Participatory Evaluation of the 2008 Farmer Field School Programme
Lira, Uganda
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Acronyms

ACF  Action Contre la Faim (Action Against Hunger)
FAO  Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FFS  Farmer Field School
FSL  Food Security and Livelihoods
HDDS Household Dietary Diversity Score
IGA  Income Generating Activity
ILO  International Labour Organisation
LEAD Livelihoods and Enterprises for Agricultural Development
M&E  Monitoring and Evaluation
MAHFP Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning
NAADS National Agriculture Advisory Service
P4P  Purchase for Progress
RRA  Rapid Rural Appraisal
WASH Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WFP United Nations World Food Programme
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Executive Summary

A. Synthesis

This is an evaluation of the 2008 farmer field school (FFS) programme facilitated by Action Against Hunger (ACF) in Uganda’s Lango sub-region. The programme was implemented from 1 January to 31 July 2008 under a letter of agreement with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), who provided the cash and in-kind programme inputs.

The evaluation brings together information from ACF and FAO, while at the same time offering an applied learning opportunity to ACF staff participating as team members. It looks at the performance and impact of the FFS programme according to indicators created for the evaluation. The performance analysis covers production practices, increased production, and capacity for asset generation and management. The impact analysis investigates whether short term accomplishments in the programme have influenced the food security and livelihoods of participant groups and their individual households.

Programme performance was good overall, with a range of planned and unanticipated accomplishments in relation to the FFS groups. A longer intervention with better planning and monitoring would have increased the strength of the accomplishments. Not much can be proved at impact level, however, given the short programme duration. The evaluation team is nonetheless convinced that benefits will continue accruing to FFS participants even now that the programme is finished, especially in terms of practices affecting production favourably and increased access to cash and credit.

This executive summary outlines the key findings of the evaluation according to thematic focus. Conclusions are drawn from the findings, and are followed by a set of recommendations with supporting explanation. The report body begins with a general outline of the location and context of the 2008 FFS programme. The evaluation objectives, methodology, and limitations are discussed before the remainder of the document addresses each indicator separately.

B. Key Findings

Improved Production Practices

1. Promoted production practices appear to have been widely adopted by individuals convinced of the benefits they can bring, and have been transferred from the farmer field school gardens to individual cultivation. These practices revolve primarily around land preparation, seed selection, planting, weeding, and pest control – all of which were implemented according to the seasonal calendar.
2. Transmission of production practices to neighbours and surrounding communities is reported in all locations but could not be verified as crops were not standing at the time of evaluation. Greater transmission could nonetheless be fostered through additional community activities at the commercial and study garden sites.
3. Adoption of promoted documentation practices is not nearly as widespread as the production practices, especially for more complex tools like the profitability analysis, budget, and work plan which remain challenging even at group level.
4. Literacy is an obstacle to adopting the documentation practices promoted in the programme, affecting their feasibility at group and individual levels, especially for women.
5. Study and commercial gardens are appropriate and effective media for achieving programme objectives and ethos, and help advertise programme messages more widely than among participants alone.
6. The study gardens nonetheless could be utilised even more effectively to encourage greater farmer participation and experimentation.
Increased Domestic Production

7. ACF is unable to determine FFS impact on increased production due to lack of data and commercial and study crop failures in 2008 resulting from poor climate conditions.
8. Increased production over time attributable to the programme can nonetheless be assumed on the basis of the apparently widespread adoption of recommended agronomic practices in FFS and household gardens.
9. Increased land opening and subsequently higher production could have been achieved if animal traction inputs and training had taken place according to plan instead of late (oxen) or non- (ploughs) delivery of required inputs.
10. Small ruminant restocking was also planned to contribute further to increased household production but never eventuated and denied participants an additional financial asset.
11. Adding a complementary activity in cassava multiplication, as originally planned, would have further enhanced participant skills, diversified household food and income sources, and encouraged greater availability of disease resistant cassava currently scarce in the area.

Enhanced Asset Generation and Management Capacity

12. Not only are all FFS groups still together and active, but all 12 still have active bank accounts – several with substantial balances remaining.
13. All groups can explain at length the different strategies they have adopted to group contributions, savings, distributions, and in some cases even interest-based lending with their collective FFS capital.

Stronger Household Food Security and Livelihoods

14. The FFS was an appropriate intervention at the right time in the process of returnee household livelihood recovery, with sufficient production already underway to provide a programmatic foundation and focus rather than trying to initiate productive activities.
15. The programme contributes positively to household food sources, income sources, and expenditure patterns, all of which over time should increase resilience to livelihood shocks.
16. Whether specifically called ‘farmer field schools’ or whether conceived as part of a more comprehensive community development programme, the approach is both appropriate and effective for mobilising rural smallholders to identify and solve their own production problems while enhancing current production capacity.
17. The seasonal timing of some activities was inappropriate and in some cases reduced potential programme impact, particularly in-kind distribution of oxen, ploughs, and cassava cuttings.
18. Many people listen to radio programmes, including last year’s production-based and seasonally timed broadcasts aired during implementation.
19. The inability to include post-harvest practices, loss reduction, and the nurturing of direct market linkages in the FFS programme lessened its potential impact on household food security and livelihoods.

Farmer Field School Programme Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation

20. Increased impact on production and income (and ultimately on food security and livelihoods) could have been achieved through a longer programme that embraced at least one complete production cycle.
21. ACF farmer field school facilitators display knowledgeable aptitude in working with their respective groups, all of which demonstrate genuine mobilisation and solidarity.
22. The ACF facilitators also displayed an impressive command of gender issues in programme communities that could be better utilised in future design, implementation, and analysis.
23. Rapid rural appraisal (RRA) tools have proven effective in opening group discussion to greater and more balanced participation, while at the same time encouraging collective analysis that does not depend on respondent literacy. Continued experimentation may lead to RRA alternatives to some of the more complex group tools, particularly profitability analysis, and overcome some of the challenges imposed by illiteracy – particularly with female participants.
24. FAO cannot be relied upon for seasonally appropriate delivery of in-kind programme inputs, but alternatives are available through increased collaboration with other farmer field school networks and NGOs who could offer the same inputs with less delay.
25. Donor funding cycles and procurement procedures have proven counterproductive to maximising seasonally strategic implementation.

C. Conclusions

1. Farmer field schools were an appropriate intervention within ACF’s 2008 Uganda country strategy and its food security and livelihoods programming therein.
2. The programme was similarly appropriate for participating returnee households with respect to their already having re-established production and shifted away from livelihood strategies based on camp provisions affecting food, income, and expenditure.
3. The ACF FFS groups were well mobilised and appeared to have embraced practices promoted through the programme, but information management was weak throughout, from monitoring and reporting to record keeping and photography.
4. Programme impact on household food security and livelihoods cannot be proven but nonetheless appears evident on the basis of qualitative analysis and triangulated proxy indicators.
5. Future FFS programme impact could be increased through a longer programme working with full production cycles, increased emphasis on complementary activities, and enhanced participation and experimentation.
6. Opejal parish in Okwang sub-county (Lira) appears to have the worst food security and livelihood situation among the three programme areas. They have less savings in their group bank account, the fewest additional physical assets created during the programme, and directed a greater proportion of their expenditure to household items and food and debt loan payments compared with the groups in Aceno and Oyoro. Their crop production and subsequent income was similarly less, although their proportion of income from own livestock is higher.

D. Recommendations

1. The framework used to structure this evaluation should be utilised as a foundation to developing a logframe for the next programme cycle. The evaluation framework provides a structure for improved programme design and planning based on a logframe. Revision will be necessary at all levels (goal, objective, outputs), but the indicators will require particular attention. With a more strategic planning process, programme data could achieve a better balance of quantitative and qualitative analysis than what has been possible to date. Fewer indicators will also help streamline future M&E. This will be preferable to the abundance of indicators used to triangulate findings in this evaluation. Regarding behaviour change, FFS groups themselves should be consulted to identify indicators that will be more revealing of programme impact than the more standard (but less informative) aggregates like ‘number of groups formed’ or ‘number of participants trained’.
2. Baseline data collection must precede programme implementation so that monitoring and evaluation can be more strategically focused, ensuring that data collection fulfils specific information and reporting needs. Baseline data collection should be undertaken once facilitators have completed their FFS training, participant selection has concluded, and groups have been established. Data should be limited to the strategic minimum required to fulfil all programme indicators and any other specific information needs (for internal/external reporting).
3. Baseline data collection must include production levels for study/commercial crops specific to each season and location, even if based on participant estimates of the previous year or expectations based on typical seed rate and acreage. Without such data
it will not be possible to assess the extent to which the programme contributes to increased production, as is the case for the current evaluation.

4. Better documentary evidence is required to retain organisational memory of programme groups, locations, and activities. Facilitators should photograph key programmatic milestones for improved documentation and reporting. GPS coordinates should also be included for all FFS groups in future to support ACF’s already strong mapping capacity and ensure that groups can be located in the future (the central meeting point, typically a shade tree, should be used). Without these there is little or no documentary evidence to support future follow-up or evaluation. Greater document record keeping is also needed at base level so that group decisions and activities can be better understood for future evaluations.

5. The farmer field school programme should be one year in duration, from 1 February to 31 January. This should help align it to donor disbursement timing and, more critically, allow the programme to include an entire first season production cycle and most of the second. The additional time will create more opportunities for reinforced programme messages, complementarity with other ACF activities, and increased impact.

6. Farmer field schools should where possible build on existing community groups already galvanised for a specific purpose. Other ACF programmes, for example, centre on water user committees, village health teams, or income generation groups. Working with existing groups could strengthen them further and encourage the sustainability of both endeavours. Similarly, the possibility of FFS participation could be attractive to participants seeking incentives for their currently voluntary contributions, such as the village health teams.

7. Farmer field school groups should be constituted from within single communities, not patched together with individuals from several separate communities. Groups composed of different village members find it more difficult to share common programme assets like draught animals and spray cans, and must travel further for meetings which can discourage their attendance. Distance between participants could also limit potential for collective bulking, storage, processing, or marketing. Arguably it is also possible that a more community focused approach can help increase local availability of food. Even coping strategies might be supported through this approach, increasing the likelihood that relatives and neighbours have seed/food to share or loan when necessary. Skill transfer might also be facilitated better this way, with more people in a concentrated area exposed to particular practices than when participants are dispersed throughout the area. Initial mobilisation of sub-county and parish leaders might therefore also need to include this consideration to avoid situations like Aceno in 2008 where the sub-county dictated how groups would be constituted and from where.

8. Communities with FFS groups should be formed with distance between them, instead of closely clustered villages. This applied only in Minakulu sub-county. Although groups should be concentrated in single communities (per preceding recommendation), greater spread of practices could over time be achieved with pragmatic spacing of participating communities. Neighbours can nonetheless be included in complementary inputs like cassava multiplication and goat restocking. It might even be possible to include neighbours in commercial seed multiplication, depending on the crop and its skill level requirements. Access to traction also could increase, as could inclusion in bulking, storing, and marketing. Spreading FFS groups more widely apart therefore would help encourage them to develop as lead farmers in their immediate areas.

9. Although FFS groups should lead their own decision making, ACF should consider encouraging a greater number female of committee members. FFS groups tend to have more female members, and staff concur that female participants in general are more effective than their male counterparts. Conversely, committee membership tends to be overwhelmingly male, especially the more senior positions of secretary and chair. This raises the issue whether group leadership reflects gender and power dynamics more than it represents group composition.
10. **FFS group meeting locations could be better utilised to increase programmatic scope through demonstration of complementary initiatives.** The 2008 programme successfully included secondary priorities such as stoves, latrines, drying racks, etc. New ACF programming in Karamoja is also planning this approach for all of its activities, building on existing nutrition sites and already captive audiences to launch a range of activities. By the time another FFS programme is ready to commence there should already be lessons from Karamoja on how best to utilise existing community focal points.

11. **A more participatory and contextually appropriate tool is required to facilitate profitability analysis and enterprise selection.** Last year’s approach to profitability analysis and enterprise selection was complicated. Even if participants understood at the time, there is no evidence that they can now replicate the process independently. A more participatory approach such as matrix scoring or proportional piling could prove easier to understand and apply without FFS facilitator support. More accessible tools could also provide a basis for articulating more participatory indicators and monitoring approaches that reflect greater emphasis on farmer experimentation.

12. **Study plots could be more strategic and participatory in their design and development to maximise the comparative experimental possibilities they offer.** Although some evaluation team members were split on this issue, the majority felt that study plots could be more rigorous in the number and type of production problems explored – instead of limiting to a single problem only. Greater experimentation and participatory design could also increase the study plot potential to stimulate non-participating neighbours to consider the practices promoted in the FFSs.

13. **Key events in the study plot cycle should include neighbours and community members not participating in the farmer field school.** These events could include preparation, planting, pest control, weeding, harvest, etc. Creating opportunities for non-participants to see techniques and benefits first hand could increase the transmission and adaptation of promoted practices. This could also increase legitimacy of the FFS group as potential lead farmers.

14. **The strategic relationship between food and cash crops (and between first and second cultivation seasons) should be explored further to determine how best to engage with and improve the results of the process.** Complicated decisions are made about what to grow, when, whether it is stored, which commodities are sold at what times, etc. Individual ACF FFS staff are knowledgeable in these dynamics but neither programme design nor related M&E identify how activities influence these strategies, to what extent, or whether they even should.

15. **Increased linkages should be facilitated to connect FFS groups directly with market opportunities.** Immediate possibilities already on the ACF radar but requiring further development are continued (but improved) collaboration with Victoria Seeds, nascent contact with USAID’s livelihoods and enterprises for agricultural development (LEAD) programme, and interest in WFP’s emerging Purchase for Progress strategy. An effective combination of some or all of these in concert with farmer field schools could create multiple new opportunities for complementary activities throughout the programme cycle that ultimately would increase impact on household food security and livelihoods.

16. **Future plans to provide processing equipment at FFS network level should be reconsidered in light of the prohibitive distance between intended user groups.** It is unrealistic to expect that farmers will travel to other communities in order to shell their groundnut, for example, when similar equipment is also available in market centres that may in fact be easier to reach. While the concept of an area network is attractive, more locally dispersed processing and storage, for example, could increase participant benefits at group and individual levels.
17. ACF FFS programme planning should include greater engagement with the sub-county level FFS network for increased linkages and experience sharing. Even if network level processing equipment is unrealistic in practice, the FFS network could still offer tangible benefits such as networking related to complementary activities, marketing opportunities, new ideas, etc. FAO will continue to encourage FFS networks, so engagement can only be to group advantage. Otherwise, some groups may feel marginalised from the network and some activities, as reported in Minakulu.

18. Cassava multiplication and transfer should be included in future FFS activities and curricula as a complementary initiative that increases food access and availability. The FFS group can be used as a locus for cassava distribution and practices, further strengthening the group as a local source of innovative practices and varieties. This would also create an additional opportunity for non-FFS participants to see what the groups are doing and learn from their experience, ultimately benefiting from increased access to disease resistant cassava. ACF first should confirm which variety is most appropriate. The 2008 programme promoted akena, which reportedly has been replaced by MH97 as the recommended choice for its greater resistance. This should be verified.

19. Goat restocking should continue to be included in future FFS design, including neighbours not participating directly in the programme. Animals are key financial assets and any opportunity to diversify income and food sources will benefit households over time. Including neighbours could help reduce resentment about not receiving other programme inputs while at the same time spreading benefits more widely (either receiving their own animal at the same time as participants or receiving the first kid). Planning should ensure inclusion of activities and costs associated with animal treatment, not only procurement and distribution.

20. Future FFS programming should explore how income generating opportunities could be increased without distracting from core activities. The emphasis here is with increasing income opportunities. Stand alone IGA initiatives like those facilitated in other ACF Uganda programmes could prove too demanding in terms of participant time and could distract from the programmatic focus of FFSs. Nonetheless, at individual and group level there are possibilities to increase income sources and levels. Possibilities include processing, value addition, direct market linkages, product bulking and sale, etc. All such activities could be linked with the commercial and study plot production, ideally extended to household level for particularly active participants.

21. Future ACF monitoring and surveillance should explore the correlation of high market prices, months with inadequate household food provisioning, feeding centre admissions, and possibly even groundwater levels.1 The seasonality of programming should also be considered alongside the seasonality of household shocks and stresses. Identifying and understanding such linkages might lead to programmatic approaches to prevent or minimise their effect on household food security and livelihoods. Greater seasonal analysis can also guide the timing of activities and inputs. This type of cross-referencing would also strengthen departmental integration, or at least coordination, while increasing the relevance of ACF monitoring and surveillance. Complementarity of methods within the FSL unit might also be improved in the process, such as how approaches to farmer experimentation and cash transfers might overlap and when they should be done.

22. Alternatives to depending on FAO procurement are required to ensure seasonally appropriate timing of inputs and related activities. Rather than depending on FAO procurement and release of in-kind programme inputs, other farmer groups such as those in the FFS network or those working with other NGOs in the North could be viable sources of seed, livestock, or cassava cuttings. Victoria Seeds could also be a source of seeds, offering ACF FFS participants the additional income opportunity of direct access to commercial

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1 Anticipating this discussion, the evaluator sought nutrition programme enrolment data for the 2007-2008 period so that the annual trend could be compared with others like market prices and MIHFP. Price data ultimately were incomplete and could not be used.
purchasing of their harvest. Another possibility would be to increase the cash component paid to groups so that they can be empowered to organise their own purchase of programme inputs. This approach would align with that already underway in an ACF direct cash transfer programme in Lira, wherein groups and individuals are backstopped in managing their own enterprise planning, savings, and expenditure.

23. **ACF should formally request FAO to fulfil its pending 2008 commitments to provide a plough to each group and a goat to every participant.** These were important shortcomings of the 2008 programme that diminished ACF’s legitimacy in participants’ eyes as an effective implementing agency and weakened potential programmatic impact on household production, food sources, income sources, and resilience.

24. **Donors supporting household food security and livelihoods through production should ensure that cash and kind inputs are available early enough in the calendar year to ensure NGO programming can capitalise on first season.** In practice, due to funding, most activities did not start until late February and March. Although this still enabled ACF to work with participants from early in their production cycle, an earlier start to activities would allow more effective FFS engagement by beginning before land preparation commences. This approach would increase the benefits of working through an entire production cycle. In-kind contributions to support production have seasonal constraints that determine periods for delivery, training, preparation, etc.

25. **Future FAO data collection of NGO farmer field school programmes for both monitoring and evaluation should be shared routinely with each agency to support their own internal monitoring.** Most of the time and energy invested by ACF in FFS monitoring was for the crop data required by FAO. Data were collected and entered by ACF staff then forwarded to FAO in Kampala without internal summary or analysis. Nor were there any summary or analysis fed back from FAO. ACF (and presumably other agencies) would benefit from better access and use of this same information as a complement to its internal M&E. The process within FAO of institutionalising this approach would strengthen their own M&E capacity in the process, and give further value to the financial and technical support they offer.
Figure 1. ACF 2008 FFS sites juxtaposed with other ACF programme locations in 2007 and 2008
1. Background

1.1 ACF and the Lango Sub-Region

ACF has worked in the Lango sub-region since 2004 with a combination of food security, livelihoods, nutrition, and water/sanitation programmes in an overall integrated approach to prevent and treat malnutrition. Initial work was in the internally displaced person camps scattered throughout the North but then shifted gradually to rural homesteads as security improved and households returned. The ACF food security and livelihood programme throughout this period has tried to support household recovery through increased access to productive assets like agricultural inputs, extension, diversified income sources, and knowledge. Means toward these ends have evolved alongside changing household priorities as rural livelihoods grow increasingly (re)established through consecutive production cycles. Programming has shifted away from broadcast activities like seed fairs for thousands of households to more targeted interventions to strengthen household resilience while seeking greater integration with nutrition and WASH.

Security has improved greatly in the Lango sub-region since the middle of 2006 after a cessation of hostilities between the Uganda government and the Lord’s Resistance Army. Voluntary resettlement has been a promising progression from an emergency situation, with the return process now officially complete in Lango. However, return and recovery have been followed by reductions in the number of donors supporting the area and the amount of funding currently available during this transition between so-called emergency and development phases. Food security nonetheless remains a priority, with ongoing integrated phase classifications ranking the Lango sub-region as a Phase 2 area with moderate/borderline food insecurity (see map, Figure 1).

Food insecurity in Lango results primarily from insufficient production at the household level. Land access has improved since return commenced in 2006, with households accessing up to 5.5 acres according to ACF monitoring. Nevertheless, increases in production have not followed suit. The main constraints to increased production are with household access to productive inputs like seeds, tools, and animal traction. Low crop production also contributes to households lacking sufficient food for consumption, sale, or seed stocks. This is exacerbated by inefficient farming practices and inferior crop/seed storage practices, the combination of which decreases seed security and further undermines the household economy.

Newly resettled households require several consistently successful harvests before agricultural efficiency can be discussed. To support return and recovery they therefore needed some form of assistance for at least a year and half after their resettlement. Estimates for 2008 harvests were initially good but below average rainfall ultimately proved counterproductive as the year progressed. Such conditions could have potential long term effects on household resilience and food security into 2009.

Local markets are functioning and usually have food available (although less in Otuke), but they are poor in quantity and diversity of foods because of low local production. Household cash access is poor and multiple forms of income are needed to ensure basic needs can be met. Formal credit is almost entirely lacking. Livestock resurgence has also been slow due to limited household capital, relatively few animals in the area, and sharp price increases for both fuel and staple foods that have doubled or in some cases tripled since 2005.

1.2 The ACF 2008 Farmer Field School Programme

Farmer Field Schools (FFS) comprise a group of rural smallholders who unite around a common production interest and problem that they explore together in the course of the programme, with facilitated external guidance and support throughout. Groups of 25-30 members elect officers, develop a constitution, and open a shared bank account before receiving a cash grant and ongoing training in production practices related to their unique production problem. Members meet weekly to analyse the “how and why” of their production with additional training from the external facilitator (with one facilitator responsible for four separate FFS groups). On the basis of collective analysis
and decision making (discussed further below), every FFS group selects both a study enterprise and a commercial enterprise. The study enterprise concentrates on one or more specific production problems and through farmer experimentation identifies contextually appropriate means of solution or mitigation. The commercial enterprise is dedicated to a group profit making venture but nonetheless also includes strong elements of promoting improved production practices. Groups can select the enterprises of their choice, based on a facilitated and analytical decision making process that encourages members to isolate critical production issues for improvement. With the study and commercial enterprises, farmers make ongoing field observations and relate these to their past experience in order to make decisions about how to improve production and profitability in the future. Participants should transplant what is learned through the group approach to their individual households and, ideally, transmit their experience and practice more widely in the surrounding community.

Beyond the experimentation and learning opportunities afforded by the programme, each FFS group also receives a cash grant of Ugx 800,000 (approximately $400) to establish its bank account with capital to purchase production inputs required for their two enterprises. The group experience therefore extends beyond production alone to encompass a range of complementary support in practices for both improved production and asset management alike.

ACF, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), facilitated formation of twelve farmer field school groups in 3 parishes of Lira (Opejal) and Oyam (Aceno, Oyoro) districts of the Lango sub-region. The programme ran from early January to the end of July 2008, and coincided with two larger 12-month FSL programmes in the North. ACF’s FFS approach sought to facilitate experiential learning for empowered decision making on improved production, along the following set of core principles:

**Figure 2. Summary of farmer field school core principles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• FFS shorten the times it takes to get research from station to adoption in farmer fields by involving farmers in their own experimentation</td>
<td>• Empower farmers with knowledge and skills in farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhance the capacity of extension workers to serve as technically skilled and group sensitive facilitators of farmer’s experiential learning.</td>
<td>• Sharpen farmer ability in making logical decisions on what works best for them, based on their own observations of experimental and validation plots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increase the competency of extension services to provide farmer education that responds more effectively to local resources and conditions</td>
<td>• Promote group initiatives that are able to solve own community problems and facilitate the work of other development players by providing a demand driven system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contribute information on the replicability and effectiveness of FFSs as an alternative and sustainable mechanism for extension service delivery</td>
<td>• Establish high level of networking by groups to handle emerging follow up with community activities [marketing, resource mobilization processing, contract farming, etc]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The twelve groups contained a total of 320 members. All groups concentrated on agricultural production for both their commercial and study enterprises (although one initially wanted to establish a piggery for their commercial enterprise before realising that the programme grant component would be insufficient). Interestingly, not only did all twelve groups ultimately pursue crop production, but most concentrated on crops preferred for sale (groundnut and soy) more than consumption (pigeon pea):
The ACF programme worked with the farmer field school groups until the FAO letter of agreement expired on 31 July 2008, unable to remain engaged for a complete production cycle. All groups had crops standing at the time, and practices related to post-harvest handling were discussed but not implemented with facilitators. Production practices promoted during the programme covered land preparation, seed selection, planting, weeding, and pest control – after which more general discussions were held on post-harvest practices all the way to storage and sale. Participant training also included a range of documentation practices like financial bookkeeping, group constitutions and meeting minutes, enterprise profitability and risk analysis, and work plans. Members of the FAO Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation Coordination Unit have commended ACF on the quality of its FFS programme and the unspecified “something different” they saw in the ACF groups when visiting a range of FFS sites supported by various NGOs.4

Continued programming based on the farmer field school approach remains a high priority for ACF Uganda. It is anticipated that continued mobilisation of groups around shared enterprises will continue on a larger and longer scale. Such programming might integrate not only with other ACF malnutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene activities but also with complementary approaches from other ACF FSL programming and monitoring in Uganda. An internally-funded evaluation of its 2008 FFS programme therefore offers ACF an opportunity to capitalise on its experience to date and determine how best to increase quality and impact in subsequent programmes.

2. The ACF Farmer Field School Evaluation

Based on encouraging participant feedback and positive reports from FAO on the relative strengths of the ACF farmer field schools, ACF plans to expand the approach in Lango sub-region during 2009 and to pilot the initiative in Acholi sub-region (probably coinciding with the first agricultural season of 2010 but potentially early enough for the second season of 2009). Before scaling up, however, an evaluation is beneficial to review achievement and refine the approach.

Increased programmatic quality and impact also require strengthened field staff capacity, an ongoing priority for the FSL unit. The evaluation is as much about staff capacity building as it is programme development, and builds upon internal training completed throughout the second half of 2008 and a two-week workshop that involved all Uganda FSL staff in February 2009.

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4 Personal communication with several members of the FAO Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation Coordination Unit, March 2009.
2.1 Objectives

The farmer field school evaluation seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To evaluate the FFS methodology and process for 12 groups in Minakulu and Okwang sub-counties.
2. To evaluate FFS impact on household food security and livelihoods, according to qualitative and quantitative data analysis generated through questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews.
3. To identify existing strengths and weaknesses in ACF FFS implementation and M&E.
4. To involve ACF staff in an applied learning opportunity and identify training needs for improved FFS implementation and M&E.
5. To develop specific recommendations for improved FFS programming in 2009.

The evaluation analyses the FFS programme according to its core components: changes in practices, production, and assets – and whether combined these have contributed to strengthened participant household food security and livelihoods. However there are very little data available to correspond with this level of specificity, as no logical framework was prepared for the programme as a management or monitoring tool, primarily because it was not required by FAO. Monitoring concentrated primarily on crop growth, and all data were forwarded to FAO for aggregation. Most of the indicator analysis – and therefore the evaluation itself – is based on qualitative assessment conducted during fieldwork and on a framework designed specifically for the evaluation. The discussion therefore also emphasises how future FFS programmes can be monitored and evaluated. FAO was however able to fill part the quantitative data gap, providing ACF with all data pertaining to its FFS participants (and a control group of non-participants in the same communities). ACF was able to build on these data through primary data collection during fieldwork to increase the evaluation scope.

Considering the breadth of data available but never strategically utilised, the evaluation has tried to compile the most salient (primary and secondary) data to ensure it remains consistently accessible and on the programmatic radar. Otherwise, more longitudinal evaluation of the farmer field school programme over several years could lose the benefit of comparative analysis and iterative learning. Now that this information is more consolidated than previously, everything can be revisited in subsequent programme planning to focus on which specific data, ideas, recommendations deserve greater attention and which can be discarded.

2.2 Methodology

Although ACF intended from the onset to evaluate its 2008 farmer field school programme, its methodology did not begin to form until several months after the programme concluded. This meant that data collection during implementation was not focused toward a specific analytical purpose. That the evaluation would be an applied learning opportunity for FSL field staff was clear, as was the broad intent to utilise rapid rural appraisal (RRA) tools. The evaluation terms of reference (Appendix 5) ultimately centred on trying to consolidate a range of FAO and ACF data with a better qualitative understanding of the dynamics behind the numbers so that lessons could be learned and recommendations articulated. There were flaws in the datasets, but they nonetheless provided direction for the evaluation fieldwork and staff discussions that coincided.

A flow diagram synthesises the evaluation approach (Appendix 6). After analysing the quantitative data available from the FAO FFS evaluation and, to a lesser extent, from ACF programme monitoring, information needs began to emerge. A decision was made to minimise the amount of

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6 All of the FAO data reported here were obtained directly from their monitoring unit. The data were part of FAO’s 2008 evaluation of the FFS approach in Uganda, but are disaggregated for the 12 groups facilitated by ACF. In the few cases where specific data are reproduced from the FAO 2008 FFS evaluation report (see previous footnote), the specific table and page numbers are provided.
new data collected and instead to try making better sense and use of existing data. Identifying gaps and excesses itself is part of the evaluation so that subsequent design, monitoring, and evaluation can capitalise on experience. With the staff capacity building objective in mind, the evaluator developed a semi-structured discussion guide as the primary field tool to counteract the habit of closed formats and limited qualitative probing (Appendix G). Ongoing ACF workshops with FSL staff in 2008 were reinforced by including in the evaluation fieldwork RRA tools relatively well practiced but never applied. Another decision was made to visit all twelve of the FFS groups rather than sample across or within them. And because the twelve groups are clustered in three separate parishes (of two sub-counties), it seemed that each bunch could offer its own subset of perspective within the whole. By the end of fieldwork the team had spoken with approximately 165 members from a total 320 (half of all programme participants) and all but one of the implementing FFS ACF FSL staff.

On this basis the 12 groups were divided according to their three parishes, four per parish cluster. One of the total four RRA tools was used with each group in the cluster, until all four groups in the parish were met and discussion around all four tools completed. The same process was repeated with the other two parish clusters of four FFS groups each. The discussion guide was used throughout as the backbone for each of the twelve focus groups convened – usually two per day for at least two hours or more. The RRA tools were sequenced:

- **Wealth ranking** to understand perceptions of relative wealth and how they might have been reflected in programme targeting
- **Seasonal calendar** to see production cycles and input needs and judge how well programming aligned
- **Proportional piling** to investigate household food, income, and expenditure and suggest what types of changes might be expected from effective FFS programming
- **Pairwise ranking** to explore relative severity of coping strategies and try to link these ideas with those about vulnerability and seasonality

Two of the three ACF FFS facilitators of 2008 were available to participate in the evaluation, but neither able to remain for its duration. One FSL officer and one field monitor joined the team for the entire period for greater consistency, and were joined by a counterpart FSL Officer from the ACF South Sudan programme to add a regional dimension to the capacity building aspect. Significant exchange of ideas occurred within the team, with daily vehicle time spent debating gender roles and mobilisation dynamics in Uganda and Sudan. The visiting FSL Officer left with a wealth of insight for FFS design and implementation planned for the immediate future.

Full day workshops were convened with all team members both before and after the fieldwork. The first introduced the methodology, reviewed the tools, and finalised the discussion guide and work plan with team input on prepared drafts. The final workshop assembled the team’s collective conclusions and recommendations while trying to consolidate the entire learning process. The workshop was structured according to the sections of the discussion guide, which themselves were the same structure as the evaluation framework indicators. This evaluation report too is structured according to the newly designed evaluation framework. The report begins with output (programme performance) then objective (programme impact) level indicators. Findings are listed thematically in the Executive Summary, followed by conclusions and recommendations. The evaluation has deliberately adhered throughout to its structured framework and fieldwork methodology to reinforce within the team and ACF FSL unit in general the message of good indicators and a premeditated approach to data collection and use. This document illustrates how a planning tool and final report can share the same structure, and how better monitoring can help improve the link. The report tries to consolidate learning and planning processes at field and office levels. It is ambitious, intending to provide a critical review of the 2008 FFS programme with both baseline and guidance for future FSL programming. Final analysis and writing were completed by the evaluator without the team for shortage of time; responsibility for content and quality is his.
2.3 Limitations

A range of limiting factors has influenced the evaluation and its final product, but not to the point of undermining the team’s confidence in its findings. The entire evaluation (from design to report writing) was conducted in 26 days, resulting in a demanding pace throughout. The team usually felt rushed, constantly trying not to fall behind schedule. That said, there were numerous logistic delays coupled with routine waits as focus groups accumulated a quorum of more than half its total members. Although trained previously in the RRA tools (except wealth ranking), staff never had opportunity to apply them, resulting in periodic uncertainty or conversational drift away from the session objectives during some focus groups. Participants too were busy as first season rains commenced on the same day as the team’s preparatory workshop, meaning that many were preoccupied with opening land (typically by hand) and preparing to plant. Translation between participants and the evaluator added time and complexity to the discussions. Behind all of this, the quantitative secondary data from FAO and ACF both had inconsistencies and gaps that sometimes raised as many questions as they answered. Internally there is a dearth of programmatic documentation available for review, with all of the Lira Base 2008 hard copy FFS programme files already in storage. It similarly appears that no photographs of 2008 FFS programme participants, locations, or activities were taken for visual documentation. More time for methodological documentation of the RRA tool processes and lessons would also have been constructive for other practitioners.

Despite these considerations the team remains confident in the validity of its analysis, and the evaluator in its process. The quantitative data by necessity were assumed to be reliable. The analysis remains largely concentrated at the FFS group level rather than with participant households, the result of both basing the fieldwork entirely around focus groups and timing it while no crops were standing meant individual gardens could not be visited to witness the extent to which particular practices have been applied and transferred since the programme concluded last year. In retrospect more time was needed for consulting team members directly as key informants and engaging them with the secondary data. More time with the team also would have enhanced the learning opportunity further. A shorter report would have increased its programmatic relevance and accessibility to a wider range of staff and stakeholders.
In the absence of a logframe for the FFS programme, the following framework was developed to structure data collection and analysis for the evaluation:

**Figure 4. ACF farmer field school evaluation framework (April 2009)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Report Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal</strong></td>
<td>To prevent malnutrition through an integrated community based approach to ACF Uganda programming</td>
<td>• Geographic and household targeting based on vulnerability analysis and integrated ACF criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact</strong></td>
<td>To strengthen returnee household food security and livelihoods</td>
<td>• Participant food, income, and expenditure patterns improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Positive changes in group and household assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Average household dietary diversity scores improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduced number of months with inadequate household provisioning of food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Improved coping strategy index scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Effective ACF facilitators communicate programme practices and ethos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Programme design and implementation reflect gender analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Programme activities and inputs are seasonally appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Programme design is based on assessment and M&amp;E planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective</strong></td>
<td>To strengthen returnee household food security and livelihoods</td>
<td>• Programme design is based on assessment and M&amp;E planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance</strong></td>
<td>1. Improved production practices</td>
<td>• Participant learning opportunities are appropriate and effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Group study plots are focal points for participatory experimentation and problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Commercial enterprise selection is based on a participatory and analytical process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Participants demonstrate adoption and transmission of production promoted practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Participant documentation capacity enhanced at group and individual levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Increased domestic production</td>
<td>• Increased cultivated acreage increases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Disease resistant cassava more prevalent in programme areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Enhanced income generation and management capacity</td>
<td>• Increased marketing capacity of own production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Strengthened seed multiplication and marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Income sources diversified through value-addition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased group and individual savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Improved access to and terms of credit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Farmer Field School Programme Performance

The evaluation of programme performance concentrates on indicators at output level in the logical framework, each of which is discussed separately in Sections 3.1 – 3.3 below.

3.1 Improved Production Practices

Improved practices are an essential component of the farmer field school approach. The ACF programme focused on agricultural practices relating to the study/commercial enterprises identified by participants. Promoted practices reflected the programme message that better land opening followed by improved crop management techniques (from planting through post-harvest handling) can increase yields, profits, and food/seed reserves. Improved practices were arguably the most important programme output, as the other outputs (improved production and asset management) depended first on the agronomic practices required to achieve them.

Practices are difficult to quantify, however, particularly without crops standing at the time of evaluation. That would have enabled the team to observe directly whether practices promoted during the FFS programme have transferred to individual gardens and whether they are still applied almost one year after the programme concluded. Better initial indicators about the outcome of training rather than simply the number of members trained also would have helped analyse changes more effectively. Many of these practices are overlapping or complementary (like documenting the specific planting quantities, techniques, and anticipated yields), but are discussed separately to try capturing issues and ideas unique to each. Literacy is also an important consideration for distinguishing between agronomic practices and documentation practices.

The team concludes that the promoted practices were appropriate to the production context and programme ethos, and that most appear to have been embraced by participants to the point of transferring them to individual household cultivation. Transmission of some practices, especially rows and spacing, also appears to be spreading to others who did not participate in the programme. But again, all of these conclusions have been drawn on the basis of discussion rather than direct observation or data. The greatest limitations in practice adoption are those dependent on literacy skills, namely record keeping and documentation. This will prove prohibitive toward the sustainability of these practices, and in some cases might even limit retention at the group level if some approaches are not improved in the future.

3.1.1 Participant learning opportunities are appropriate and effective

More use needs to be made of the group study plots and how participants themselves should lead the analytical learning process. All participants appreciate the value of the plots and how they are meant to test and promote particular practices. The ethos of farmer experimentation is not obvious, however, and appears to have been subsumed by the more general intention to increase participation (see Section 3.1.2 below for more specific points on study plot design). But more important is creating opportunities for participants (and non-participants alike) to identify and explore their own learning needs rather than being included in those specified and led by ACF staff. Participants appear to have been more involved in the study enterprise activities more than they designed or led them.

Some of the documentation practices promoted in the programme are inaccessible to a probable majority of participants based on the literacy implicitly assumed by some of the tools. The profitability analysis and group business plan, for example, were the most regularly cited examples of tools participants were unable to use independently since the FFS programme concluded. The profitability analysis is in fact quite sophisticated and includes gross margin analysis (production costs, marketable yields, selling price, expected revenue, etc) and risk analysis (yield fluctuations, production cost changes, etc) – despite that these both require good numeracy skills. Participants suggested repeatedly that more refresher training is required, with more opportunities to reinforce messages and skills. Profitability analysis or enterprise selection could first be introduced to full groups so that everybody understands the purpose and content of the tool, but a smaller sub-group...
of participants could be the ones actually trained in using the tool. At the same time, the tools used for profitability analysis and enterprise selection need to be revisited to determine whether more accessible approaches are possible. Toward this, at the end of the final workshop, the evaluation team experimented on itself by trying two approaches to study crop selection using matrix scoring as a possible alternative to the more complex approach promoted by FAO (see Appendix 3). A final conclusion was not reached on the best tool or approach, but the team was convinced that the experiment offered a good model for how enterprise selection could be more participatory and methodologically accessible in the future. The team is also convinced that more participatory approaches to analytical decision making will help ensure that similarly accessible approaches have a better chance of being replicated independently in the future. One group (Acan Dano) even said that they cannot remember the specific measurement required for groundnut rows and spaces. This sounded exaggerated at the time, but led the team to question whether more emphasis could be given to ‘local’ measurements in the future (steps, hands, arm lengths, etc) alongside the usual ‘scientific’ units like centimetres and kilograms.

The timing of group meetings and training is also an important factor influencing the impact of intended learning opportunities. Stated female/male preferences for meeting/training times reflect gender divisions of labour, with women usually indicating that afternoons were better (between digging in their garden and preparing household food) and men generally suggesting that mornings were better. The rationale for these preferences was not explored for lack of time, but would be interesting to understand for future planning. Figure 5 summarises the preferred versus actual meeting times for the 12 FFS groups, suggesting that women’s preferences were met more than men’s.

In addition to meetings tending toward preferred female times, staff all agree that male participants had poorer attendance than female, regardless whether the group was predominantly male or female. (The team was unable to locate the group attendance reports to validate this assumption). Staff and participants alike agree that women are in general more reliable, to which staff add that the more female members a group has the better its chances of success. Based on reports of better female attendance than men, women had more opportunities to engage with the programme and its opportunities for facilitated learning. Women nonetheless agreed that all participants should be involved in all training components without trying to specify which are more appropriate to which sex, despite that most activities are typically divided along predictable gender lines. The team explored this theme in greater detail during its final workshop and established the following summary of gendered roles in agriculture:
Figure 6. Summary of the gender division of labour in agriculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Typically Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land preparation by hand</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land preparation with traction</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed sorting</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planting</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeding</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pest control with spray</td>
<td>Both, more men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvest</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drying</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnowing</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packing and storage</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are generalisations, but nonetheless informative when considering how training and related messages will be applied in daily life once the programme concludes. There is also the obvious point that men tend to be more involved when the task becomes more techno-physical (such as traction or spraying) or more directly related to cash (such as marketing). More female contribution to marketing could suggest greater programme impact on women, but this has not yet been explored. Along these lines, in Opejal, the Pur En Lonyo group told how weeding used to be an exclusively female role. But now that row planting has made weeding easier, men have become more involved in weeding. More investigation would help draw a more concrete conclusion, but the FFS group specifically suggested that the production practice promoted in the programme (in this case row planting) had a direct effect on the gender division of labour now that men contributed more to weeding. More investigation would also help determine whether this change affected women’s ability to identify or address other gender needs.

Aside from the above considerations, more specific indicators are required for demonstrating the effectiveness of skill training or transfer. Monitoring efforts to date only capture the number of people present at a session, without offering any insight into the subsequent engagement or effect of participation. Future training and its evaluation will need to consider anticipated outcomes more specifically, and how these can be measured.

3.1.2 Group study plots are focal points for participatory experimentation

The study plots tend to focus on a single production issue identified by participants, usually comparing differences between only one to three variables. All but one team members agree, however, that farmers have the interest and capacity for additional comparisons. The groundnut plots, for example, were usually divided into three sections to compare different approaches to pest control: chemical spraying, onion intercropping, and no pest management inputs. In all cases, however, the plots were planted entirely in properly spaced rows without any comparison of how row planting can increase yields limited by broadcasting. That is, even though the study plot focus was on pest control, additional comparison of planting techniques could have been included to reinforce the benefits that are promoted but never ‘proven’ through direct farmer experimentation. Participants have in fact embraced row planting as a direct result of the programme (and claim to use it in their individual gardens as well), and all agree that the benefits were obvious from both the study and commercial plots. Nonetheless the study plots could also be used to help quantify yield differences based on planting techniques without compromising the primary objective of comparing pest control techniques. Figure 7 compares groundnut study plot possibilities:
Despite inability to verify, the team has no doubt that the practices promoted through the study (and commercial) plots for rows and spacing have enjoyed widespread adoption in the individual household gardens of participants. Everybody was convinced of the benefits, even if they did not have programmatic opportunities to quantify or compare differences in yield, for example between scattered and spaced seed.

This is only one example. The study plot ultimately should reflect specific problems identified by each FFS group, and therefore its design cannot be prescribed here for all possibilities. In other locations, for example, the groundnut study plot compared only the difference between scattered and spaced planting, without any investigation into pest control. Another group, for reasons that were not entirely clear during fieldwork, subdivided their study plot by five to compare performance of three groundnut varieties and two pigeon pea varieties, without any analysis of planting techniques or pest control. The point is that experimentation itself appears lower than what could be possible, and therefore needs to be improved. Depending on the type of crop and problem, other study plot combinations could include land preparation (hand hoes versus traction), seed varieties, fertilisation – or different combinations of the above. Increased experimentation will however require increased facilitation to ensure that participants do not lose track of causality and which variables are being tested.

### 3.1.3 Commercial enterprise selection is participatory and analytical

Like the development of group study plots, the degree of member participation and leadership in selecting the commercial enterprise should be an indicator of whether the FFS programme achieved the participatory and sustainable practices it promotes. It was telling, however, that none of the groups was able to produce its business plan or profitability analysis for review during the evaluation. There is no doubt that participants can select a commercial enterprise on the basis of considering a range of criteria, as they do every year when determining which crops and varieties to cultivate. However it appears that the programme has had limited influence on strengthening the commercial enterprise selection process or the criteria used therein. Focus group respondents could explain the decision making process they employed during the 2008 second season (after the FFS programme had concluded) and the considerations they were currently weighing as 2009 first season planting approached, such as cost, sale value, and climatic risk. Such decisions were made on knowledge and experience, even if less methodical than the profitability and business plan promoted in the programme. But if by using the FAO profitability analysis model ACF is promoting a tool that will not be adopted by the group, then the approach should be reconsidered. The fact that so few could explain the profitability analysis in detail also suggests that they might not have been thoroughly engaged in the process, or more generally that they did not consider it meaningful enough to remember or replicate. It was for this reason that the evaluation team began to explore a possible matrix scoring approach to profitability analysis (discussed above in Section 3.1.1), given the apparent success of the RRA tools to include all interested members in discussion.
without excluding on the basis of literacy. As stated, a final decision was not reached about how best to improve the accessibility and replicability of profitability analysis, but it was clear that the 2008 approach was not entirely appropriate in that nobody met during fieldwork was able to summarise the process or verify that anybody in their group could lead it independently in the future. The ACF facilitators endeavoured to make it as participatory as possible but were perhaps constrained by the inherent limitations of the approach. The lack of available programme documentation further challenged the ability to understand in detail what happened and what was recorded. Regardless whether matrix scoring or another approach is used, participants should be able to identify collective ventures through participatory and transparent processes, and should be able to document their investment, profit, loss, etc. Success in this direction will also encourage greater gender equity in the process through more conversational inclusion and less literacy exclusion.

But aside from the identification process, the commercial enterprises themselves provided an important contribution to the programme. For one, all utilised the full scope of agronomic practices promoted in the programme. While there were no commercial control plots against which practices could be compared, facilitators nonetheless worked with participants to identify the apparent differences in pest control effectiveness, ease of weeding, informal growth monitoring, and anticipated yield. The commercial plot also provided additional incentive to mobilise the group around a shared purpose. The plots additionally contributed to reinforcing use of the group bank account and to distributing cash and seed profits among the group for household use.

3.1.4 Participants demonstrate adoption and transmission of practices

Like the impact of training, this indicator is difficult to quantify and evaluate – especially since the evaluation was conducted without benefit of standing crops. Without the benefit of direct observation the team was forced to challenge participants with specific questions about practices promoted during the FFS programme and gauge their response. This was by no means ideal. Nonetheless there were consistently correct responses and usually unanimous agreement about what people claimed they learned and subsequently applied as a result of the programme. The main practices promoted during the programme and discussed during the evaluation were land preparation by traction, planting with rows and spacing, number of seeds per hole, pest control, and weeding.

Even during the second season of 2008, most participants claimed to have applied the promoted practices in their home gardens despite that the FFS facilitator was no longer active in their area. Interestingly, the only exception identified during the fieldwork was a man from the Pur En Lonyo group who explained that he was convinced of the benefits of rows and spacing but has had to continue scattering seed because he cannot afford to pay the additional labour requirements of promoted planting techniques. This corroborates the prevailing FSL team understanding that lack of available labour in the household (available without fee) can increase vulnerability to food insecurity. It is nonetheless possible that a cost benefit analysis of scattered seeding versus proper rows and spacing could assist farmers make decisions in the future, or that other FFS participants could assist such farmers in need of labour.

Transmission of these same practices to non-participants was also reported throughout the evaluation but could not be proved. Many of the groups described how they invited neighbours to visit the study plot, how they shared their experience with the new techniques, and in some cases even invited others on harvest day so that they could witness the results for themselves. An easy solution could be to rely on easier output indicators on the number of neighbour visits, open days, etc. However this would not answer the more seminal question of whether these formal or informal exchanges are encouraging others to modify production behaviour.

On the whole, however, comparing ACF FFS participants with non-participants in the same locations indicates that the programme succeeded in promoting two of its central practices, proper spacing and row planting:
### 3.1.5 Documentation capacity enhanced at group and individual levels

Literacy is a key issue in relation to documentation capacity, as is the distinction between group and individual level practices. All of the groups were requested to bring their full set of FFS documentation to the focus group but only half complied, so not all records could be reviewed during the fieldwork. Of the group documents reviewed during the evaluation (usually cash contributions, meeting attendance and minutes, constitutions, member lists, and visitor books), all were organised, clearly written, and in good physical condition. In most cases, the meeting and cash records were still being maintained by the group, even though the FFS programme concluded eight months ago (although perhaps only half of the individuals directly asked knew the current balance of their group’s bank account). The continued prevalence of cash flow record keeping nonetheless makes sense when considering how clear financial records can help maintain group cohesion by increasing transparency and reducing suspicion. These are not concerns for an individual farmer at household level, however, and probably explain in part the very low quality of individual records reported by FAO (factoring too for literacy).

According to the FAO data summarised in Figure 9 below, an approximately equal percentage of ACF FFS group members maintain household level records compared with the national FFS average. Two prominent differences are however apparent from the data. The first is that despite the inherently equal incidence of record keeping, the quality of ACF FFS participant records appears below the national averages. More significant, perhaps, is that record keeping appears to be far less common for non-participants in the ACF areas than for the national average reported by FAO. If record keeping is so uncommon in the ACF areas, then even the reported 94 percent of ACF participant records determined ‘partial/incomplete’ might nonetheless suggest a programme accomplishment. In the control group, for example, only 5 percent of households keep records. Participant records may have been equally absent prior to the FFS programme, and partial records are an improvement over no records. In fact, the ACF sample reports that the main reason given by participants for lack of records or poor quality was that they were ‘too complicated’; most non-participants by comparison responded that they were ‘not trained’ in record keeping or that there is ‘no need’ (the possible responses did not, however, include ‘not literate’ or ‘unable’).

**Figure 9. Comparison of household record keeping and quality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ACF (%)</th>
<th>FAO (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of HHs that keep records</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of those records</td>
<td>Scanty</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partial/incomplete</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Incomplete data
Source: FAO (2008) Table 20, pg 23

Despite the generally good quality of FFS group records discussed above, this conclusion is limited to the more straightforward documents like cash flows and meetings. Only one group was able to show the team their profitability analysis from last year, for example, or to produce their business plan, sub-county registration certificate, programme budget, or in some cases even the specific amount of seed they planted and harvested. This surely influences the transparency of group documentation, which in turn is likely to contribute to less household level adoption as well.

### 3.2 Increased Domestic Production

Alongside improved practices throughout the production cycle is the guiding intent that these contribute directly to increased yields and, by extension, profits and stores. Households are by no
means subsistence producers, nor are they apparently striving for this. Households in the programme areas are integrated with local markets and demonstrate complex approaches to juggling production, consumption, and sale. This is best exemplified by the fact that almost all FFS group activities in 2008 (the commercial and study enterprises) were dedicated to crops that generally are sold to purchase food. Increased production therefore does not in itself mean increased food security because of more food grown. Rather, increased production supports increased access to food through both own production and market purchase alike.

Like the practices discussed in Section 3.1, quantification for evaluation is hampered by insufficient or inadequate baseline data. Analysis here therefore is more qualitative than preferred, but nonetheless provides guidance for subsequent programme design and more refined indicators in the future. The team’s conclusions on improved production are in cases entirely by proxy, the assumption that the new practices adopted will lead to commensurate production gains. And even if there were baseline data available to compare production differences of, for example, broadcast versus spaced planting, all of the groups experienced various degrees of crop failure from their commercial and study plots due to climatic factors beyond programmatic influence. Agriculturally, the team therefore concludes that production increases can be expected – but not proved – as a result of the apparently widespread adoption of improved practices. Other shortcomings were also identified in the programme’s influence on improved production. One example is that the incomplete alignment between the production cycle and the programme cycle left farmers with crops standing and insufficient guidance on post-harvest handling. Complementary opportunities to increase production further through cassava and goat multiplication were also missed. The planned combination of traction, training, cassava, and goats ultimately would have increased programme impact at household level more than what was achieved in 2008.

3.2.1 Increased cultivated acreage

The prevailing wisdom about northern Uganda is that returnee households still cultivate less land than the total they have available to them due to insufficient capital or inputs. ACF Uganda has included acreage in its monitoring of several FSL programmes over the last few years, however there is no known source of both baseline and final acreage available for any programme, including the farmer field schools, upon which conclusive statements can be drawn. For the FFSs, the only ACF data available for acreage is that the average land opened for household cropping (in first season 2008) was 2.27 acres. Unfortunately there are no known data available to compare this average with the preceding or subsequent year in order to extrapolate a trend.

There are nonetheless indications that the FFS programme has supported acreage increases. The study and commercial plots of all 12 groups were on previously unopened land prepared specifically for the programme. Study plots were only half an acre, but commercial plots were between 1.5 and 4 acres. These amounts are comparatively small when considering a total 320 participants, but are increases nevertheless.

The programme facilitated less of an acreage increase than it could have if implemented fully to plan, in that none of the groups was able to utilise animal traction to open their group or individual plots (discussed further alongside other seasonality issues in Section 4.9). Every group should have received a pair of oxen and a plough. The oxen were delivered after planting had concluded, too late for study/commercial plot land opening; the ploughs to date have not yet been received from FAO. More groups would have been able to open more land if both bulls and ploughs had been delivered on time for first season land preparation typically done between January and March (depending on rain and intended crop). Oxen were received in May, however, so even if ploughs had been included it would have been too late to influence programme performance. With greater access to animal traction through the FFS programme, increased acreage would probably have included individual gardens as well, particularly if delivered and trained early in the year. In fact, other ACF programming with traction in the North has found that groups generally rent their animals to other households in the community in exchange for cash (based on land area). Not only does this further increase the amount of land opened, but also creates a new income source for
group members. Such benefits may accrue to the 2008 FFS members in time, but realistically could have been achieved during the programme period.

The ACF FAO data shed contradictory light on the question of whether increased acreage was achieved through the programme. Their aggregated data suggest that 95 percent of FFS participants enjoyed an increase in cultivated acreage, compared with merely 8 percent of households among the non-participant control group. If true, this suggests significant accomplishment toward the indicator. Unfortunately, the ACF-specific data from FAO paint a contradictory picture than the larger average: these data suggest that non-participants are cultivating a greater percentage of their land than FFS participants, 67 versus 49 percent, respectively. Although this does not address fully the question of changes in acreage it nonetheless highlights the fact that a greater understanding of land access and utilisation is required before programming can reflect specific strategies to improve this ratio or before data collection can verify it.

### 3.2.2 Increased production

This indicator too is another mainstay of monitoring production based approaches to enhancing food security. However, there are no baseline or final data with which to determine or measure changes in production levels resulting from the 2008 FFS programme. Although changes cannot be evaluated directly, only a little rationalisation is required to assume programme achievement in this regard.

The practices promoted through the FFS programme for planting, weeding, and pest control are reported by staff and respondents to have improved the initial performance of 2008 first season crops in the commercial and study plots. Staff and participants alike attested that 2008 study and commercial crop performance was recognised by all as superior to previous years, but that poor climatic performance in the second half of the season undermined most groups’ crops. In fact many of the groups did not realise a harvest from either their commercial or study plot – in some cases neither – due to prolonged sunshine. Presently it is only possible to assume that the apparently high prevalence of adopted practices and initial transmission to others will result over time in greater agricultural production (assuming favourable climatic conditions).

A farmer field school programme does not have to concentrate only on crop production. Animal production also should have increased through the ACF FFS programme but was hindered by two factors. The Acan Dano group, for example, resolved to develop a piggery for their commercial enterprise but ultimately had to abandon this for soy bean cultivation because the programme grant amount proved too low (unfortunately the team lacked time to research the actual numbers involved in this decision). Much more significant, however, was the complete failure to deliver one female goat to each participating FFS household through the in-kind contribution of animals from FAO. According to respondents, goats are financial assets that generally contribute more toward household income sources than to food sources; increased income nonetheless contributes directly to increased access to food from market purchase (which all households demonstrate, see Section 4.2). Animals, especially goats, also enable households to sell them to meet other cash needs, especially unexpected expenditure on healthcare, funerals, or school fees. Access to such financial assets supports household resilience, presumably reducing the likelihood of turning to more corrosive coping strategies (discussed further in Section 4.6). During the evaluation fieldwork, each of the groups questioned whether their goats (and ploughs) were forthcoming, to which the team could only respond that it would follow up with FAO again to determine what might still be possible. (Quarantines against foot and mouth disease apparently have disrupted large scale procurement of animals, which may have contributed to the fact that the goats were not delivered by FAO to the FFS participants.)

### 3.2.3 Disease resistant cassava is more prevalent

Multiplication of disease resistant cassava represents another missed opportunity to increase household production through the FFS programme. At the same time, multiplication also would
have enhanced the complementarity of FFS inputs contributing to the household economy and increased the already limited local access to disease resistant cassava cuttings.

The causes behind the missed opportunity are admittedly vague, but it appears that ACF intended for all 320 FFS members to receive cassava cuttings. Despite this plan, actual date of receiving the cuttings came unexpectedly as a result of reportedly poor coordination with FAO who supplied them. Participant land had not yet been prepared as a result, but many of the cuttings were becoming too dry for planting to be delayed. Therefore the entire consignment was distributed to households engaged in other activities in the North (also funded by FAO under the same agreement but not participating in the FFSs) who were able to plant the cuttings immediately. Despite cassava multiplication initiated with these other groups, the participants and benefits were outside the FFS programme and represent another missed opportunity for complementary inputs and impact.

Including cassava in the FFS programme would have contributed to household food sources and, to a lesser extent, income sources. Once plants matured, new cuttings also could have been circulated and sold by members, further increasing the programmatic benefits of cassava while facilitating increased local access to disease resistant varieties. Cassava cultivation could even help create possibilities for value addition activities like chip production and sale. The following photograph illustrates the difference in quality and resilience between two cassava stands planted at approximately the same time.7 The leaves on left are infected with cassava mosaic virus (CMV), a plant pathogenic begomovirus transmitted by white flies that feed on the plant,8 and has consequently stunted development compared with the large green leaves of the resistant variety (akena) on the right disseminated by ACF through FAO.

Figure 10. Comparison of a healthy cassava plant and one infected with CMV

3.3 Enhanced Asset Generation and Management Capacity

Asset generation and management have become an increasingly prominent objectives of ACF FSL programming in Uganda over the last two years. Although not an explicit objective of the 2008 farmer field schools, a range of income generating activities has been undertaken under different programmes throughout the North with corresponding training in entrepreneurialism, bookkeeping, and small business management. Interestingly, evaluation of this output offers some of the best

7 Photograph taken in Koch Goma sub-county, Gulu, in October 2008 (not an ACF FFS area), but depicts the same stock of cassava cuttings received from FAO and originally intended for FFS members.
indications of positive FFS performance, while at the same time highlighting missed opportunities that could have been capitalised more effectively. Much of the structure and discussion of this section is structured in a way that offers alignment with other ACF FSL monitoring indicators, including both Karamoja and the North (especially questions of cash, savings, and credit) without detracting from the focus here of evaluating 2008 FFS performance.

In short, all twelve FFS groups demonstrated greater asset generation and management capacity than anticipated either in programme design or in the subjective expectations of the ACF facilitators. All group bank accounts are still open, are still being augmented through group contributions, and still offer a range of asset possibilities like input expenditure or access to credit. Despite these meaningful outcomes, more could have been achieved through the programme to support marketing skills and opportunities that would have contributed further to increased household access to food. These missed opportunities were however the result of the short programme period, not poor performance in implementation.

3.3.1 Increased marketing capacity of own production

Marketing capacity could not be included in the original FFS programme design due to the limited number of months available for implementation and the subsequent inability to engage with an entire crop cycle (from land preparation to final consumption or sale). There are indications nonetheless that gains have been made and that there is an excellent foundation now in place as a result of the programme for future improvement of marketing capacity.

The group solidarity witnessed so far will facilitate the collaboration required for a range of activities that could increase marketing capacity and profitability. Increased marketing capacity could for example have been supported through the programme by including post-harvest handling practices, especially packing and storage which have direct effects on quantity and quality of sale. Better storage facilities combined with good group dynamics and business planning could also enable more households to make more favourable decisions about how much of their production they sell in order to buy food (or other services) at particular times of year, ideally avoiding seasonal fluctuations like low prices immediately after harvest or high food prices during the dry season. Improved storage also would minimise the notoriously high rate of post-harvest losses (about which one usually hears of an average 25% in Uganda). Equal production with less loss could increase household sale and consumption.

Group bulking and transportation of their production could offer another means of increasing profits, as larger quantities sold in trading centres fetch better prices than smaller quantities sold at the farm gate. The Acan Kwette group illustrates this point in detail, using the example of their study crop, the red beauty variety of groundnut. They explained how at the time of harvest one kilo of shelled groundnut was worth roughly Ugx 1,400 at the farm gate but at the same time Ugx 1,600 at the Minakulu trading centre and Ugx 1,800 at the Gulu central market – 29 percent higher than the original farm gate price. Transportation costs make this unrealistic for an individual smallholder, but are worth the investment if a group can organise itself and absorb the costs. The Acan Kwette respondents reported that last year five of their members did this for the first time to sell their individual groundnut harvests at a better price in Gulu (why only five members instead of all 25 was not established). If more such collective action can be mobilised in the future, then the profitability of group cohesion can be increased. Even the improved group record keeping skills developed in the programme can support group marketing, helping both to organise the process and to ensure transparency in individual contributions and payments. On the possible programmatic horizon for ACF is working with WFP, wherein smallholders can organise to sell through the Purchase for Progress programme. Aside from the coordination issues, group solidarity, record keeping, storage, and bulking will all be necessary for this to be a feasible consideration.

3.3.2 Strengthened seed multiplication and marketing

This is the best example of an attempt made to build on the foundation of group mobilisation and solidarity for increased market engagement, in this case working with ACF partner Victoria Seeds.
The collaboration was actually initiated after the FFS programme concluded, but nonetheless worked with the FFS groups to try linking them directly to a commercial seed source within a structured buyback programme that would increase crop quality and household income simultaneously. This marketing venture is therefore included in the evaluation because the initiative was exclusively with the FFS groups who were accepted by Victoria Seeds as potential commercial growers because of their graduation from the FFS programme and because it offers an example of future marketing possibilities, even though the end results were below expectations for all concerned.

The intention was excellent and all participants indicated that they would continue working with Victoria Seeds in the future if possible. Unfortunately, the idea was born late into the second season planting season. Despite mobilisation and subsequent FFS group expressions of interest in the activity, tripartite agreements between FFS groups, Victoria Seeds, and ACF were slow to finalise. This caused some groups to cease waiting and proceed with their own independent planting, for fear of missing the season completely. Some groups even rejected seeds because they were too late. (It is nonetheless encouraging to see that groups are not afraid to decline inputs.) As a final blow to the 2008 marketing venture with Victoria Seeds, most crops suffered from an unusual dry spell which undermined much of the anticipated soy and groundnut harvests. Also similar to the FFS programme, data collection with the Victoria Seeds groups has been ineffective. Even at the time of writing, collated data from the 2008 second season attempt at commercial growing partnership with Victoria Seeds are not available. But despite all of these limitations, the FFS groups demonstrated sufficient organisation and market savvy to engage with the seed multiplication venture in light of its potential profits.

3.3.3 Income sources diversified through value-addition

Value addition activities were not included in the farmer field school programme design, another missed opportunity symptomatic of the short implementation schedule – but equally another opportunity for more effective design in subsequent programmes. FSL staff meetings for strategic planning, for example, regularly touched the need for value addition activities to increase household income.

For example lowland rice could have been an option for the Okwang groups last year. It is typically sold for Ugx 800/kg (at the farm gate) in the husk because hullers apparently are not available. Hullled rice, by comparison, could sell for Ugx 1,500/kg even during harvest, when prices are lowest – almost double the unhulled farm gate price. Groundnut offers other possibilities for shelling and sale at a higher price. This practice is in fact more standard, because manual shellers are accessible for hire and offer growers a higher price for their product. Shared group ownership of a sheller nonetheless could increase profit further by eliminating expenditure on renting the machine. Paste is another regularly mentioned possibility for groundnut value addition, as are cassava chips. These are only the more obvious and most mentioned possibilities that arose during the evaluation, but further probing would probably identify others and suggest how to initiate such activities more effectively and for greater profits than in 2008.

3.3.4 Increased group and individual savings

Of the 12 groups established for the farmer field school programme, every one of them still has an active savings account with funds deposited. This is an excellent validation of both the programme and the group approach it utilises, as the groups presumably would have dissolved their memberships and liquidated their bank accounts now that the programme has finished if they no longer perceived them relevant. It is important that all groups are in fact still together and still managing active bank accounts, of which the current balances are summarised below:
This vindicates the FFS programme and aspects of ACF’s 2009 FSL strategy to nurture household linkages with formal financial institutions. It is also interesting to notice that with the exception of two groups in Opejal, the remaining balances within each geographic cluster are roughly equivalent. This probably reflects the individual influence of each of the three ACF facilitators toward how groups managed their contributions, expenditure, and savings (although all accounts require three separate signatures to ensure protection and transparency).

Participant cash contributions and savings are another positive outcome of the FFS programme. Although the individual method varied between groups, all utilised some form of group asset building through membership and registration fees. All groups also supported individual savings by tracking and managing the contributions of each member (usually agreed amounts at agreed intervals, but otherwise based on ability to pay). Illustrative examples of member contribution schedules are useful:

- Ugx 300/month/member (Kok Can Ikweri)
- Ugx 200/week/member (Apit Pe Ool)
- Minimum Ugx 500/week/member but maximum Ugx 1,000/week/member (Acan Dano), based on individual ability

These are examples of a common collective practice called *bole cap* in Langi, wherein group members each contribute savings and maintain a shared ledger. The scheme often pays out at the end of the year (before Christmas), with each member receiving the total sum of their contributions. The *bole cap* can also be used for immediate cash needs, not solely for annual disbursements. The prevalence of FFS group *bole cap* saving schemes represents a significant accomplishment for the FFS programme that can also help inform other ACF programming in the North. It illustrates how a new initiative can integrate existing practices, perhaps even increasing their viability through improved record keeping skills or the collectively perceived benefits of working as a production group. It also demonstrates that access to savings is an important social and financial asset valued by returnee households.

Analysis of how groups utilised the ‘profits’ of their commercial and study plots also illustrates the ability of programme activities to support livelihood strategies. The categories used for analysis are based on those developed by FAO, although they have been adapted because FAO used slightly different categories for the commercial and study plots whereas for this evaluation ACF wanted greater comparability by using the same criteria for both plots.\(^9\)

\(^9\) See FAO Tables 24 and 28 for comparison.
Not all of the responses were as clear as they appear here in summary, in that some groups would for example immediately deposit commercial plot sale profits in the group account, then distribute it to members so that they could purchase inputs (typically seed) for individual or collective cultivation (i.e. another ‘enterprise’). The responses indicated here try to capture the bottom line of how the profits ultimately were used, although this was not easy given the multiple uses reported for profits. More generally, all of the reported utilisation of commercial and study enterprise profits was constructive; even the ambiguous (and most commonly reported) ‘distributed to members’ in practice meant that either cash or seeds went directly to individual member households. Only in three cases did groups identify an ‘other’ use for their profits. For the commercial plot the one exception was to contribute all of the proceeds to the group’s bole cap savings; for the study plot one group reported ‘other’ because they stored all of their harvested seed (pigeon pea), whereas another group reported no profits due to seasonal irregularities. But again, all uses are constructive and all can be attributed to the FFS programme.

3.3.5 Improved access to and terms of credit

This section builds on the preceding analysis of how the FFSs strengthened group savings, but is sufficiently distinctive to be a separate indicator of programme performance. Several of the FFS groups reported using their collective savings to offer loans to members, even charging 10% interest to help augment group equity. Where they are used, these group based loans are the only formal credit source available to participants; not even their non-member neighbours can access such loans from the FFS group or elsewhere. Community based lending outside FFSs in the programme areas usually comprises seeds or food, but not cash – and none of the three is available from shops in any of the respective trading centres. Utilising the newly established group savings, FFS loans are now possible. These typically are used, in no particular order, for school fees or materials, seeds, food, or sudden cash needs like household illness or death. The additional information necessary to analyse better the impact of this increased access to credit would be to understand how households managed before this credit source emerged from the FFS programme.

The FAO evaluation data offer an interesting look at credit. Among ACF participants nearly twice as many households are using credit. This differs from the question of access to credit but nonetheless suggests that this results from FFS programme participation. It is unclear, however, why a roughly equal percentage of households in the full FAO dataset use credit (although this

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ACF</th>
<th>FAO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households using credit facilities (%)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average credit/loan amount taken (Ugx)</td>
<td>77,414</td>
<td>34,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with debt</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

might simply reflect the effect of averaging data). FAO adds that among the households not accessing credit, 43 percent said this was because no sources were available in their area. FFS participants in both examples appear to have smaller loans than their non-participant neighbours: This might be attributable to the programme and the inputs it brings, perhaps to the group savings, the commercial or study plot profits, or even the increased production resulting from improved practices. Even if the cause is unclear, FFS participants appear to have better access to credit.

4. Farmer Field School Programme Impact

4.1 Stronger Household Food Security and Livelihoods

The farmer field school programme is one of the approaches employed by ACF Uganda toward stronger household food security and livelihoods and, ultimately, reduction of the root causes for malnutrition. At this level, impact is not simply about accomplishment of any particular indicator or output, but about the combined effects from all outputs and how sustainable these might be over time.

The evaluation of programme impact concentrates on indicators at objective and goal level in the logical framework. The impact analysis tries to utilise a range of data from both FAO and ACF. Considering that the FFS programme lasted only seven months, however, profound impact at either group or household level cannot be expected. The discussion below therefore concentrates on how the FFS approach can be expected to contribute toward the programme objective. Similarly, some of the indicators are used despite the lack of corresponding baseline data in order to illustrate how programme evaluation could have been anticipated more effectively, to suggest how future ACF FSL initiatives can utilise the same indicators and to offer a FFS baseline for future programme cycles. Evaluation at impact level is here more by proxy, and is not as rigorous as that for FFS programme performance.

4.2 Participant food, income, and expenditure proportions improve

The 2008 programme design does not demonstrate any explicit strategy for how it will influence particular elements of the household economy or what specific changes might therefore be expected. Proportional piling with one FFS group in each parish cluster was used to generate indicative (as opposed to representative) trends of how households apportion their assets and how future programming might align more directly with these strategies:

Figure 14. Summary of the household economy

More food comes from own crops than from own animals. Even though most groups concentrate on cash crops for their study and commercial enterprises, the promoted practices are relevant well beyond these particular crops and should contribute over time to increases in own crop production as a food source as well. It is interesting to note that among the participating groups ‘own animals’ tend to be less a food source and more an income source, a financial asset. Animals, particularly shoats, are sold to meet cash needs; poultry, however, are usually consumed more than sold. As with sources of food, the increases expected from FFS practices that increase production quality and quantity should translate into greater household income, but not necessarily the diversity of
income sources. The 2008 ACF programme nonetheless missed its opportunity to diversify and strengthen income sources by distributing goats to participants. The same applies to the missed impact potential from storage and marketing practices that would have influenced food, income and expenditure. Cassava also would have offered an additional source of food and occasional income. In fact, these gaps all highlight how the programme could be redesigned in the future to identify more specifically its expected influence on aspects of the household economy. The idea that the FFS programme contributed more to income than food sources (because groups predominantly select cash crops) would not be entirely accurate, as increased cash ultimately meant increased food and greater access to seed stocks for participating members.

ACF Uganda FSL documentation often mentions ‘a return to self-sufficiency’ in the course of post-displacement recovery. However as illustrated in Figure 14 above, these households are all market actors. This suggests that a successful FFS programme should increase household capacity to meet food needs regardless whether participants consume the food they grow or whether they sell one commodity in order to purchase another. Reductions in household expenditure on food therefore will not necessarily indicate programme impact as much as would changes in expenditure and their underlying reasons.

### 4.3 Positive changes in group and household assets

**Figure 15. Average number of livestock per household**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>ACF</th>
<th>FAO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoats</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigs</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAO (2008) Table 19, pg 21

The FAO evaluation data suggest that animal ownership (key financial assets for rural households) is lower among the ACF groups than in the larger population of FFS participants. The letter of agreement with FAO included plans to distribute one female goat to every ACF participant in order to bolster household livestock recovery. Without receiving goats, however, the 2008 programme missed opportunities to strengthen household financial assets through goat restocking. Goats are often sold to meet immediate cash needs, such as healthcare or education, or to purchase food. The terms of trade between goats and maize meal (*posho*, the primary staple purchased) are therefore illustrative of the additional purchasing power that could have been given to households (without even considering the reproductive capacity of the animals). A mature female goat is currently worth Ugx 45,000 while a kilogram of *posho* is Ugx 1,200. Goats distributed in the 2008 FFS programme would now be mature and able to fetch competitive prices, with which a household could exchange one goat for roughly 35-40 kilograms of food. By now these goats would also be producing kids and thereby increasing household financial assets further still.

A significant but unanticipated accomplishment of the FFS programme was the number of additional physical household assets constructed by members throughout each different location, reflecting both the mobilisation skills of the ACF facilitators and the productive solidarity demonstrated by the groups. One group, Can Opwonya, mandated that all members would construct these household structures in order to increase the collective wellbeing of the group:

**Figure 16. Summary of additional physical assets resulting from the FFS programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Opejal</th>
<th>Aceno</th>
<th>Oyoro</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rocket lorenas stove</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pit latrine</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drying rack</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathing shelter</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubbish pit</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>364</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>1,277</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although these additional household assets were an unexpected achievement, it is nonetheless unfortunate that comparatively few fuel efficient stoves were established – especially as this was a core activity in its 2006-2007 FSL programming. Improved stoves can reduce the time and money women spend collecting or purchasing firewood (used more than charcoal in the rural North) and help increase the positive environmental impact of ACF programmes. (One explanation might be that most households had stoves already from the previous ACF programming, although this could not be verified).

FAO in their 2008 evaluation also tried to assess possible changes in symbolic assets that can contribute to household livelihood activities (bicycles, radios, mobile phones, motorbikes). Although many participants owned a combination of some of these assets, almost all of them (97%) were acquired before joining the FFS programme. Previous ACF FSL monitoring in the North attempted a similar analysis of changes in these same assets, however there are no known examples of both baseline and final data for the same groups, locations, or programmes. Analysis therefore has never been possible, but nonetheless remains on the ACF radar as it continues to explore how best to track and attribute changes in productive assets.

4.4 Average household dietary diversity scores improve from poor to medium

According to the FAO ACF data, household dietary diversity scores\textsuperscript{10} are remarkably low, between 1-4 from a maximum possible score of 12. Nobody in the ACF group scored above 4 in either the programme population or control group, without a single household scoring in the higher quartiles. This is unfortunately difficult to see in Figure 17, however, because of how the score ranges have been grouped:

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure17.png}
\caption{Comparison of household dietary diversity scores}
\end{figure}

Source: FAO (2008) Table 10, pg 18

On the one hand it is obvious from these data that although dietary diversity is low throughout the ACF FFS programme area, there is nonetheless a small difference between participants and non-participants. This difference cannot however be attributed to the FFS programme itself. It could reflect, for example, the possibility that participants represent slightly stronger households who are able to mobilise around a collective activity and budget the time necessary to fulfil the subsequent obligations, and that such households have slightly better access to a wider variety of food.

Future dietary diversity monitoring will need not only better baseline and final data, but will require an understanding of household food preferences and habits. It may not be realistic, for example, to expect households to reach a score of 10-12 because of prevailing food preferences. That is, no matter how much improvement is achieved programmatically to household access to food, this may not be entirely captured by the dietary diversity score. Changes should nonetheless be anticipated, and the possibility of comparing these with a control group would be ideal. For the 2008 FFS participants, scores are slightly better than the non-participants, but this cannot be

attributed directly to ACF or the programme – only assumed (perhaps indirectly resulting from the increased access to savings or credit, or increased production accomplished through improved practices).

4.5 Reduction in the number of months with inadequate household provisioning of food

The number of months with adequate provisioning of food is another useful indicator for assessing changes in household access to food.11 According to the FAO data, 93 percent of the ACF participants report a food gap, compared with 97 percent in the control group. These are generally equal when considering the precision error of sampling.12 Both of these figures are also essentially equal to the national averages FAO reports (within a percentage or two).

![Figure 18. Months with inadequate household food provisioning](chart)

Source: FAO evaluation data

Adding the total number of inadequate provisioning months per household and dividing by the number of respondent households provides a score useful for comparison or tracking. The ACF and FAO averages are similar only in that there is no real difference in MIHFP scores between the FFS participants and the control groups. Comparing the ACF and FAO scores, however, shows that the ACF groups score twice as high as the FAO averages:

![Figure 19. Computation and comparison of MIHFP scores](chart)

Source: FAO (2008) Table 12 pg 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ACF Participant</th>
<th>ACF Control</th>
<th>FAO Participant</th>
<th>FAO Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sum (MIHFP)</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>2,848</td>
<td>2,342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of households</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average MIHFP</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>6.38</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation respondents generalised the MIHFP period as shorter than what is reported here, usually indicating May and June when market prices peak. The FFS programme therefore might have addressed the apparently high ACF participant MIHFP scores by increasing household ability to purchase food during periods of high market prices or, even better, pre-empt the need for purchase at this time through increased storage capacity. The team thinks that household access to food has increased through the programme, however it is not yet possible to conclude whether the timing of this increase aligns with the most critical period of the year. Continued tracking of this indicator might also guide future implementation to determine whether particular inputs or activities can be more effectively timed to influence a reduction in MIHFP scores.

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12 Assumed to be ±5% but not indicated in the FAO report.
4.6 Improvement in participant coping strategy index scores

The short duration of the FFS programme and its partial production cycle mean that significant changes to the type, frequency, or severity of household coping strategies cannot be expected. The FAO data nonetheless suggest which coping strategies are more expected among the ACF groups, which in turn can support more informed future programme design that includes anticipated changes in coping strategies.\(^\text{13}\)

**Figure 20. Frequency of coping strategy use in ACF FFS programme areas\(^\text{14}\)**

![Graph showing frequency of coping strategy use in ACF FFS programme areas]

Source: FAO evaluation data.

The list of coping strategies is not exhaustive and is in fact concentrated specifically around food shortages. This is a narrowly conceived picture of coping that does not include, for example, (productive and non-productive) asset sales for meeting food or cash needs. There is no significant difference between the frequency of coping strategies reported by ACF participants or the control group. In fact, for most of the nine strategies the ACF average score is essentially equal to the control. This suggests that the FFS programme did not influence household resilience against particular coping strategies, otherwise a greater difference would be expected between the ACF participant and control scores in Figure 20 above.

To begin understanding and evaluating programme-related coping strategies, the evaluation tried to establish relative degrees of severity by using pairwise ranking, the results of which are summarised below:

**Figure 21. Relative severity of coping strategies\(^\text{15}\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coping Strategy</th>
<th>Opejal Score</th>
<th>Opejal Rank</th>
<th>Aceno Score</th>
<th>Aceno Rank</th>
<th>Oyoro Score</th>
<th>Oyoro Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rely on less preferred, less expensive food</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow food from friend or relative</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase food on credit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consume wild foods and animals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the portion size of meals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the number of meals per day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skip entire days without meals</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unfortunately the discussions around the ranking lacked sufficient time to probe further into the rationale behind the ranking or to elaborate specifically what types of households employ which of the strategies at what time of year. The ranking nonetheless suggests how ACF might weight coping strategies for its planned surveillance activities and future monitoring.

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\(^{14}\) FAO used the following weighted scale: 0 = never, 1 = hardly at all (less than once/week), 2 = once in a while (once-twice/week), 3 = very often (1-6 times/week), 4 = all the time (every day).

\(^{15}\) The evaluation team neglected to complete the ranking process in Aceno for lack of time, resulting in a three-way tie for third and a two-way tie for fourth. These should have been resolved through additional rounds of pairwise ranking to produce a clear hierarchy like those completed in Opejal and Oyoro parishes.
also be used for future evaluation to suggest whether programming has affected the range, number, or frequency of coping strategies. Toward this, the FAO data are slightly more illustrative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted Sum of Coping Strategies</th>
<th>ACF (%)</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>FAO (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 15</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Comparison here with the FAO averages was not possible as their data were grouped into different ranges than those used for ACF.

Source: FAO (2008) Table 13, pg 19

If the programme aim is to reduce coping strategy indices for participating households (i.e. reduce the frequency of using these coping strategies), then a higher percentage would be expected from the first group with scores between ‘0’ and ‘5’ (only 28% for the ACF FFS participants). Another quarter of the ACF respondents are in the highest group of scores, which should also decrease as programmes improve household food security and livelihoods.

4.7 Effective ACF facilitators communicate programme practices and ethos

The ACF FFS facilitators (and implicitly their parish based field assistants) were reported to be the primary source of information about production practices. Participants everywhere were additionally aware and enthusiastic about the seasonally contextual radio programmes that ACF broadcast in 2008, some of which were included in the same FAO-funded agreement as the farmer field schools. According to the FAO data, the FFS programme achieved meaningful impact as the predominant source of agronomic skills:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>FFS Facilitator (%)</th>
<th>Other Farmer (%)</th>
<th>NAADS (%)</th>
<th>Other Extension Service (%)</th>
<th>Tradition (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zero/minimum tillage</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper spacing</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row planting</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunding/grass strips</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relay cropping</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crop rotation</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulching</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinning</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pruning</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of the information listed above should originate only from FFS facilitators. One would expect households with greater human assets (such as knowledge and access to information) to display a greater variety of skill sources than citing only external facilitators. This is one reason why ACF facilitators also promoted the onward transmission and exchange of information and practices across FFS groups and (perhaps even more importantly) non-participants alike through activities such as field days and exchange visits. The groups absorbed this ethos, many of which independently invited neighbours to compare study plot harvest results for example, or tried to convince others of the value of production practices promoted during the programme. This is another reason why facilitators in future programming should increase farmer experimentation (see Section 3.1.2) so that participant mobilisation is greater and the likelihood of perpetually transmitted messages higher.

Even though the radio programming was not specifically focused on the FFS programme, it offered an effective complement that has been commented on by respondents throughout the North, not only those in the FFSs. It is unfortunate that the FAO data do not include radio as a possible response for information source (despite that their focus is more on skills than information). In an impact assessment on the role of radio in delivering food security information (currently in its second draft), the Uganda office of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) also tries to identify different sources of information on agriculture and animal husbandry messages. For Lira district
they report that 97 percent of respondents receive information on practices through radio, a medium not included in the FAO analysis of sources outlined in Figure 23 above. ILO similarly reports that 46 percent receive information from NGOs, 26 percent from friends/neighbours, and only 17 percent from agricultural officers (in addition to a range of other sources). In fact, ILO then suggests that 87 percent of respondents say radio is their most credible source of information on agriculture and husbandry, compared with only 2 percent accorded to agricultural officers. (Conversely, ten percent of respondents identified NGOs as the least credible source of information; six percent said the same about agricultural officers.) In short, there are many valid sources of information available to rural producers, and ACF should not necessarily try to be the most significant. Rather, ACF should endeavour to provide the most appropriate and effective support it can while facilitating access to other complementary information sources at the same time. The 2008 farmer field school programme appears to have achieved this.

More generally in the discussion of facilitator effectiveness, two of the three FFS facilitators participated in the evaluation, consistently demonstrating familiarity with the 2008 programme precepts to involve farmers in analysis of their own situations while facilitating improved practices and production. The facilitators demonstrate excellent rapport with participant groups and know everybody by name. Even while preparing for the evaluation fieldwork, over eight months after the programme, facilitators still had participant phone numbers and were easily able to reach members and agree on meeting times. Staff even report that some have maintained informal FFS group contact since the programme, and that groups have periodically called with questions. It was obvious during fieldwork that participants were genuinely engaged with the programme through the mobilisation efforts of the facilitators – further evidenced by the time they were willing to engage with the evaluation to improve the programme for other participants elsewhere in the future, without any further benefit to themselves.

Despite these strengths there are opportunities for improved staff capacity to facilitate farmer experimentation and analysis. The way participants are trained in particular practices also needs to be revisited so that a ‘training of trainers’ can be conducted for better group facilitation and communication skills. Facilitation and adult learning are in fact part of the FAO FFS facilitator training in which the three ACF facilitators participated, but these are complex topics that require ongoing development. Key skill areas for review include focus group facilitation, gender and power analysis, more confident use of rapid appraisal tools, and greater qualitative probing. Further time invested in facilitator skills could also be extended to a review of how participants are mobilised and trained, and how they are supported in their own experimentation.

4.8 Programme design and implementation reflect gender analysis and decision making

We already saw in Figure 6 above how much more consuming female agricultural roles tend to be than male. To extend this idea further the evaluation team confirmed the sex of all group committee members, on the hypothesis that women’s disproportionate role in agriculture would not be reflected in the group committee membership. The results are summarised below:

17 This example also demonstrates that data collection tools can be biased toward the type of results sought. The FAO data prove that FFS facilitators are the prevailing source of agricultural information, just as the ILO data prove that radio is the primary source. Respondent bias could also be an issue.
The discrepancies are obvious, but run even deeper when looking at the level of leadership and prestige of committee roles and who tends to fill them:

**Figure 25. Comparison of gender role discrepancies in FFS committees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobiliser</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Representative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Leader</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The team expected that all or most of the chairs and secretaries would be men, but did not anticipate that most treasurers would be women. All respondents agreed that this reflects the fact that women are more reliable than men and less likely to misappropriate group funds. This is particularly interesting when considering that all bank accounts require two additional signatures in addition to the treasurer’s (usually the chair and secretary), meaning that a female treasurer does not in itself eliminate opportunities for graft or increase the transparency of collective financial records.

Looking at the combined gender analyses of labour division, meeting times, and committee membership we see that the FFS programme did not respond specifically to the different roles and responsibilities of women and men. Nor did it intend to. In the future, however, it may be possible for a more extended and inclusive design and planning process to spend more time looking at not only the different roles but also the different priorities of women and men in relation to managing household assets and production. In practice this could have translated into specific training sessions conducted separately and in plenary, or at different times of day to try meeting the needs of both. Despite the previously mentioned participant suggestion that all activities continue to be conducted for women and men alike (Section 3.1.1), it is nonetheless possible that after more meaningful discussion on the issue a different conclusion could result.

4.9 Programme activities and inputs are seasonally appropriate and synchronised

The short duration of the 2008 FFS programme is perhaps its single greatest limitation, echoed repeatedly by participants and staff throughout the evaluation. Beyond the questions of programme implementation dates or seasonally appropriate activities and inputs is that regardless how effective these might have been, they did not include the full range of activities undertaken in a single production cycle. In short, when the programme concluded on 31 July 2008 all group study and commercial crops were still standing. Practical sessions with FFS participants and ACF
facilitators on improved production techniques therefore only extended from land preparation to weeding, without any hands-on engagement with harvest or post-harvest practices.¹⁹

Even FAO reaches the same conclusion in its evaluation, suggesting that programme support and facilitation should be extended to “at least two crop cycles” if resources permit.²⁰ Two full cycles would in fact extend beyond a twelve month programme, given that second season harvest is generally not finished until December/January, in which case a one year programme would still not be able to engage with the second season post-harvest period. A full one year programme nonetheless could cover post-harvest practices with participants during first season in an approach that anticipates them working without facilitator backstopping during the second season.

In addition to the 2008 missed opportunities for post-harvest practices, the short duration similarly prevented the programme from engaging with additional possibilities to contribute to household income (and therefore food) sources through group marketing for higher prices or possibly even value addition activities. Some of these were discussed with facilitators during the 2008 programme, but like the post-harvest practices they were not put into practice. At least with the crop management practices covered during the FFSs the team has been able to conclude they were sufficiently practiced during the programme itself for participants to perpetuate them.

More generally, the short period of implementation and input delays helped weaken programme impact. The most significant issues have already been introduced, namely that oxen, ploughs, goats, and cassava cuttings either did not arrive or were received too late. Reasons behind each of these were not sought during the evaluation, but the key issues appear to be (the seasonal calendar in Appendix 1 helps contextualise these points):

- **Implementation commenced in practical terms in February rather than January as planned, but with land preparation also beginning in January it is advantageous to mobilise groups as early as possible in the year so that the programme can meaningfully engage with the complete production process.**
- **Draught oxen were received by the groups in the second half of May, without an accompanying plough, after planting had been completed. Participants say that these inputs must be in hand by February at the latest if intended to contribute to first season production.**
- **The cash grant should also be disbursed earlier than late March, when they were received in 2008. Earlier disbursement ensures that groups can open their bank account more readily, begin additional contributions sooner, and purchase first season seeds and inputs without rush.**
- **Assuming normal rainfall, the ideal time to plant cassava is between March and April. Cuttings intended for FFS groups were not received until May and subsequently were all redirected to unrelated groups in other ACF FSL programmes in Lango and Acholi.**

Additional guidance from participants and staff on the seasonal timing of implementation is summarised in the seasonal calendar (Appendix 1).

**4.10 Programme design is based on assessment and M&E planning**

That much of the data used in this evaluation are from FAO rather than ACF is revealing, as is the fact that the evaluation is structured according to indicators and framework developed after the programme finished. This should no longer be possible as ACF Uganda has since agreed that all programmes should be designed and monitored according to a logical framework, regardless whether donors require one or not (which was the case for FAO).

The ACF FFS proposal and inception report both include the planned development of a participatory M&E system, but this never happened. The reports similarly discuss how the programme will increase access to productive assets and strengthen household purchasing power,

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¹⁹ The oft-cited statistic from an (unidentified) FAO Uganda report is that preventable post-harvest losses can reach up to 25% due largely to poor storage.
but none of the monitoring conducted in 2008 included data necessary for reporting or analysis. Most of the programme monitoring was in fact conducted on behalf of FAO, concentrating on crop growth, with data collection and entry completed in the field and a spreadsheet emailed to FAO (unfortunately this did not include yield data). ACF also monitored the programme, concentrating entirely on quantitative cumulative progress of for example number of groups formed and bank accounts opened, types of enterprises selected, acres planted, number of people trained, additional assets constructed, number of household animals and symbolic assets, etc. Some of the above might have contributed to an evaluation, but certainly not to analysing changes in purchasing power, for example, which was the strongest statement of impact forecast in the proposal and inception report. Conducting this evaluation closer to the programme conclusion may have facilitated greater access to some of these data, but this proved to be surprisingly difficult. Aside from the fact that hard copy files had been stored already, there appeared little staff knowledge about what might be found in the files – such as whether they contained copies of group profitability analyses or work plans. Some of the electronic data were found, but it was evident that – like the monitoring system on the whole – it was not stored in a manner that reflected its anticipated access or use. Nor were there final data against which the baseline could be contrasted. For these reasons the evaluation had to be based on predominantly external data and a retrofit framework. This made the exercise possible but has compromised its quality and relevance in that there are very few conclusions that can be drawn on the basis of FFS programme monitoring in 2008.

Greater investment in initial assessment for design followed by a more strategic commitment to baseline data collection and monitoring will ensure that information can be utilised more effectively during implementation and evaluation. This can ensure a more efficient use of staff time in the field, reduction in the costs associated with monitoring (like additional photocopying, vehicle travel, data entry, etc), and ultimately better reporting. Planning for M&E also helps field staff understand the content, purpose, and use of the information they are collecting. Recent ACF experience following the FFS programme suggests that greater field staff involvement in all aspects of monitoring has improved the accuracy and reliability of their data collection. Greater foresight in data collection, management, and use will also help support ACF’s planned surveillance activities and encourage greater comparability of data within and across departments.

The method of initial assessment and baseline data collection, depending on how approached, might even be able to contribute to the originally intended participatory nature of FFS M&E. Any one of the RRA tools used during the evaluation fieldwork could generate participant perspectives on a range of issues pertaining to practices, production, gender, assets, transmission, etc. The specific criteria they use, the amounts they indicate, the priorities they establish could all be channelled into more meaningful indicators and monitoring. The same could prove true for a modified version of matrix scoring for profitability analysis and enterprise selection, as the tool by necessity would establish a range of criteria and preferences that could be evaluated for achievement at the end of the programme.

4.11 Targeting based on vulnerability and integrated criteria

It is difficult to establish precisely how the three programme parishes were selected, or how the participating communities therein were identified. At household level the process and criteria become clearer and more effective.

Geographic priorities were established partly on the basis of FSL field staff experience and where they ‘knew’ vulnerability to food insecurity to be higher. As the programme map illustrates (Figure 1), there was geographic overlap between the FFS parishes and other ACF activities in nutrition and WASH. Of particular interest are water user committees and village health teams, as they too reflect elements of group approaches to management and problem solving. The FFS programme locations were also all within the catchment area of ACF feeding centres. The evaluation team therefore expected more apparent connections between the FFS groups and those from WASH and nutrition, however in practice these were surprisingly few. Although not explored in depth during each focus group session, there was always a question or two about other ACF activities or
groups in the area, about which many participants seemed to know surprisingly little. It was also expected that there might be some overlap between committee memberships, with the same person representing both a water group and a FFS group, for example. However in practice the evaluation team knowingly met only one water committee member and none of the village health team volunteers.

The intended overlap of integrated programming was appropriate but would have benefited from additional rigor along the lines of what has since been developed by the Lango FSL team for 2009 (see Appendix 4). New programming in the sub-region has commenced with analysis of the feeding centre data to identify priority parishes and, if possible, specific communities therein as the basis for geographic targeting. In addition to the geographic focus, the feeding centres offer possible priorities for household targeting among those with children admitted or discharged from the centre.

Household targeting in 2008 prioritised resource poor households, defined by FSL staff as disabled, female-headed, child-headed, elderly, HIV/AIDS affected, and disaster affected. Households should have been displaced then returned to what were the geographic priority areas. Households should have the ability and willingness to participate fully in programme activities and have access to arable land. Aside from the question of subjective interpretations of relative vulnerability, there appears to be nothing to document how specific locations or households were identified, vetted, or finalised. Similarly there are no data to synthesise profiles of participating households.

Conversations with local authorities were also an important part of the FFS participant selection process. Building on district-level memoranda of understanding with ACF, parish level leaders are considered knowledgeable sources of information on ‘vulnerable’ locations and households. But again, there is no documentation into how these consultations were conducted or vulnerability defined. Large meetings were convened in the parish centre to advertise the programme and encourage interested individuals to participate. Actually, the facilitators say that interest was usually so high at such meetings that the focus was more about trying to discourage overly opportunistic participation. That is, the facilitators emphasised the work involved, the financial and temporal contributions required, and the levels of participation and transparency expected. All of this helped some opt not to participate because they did not meet the criteria or because they could not commit to so much. In Minakulu the parish level consultations resulted in FFS groups composed of several individuals from up to five or six communities that together comprise a zone. Although the political advantages of equally distributing programme participation across a zone are obvious, this could over time weaken the solidarity or feasibility of the FFS groups. These groups, for example, were the only ones who indicated that a single pair of draught animals would be difficult to share. The same presumably would also apply in a more comprehensive FFS programme to collective bulking and sale. Even the onward transmission of FFS messages might be watered down by distributing the membership across too wide an area, rather than concentrating impact in strategic centres while striving to include satellite communities in activities like open days, exchange visits, or harvest comparisons.

As a final test of the effectiveness of FFS household targeting, the team conducted a wealth ranking exercise with one group from each of the three parishes. The exercise (and related probing into relative wealth and vulnerability) helped determine what kinds of households comprise a FFS group and whether or not these are homogeneous. There was insufficient time to probe more deeply into what types of changes might be expected within particular types of households, but by cross-checking the 2008 participant lists with the wealth ranking results and sex composition of group committees it was possible to compare wealth group results for both plenary groups and committee members.21

21 Each of the focus groups defined wealth differently but with team guidance all adhered to three categories to ensure comparability. Criteria were in all cases a combination of land, animals, household members, house and roof type, etc.
The wealth ranking results are encouraging for the effectiveness of FFS household targeting, especially in Opejal and Aceno. Although there is not (yet) a specific target dictating what proportion of participants should be ‘poor’ we would nonetheless expect that most participants should fall into this category. At the same time, it may not be reasonable to expect that all households are poor, as the programmatic requirements for land, labour, time, and finance may prohibit some of the poorest households while increasing the likelihood that more ‘middle’ households join instead. The Opejal and Aceno results match this expectation, but the high proportion of middle households in Oyoro is difficult to explain.

The wealth group composition of the group committees is also encouraging, especially if compared with the preceding analysis of gender roles. The proportions within committee members are almost equal to those of the full group, but with an apparently slight bias toward the higher group (i.e. when compared with the corresponding plenary the committee members are more middle than poor, more rich than middle).

As a final review of the analytical process behind geographic and household targeting, the map (Figure 1) includes a layer of colour indicating the integrated food security phase classification (IPC) at the time of programming. Although the FFS groups are all in the lower Phase II area (compared with Phase III in Gulu and Amuru), this was a more appropriate place for implementation than the Phase III areas. Household returns were officially over in Lango, with households already in the process of re-establishing and recreating livelihood activities, which in turn allow greater FS engagement than displaced households or those in the process of return.
## Appendix A. Seasonal and programmatic calendar

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Appendix B. Seed Flow Diagram (Groundnut, Red Beauty)

In an attempt to understand better some of the community dynamics surrounding seed flow, the evaluation team facilitated the following diagram with FFS focus group respondents in Acan Kwette. Although neither rigorous nor complete, the illustration suggests that there are opportunities to increase the amount of seed retained within communities, estimated below as less than the amount purchased externally from traders.
Appendix C. Matrix Scoring Experiment for Enterprise Selection

After completing fieldwork and agreeing on key findings and recommendations, the evaluation team experimented with two approaches to matrix scoring as a possible alternative to the currently complex approach to enterprise selection.

Opinions were split regarding which approach would be more accessible to FFS participants more informative or which would reveal a more telling snapshot of decision making criteria. Nonetheless, it is interesting to see that each of the two trial groups reached identical conclusions about their top three choices: groundnut (red beauty), yellow bean, and hybrid maize.

Regardless which approach is utilised, the team concluded that an approach along these lines would be more effective than that used in the 2008 programme.

Matrix scoring version 1

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
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<th>Vulnerable to Disease</th>
<th>Vulnerable to Drought</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Maturity Period</th>
<th>Production Costs</th>
<th>Marketability</th>
<th>Score</th>
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Participant scoring is done horizontally, with each crop scored 1-3 (low-high) according to each criterion.

Matrix scoring version 2

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<th>Vulnerable to Drought</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Maturity Period</th>
<th>Production Costs</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yellow bean</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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Participant scoring is done vertically, with a total of 10 points distributed throughout each column.
Appendix D. Programme Tools for Targeting and Timing

These are two of several possible tools that can be used for future programme targeting and planning. The first was developed in 2009 for cash transfer programme geographic targeting based on a range of complementary criteria, and represented an innovative step forward departmental integration.

The second chart summarises admissions of children under five years old in the ACF feeding centres operational around each of the FFS areas. Such data are a first step in completing the preceding table for integrated targeting. More broadly, the trend line of nutrition admissions can provide an interesting counterpoint to trend lines for market prices of key commodities and months without inadequate household food provisioning. Analysing the relationship (or lack) between these three trends might offer increased insight into seasonal shocks, which in turn could suggest possible impact indicators or the timing of certain activities (such as when cash grants should be dispersed to support households without undermining local markets).

ACF FSL targeting tool for 2009 Otuke (Lango) livelihood recovery programme

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<th>Parish</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th># of Children Under 5</th>
<th># of Nutrition Admissions</th>
<th>% of Children &lt; 5 Admitted</th>
<th>WASH 2009</th>
<th>FSL 2008</th>
<th>FSL 2009</th>
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ACF feeding centre admissions of children under 5 (2007-2008)

Source: ACF
Appendix E. Evaluation Methodology Diagram

Secondary Data
- ACF Programme Documents & Data (2008)
- FAO Evaluation Data (2008)
- Secondary Literature and Data

Primary Data
- ACF Farmer Field School Evaluation (April 2009)
  - Analysis
  - Findings
  - Recommendations

Focus Group Discussion Guide
- Opejal
  - Targeting and social stratification (wealth ranking)
  - Household food, income, expenditure (proportional piling)
  - Coping strategies (pairwise ranking)
  - Seasonality (calendar)
- Oyoro
  - Targeting and social stratification (wealth ranking)
  - Household food, income, expenditure (proportional piling)
  - Coping strategies (pairwise ranking)
  - Seasonality (calendar)
- Aceno
  - Targeting and social stratification (wealth ranking)
  - Household food, income, expenditure (proportional piling)
  - Coping strategies (pairwise ranking)
  - Seasonality (calendar)
Appendix F. Evaluation Terms of Reference

ACF Farmer Field School Evaluation: Terms of Reference

Background

Since mid-2006, security has improved greatly in the Lango sub-region. Voluntary resettlement has been a promising progression from an emergency situation. However, resettlement has been followed by an abrupt cut to humanitarian aid in the area followed by worrying trends in the food security situation. WFP found in April 2007 that 74% of all households in Lira resettlement area demonstrate some degree of food insecurity. The percentage of food insecure households in Lira and Apac/Oyam was significantly higher than Gulu: 15%, 24% and 8% respectively. Additionally, ACF nutritional surveys conducted during the same period found that global acute malnutrition was considerably higher in Lango than Acholi, with underlying causes connected to food insecurity.

Currently, the primary cause of food insecurity in Northern Lango is insufficient production at the household level. Land access has improved significantly since 2006, with households accessing up to 5.5 acres according to ACF monitoring. Nevertheless, increases in production have not followed suit. The main constraints to increased production are with household access to productive resources: hand hoes are still used by 84% of the population and tool ownership is a paltry two hoes and one panga per household. Because of low crop production, households lack sufficient food for consumption, sale, or seed stocks. This is exacerbated by inefficient farming practices and inferior crop/seed storage practices, the combination of which decreases seed security.

Newly resettled households will require several consistently successful harvests before agricultural efficiency can be discussed. They therefore require some form of assistance for at least a year and half after their resettlement. Estimates for 2008 harvests were initially good, but below average rainfall is raising concern as the year progresses. Pockets of the sub-region are likely to have poor harvests for second season 2008 due to late land preparation, delayed planting, and uneven rainfall distribution, especially in the northern sub-counties. The above conditions could have potential long term effects on household resilience and food security into 2009.

Local markets are functioning and have food available, but they are poor in quantity and diversity of foods because of low local production. Household cash access is poor and multiple forms of income are needed to ensure basic needs can be met. Re-growth of the livestock sector has been slow due to lack of household capital, low levels of animals in the area, and sharp price increases for both fuel and staple foods that have doubled or in some cases tripled since 2005. Lango is currently a major source of animals for Acholi, which has the potential to stagnate animal population growth in the latter sub-region. Demand for meat and milk are not met by the local supply either.

Farmer Field Schools

Farmer Field Schools (FFS) comprise of a group of rural producers who come together with a common agricultural interest or problem which they want to solve together. Members meet on a regular basis to study the “how and why” of a particular situation. Farmers make regular field observations, then relate to their past experience before making an appropriate enterprise management decision to improve their production.

ACF, in partnership with FAO, facilitated formation of twelve farmer field school groups (with a total of 320 households) in Minakulu sub-county of Lira district, Lango sub-region. Implementation was from January to July 2008. The main focus of the FFS approach was to facilitate experiential learning for community empowerment along the following two sets of parallel objectives:

24 Data from 2008 1st season seed fair, post-distribution monitoring.
Institutional Community

• FFS shorten the times it takes to get research from station to adoption in farmer fields by involving farmers in their own experimentation
• Enhance the capacity of extension workers to serve as technically skilled and group sensitive facilitators of farmer’s experiential learning.
• Increase the competency of extension services to provide farmer education that responds more effectively to local resources and conditions
• Contribute information on the replicability and effectiveness of FFSs as an alternative and sustainable mechanism for extension service delivery
• Empower farmers with knowledge and skills in farming
• Sharpen farmer ability in making logical decisions on what works best for them, based on their own observations of experimental and validation plots
• Promote group initiatives that are able to solve own community problems and facilitate the work of other development players by providing a demand driven system
• Establish high level of networking by groups to handle emerging follow up with community activities [marketing, resource mobilization processing, contract farming, etc]

Based on encouraging participant report and positive feedback from FAO on the relative strengths of the ACF farmer field schools, ACF plans to expand the approach in Lango sub-region during 2009 and to pilot the initiative in Acholi sub-region at the same time. Before scaling up, however, an evaluation is required to review achievement and improve the approach.

Evaluation Objectives

1. To evaluate the FFS methodology and process for 12 groups in Minakulu and Okwang sub-counties.
2. To evaluate FFS impact on household food security and livelihoods, according to qualitative and quantitative data analysis generated through questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews.
3. To identify existing strengths and weaknesses in ACF FFS implementation and M&E.
4. To involve ACF staff in an applied learning opportunity and identify training needs improved FFS implementation and M&E.
5. To develop specific recommendations for improved FFS programming in 2009.

Evaluation Process

Phase one of the evaluation will build on a recently concluded quantitative evaluation of the farmer field school approach in Uganda, completed by FAO in July 2008. Sections of the FAO data collection tool will be used in order to ensure comparability of ACF results with national trends identified in the FAO data. ACF field extension workers will be briefed on the evaluation objectives and trained in use of the quantitative data collection tool before collecting data from the 12 FFS groups. If possible, one control group (not participating in the FFS) will participate from each location for further comparative analysis.

Phase two of the evaluation will utilise initial analysis of the quantitative data as the basis for focus group discussions in each FFS location so that causes, effects, preferences, etc can be understood in greater detail. Seasonality of activities and inputs will be analysed, preferably building upon a seasonal calendar already developed by ACF field extension workers. Matrix scoring and proportional piling could be included in the focus groups, depending on initial results from the quantitative data collection and subsequent identification of analytical priorities. The possibility of gender-disaggregated groups will also be explored to consider possible differences in gender impact of FFS activities on women and men.

Key Documents

• ACF-FAO letters of agreement and project proposals
• ACF progress and final report to FAO
• FAO evaluation of farmer field schools in Uganda
• Draft logical framework for 2009 ACF FFS M&E
• Quantitative data analysis results of ACF 2008 output indicators
**Outputs**

1. Development of ACF farmer field school logical framework: objective, results, activities, indicators, means of verification, assumptions, and risk management. To be annexed to the final report.

2. Final, concise report structured according to the logical framework, including comparison of available baseline data against progress achieved to date and identification of existing gaps in ACF FFS M&E. This will include but not be limited to:
   - Demonstrated capacity in new planting techniques (rows, spacing).
   - Changes in agricultural production resulting from new techniques and inputs.
   - Differences in crop quality, compared with non-FFS participants in same location.
   - FFS group and individual savings (amounts, use).
   - Seasonal appropriateness of inputs and activities.
   - Increased knowledge of soil fertility management.
   - Increased knowledge of importance of environmental preservation.
   - Prevalence of appropriate drying, packing, storing techniques and facilities.
   - Utility of farmer field days in 2008 and their potential in future FFS.
   - Effectiveness of FFS training modules (and recommendations on possible curriculum changes and how to assess training effectiveness more systematically in 2009).
   - Anticipated sustainability of promoted ideas, practices, and inputs of 2008.
   - Priorities for improving FFS facilitator training skills.
   - Evidence of onward transmission of knowledge, practices, seeds, etc from FFS participant to other(s) in community.
   - Participant perception of their input into FFS design and implementation in 2008.
   - Relevance of farmer field schools to the current context of household livelihoods and food security in the Lango sub-region.
   - Guidance on future implementation of FFS, including all aspects of targeting, design, seasonality, enterprises, M&E, etc from the perspectives of participating groups, non-participants, ACF staff, and the evaluation team.

**Qualifications**

- Minimum six years of programmatic experience in agronomy, food security, livelihoods, or related subject.
- Advanced university degree in relevant discipline.
- Experience in designing, leading, and reporting on development project evaluations.
- Demonstrated experience in field staff capacity building, ideally in an applied learning context.
- Excellent English report writing skills; ability to summarise findings and data concisely, and to develop clear conclusions and practical recommendations that are linked directly with findings.
- Ability to facilitate, train others in, and analyse findings from participatory research tools (particularly matrix scoring, proportional piling, and pairwise ranking).
- Fluent spoken Luo.

**Timing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design and preparation</td>
<td>Mon Mar 23</td>
<td>Fri Mar 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; workshop</td>
<td>Mon Mar 30</td>
<td>Wed Apr 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldwork at 10 sites</td>
<td>Thu Apr 2</td>
<td>Wed Apr 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debrief &amp; base analysis</td>
<td>Wed Apr 8</td>
<td>Fri Apr 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft &amp; comments</td>
<td>Mon Apr 13</td>
<td>Mon Apr 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final report</td>
<td>Tue Apr 14</td>
<td>Fri Apr 17</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Evaluation Objectives:

1. To assess the performance and impact of ACF facilitated farmer field schools in the Lango sub-region.
2. To document the strengths and weaknesses of the 2008 FFS programme for improved performance and impact in subsequent implementation.
3. To build ACF field staff capacity in food security, livelihoods, rapid appraisal tools, and evaluation.

### Topic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmer field school approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACF FFS programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other ACF programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Existing quantitative data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dietary diversity score</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coping strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food, income, expenditure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Months of adequate household food Provisioning</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFS facilitators as sources of information and skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changes in household assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriateness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Targeting</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Information Required

- Rationale and approach
- Rationale, locations, approach
- Impact, performance, capacity building
- Displacement times
- Duration of displacement
- Comparison with nutrition admissions
- VHTs in same area
- Other/previous WASH and FSL programming in location
- Timing of previous data collection
- Any of the same respondents?
- Food preferences
- Differences for wealth groups
- Low diversity normal or could changes be expected?
- Types
- Frequency and seasonality
- Relative severity – PAIRWISE RANKING TOOL
- PROPORTIONAL PILING TOOL
- Which months
- Same every year, or only sometimes?
- Which wealth groups
- NAADS
- Radio?
- How was this done before FFSs
- What will happen for others not in the FFS (lead farmers?)
- Additional stoves, latrines, racks, pits, kitchens, etc
- Symbolic assets like radios and bicycles
- Approach
- Activities
- Inputs
- Timing of delivery (bulls, ploughs, grinders, hullers, goats, cuttings, cash)
- Participation by wealth group
- WEALTH RANKING TOOL

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**Action Against Hunger Uganda**  
- 53 -  
**Farmer Field School Evaluation**
| 4. Improved crop and livestock practices | Training of ACF facilitators | By FAO  
By ACF  
Refresher |
|---|---|---|
| Participant skill training | Decreased attendance  
Relevance of topics  
Timing and location of sessions (actual vs female/male preferences) |
| Demonstration gardens | Where  
What technology and practices  
Describe experimentation process  
Other community experimentation or transfer  
Most useful aspect of demonstration sites  
How to do differently next time for others |
| Practices promoted through the FFS | Which practices promoted  
Relevance  
Adoption; still applied  
Others that should have been included  
Onward transfer to others |
| Record keeping | Types  
Quality of records  
Group access and transparency  
Perception of record keeping  
Where kept  
Lag between action and notation  
Too complicated to maintain? |
| Documentation | Group constitution  
Business plan  
Work plan  
Enterprise selection  
Budget  
Certificate of registration  
Minutes  
Whether all kept together |
| Post-harvest handling | Practices  
Individual or group storage; types  
Question of practice or inputs |
| Enterprise selection capacity | Profitability analysis  
Seed selection  
Site selection  
practices |
| 5. Increased crop and livestock production | Acreage | Changes and trend (access vs utilisation)  
No increase for non-participants?  
Types of crops for first and second season |
| Crop production | Quantity  
Quality  
Factors  
Changes |
| Livestock production | Housing  
Practices  
Changes  
Complementarity of small ruminants to cultivation |
| Marketing | Farm gate or town  
Prices |
| Cassava multiplication | Variety  
Late FAO delivery and ACF reallocation to other groups  
Pass on group identification, timing, follow up  
Whether cassava should be included in future FFSs |
| 6. Enhanced income generation and management capacity | Markets | ▪ Access  
▪ Demand  
▪ Linkages  

| Value addition | ▪ Missing FAO equipment  
▪ Current processing in area  
▪ Ideas and opportunities  

| Seed multiplication and marketing | ▪ Experience with Victoria Seeds (Minakulu)  
▪ Comparative profitability  

| Savings | ▪ Record keeping  
▪ Transparency  
▪ Amount  
▪ Where kept  

| Credit | ▪ Type (food or cash)  
▪ Increase or decrease  
▪ Source  
▪ Amount  
▪ Purpose  

| 7. Recommendations for design, targeting, implementation, and M&E | Possible interventions & linkages | ▪  

| Timing of activities and inputs | ▪  

| M&E considerations | ▪  

Location: _______________________     Date: ______________

FFS group new?
○ Yes
○ No

Preferred FEMALE meeting time: _______________________
Preferred MALE meeting time: _______________________
At what time of day did group routinely meet? _______________________

Representation (female/male):
Chair  _______
Secretary     _______
Treasurer  _______
Market Coord _______
Mobiliser    _______
Network Rep     _______

How was profit from study enterprise used?
○ To expand enterprise
○ To start another enterprise
○ Distributed to members
○ Deposited in the group account
○ To buy inputs and distribute to members
○ Other: _______________________________________________

How was profit from commercial enterprise used?
○ To expand enterprise
○ To start another enterprise
○ Distributed to members
○ Deposited in the group account
○ To buy inputs and distribute to members
○ Other: _______________________________________________

Is the group bank account still open?
○ Yes
○ No

If yes, what is the current balance? Ugx _______________
## Coping Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Rely on less preferred, less expensive food</th>
<th>B. Borrow food from friend or relative</th>
<th>C. Purchase food on credit</th>
<th>D. Consume wild foods and animals</th>
<th>E. Reduce the portion size of meals</th>
<th>F. Reduce the number of meals per day</th>
<th>G. Skip entire days without meals</th>
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**SCORE**

**RANK**
# The Household Economy

Location: _______________________

Date: ______________

## Food Sources

| 1. | Own crop production |
| 2. | Own livestock production |
| 3. | Market purchase |
| 4. | Wild foods (gathered and consumed by HH) |
| 5. | Food aid (food or food vouchers from UN/NGO, including general distribution and food for work) |
| 6. | Casual labor (for food wage, not from UN/NGO) |
| 7. | Gifts/begging (received from outside the HH without expectation of reimbursement) |
| 8. | Loans (received from outside the HH with expectation of repayment) |
| 9. | Other |

**Total 100**

## Income Sources

| 1. | Own crop production |
| 2. | Own livestock production |
| 3. | Casual labor (unskilled, for cash wage) |
| 4. | Artisan (skilled labor, even if casual) |
| 5. | Petty trade (kiosks, salon, boda boda, hotel, etc) |
| 6. | Bush products (HH collection and sale of wood, charcoal, grass, etc) |
| 7. | Gifts/begging (received from outside the HH without expectation of reimbursement) |
| 8. | Loans (received from outside the HH with expectation of repayment) |
| 9. | Other |

**Total 100**

## Expenditure

| 1. | Food for the household |
| 2. | Ag/vet inputs (seeds, tools, spray, vaccines, etc) |
| 3. | Transportation (of self or ag/vet products) |
| 4. | Household items (matches, kerosene, clothing, kitchen tools, etc) |
| 5. | Debt/loan repayment (cash expenditure, not food) |
| 6. | Health |
| 7. | Education (fees, books, uniforms, etc) |
| 8. | Cigarettes and alcohol |
| 9. | Other |

**Total 100**