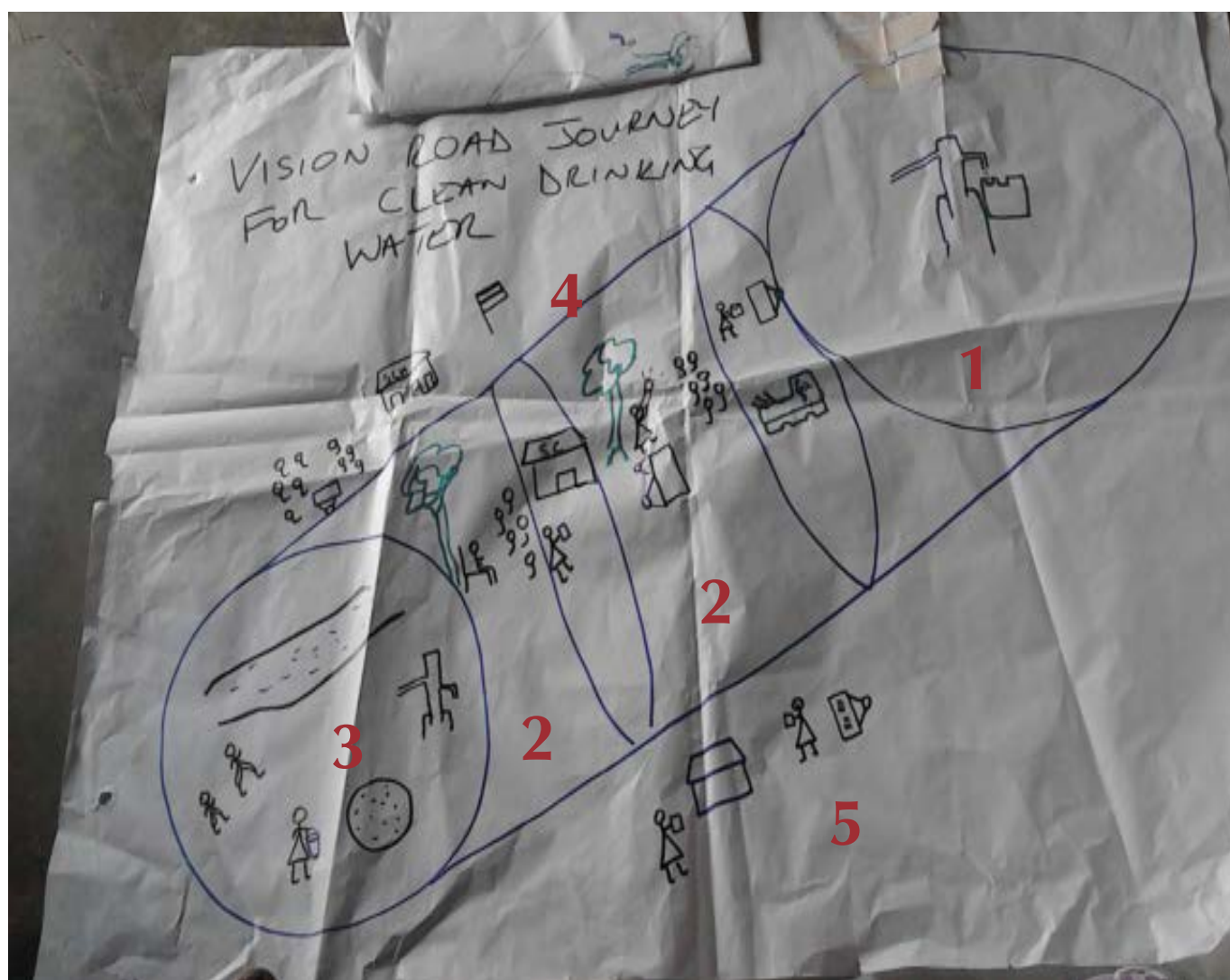
Ayiwala farmers group, is a women only group, located in Paluga village; Meliaderi parish, Pakele sub-county, Adjumani district. The group was formed in 2011 by 20 women with the aim of increasing household income. Later, they joined ESAFF Uganda so as to effectively work with other partners such as local governments in raising the voices of smallholder farmers. The group was introduced to GALS in value chain development by ESAFF Community based trainers were introduced

to GALS and these in turn piloted GALS tools among smallholder farmers. Tools piloted included the Vision road journey, the challenge action tree and the empowerment.

- To integrate the GALS methodology in Ayiwala Women's group, ESAFF followed the following steps.
- Integrated GALS in their existing advocacy manual in 2015 following a workshop with their community based trainers
- The trainers then piloted the tools which included the Vision road journey, the challenge action tree and the empowerment map.

### 5.4.2 How did the group use the GALS to advocate for clean water?

#### The Vision Road Journey



*Ayiwala Women's group Vision Road Journey for advocating for clean water*

Ayiwala Women's group had a vision that all members would have access to clean drinking water (see number 1 in the diagram above). The group used the Vision Road Journey tool to develop plans on how to achieve their vision based on analysis of their current situation (see number 3 in the diagram above), past achievements and available opportunities (see number 4 in the diagram above) and challenges (see number 5 in the diagram above). Their plan was to create awareness on the problem among their colleagues and together develop an advocacy agenda (see number 2 in the diagram above). They wanted to achieve this vision for safe water within a period of 2 years.



Among the opportunities they identified was the district local leadership whom they knew was mandated to provide boreholes. They knew of neighboring communities who had more than one borehole. They also realized that they had allies in form of their local councillors and sub county chairperson who would boost their campaign. The group saw their large number as an opportunity that could be used to demand for clean water.

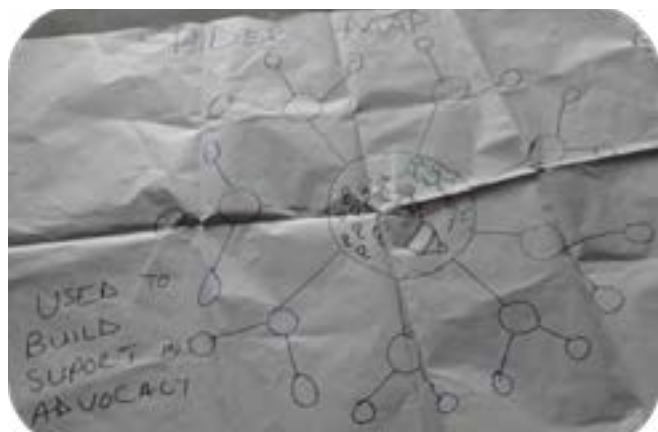
## 2. The Challenge Action Tree



*The group's Challenge Action Tree*

The group used the Challenge Action Tree to analyze why the village, with a population of over 1,000 people (including a primary school of over 500 pupils), had only one borehole.

## 3. The Leadership Empowerment Map



*The group's Empowerment Leadership Map*

Group members needed to build mass support among other community members for their advocacy agenda. They knew that advocacy is about information and numbers thus the strategy to mobilise more community members to identify with the advocacy issue.

Members and offices to be influenced were identified using the Empowerment Leadership Map. Members also mapped out key persons within the Local Government that would be approached among them the district local council five, chairperson and school. The group also used the Social Leadership Map to map out other women's groups and community members who would support their campaign.

### 5.4.2 Achievements



*Ayiwala Women's group members engaging with local leaders*

Through action learning, members of Ayiwala Women's group engaged their leaders in dialogue. GALS tools such as the Vision Road Journey and the Challenge Action Tree were used to clearly present the water problem and how it effected the community. This eventually resulted in provision of a borehole for the community.



*Picture of the new borehole*

## 5.5 Challenges of Integrating GALS in Advocacy

The time it takes to influence and get positive feedback from local government is long and many times demoralised smallholder farmers who sometimes leave the advocacy campaign.

- Communities are yet to effectively appreciate the impact and benefits of community-led advocacy. Most times they feel that their advocates are their politicians and religious leaders and so do not actively participate in advocacy processes.

## 5.6 Lessons Learnt from Integrating GALS in Advocacy

- Community led advocacy is a process that does not happen overnight. Building a confident and motivated community that can advocate for themselves requires consistency and patience. Community members need to be patient.
- Unless there is a general understanding of issues that affect the community, advocacy is very difficult. As a methodology, GALS helps individuals and communities to identify issues that affect them and appropriate approaches to deal with them.
- It is important for communities to clearly plan for their advocacy activities and potential challenges so as not to become demoralised along the way. GALS tools such as the Challenge Action Tree and the Vision Road Journey can help farmers achieve this.

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# ANNEXES

## 1. Process Guidelines for GALS Facilitation (Adapted from revised GALS manual rocky road to diamond dreams, 2013)

- 'Active facilitation from the back' where the facilitator empowers participants to express themselves. The facilitator's main task is to ensure that all voices are fairly heard, and that the discussion is not dominated by particular people. This requires very close observation of the process - who is and who is not talking and why, and encouraging people who lack confidence.
- All participants and all responses should be applauded and respected through a culturally relevant show of appreciation following each presentation.
- No one should feel they cannot ask questions or say things which they feel – provided this is done in a real spirit of wanting to understand and does not undermine the expression of others. · Presentations should always start from the back or with minority participants (e.g. men first if they are poor and fewer in number) to show respect for those who are likely to be less confident and to promote inclusion. This means those who are larger in number or more likely dominant have to listen and respond to others in their presentations/suggestions
- The facilitator should be seated on the same level as the participants.
- The facilitator should not touch the marker - participants should do all drawings themselves in order to develop skills and increase confidence and ownership.
- The facilitator should not be frightened by silence and always tempted to intervene, but give people time and space to reflect and express themselves.
- Facilitation should be through asking questions e.g. on contradictions between different responses to provoke discussion. The facilitator should not express their own opinion during the discussion. A good facilitator would be able to manage through encouraging participants and asking a few pointed questions to arrive at a point where most of the important issues would come up from participants themselves.

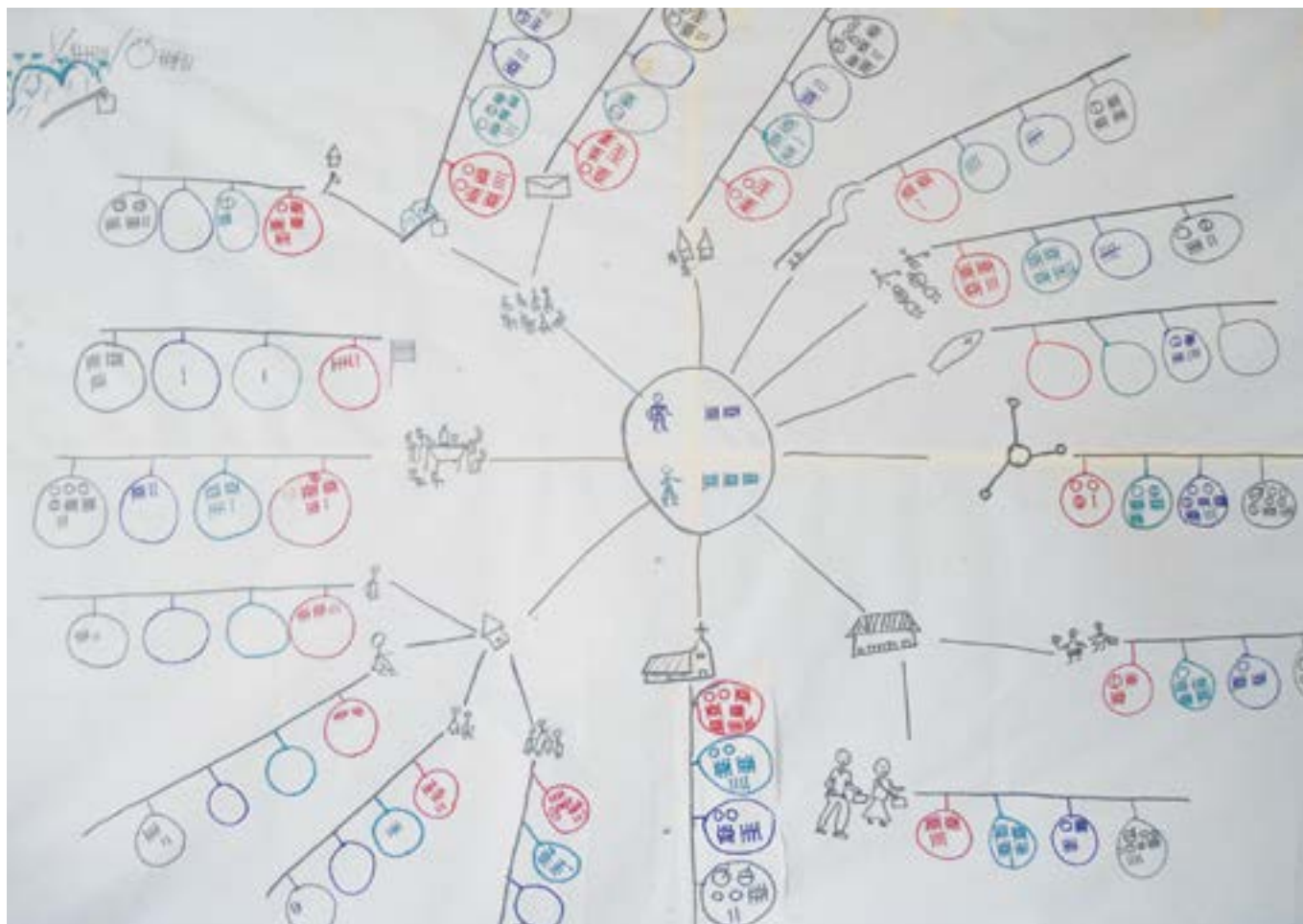
## 2. GALS tools to read;



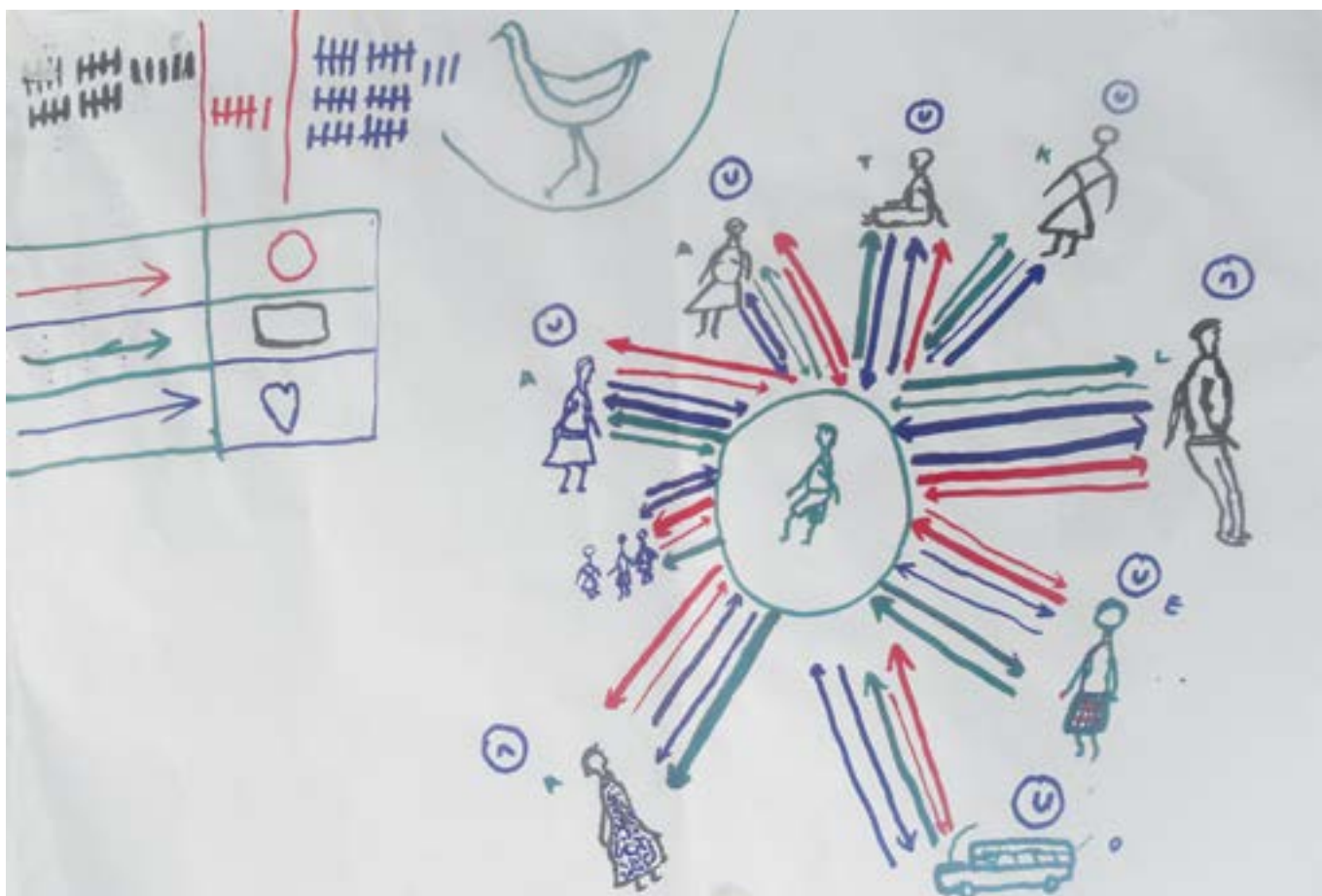
Challenge Action Tree



Gender Balance Tree



Empowerment Leadership Map






Empowerment Leadership Map



Vision Road Journey



## 3.0 ABOUT THE 6 ORGANISATIONS

Organisation	Background
	<p><b>OXFAM</b></p> <p>Oxfam is a global confederation of 18 international affiliates working in more than 90 countries to find lasting solutions to poverty, inequality and injustice.</p> <p>In Uganda, Oxfam has been working since the 1960s focusing both on development and humanitarian programs to support practical and innovative ways for people to lift themselves out of poverty. Our country strategy focuses on deepening governance &amp; accountability processes, fostering resilient livelihoods and strengthening humanitarian capacity as well as responding to humanitarian crisis. Women's rights are at the center of all this work.</p> <p>We believe that fundamental change will happen in Uganda with a shift in government and donor policies, implementation practices and when citizens, particularly women and youth are able to claim their rights as enshrined in the constitution and hold duty bearers to account.</p> <p>We work with strategic partners, across the country to generate wider evidence for our work although our program footprint is in the Greater North.</p> <p>As part of our work, we pilot and scale up inclusive methodologies and tools such as the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) towards achieving gender justice. The pilots are a basis for wider advocacy in policy and practice change. Over the years, Oxfam has supported partners and communities to use GALS to empower households and communities among other stakeholders address power imbalances that hinder development.</p>
	<p><b>Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Uganda</b></p> <p>Since 1995, PELUM Uganda has been working to improve the livelihoods of small-scale farmers and the sustainability of rural communities, through the fostering of ecological land use management. We share skills and knowledge about good practices and techniques, through a broad network of like-minded organizations; undertake research and demonstration projects; and advocate for policies that better support small-scale farmers. PELUM Uganda is part of a 12-country strong association of civil society organizations in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa.</p> <p>PELUM Uganda has a membership of 55 member organisations (as at June 2016) working in 80 districts of Uganda and reaching approximately 3million smallholder farmers</p>
	<p><b>Community Organisation for Rural Enterprise Activity Management (CREAM)</b></p> <p>Community Organisation for Rural Enterprise Activity Management (CREAM) started as a member based organisation working with individual farmers who formed an umbrella organisation in 2001. CREAM provides business development services in the form of selection, planning and management of income generation activities supported by ROSCAs ie rotational savings and village savings and lending associations which developed into community managed CFF. Initially, CREAM was linking farmers to banks but due to limited access to rural farmers and the prohibitive high interest rates eventually led to the establishment of savings and lending schemes by farmers. In addition, CREAM has supported reduction in adolescent school dropout among girls by providing training in life skills, hygiene, sanitation, basic rights. CREAM targeted girls as they are most vulnerable and are more likely to drop out of school due to lack of fees and get married early.</p> <p>CREAM also focuses on issues of food security through promoting summer crops and environmental management issues related to the income generation activities that beneficiaries are engaged in, for example, charcoal and brick making businesses. They have been promoting the use of local appropriate technology through the improved cooking stoves.</p> <p>CREAM operates in all 8 districts in West Nile (Arua, Nyadri, Nebbi, Zombo, Yumbe, Moyo, Adjumani and Koboko) where most of their target groups are subsistence farmers growing tobacco; sesame seeds, maize, soya beans, cassava and produce shear butter from the shear nut tree. The groups are largely engaged in savings and lending of incomes generated from farming and other entrepreneurial activities. To date CREAM has reached more than 40, 000 people in business development services with 75% of those trained being female farmers in rural areas. CREAM has since then used VSLA as a platform to address underlying gender issues in VSLA and challenging the social norms that constrain women in rural finance using the GALS methodology.</p>

## Organisation

## Background



### Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns (VEDCO)

Founded in 1986, VEDCO's mission is to "Promote sustainable agricultural practices for food/nutrition security and market competitiveness of small/medium holder farmers" while its vision is to "Improve quality of life of small/medium holder farmers. The organization works on interventions to increase access to appropriate knowledge and technology relevant for sustainable food production and equitable utilization, effect farmers' (especially women and youth) participation in the market at local, national and regional levels, improve farmers' adaptive capacity and resilience to the effects of climate change and the resultant shocks, strengthen farmers' participation and engagement in policy processes that influence food and nutrition security and market competitiveness, strengthen VEDCO's capacity to deliver effective, efficient and sustainable agricultural services. VEDCO also puts into consideration cross-cutting issues of HIV/AIDS, Reproductive Health, Gender mainstreaming through use of the GALS methodology and environment management through use of Population Health and Environment-(PHE) Concept. VEDCO works in the districts of Kampala, Luwero, Mukono, Wakiso, Buyikwe, Nakaseke, Nakasongola, Buyende, Kamuli, Amuria, Apac, Kole, Oyam, Alebtong, Otuke, Pader, Agago, Lira, Moyo, Yumbe, Rubiriizi, kabong, Abim, Napak, Kotido and Kiryandongo.



### Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) Uganda

Formed in 2002, ESAFF was established to bring together small scale farmers into a social movement to build common aspirations, learning and linkages as well as nurture the participation of small scale farmers in sustainable development processes, for self reliance through advocacy, capacity building and institutional development. ESAFF Uganda is part of a bigger network of small-scale farmers in other 14 countries including Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Lesotho, DR Congo, Madagascar, Seychelles and Mozambique. In Uganda membership is in 30 districts across the country with a membership of 600 farmer groups. ESAFF Uganda's vision is Empowered self reliant small-scale farmers.



### Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD)

Since 2000, the Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD) organization has been providing capacity development services in the areas of education, health, and civic education targeting rural communities in all the 8 districts of the West Nile region of Uganda (Arua, Nyadri, Nebbi, Zombo, Yumbe, Moyo, Adjumani and Koboko).









