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NBCEs Community-to-Community Exchange 2017

**Partnering with Nature Based Community Enterprises (NBCEs)
for Livelihoods and Environmental Resilience**

Rwanda, 27th - 30th Nov 2017

Event Report



**ARCOS Network
Kigali, December 2017**

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List of acronyms

ARCOS	Albertine Rift Conservation Society
BEST	Building sustainable institutions, Enhancing environmental resilience, Sustainable business solutions, and Transforming and inspiring others
CITMK	Coopérative Imboni pour le Transport Maritime de Kibungo
COMUFLEKI	Coopérative de Multiplication des Fruits et Légumes de Kigarama
FONERWA	Rwanda's National Climate and Environment Fund
KAKIKA	Koperative Abaharanira Kwiteza Imbere ba Kabungeri
KEFA	Kapchebut Elgon Farmers Association
KOAAMI	Koperative Amahoro y'Abarobyi ba Mitako
KOAKAKI	Koperative y'Abahinzi ba Kawa ba Kigarama
KOAUKI	Koperative y'Abahinzi b'Urutoki ba Kigarama
NBCEs	Nature Based Community Enterprises
NBCF	Nature Based Community Fund
NBV's	Nature Based Villages
NFF	New Field Foundation
Rwf	Rwandan Francs
SA	Sustainability Agreement
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
WRI	World Resources Institute

PART I. INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background



Since its creation in 1995, the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS Network) has promoted information exchange, networking and capacity building, as well as on-ground activities for sustainable community development and environmental resilience.

Through its Nature Based Community Enterprises (NBCEs) Programme, ARCOS Network partners with communities to sustain community development at household and community organization level through supporting their engagement in sound environmental management while strengthening their nature based enterprises and building networks with other communities to exchange knowledge and experiences. enhance adaptation to climate change and promote environmental restoration and community development, as well as to build community exchange networks through which partner communities exchange bio-culture knowledge and experience. This partnership is formalized through a “Sustainability Agreement (SA),” which is a negotiated performance and benefits-based contract involving ARCOS Network; partner NBCEs and the local government in the areas where NBCEs operate.



On-ground interventions of ARCOS Network are centered around four key areas that constitute its BEST Approach (B: Building leadership and sustainable institutions; E: Enhancing Environmental Resilience; S: Sustainable nature based business solutions; and T: Transforming and inspiring others) that provides an integrated framework to face complex challenges and bring solutions for sustainable community livelihoods and environmental resilient villages through Nature Based Villages (NBVs), Nature Based Community Fund (NBCF) and Community-to-Community Exchange.



It is in this framework that every year since 2016, ARCOS Network facilitates Community-to-Community Exchange. The first edition was held in Kapchorwa, Mbale, and Bududa Districts in Eastern Uganda on the slopes of Mt. Elgon from 29th to 31st August 2016. The first Community-to-Community Exchange resulted into a “Regional NBCEs Learning Group” and regional community newsletter named “ENDOKWA News”, Endokwa means “seedling” in Luganda, one of the ethnic languages in Uganda (See resolutions here: http://www.arcosnetwork.org/uploads/2017/11/COMMUNITY_TRAIN_RESOLUTIONS_Final.pdf)).



ARCOS Network with support from Rwanda’s National Climate and Environment Fund (FONERWA), New Field Foundation (NFF), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and World Resources Institute (WRI), organized the 2nd Phase of the Regional Community-to-Community Exchange in Rwanda. This event took place from Monday, 27th to Thursday, 30th November 2017 in selected sites of Bugesera and Kirehe Districts in Rwanda and it targeted 30 NBCEs, members of ARCOS’ community network, from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda.

1.2. Objectives

The main objective of this Community-to-Community Exchange 2017 is to enable participants to exchange information and knowledge on best agricultural practices, biodiversity conservation, sustainable energy solutions, value addition as well as cultural exchange.

Specific objectives

1. Enable participants to share experience on sustainable and business oriented agriculture, to boost income and contribute to landscape restoration
2. Facilitate learning while doing the activities related to soil, water and biodiversity conservation, including rain water harvesting practices, wastewater management, erosion control, forest landscape restoration, catchment management practices, etc.
3. Facilitate bio-cultural knowledge exchange on seeds conservation practices, traditional dances as well as community self-reliance initiatives (i.e. Nature Based Community Fund)
4. Identify new community initiatives to improve livelihoods and environmental sustainability and a strategy to nurture them
5. Market community products and seek for possible partnerships to ensure sustainability of this initiative.



1.3. Learning approach

During the 2017 Community-to-Community Exchange, participatory and hands-on learning approaches were used, where participants were able to see the innovations first hand and exchange practical knowledge focusing on four key areas that constitute ARCOS' BEST approach. It is particularly under the component T of BEST Approach where communities share knowledge and biocultural heritage in the management of natural resources, agroforestry, seeds, water and soil conservation and sustainable business practices as well as experience in community institutional management.

Through field visits, participants explored agriculture and livestock farming, fishing, wastes management practices, catchment management practices, landscape restoration practices, and institutional management. From each site, participants identified best practices that should be scaled up or replicated in their respective landscapes, as well as discussed on threats in the landscape and proposed potential solutions to address them. Each site visit was concluded by a cultural exchange that brought participants, members of the host NBCEs and local communities together through shared meals, traditional songs and dances.

1.4. Participants

NBCEs Community-to-Community Exchange 2017 gathered members of 30 NBCEs, partner of ARCOS, from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. Those include 37 participants among whom two were from Burundi, 22 from Rwanda and 11 from Uganda (See list of participants in Annex I).



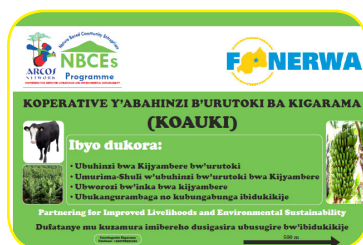
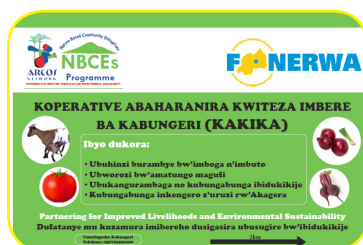
I.5. Programme

NBCEs Community-to-Community Exchange 2017 covered different topics, namely: 1) Sustainable Agriculture, 2) Sustainable Livestock farming and Fishing, 3) Handcrafts and Carving, 4) Bee-keeping, 5) Ecotourism, and 6) Seeds conservation.

The key activities included:

- Visits to different sites in Kirehe to explore sustainable coffee, horticulture and banana farming, market oriented agriculture for women, as well as sustainable fishing in Akagera river
- Visit Kabungeri Nature Based Village (NBV) and learn about how the Nature Based Community Fund (NBCF) is contributing to village development through supporting community small projects and launch tree planting campaign
- Visit Amasangano (the congruence of Akanyaru and Nyabarongo rivers to form Akagera) in Bugesera and learn from CITMK (Cooperative Inyenyeri pour le Transport Maritime de Kibungo) experience in a long-journey towards promoting sustainable exploitation of that important ecosystem (See Community-to-Community Exchange Program in Annex II)

NBCEs Community-to-Community Exchange 2017 concluded with an Open Day that took place on 30th November 2017 in Bugesera district. It brought together different stakeholders, including communities, Development Partners, local and central government, private sector and civil society to learn about NBCEs Initiative through NBCEs members' testimonies and exhibition, as well as to explore possibility for partnership to enhance and scale up the initiative (See Open day Program in Annex III).



PART II: FIELD VISITS AND NBCEs EXCHANGE

II.1. Field Visits

II.1.1. Visit to KAKIKA and KOAAMI Cooperatives and Kabungeri village

Kabungeri village in Nyamugali sector of Kirehe district is at eastern-north border of Rwanda and Tanzania. The communities in this village are very affected by very long dry seasons. The latter affect their livelihoods as almost all the village households depend on rain-fed agriculture.

KAKIKA (Koperative Abaharanira Kwiteza Imbere ba Kabungeri) and KOAAMI (Koperative Amahoro y'Abarobyi ba Mitako) are both NBCEs operating in Kabungeri village, with the aim to promote sustainable agriculture and fishing, while promoting restoration of the degraded environment and protection of the natural resources.

KAKIKA is a women farmer's cooperative that was founded in 2016 with initial investment from ARCOS Network. They mainly do business oriented horticulture, where they grow different varieties of vegetables including onions, egg plant, pepper, cabbage, etc. Their farming practices integrate land restoration, soil and water management and agroforestry including tree planting, rain water harvesting, irrigation system using solar water pump, digging trenches for erosion control and goats rearing to promote organic farming. According to their testimonies, KAKIKA has considerably contributed to enhancing food security and increase household income among cooperative members, where the last two seasons they produced 15 tonnes of mixed vegetables grown on 3ha and the annual turnover of the cooperative increased from 0 up to Rwf 1,500,000.

KOAAMI is a cooperative whose members are majorly men, mainly doing fishing in Akagera river. Before ARCOS intervention, the cooperative was very disorganized and members were sometimes involved in activities such as illegal transboundary trade. Since they started working with ARCOS Network in 2016, the cooperative got capacity built in institutional management and leadership that helped them to draw new guidelines and set targets and objectives. Today they are registered at national level and They now do proper fishing using proper equipment, while protecting biodiversity in Akagera river and restoring the buffer by reintroducing aquatic vegetation and leaving 10m along for natural regeneration.

As alternative source of income, they rear pigs. With support from ARCOS Network, they also got technical capacity in tree nursery establishment and management, where in 2017, they produced over 35,000 seedlings including fruit species, agroforestry and indigenous species. These seedlings were planted in Kabungeri village and 3 other neighbouring villages, as well as in public places (schools, local government offices, health centres and roads) and along Akagera River. The cooperative established a stable and transparent financial system, where through savings they bought land and built cooperative office in 2017. The recorded annual turnover was Frw 3,000,000 by 2017.





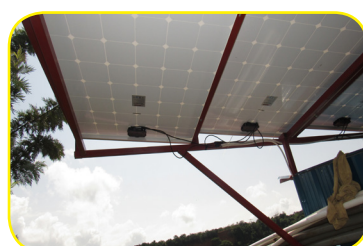
During the first day visit, participants also explored community self-reliance initiative through Nature Based Community Fund (NBCF) that is contributing to improving community livelihoods in Kabungeri village through small loans and in return, beneficiaries commit to implement recommended practices to restore and conserve the environment. 16 NBCF funded community projects are already ongoing and the second phase funding will be launched in January 2018.



This first day of the second Community-to-Community Exchange was concluded by a tree planting session, where over 500 seedlings were planted by participants, members of the host NBCEs, local communities and local government authorities on hillside adjacent to Akagera River; and the remaining seedlings were distributed to other destinations as mentioned above.



After tree planting, participants, host NBCEs, local communities and leaders had cultural exchange including shared lunch made of traditional local meals, which was a good opportunity for participants from abroad and local young people to learn how traditional meals are prepared and served. The exchange also included cultural entertainment which gathered everybody in traditional songs, poem and dances.



II.1.2. Visit **COMUFLEKI, KOAUKI and KOAKAKI Cooperatives**

COMUFLEKI (Cooperative de Multiplication des Fruits et Legumes de Kigarama) is a cooperative operating in Cyanya village, Kigarama sector of Kirehe district. The cooperative was established on 2nd May 2016 and got registered at national level on 28th March 2017. It started with 5 members, but the group expanded by recruiting more members where today they are 14 members.

The cooperative aims at promoting horticulture in Cyanya village, where they multiply diverse fruit and vegetable seeds and sell them to local community members at affordable price. Nowadays this business is extending given the cooperative is producing seedlings on contract basis for other buyers. However, this activity would not be performed well due to lack of water infrastructures and limited access to irrigation facilities. Through partnership with ARCOS Network, COMUFLEKI has developed an integrated water use system, combining rain water harvesting and gravity water supply for irrigation (on over 55ha) and domestic use in Cyanya village.

KOAUKI (Koperative y'Abahinzi b'Urutoki ba Kigarama) is a banana farmers cooperative operating in Kigarama sector in Kirehe district. The cooperative was founded in 2012 with 39 members (7 women, 2 youth and 30 men) and by the time of the visit it counted 169 members among, which 28 are women, 5 youth and 129 men. Today, they are registered at district level and proceeding to be registered at national level.

With support from ARCOS Network, the cooperative has scored success in terms of leadership, cooperative management and members switched to sustainable banana farming which increased production. The cooperative was facilitated to buy a 2.5ha of land on which a farmer field school was established. The cooperative was also supported with 10 dairy cows for manure and milk business to increase cooperative income. Since KOAUKI started working with ARCOS Network, their total investment increased 5 times. However, the cooperative has also faced with challenges such as registration at national level that has taken a long time than expected, worse drought that took banana production down in 2017 and lack of market.

At KOAKAKI (Koperative y'Abahinzi ba Kawa ba Kigarama) site, participants learnt from cooperative experience in promoting sustainable coffee production and how it contributes to farmers' livelihoods and development of Kigarama sector. KOAKAKI was established in August 2011 with a starting capital of 20,000 Frw. It started with 5 members, but the number increased where by 2017 the members were 315 members of which 110 women and 205 men. These numbers include 37 youth. The cooperative has governance structures, management strategy and financial system in place, transparent and stable. The cooperative managed to build a Coffee Washing Station (CWS) from savings and through in-kind contribution from members. They have 14 coffee collection sites across the sector, from where they take coffee to the CWS for processing. Besides, the cooperative earned different assets including a coffee





processing machine, land, office and various types of production equipment. Through partnership with ARCOS Network, KOAKAKI was supported with more production equipment, as well as post-harvest and processing infrastructures that helped to boost processing capacity from 150 tonnes up to 500 tonnes and triple the annual turnover up to Frw 30M in 2017. In order to promote shaded coffee and organic coffee production, KOAKAKI members were trained in tree nursery establishment and management, where over 150,000 seedlings including fruits, indigenous, agroforestry species and coffee seedlings were produced. In addition, KOAKAKI was trained and facilitated to establish vermicomposting to produce manure from coffee pulps. According to farmers' testimonies, this manure boost coffee production from 4kg to 12 kg of cherries per plant.

Among encountered challenges was limited access to water that often raised conflicts between KOAKAKI and local communities. To this, ARCOS Network intervened with rehabilitation and split of the available water point into two channels, one serving local communities and another supplying water to the CWS. This intervention motivated the cooperative to establish two more water points for local communities to reduce water-based conflicts. These water points serve more than 6 villages.

Dr. Sam Kanyamibwa, the Executive Director of ARCOS Network appreciated the hard work done by each among the host NBCEs, as well as the good relationship between them, local government and communities. He once again appreciated everyone's contributions during site visits to identify and define threats and potential solutions to address them, and called them to build on lessons that they learned from on-ground actions to structure recommendations that should be applied by their respective NBCEs.

In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of Kigarama sector thanked ARCOS Network for the tremendous work it has done with all the cooperatives because the results are self-explanatory and evident. He added that ARCOS has gone ahead to uplift local community livelihoods and above all enhance knowledge on the need for environmental conservation and ensure this knowledge and sustainable practices are spread beyond its areas of operation to transform and inspire others, therefore to contribute to development of Rwanda as a country. He called upon participants and local communities to preserve the precious legacy they earned through these interventions for present and future generations.



II.2. NBCEs Exchange session

On 3rd day of the second NBCEs Community-to-Community Exchange, all participants convened together with ARCOS team in Bugesera district to pave the way forward. Basing on BEST Approach, all participants facilitated by ARCOS staff were split into four groups to deliberate on the positives and negatives witnessed from the sites visited.

The following table summarizes lessons learnt by participants basing on “BEST Approach” components:

Table1: Summary lessons learnt basing on BEST Approach

“BEST” components	Positive feedback	Observed challenges
B: Building leadership and sustainable institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Governance, transparency and leadership in place 2. Mission, vision and objectives statement 3. Financial system, reporting and record keeping in place 4. Good relationship with local government and communities 5. Information sharing between NBCEs leaders and members 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Registration at national level not accomplished for some NBCEs 7. Gender imbalance in few NBCEs 8. Poor capacity to market NBCEs products and services 9. In few NBCEs, membership mechanism is not flexible
E: Enhancing environmental resilience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Members are skilled in nursery management and development, where fruit, indigenous and exotic tree species are integrated 11. Members are aware of sustainable practices and have good will to implement them. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. NBCEs did not yet adopt landscape restoration approach. Ex: at KOAAMI and KAKIKA sites, erosion control is made in their lands down the hill, but does not start from hill side 13. More community awareness and inclusiveness in focal NBVs is still needed
S: Sustainable business solutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Contract-based production 15. NBCEs members consider conservation practices as business opportunities 16. NBCEs have financial and monitoring system in place (internal and external loaning, saving, credit, budgeting and audit mechanism) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Lack of market for some NBCEs 18. Lack of post-harvest facilities and processing for some NBCEs 19. Sometimes, NBCEs do not stick on elaborated business plan and some do not have it in place
T: Transforming and inspiring others	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20. NBCF in place and contributing to sustainable livelihoods and environment 21. NBV approach to showcase sustainable practices 22. NBCEs’ areas of operation are transformed and their actions are evident 23. Social cohesion, welfare and common benefits are promoted 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 24. NBCF needs to be expanded to more villages 25. Low feedback of some members to NBCEs commitments 26. Community centres need to be established and supported to enhance community exchange at NBV level



From the observations above, participants into the same groups defined NBCEs commitments on each component of BEST. These resolutions later resulted into “ARCOS’ NBCEs BUGESERA CHARTER” that was signed by all the NBCEs representatives and enacted during the Open Day (see Annex IV).

For this Charter to be implemented, NBCEs committed to:

- Mobilize their own human and financial resources and seek for possible partnership opportunities to support this initiative
- Use NBCEs newsletter (ENDOKWA News) to facilitate internal and external communication and experience sharing on NBCEs achievements
- Enhance good collaboration with local government structures and support government development agenda for sustainable development

Participants gave more recommendations to ensure these resolutions are implemented. These recommendations include promotion of “competitions-Co-operation system”, where competition between members incites them to operate sustainably in order to promote common benefits. In this regard, monitoring should be conducted to assess NBCEs performance in terms of achieved commitments and incentivise best performers.

Participants concluded to have the 3rd Community-to-Community Exchange in Kisoro/ Uganda in 2018.

In their remarks, Mr Joseph NIZEYE on behalf of participants from Uganda appreciated ARCOS’ efforts to bring people together and enable them to learn from each other. He promised that with the experience acquired through this Community-to-Community Exchange, they will use BEST Approach to transform community livelihoods and enhance the environment within and beyond their areas of operation.

Mrs Maria NDUWIMANA from Burundi said that basing on their experience in working with ARCOS, mind-set transformation is key to reach sustainable development. On behalf of participants from Burundi, she promised to promote BEST approach and teach other communities by example.

Mr Emmanuel HARERIMANA on behalf of Rwandan participants confirmed that they have learned a lot from each other and that as feedback, they will replicate good practices and correct wrong ones. He said: “This Charter is a perfect guide for us to operate sustainably and a bright work done inspires others. We will make sure to implement it to build our sustainable institutions and incite others to do the same”.

In his closing remarks, Dr Sam KANYAMIBWA thanked all participants for their active participation during each and every activity that was conducted during this event and he added that ARCOS would have appreciated to have all the members of the cooperatives to attend the exchange visits, but due to limited funds, this was not possible. He also thanked them for the commitments they made and reminded them that if they work sustainably building on “BEST” approach, they have the power to transform livelihoods and enhance environmental resilience.

Professors Nick King the Chairperson of ARCOS Board said that he was happy that participants found the event fruitful and hoped they will use the knowledge and experience acquired to build sustainable NBCEs, operate sustainably and transform others. He also said that he was grateful for the tremendous work done so far by each among all NBCEs and looks forward to learning more from exhibition by NBCEs from the three countries.



PART III: OPEN DAY



III.1. Objective

The Open Day brought together stakeholders including development partners, governmental and non-governmental organisations, private sector and communities to show case the achievements of partner NBCEs and explore possible partnership opportunities to scale up the initiative.



III.2. Agenda

The Open Day's Program included presentations on implementing BEST Approach by NBCEs, as well as testimonies of communities in BEST achievements for sustainable livelihoods and environment. It also included NBCEs' exhibition and was concluded by a tree planting in Amasangano, in Ntarama sector of Bugesera district (See Open Day's Agenda in Annex III).



III.3. Welcome and Opening remarks

Dr. Sam Kanyamibwa explained that through different initiatives and projects, ARCOS Network partners with communities in the Albertine Rift region and has experienced climate related issues in terms of scarcity of food, water, energy solutions and other resources. According to the acquired experience and as embedded in ARCOS Network's motto, collaborative action is key to provide alternative livelihoods and sustainable solutions to enhance environmental resilience. He added that communities need to be empowered so as to build sustainable institutions, protect environment, improve their business and scale up good practices beyond their areas of operation.



He acknowledged different partners that financially supported this 2nd Community-to-Community Exchange including New Field Foundation, World Resources Institutes, FONERWA and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and he addressed special thanks to Mayor of Bugesera district



and other leaders representing local and central government for their continual collaboration. He also thanked all participants for their participation.



On behalf of ARCOS, Professor Nick King, the Chair Person of ARCOS Board welcomed everybody on board. He thanked special guests and all participants for their participation. He briefly came back on climate related issues that facing the world including water and food scarcity, etc.. He said that policy is there and it just shares a framework which needs to be implemented at international, national and community level, but does not achieve everything. He added that he was proud to be ARCOS Board member and that the work done to contribute to these national and international development goals is very important, so, he called everybody who were part of the meeting to feel proud and support the good work done to build sustainable solutions at community level and ensure successful implementation by communities which can serve as model to others.



Mr. Nsanzumuhire Emmanuel, Mayor of Bugesera district warmly welcomed special guests and all participants. He thanked ARCOS Network for the work done in supporting communities to improve livelihoods and environment. He appreciated the approach undertaken by ARCOS Network to implement on-ground interventions not focus on one area, but on an entire landscape to contribute to sustainable development goals that include adaptation to climate change, food security, sustainable environment, etc. He said that ARCOS Network goals fit suitably in district development goals and that building on their past experience, Bugesera district appreciates a lot ARCOS Network's contributions in enhancing environmental resilience and community development. He added that he was part of the meeting as an expression of support and recognition to ARCOS Network, because the implemented on-ground initiatives are evident and acknowledgeable.



However, he requested ARCOS Network to keep handholding communities to ensure that these interventions are owned by them and scaled up from two sectors to five or more sectors, as well as to bring stronger interventions that will build ARCOS brand among district achievements. He requested communities to sustainably manage the support given to them to build sustainable institutions, improve their businesses, protect the environment and contribute to community development in their areas of operation.



III.4. Presentation on NBCEs implementation and NBCEs testimonies

III.4.1. Presentation: “Building sustainable Nature-Based Community Enterprises (NBCE) to enhance livelihoods and environmental resilience”

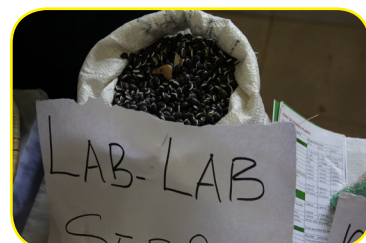
The presentation was given by Mrs Kanyamugenge Brigitte, the ARCOS' NBCEs Programme Manager and it covered two main sections, namely: 1. NBCEs Programme background including NBCEs Programme goals, pillars, Sustainability Agreement model (SA*) and BEST approach; and 2. On-ground actions including NBCEs implementation process and key achievements, challenges and opportunities (See presentation in separate annex).

Sustainability Agreement (SA) is a negotiated performance and benefits-based contract between ARCOS, its partner communities and local government authorities, with the aim to integrate sustainable actions and enhance environmental resilience, as well as to promote community development through the empowerment of community business enterprises and building the experience-sharing networks between different community groups, building on ARCOS rich network.

III.4.2. NBCEs testimonies on major achievements in implementing BEST approach

For this session, 8 NBCEs representatives from the three countries took participants briefly through their achievements basing on BEST approach (2 representatives per each component of BEST). The following are among others, the achievements highlighted by communities:

1. Under B: Two NBCEs representatives (Rurangirwa Eric from CITMK/ Rwanda and Sabika Will from KEFA/ Uganda) explained that their NBCEs have now leadership and governance structures in place and stable and a dynamic membership that allow new members to join their NBCEs to include women and youth. They added that internal communication highly increased, where all members have access to information. Capacity of members also increased through different trainings and exchange visits
2. Under E: The representatives of KABONYA and Abateraninkunga ba Sholi Cooperative said that awareness and ownership of environmental resilience practices among members and communities in focal villages have increased and that their NBCEs are now integrating sustainable practices in their operations
3. Under S: Ndikubwimana Cyriaque and Hakizamungu Sylvestre, the representatives of KOAKAKI and KOAUKI respectively, said that their business have improved in terms of production system, overall investment and annual turnover, as well as their NBCEs management system
4. Under T: Nduwimana Maria who was representing DUKINGIRE IKIBIRA/ Burundi said that livelihoods in Kibira have improved a lot through small livestock rearing and Adeline Nyiramajyambere representing KAKIKA/ Rwanda testified that physical transformation in Kabungeri is evident where restoration interventions were put in place by local communities and their NBCE members contribute a lot in sensitizing local communities to replicate good practices at household level. She added that local livelihoods and social relationships have highly improved due to the NBCF established in Kabungeri that has united community members as a family.



III.5. NBCEs exhibition



The purpose of this exhibition was to show-case NBCEs achievements and it was an opportunity for communities to share knowledge on different types of soil, seeds and products. At the end of the exhibition, NBCEs took time to exchange different types of seeds including cereals, vegetables and indigenous tree seeds.

The following is a list of seeds and products or materials that NBCEs brought for exhibition and exchange:



1. **Cereals** (Sorghum, maize, millet, wheat)- They are of very important socio-cultural values and they are resistant to climate change (sorghum). They are also very important in terms of food security and income generation for communities.
2. **Medicinal plants** – Knowledge of traditional medicine is disappearing, particularly with young generation. NBCEs were encouraged to come with a list and leaves as much as possible.
3. **Other products** (handcrafts, honey, bamboo food, banana beer, coffee, mushrooms, sorghum beer and other products that may be used by the NBCEs during the exhibition to market what they do).
4. **Tubers:** Sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, taros, yams, cassava, Tubers are resilient to climate change and in terms of food security, they are rich in nutrients.
5. **Legumes** (Beans, peas, soy beans, Inkori/ vigna). Legumes grow in different places (hills, lowlands), they have many varieties and are of multiple use, so they have potential for very good stories around them.
6. **Pumpkins** (pumpkins, chayote, cucumber, courgettes) – pumpkins are disappearing on the market and they are very important in terms of food security and can adapt easily. They also have different varieties.
7. **Traditional Vegetables** (Isogi, Urudega, isogo, dodo/ inyabutongo, intagarasoryo, etc.)



III.6. Tree planting in Amasangano

The Open Day's agenda was concluded by tree planting in Amasangano, the congruence of Akanyaru and Nyabarongo Rivers to form Akagera River.

This site is very important as it can be exploited for fishing, tourism, agricultural irrigation and farming among others; however it is affected by unsustainable practices. Therefore, it is crucial to restore and promote sustainable exploitation of this important area, as well as to call up on participation of other stakeholders for the sake of present and future generations.

Through the Water-Energy-Food Nexus Project, ARCOS Network partnered with CITMK to promote sustainable exploitation of Amasangano by promoting sustainable fishing, agriculture, marine transport and ecotourism. As part of SA signed between ARCOS Network, local government and CITMK, the later was supported and facilitated to establish a tree nursery for restoration of Amasangano landscape. During this event, over 20,000 seedlings including fruit species, agroforestry and indigenous species were planted along the river banks and others distributed to communities in Kagoma village and other two neighbouring villages.



III.7. Reflexion and conclusion

Inspired by the achievements presented by NBCEs during this second Community-to-Community Exchange, different stakeholders representing local government, private sector, civil society and development partners gave few remarks appreciating the commendable efforts ARCOS Network and its partner communities have done to promote environmental resilience and sustainable livelihoods through BEST approach.

Mr Amri HATEGEKIMANA, the Managing Director of Serve and Smile Ltd. said that he was very happy to be part of this fruitful event that allowed him to think twice on who to work with and why. He added that communities are among their key and potential clients, and he thanked ARCOS Network to have invited him to the event that has offered him the opportunity to meet very performing community institutions that any private organisation would be interested to work with. He called upon any support to ARCOS Network in this journey.

“It is impressive to see that the real community achievements are far beyond their testimonies. All these beautiful and inspiring products exhibited by NBCEs are evidence of the efforts that they invest in sustainable practices that improve their livelihoods, as well as transform and inspire others. This good initiative is worth everyone’s support to ensure it is scaled up and serves to promote sustainable development at community level”. Said Miss Dow Maneerattana from WRI.

The community-to-community exchange has proven to be a significant vehicle leading to community mindset transformation, where it enables participants to learn from each other’s knowledge and experience in institutional management and leadership, sustainable environmental practices, sustainable business solutions and community self-reliance initiatives to promote sustainable livelihoods and environment. It also builds community spirit of ownership, where basing on knowledge and experience acquired, participants commit to replicate sustainable practices within and beyond their areas of operation and on that, their performance will be assessed.



ANNEXES

Annex I: ARCOS' NBCEs Community-to-Community Exchange _ List of Participants

N°	NAMES	NBCE
1	Adeline NYIRAMAJYAMBERE,	Koperative Abaharanira Kwiteza Imbere ba Kabungeri (KAKIKA)/ Rwanda
2	Agnes UWIFASHIJE	JYAMBERE MUNYARWANDA Cooperative/ Rwanda
3	Anastase NZAHUMUNYURWA,	Koperative y'Abahinzi ba Kawa ba Gitesi (KOPAKIKA)/ Rwanda
4	Alexis AYIRWANDA,	MUTUBEHAFI Cooperative/ Rwanda
5	Augustin SEMUSAMBI,	Koperative Imizamukire Nyagihunika (KOIMIZANYA)/ Rwanda
6	Beatrice KABIHOGO,	UPLIFT THE RURAL POOR (URP)/ Uganda
7	Cassim GIBUSIWA,	SIRONKO VALLEY PROJECT/ Uganda
8	Christine MUKANDINDA,	JYAMBERE MUNYARWANDA Cooperative/ Rwanda
9	Consesa NYIRAMAFARANGA,	Koperative Terimbere Muvumvu wa Mukura (KOTEREMU)/ Rwanda
10	Cyriac NDIKUBWIMANA,	Koperative y'Abahinzi ba Kawa ba Kigarama (KOAKAKI)/ Rwanda
11	Donath MBITONDEHO,	Cooperative Artisanale de Bamboo (COABA)/ Rwanda
12	Emmanuel HARERIMANA,	MUHSIMBI Volunteer Guides Association/ Rwanda
13	Ephraim KAMARAMPAKA,	Le Pillier de la Nature et de la Promotion du Tourisme (PNPT Banda Cooperative)/ Rwanda
14	Eric RURANGIRWA,	Cooperative Imboni pour le Transport Maritime de Kibungo (CITMK)/ Rwanda
15	François HARERIMANA,	TWIGIRE MUHINZI _Rusebeya Cooperative/ Rwanda
16	Geofrey KAMBEKWINE MUGARURA,	KIZIBA Seed-bank Cooperative Society/ Uganda
17	Jane KAMPIRE,	KANABA Community Association/ Uganda
18	Jean BARANGENZA,	TUBEHO NK'ABANDI/ Burundi
19	Jean de Dieu DUSENGE,	Koperative Amahor y'Abarobyi ba Mitako (KOAAMI)/ Rwanda
20	Jean Pierre MPAGAZEHE,	Cooperative de Multiplication des fruits et Legumes de Kigarama (CO-MUFLEKI)/ Rwanda
21	Jeanne d'Arc MUGOREWISHYAKA,	ABATERANINKUNGA BA SHOLI Cooperative/ Rwanda
22	Joseph NIZEYE,	JIJUKA/ Uganda
23	Kadija NAMBUYA	BUDWALE Community Development Association/ Uganda

24	Marcel SEKAMANA,	Koperative Sugira Musenyi (KOSUMU)/ Rwanda
25	Marie NDUWIMANA,	DUKINGIRIKIBIRA Cooperative/ Burundi
26	Marie Rose NYIRAMANA	JYAMBERE MUNYARWANDA Cooperative/ Rwanda
27	Moreen CHELANGAT	Kapchebout Elgon Farmers Association (KEFA)/ Uganda
28	Reverien NSANZURUVUGO,	Koperative y'Abarobyi bya Musenyi (KABAMU)/ Rwanda
29	Samuel WAKINYA,	BUSHIKA Integrated Community Enterprise Ltd/ uganda
30	Sylver NZABAGOROZIKI,	ABIZERANA cooperative/ Rwanda
31	Sylvestre HAKIZAMUNGU,	Koperative y'Abahinzi b'Urutoki ba Kigarama (KOAUKI)/ Rwanda
32	Tereza NANDUTU	BUSHIKA Integrated Community Enterprise Ltd/ uganda
33	Theogene NSENGIYUMVA,	Koperative y'Abahinzi Borozi ba Nyagihunika (KABONYA)/ Rwanda
34	WAYIYA MUZAMIRU,	BUDWALE Community Development Association/ Uganda
35	Willy SABIKA,	Kapchebout Elgon Farmers Association (KEFA)/ Uganda

Annex II: ARCOS' NBCEs Community-to-Community Exchange Agenda

DATE	TIME	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
25-Nov	Whole day	Participants from Uganda (reach Kigali 26th early morning) and Burundi travel to Kigali	Joel Wako and Jacqueline Ntukamazina
26-Nov	Morning	Bugesera and Rutsiro participants travel to Kigali	Brigitte Kanyamugenge
	12:00-14:00	Lunch	Beatrice Mukansoro
	14:00-17:00	Travel to Kirehe	Beatrice Mukansoro
	17:00-19:00	Self-introduction and cultural knowledge performance including dance, songs	Jacqueline Ntukamazina
	19:00-21:00	Dinner	Beatrice Mukansoro
27-Nov	8:30-9:30	Official opening	Kirehe District and ARCOS
	9:30-10:30	Travel to Kabungeri Village	Beatrice Mukansoro
	10:30-13:00	Visit Kabungeri and KOAMI Cooperatives	Brigitte Kanyamugenge
	13:00-14:30	Lunch	Kabungeri NBCEs and Brigitte Kanyamugenge
	14:30-15:30	Plant trees to Kabungeri village	Jean Ndamage
	15:30-16:30	Travel to Nyakarambi (Kirehe)	Beatrice Mukansoro
	17:00-19:00	Recap and Diner	Jacqueline Ntukamazina

28-Nov	8:00-10:00	Visit to Komufreki	Jean Ndamage
	10:00-12:00	Visit Koakaki	Jean Ndamage
	12:00-13:00	Lunch	Koauki and Koakaki NBCEs/ Brigitte Kanyamugenge
	13:00-14:30	Visit Koauki	Brigitte Kanyamugenge
	14:30-18:00	Travel to Bugesera	Beatrice Mukansoro
	18:00-20:00	Wrap up and Dinner	Jacqueline Ntukamazina
29-Nov	08:00-13:00	NBCE Exchange Session I	Dr Sam Kanyamibwa
	13:00-14:00	Lunch	Beatrice Mukansoro
	14:00-18:00	NBCE Exchange Session II	Brigitte Kanyamugenge
	18:00-20:0	Recap and Dinner	Jacqueline Ntukamazina
30-Nov	Open Day		
31-Nov	All Participants Departure		

Annex III: ARCOS' NBCEs Community-to-Community Exchange_Open Day's Agenda

Time	Activity	Lead/Speaker
7:00- 7:15	Arrival of participants at ARCOS Office	Yvonne & Brigitte
7:30	Departure from ARCOS Office	Yvonne & Brigitte
8:30-09:00	Registration	Yvonne BIGENIMANA
09:00-9:20	Welcome remarks and official opening	ARCOS, Bugesera District
09:20- 9:40	Community Development and Environmental Sustainability: ARCOS'NBCE programme	ARCOS' NBCE Programme Manager
09:40-10:00	NBCEs in action (Community Representatives from Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda)	NBCE Representatives
10:00- 10:30	Reflexions from partners	FONERWA and WRI
10:30-11:00	Coffee/tea break	Beatrice MUKANSORO
11:00- 11:30	Open discussion, questions and contributions	Jean NDAMAGE
11:30-11:45	Call for supporting community actions	Dr Sam KANYAMIBWA
11:45-12:30	Visit to NBCEs stands	Jacqueline NTUKAMAZINA
12:30-14:00	Lunch	Beatrice MUKANSORO
14:00-16:00	Visit Amasangano (The congruence of Akanyaru and Nyabarongo rivers) to raise awareness on restoration of that important ecosystem and plant trees in Kagoma Village	Ntarama Sector, NBCEs and ARCOS
16:00-16:30	Closing remarks	ARCOS and Bugesera District

Annex III: ARCOS' NBCEs Bugesera Charter

PREAMBLE

We, Representatives of 30 Nature Based Community Enterprises (NBCEs) from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda having met in Nyamata, Bugesera district in Rwanda from 27th to 29th November 2017, for the second NBCEs Community-to-Community Exchange with a theme entitled "Partnering with Nature Based Community Enterprises (NBCEs) for Livelihoods and Environmental Resilience" organized by the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS Network) with support from Rwanda's National Climate and Environment Fund (FONERWA), New Field Foundation, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and World Resources Institute (WRI).

ACKNOWLEDGING that nature provides indispensable goods and services for our livelihoods, and that they harbour unique biodiversity, provide non-timber forest products, water, food and energy security among others,
CONCERNED that rural communities are facing challenges including land degradation, and poverty which are increasing and exacerbated by climate change leading to rapid biodiversity loss, and increasing disasters,
VALUEING the importance of traditional knowledge and bio-cultural heritage and noting with concern the loss of traditional knowledge in the face of globalisation and competing commercial environment,
ACKNOWLEDGING the role of communities in addressing environmental and livelihoods issues and promoting sustainable practices

RECOGNIZING various efforts made by government, civil society, private sector and development partners in supporting community initiatives that promote sustainable livelihoods and environmental resilience

NOTING that ARCOS' BEST Approach (B: Building leadership and sustainable institutions; E: Enhancing Environmental Resilience; S: Sustainable nature based business solutions; and T: Transforming and inspiring others) provides an integrated framework to face complex challenges and bring solutions for sustainable community livelihoods and environmental resilience

WE DECLARE AND COMMIT TO:

B: Building leadership and sustainable institutions

- Register our cooperatives and make them recognized at the national level
- Build result based NBCEs, members' ownership and put in place participatory monitoring mechanisms
- Build institutional capacity to enable members' effective contribution to NBCE's development
- Mainstream gender and youth in membership and governance of our NBCEs.

E: Enhancing Environmental Resilience

- Raise awareness about environment protection among cooperative members and communities in NBCE's areas of operation
- Adopt and promote affordable rain water harvesting systems among our NBCE members
- Promote sustainable and efficient energy solutions (biogas, solar and energy saving cooking stoves) among NBCE's members and local communities for environmental sustainability
- Promote sustainable land management practices including tree planting of different species, protection of water bodies and soil erosion control.

S: Sustainable business solutions

- Have collective selling centers in NBCEs areas of operation for marketing and increase of income
- Produce quality and quantity environmentally friendly products
- Promote value addition to various NBCE's products for efficiency and increased income
- Establish good financial systems for accountability and transparency in all NBCE's operations
- Adopt saving mechanisms, loaning and work with financial institutions to boost our business



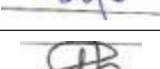


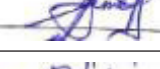


T: Transforming and inspiring others

- Establish demonstration sites to show case sustainable environmental protection practices and livelihoods initiatives
- Support and promote Community-to-Community exchange to enhance information and knowledge sharing at wider scale
- Advocate for establishment of the NBCF in NBCEs' areas of operation
- Promote bio-cultural knowledge and practices on land, soil, seeds and sustainable agriculture
- Raise awareness on environmental and cultural oriented practices through establishment of Nature Based Community Centers,
- Promote knowledge and information exchange within and outside NBCE's areas of operation

As means of operationalisation

- We commend ARCOS's initiative and efforts to support NBCE's development and facilitate information and knowledge sharing and regular community-to community exchange ;
- We commit to mobilize our own human and financial resources to implement this charter and call upon different partners to support our efforts
- Use NBCE's newsletter (ENDOKWA News) to facilitate internal and external communication and experience sharing on NBCE's achievements
- Enhance good collaboration with government structures where we work and support government development agenda for sustainable development

List of NBCEs Representatives

1	Adeline NYIRAMAJYAMBERE, Koperative Abaharanira Kwiteza Imbere ba Kabungeri (KAKIKA), Rwanda	
2	Alexis AYIRWANDA, MUTUBEHAFI Cooperative , Rwanda	
3	Anastase NZAHUMUNYURWA, Koperative y'Abahinzi ba Kawa ba Karongi/ Gitesi (KOPAKIKA GITESI), Rwanda	
4	Augustin SEMUSAMBI, Koperative Imizamukire Nyagihunika (KOIMIZANYA), Rwanda	
5	Beatrice KABIHOGO, UPLIFT THE RURAL POOR (URP), Uganda	
6	Cassim GIBUSIWA, SIRONKO VALLEY PROJECT , Uganda	
7	Christine MUKANDINDA, JYAMBERE MUNYARWANDA Cooperative, Rwanda	
8	Consesa NYIRAMAFARANGA, Koperative Terimbere Muvumvu wa Mukura (KOTEREM)Rwanda	
9	Cyriac NDIKUBWIMANA, Koperative y'Abahinzi ba Kawa ba Kigarama (KOAKAKI), Rwanda	
10	Donath MBITONDEHO, Cooperative Artisanale de Bamboo (COABA), Rwanda	
11	Emmanuel HARERIMANA, MUHISIMBI, Rwanda	
12	Ephraim KAMARAMPAKA, Banda community Village from the heart of Nyungwe National Park/ PNPT , Rwanda	
13	Eric RURANGIRWA, Cooperative Imboni pour le Transport Maritime de Kibungo (CITMK) Rwanda	
14	François HARERIMANA, TWIGIRE MUHINZI RUSEBEYA Cooperative, Rwanda	
15	Geofrey KAMBEKWINE MUGARURA, KIZIBA SEEDBANK Cooperative Society, Uganda	
16	Jane KAMPIRE, KANABA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, Uganda	
17	Jean BARANGENZA, TUBEHO NK'ABANDI Cooperative , Burundi	
18	Jean de Dieu DUSENGE, Koperative Amahoro y'Abarobyi ba Mitako (KOAAMI), Rwanda	

19	Jean Pierre MPAGAZEHE, Cooperative de Multiplication des fruits et Legumes de Kigarama (COMUFLEKI), Rwanda	
20	Jeanne d'Arc MUGOREWISHYAKA, ABATERANINKUNGA BA SHOLI Cooperative, Rwanda	
21	Joseph NIZEYE, JIJUKA, Uganda	
22	Marcel SEKAMANA, Koperative Sugira Musenyi (KOSUMU), Rwanda	
23	Marie NDUWIMANA, DUKINGIRIKIBIRA , Burundi	
24	Reverien NSANZURUVUGO, Koperative y'Abarobyi ba Musenyi (KABAMU), Rwanda	
25	Samuel WAKINYA, BUSHIKA INTEGRATED CE Ltd, Uganda	
26	Sylver NZABAGOROZI, ABIZERANA Cooperative, Rwanda	
27	Sylvestre HAKIZAMUNGU, Koperative y'Abahinzi b'Urutoki ba Kigarama (KOAUKI), Rwanda	
28	Theogene NSENGIYUMVA, Koperative y'Abahinzi Borozi ba Nyagihunika (KABONYA) Rwanda	
29	WAYIYA MUZAMIRU, BUDWALE Community Development Association , Uganda	
30	Willy SABIKA, Kapchebut Elgon Farmers Association (KEFA), Uganda	





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