



Eastern and Southern Africa  
Small Scale Farmers' Forum  
**ESAFF - UGANDA**



*Amplifying Small-scale  
Farmers' Voices*

# Report

THE 6<sup>TH</sup> *Annual*  
**NATIONAL ORGANIC WEEK**

**NOW** **20  
24**  
**30<sup>TH</sup> SEPT. - 4<sup>TH</sup> OCT.**

## THEME

POSITIONING ORGANIC FARMING AS  
A PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD  
PRODUCTION AND RESILIENCE



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# REPORT FOR THE 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NATIONAL ORGANIC WEEK (NOW) 2024

Organic farming represents a holistic approach to agriculture, focusing on sustainability, environmental stewardship, and human health. As the world faces increasing challenges from climate change, biodiversity loss, and deteriorating soil health, it is imperative to promote farming practices that restore ecosystems and ensure long-term food security. Organic farming is a key solution to these challenges due to its regenerative and environmentally friendly principles. Additionally, consumers are increasingly concerned about the safety and quality of their food. Organic farming provides an alternative to conventional agriculture by producing food without synthetic chemicals and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). This reduces the risk of exposure to pesticide residues, which are associated with various health concerns. Moreover, organic produce may contain higher levels of certain nutrients, including antioxidants, contributing to better overall nutrition.

Since 2019, ESAFF Uganda has been organizing the National Organic Week (NOW) to raise awareness among the public on consumption of organic products and the contribution of organic farming and Agroecology in combating the impacts of climate change. Yet again, ESAFF Uganda organized the 6th Annual National Organic Week (NOW) 2024 from 30th September to 4th October 2024, which aimed at popularizing best agroecological practices among small-scale farmers, schools as well as local leaders and emphasizing their role in environmental conservation while mitigating climate change impacts. This year, the NOW was celebrated under the Theme: **Promoting Organic Farming as a Pathway to sustainable food production and climate resilience**. The 6th Annual National Organic Week (NOW) 2024 was held in 9 districts including: Serere, Soroti, Amuru, Apac, Zombo, Nebbi, Gulu, Iganga and Mityana.



# OBJECTIVES OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL ORGANIC WEEK (NOW) 2024

- 1.** | To increase awareness of the benefits of organic products and farming production systems and accelerate the uptake of these in the wider community.
- 2.** | To show case and promote best practices on agroecology, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land management.



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**ESAF - UGANDA**  
 **AGROECOLOGY SCHOOL**  
 BUILDING IN AGROECOLOGY REGION OF JOBS, HEALTH & COMMUNITIES  
 (AGRI, URBAN, RURAL & STRATA)  
**THE SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' MEDIA SENSITIZATION ON KEY ISSUES IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR**  
 30<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2024 |  **CULU CITY**  
   
 www.norad.org

# 1. NATIONAL MEDIA SENSITIZATION ON KEY SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' ISSUES



The media sensitization was organized in Gulu City at the Northern Uganda Media Club offices. This was attended by 3 small-scale farmers and 16 journalists from Northern Uganda and focused on key issues and challenges that affect small-scale farmers, which journalists should focus on. Small-scale farmers highlighted land and seed rights as some of the key issues that should be focused on while reporting. They emphasized that reporting on land rights is crucial for promoting transparency, accountability, and social justice and by shedding light on issues such as land grabbing, displacement of communities, and unequal access to land, reporting raises awareness, hold stakeholders accountable, and advocate for policy changes that protect the rights of vulnerable populations.

Additionally, we held six radio talk shows on Radio Maria in Nebbi district, Etop FM in Soroti district, Mega FM in Gulu district, RFM in Iganga district, Mboona FM in Mityana district and Apac FM in Apac district. A total of 14 people took part in the



radio talk shows including small-scale farmers, extension officers as well as local leaders. The radio talk shows focused on popularizing organic farming practices and reached an estimated 1.5 million listeners across the country. During the talk shows, small scale farmers were urged to adopt agroecological practices such as composting, intercropping, and natural pest control, support local organic markets by growing, buying, and consuming organic products as well as participate in community exhibitions to learn more about organic farming's role in building sustainable food system and climate resilience.

Small-scale farmers called for the fast tracking of the development of the NAS and implementation of favorable policies that promote organic agriculture and agroecology like the NOAP 2019 while ensuring land tenure security for small-scale farmers especially women to encourage long-term investments in sustainable farming/organic agriculture/Agroecology.





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**FOSTERING  
SMALL-SCALE  
FARMERS'  
COLLABORATION  
AND EMPLOYMENT**

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## 2. COMMUNITY AGROECOLOGY TRAINING AND LEARNING EVENTS

In Serere and Amuru districts, 78 small-scale farmers were trained on best Agroecological practices that they can adopt to increase their resilience to the impacts of climate change. The small-scale farmers were taken through the general understanding of Agroecology and its principles and the various agroecology practices which included making of bio-pesticides and organic fertilizers and making of compost manure. During the learning events, small-scale farmers expressed their gratitude for such training as it had come at a timely manner when most of the farmers are losing their yields because of using fake agricultural inputs.



**AGROECOLOGY CLUBS**

**Promoting agroecology in the learning institutions**

Goal of the Agroecology Clubs is to empower a generation to understand the role of agroecology in building a healthy and resilient food system.

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**SCHOOLS CLUBS**

**The Annual National Organic Week (NOW)**

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### 3. SCHOOL DEBATES ON ORGANIC AGRICULTURE AND AGROECOLOGY IN THE AGROECOLOGY CLUBS IN SCHOOLS



We held 3 school debates in St. Joseph's Naama Modern Secondary School, Olwal Mucaja Primary School and Maruzi Seed Secondary School where students engaged in an insightful debate on organic farming. The proposing teams of the debates emerged winners as they ably convinced the audiences the crucial benefits of organic farming to improving human health and sustaining our environment. The debates were attended by 90 students in the three schools. Additionally, we launched an Agroecology club at St. Mary's Secondary School Kasolo in Iganga district where we engaged 95 students on the concept of Agroecology. 5 students participated in a quiz on Agroecology. This increased their understanding of Agroecology and its benefits in ensuring human health and preserving the environment.



Support for Sustainable Africa  
Land Rights Resource Centre  
ESAF - Uganda

**LRSC** LAND RIGHTS RESOURCE CENTRE

**OXFAM**

**COMMUNITY DIALOGUE  
ON THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN (NDP) AND CLIMATE JUSTICE**

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FOR ANY QUESTIONS ON  
**LAND RIGHTS**  
SMS OR WHATSAPP TO

**0776892211**

Providing easy  
information and  
for financed Pro  
Sustainable





## 4. COMMUNITY DIALOGUES ON THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

ESAFF Uganda held consultative community meetings on the National Development Plan 4 (NDP4) in Pakia Azii Community, Warr Sub County, Zombo District, Erusi Sub County, Nebbi District, and Akere Sub county in Apac district. The community meetings were attended by 198 people including small-scale farmers, local leaders and representatives from the district local governments. Community members shared experiences on organic and agroecology farming, highlighting struggles to achieve food and nutrition security amidst the climate crisis, particularly for women farmers and the National Development Plan (NDP) process and government priorities for NDP4. These meetings demonstrated ESAFF Uganda's commitment to amplifying community voices and advocating for inclusive and sustainable agricultural development.

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The Annual  
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# THE 6TH ANNUAL NATIONAL ORGANIC AGRICULTURE DIALOGUE

On 4th October 2024, we held the 6th Annual National Organic Agriculture Dialogue which was the climax event of NOW 2024. This took place in Serere district at the district headquarters. 56 participants including small-scale farmers, representatives from Serere District Local Government and the media attended this dialogue. The dialogue included breakout sessions, which helped us collect information from small-scale farmers and other participants on key issues related to organic agriculture. Information from this session was used to develop the Serere Declaration on Organic Agriculture. The dialogue incited discussion on the different challenges small-scale farmers are facing in practicing organic agriculture and received commitment from local leaders on supporting small-scale farmers with extension services to help them in transitioning to organic agriculture.

Small-scale farmers also exhibited various indigenous seeds and food crops, which they explained the different benefits in improving nutrition and reviving our endangered ecosystems. Some of the practices that were exhibited included use of bokash as a fertilizer and human urine as pesticides. Small-scale farmers also exhibited indigenous seed of turmeric, ginger, pumpkins and many other local food plants, which are slowly becoming extinct within the farming communities.





## OUTCOMES

- 1.** Increased knowledge on Agroecological farming practices among small-scale farmers. Small-scale farmers gained an understanding of the practices they can adopt to cope with the impacts of climate change.
- 2.** The 6th Annual National Organic Week (NOW) 2024 facilitated knowledge sharing and exchange among small-scale about the cultivation, preservation, and importance of indigenous seeds and plants. This sharing of local knowledge during the exhibition strengthened their understanding of how to maintain seed diversity and adapt to local environmental conditions.
- 3.** Increased awareness on the benefits of organic farming towards human health and environmental sustainability among consumers and students.



## CONCLUSION

The 6th Annual National Organic Week (NOW) in 2024 provided an essential forum for influencing the direction of organic farming, highlighting the significance of sustainability, expanding the organic markets, and implementing agroecology in learning institutions. The weeklong activities concluded with a feeling of hope and momentum for small-scale farmers across the country to continue growing and embracing organic farming.



## MEDIA LINKS

1. <https://thecooperator.news/serere-farmers-equipped-with-knowledge-in-agroecology/amp/>
2. <https://dailyexpress.co.ug/2024/10/06/journalists-called-to-expose-plights-of-small-scale-farmers/?s>
3. <https://gna.co.ug/2024/02/rats-destroy-rice-worth-over-shs1b-at-tochi-irrigation-scheme/>  
[https://ugandaradionetwork.net/story/small-holder-farmers-in-acholi-join-hands-in-protecting-l](https://ugandaradionetwork.net/story/small-holder-farmers-in-acholi-join-hands-in-protecting-local-seed-varieties)
4. [ocal-seed-varieties](https://ugandaradionetwork.net/story/small-holder-farmers-in-acholi-join-hands-in-protecting-local-seed-varieties)
5. [https://www.youtube.com/live/y\\_XeVGZZbTs?si=nr7dN8\\_Jb5vTBEqf](https://www.youtube.com/live/y_XeVGZZbTs?si=nr7dN8_Jb5vTBEqf)
6. [https://ugandaradionetwork.net/a/story/amuru-schools-embrace-practical-organic-farming-less](https://ugandaradionetwork.net/a/story/amuru-schools-embrace-practical-organic-farming-less-lessons-)  
[ons-](https://ugandaradionetwork.net/a/story/amuru-schools-embrace-practical-organic-farming-less-lessons-)
7. [https://thecooperator.news/organic-farmers-raise-concerns-over-policy-failures-and-certificatio](https://thecooperator.news/organic-farmers-raise-concerns-over-policy-failures-and-certification-costs/)  
[n-costs/](https://thecooperator.news/organic-farmers-raise-concerns-over-policy-failures-and-certification-costs/)



# SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' FORUM ON ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

ORGANIC WEEK (NOW) 2024

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**ED IN DIVERSITY - RID  
TNERSHIP FOR FOOD  
RTY AND LIVELIHOODS**  
PROJECT GOAL

Increased food security  
and livelihoods for  
small-scale food  
producers and their  
communities.



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## The Annual National Organic Week (NOW)



**LIVESTOCK MATTERS**

BUILDING A NETWORK OF JOURNALISTS  
AND COMMUNICATORS FOR AGROECOLOGICAL  
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