

**James F. Kelly**

Chairman Board of Trustees

**Isaac Bekalo**

President

## Message from the President and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees

**‘Not to conform but to transform’**

**The International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) works with communities to enable them to attain self-development and learn how to effectively adapt, replicate and scale up successful models under varying situations.**

We make this happen by promoting active and meaningful participation of community people in the entire process of development, applying the Rural Reconstruction principles of “going to, living among, learning from and planning with them”.

We work with communities to preserve their rich cultures and traditions, at the same time help and motivate them to transform their values and ways of life into a progressive and development-oriented approach instead of conforming to norms and traditions that are counter development. Our 2014 Annual Report is dedicated to the transformative work of individuals and communities that IIRR has supported and partnered with in Eastern Africa and Southeast Asia.

Through our education program we address the problems of reading and writing, but more importantly, we integrate problem solving, financial literacy and other critical life skills which will help transform their lives.

We adapt a holistic approach to delivery of quality education. While enrollment, retention and transition rates remain integral to delivery of quality education, we work with communities, local governments and development partners to integrate water, solar lights, nutrition and environmental education. In Ethiopia for example, we partnered with the Polish Center for International Aid (PCPM) to install solar lights in 183 schools, which is transformative in many ways. Now children, especially girls, can read at night, which enhances their academic performance. Computers are powered by this solar energy which brings much needed information and communication technology (ICT) to remote village schools.

Our school nutrition program is not just about growing nutritious food. It is also about making our future sustainable by preserving our planet for future generations. We believe the younger generation has a bigger stake in this and hence, we focus our energy in schools. In schools we have

integrated Bio-Intensive Agriculture (BIG) and nutrition, where tens of thousands of kids learn how to grow nutritious food while preserving the environment. A variety of indigenous crops and vegetables are grown in over 100 schools actively involving over 160,000 children in the Philippines, South Sudan and Cambodia using climate-smart techniques. From teachers to pupils, from peoples to households and communities, these techniques are being replicated widely and are bringing transformative changes in nutrition, environment and policy.

We deliberately encourage schools to work as a community so that they can pull their collective energy and aspirations for their common good. In northern Kenya, cluster education forums are one such example where 5-6 public primary schools and a secondary school in the same location form a community of practice to learn, share scarce resources, and support each other. Among them they form several sub-groups such as head teachers, teachers who teach the same subjects, school boards, or parent-teacher committees and student leaders. In these forums, they collectively learn to adapt good practices from each other but also collectively deal with bad and non-transformative practices.

Schools are also ideal platforms for population education. In Ethiopia, Uganda and South Sudan, in Partnership with Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid (Cordaid), we have effectively piloted Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) for adolescent youth in schools and surrounding communities. The youth in school and outside of school are organized into SRHR clubs to protect themselves from early and unwanted pregnancies as well as from sexually-transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS. Forums of elders have been formed to help modify cultural and traditional beliefs and practices that are counterproductive to development and progress, especially those that keep girls and women oppressed. Early progress is evident that girls' dropout rates because of unwanted pregnancy have gone down significantly. There is marked improvement in girls' performance in national exams, which is attributed to girls' friendly school environment and an assertiveness that girls have gained as a result of their active participation.

As illustrated in the stories of Okot, Vicky and others, young people are spreading these concepts through art, drama, songs, dance and other creative means, to transform their lives and their communities. IIRR

encourages young people to remain in school and become productive through our innovative economic support packages such as Goat4Girls, village saving and loan associations (VLSAs) and others means that are transformative.

Our livelihoods program focuses on bringing rural communities to work together to attain economic transformation. In the context of value chains, our efforts focus on bringing the various actors in a given product chain to cooperate instead of compete. Producers are suspicious of traders, and traders of middle men. By bringing together all these actors, including input supplier, transporters, regulators and financial services providers, we foster an enabling business environment built on a common vision and trust. Through this strong chain, the actors are in a better position to add value to their products. They collectively access markets and financial services that earn them a bigger profit margin and minimize business risks by acting together. The stories of Ms. Connie in the Philippines, from a purely coconut farmer to a goat breeder, and Angella in Western Uganda, are a few illustrations of our transformative partnership with the poor and their communities.

Our Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) program is community-managed and that is why we call it CMDRR (community-managed disaster risk reduction). In each of the communities we partner with, we introduce a bottom-up planning approach where CMDRR plans are informed by a community's deep understanding of their local context, needs, risks, capacities, and vulnerabilities. This approach is in sharp contrast to traditional top-down planning where solutions that don't work are handed down to communities. These plans are now making a big difference. In the Philippines, 50% of barangay (village) CMDRR projects are now allocated a barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) trust fund, the most tangible proof of government seriousness to implement such plans. Undoubtedly, these preventive measures are better and less costly than dealing with huge recovery cost following the aftermath of devastating disasters.

In addition, in CMDRR we work with communities and international partners to develop "climate-smart" adaptation, mitigation, prevention and management measures to cope with hazards, in ways that are climate-smart and utilize environmentally-friendly measures. The story of *Gregorio B. Comia*, also known

in his community as 'Tatay Oyong', and other Filipino farmers illustrate how farmers, using "climate-smart" approaches, are making a difference by introducing measures that significantly save on production cost and are environment-friendly.

Also in 2014, in partnership with Give2Asia, we implemented the first year of a three-year regional program called 'NGO Disaster Preparedness', which links international philanthropy with innovative and effective community programs on disaster risk preparedness implemented by local development organizations in six of the most vulnerable South and Southeast Asian countries. This project aims to link our local action with global policy and advocacy.

Finally, our effort to share our field lessons with the global development community continued in 2014. Both in Asia and Africa, we managed to build technical and professional capacities of 660 development managers and practitioners (of which 231 are women) coming from 160 organizations from over 40 countries. Also, we have taken our innovative writeshop process one step closer to the communities by simplifying and transforming highly technical information into simple posters, practical

guides, and school reading materials, policy briefs and extension training manuals.

The Yen Center, our global headquarters, continues to serve as livelihoods learning and nature discovery center. In 2014, it hosted 14,700 visitors who interacted with us and learned from our livelihood demonstrations.

We are truly thankful to all of you, our friends, collaborators and partners, for your continued encouragement and support in 2014, and we look forward to working with you in 2015 and the years to come.



**James F. Kelly**  
Chairman Board of Trustees



**Isaac Bekalo**  
President



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# EDUCATION



**Education is a gateway that opens important avenues away from poverty. In the remote arid and semi-arid regions of Eastern Africa, where pastoralism is the backbone of the economy, IIRR's education program for pastoralists is transforming communities whose nomadic lifestyles have deprived their children, especially girls, the basic right and privilege to go to school.**

What makes IIRR's Pastoralist Education Program unique and transformative is its holistic approach. To be able to focus in school, children must have their basic needs: nutritious meals to support mental development, water for drinking and sanitation. Reading light is essential to do their homework, especially for girls who do household chores during the day and have time to read only at night. The Program has integrated provision of meals especially for children in the lower grades, water supply and solar lighting to ensure quality learning.

Teachers of the Pastoralist Education Program have been trained to facilitate child-friendly interactive learning. Learning materials developed have also been made relevant to the local context, produced through the active participation of children and teachers.

When they reach adolescent age, boys and girls are provided sexual and reproductive health education, information, knowledge and critical life skills to guide them grow into responsible adults. For those who drop out of school, IIRR has developed a

conditional economic incentive program like 'Goats4Girls,' and re-enroll thousands of young boys and girls back to school.

In most cases, the Program started out with innovative mobile schools under tree shades and evening shepherd classes using kerosene lamps. Later, classes were held in reading sheds constructed by community members. Solar lighting has allowed children and adults to attend evening classes. The many non-formal evening classes have now been transformed into formal primary and secondary schools with modern classrooms illuminated by solar lights. With the cooperation of local governments and the support of communities and partners, the new schools have been equipped with desks, books, and supplementary reading materials. The schools have encouraged reading, a basic skill that teaches children to focus and opens their limited worlds to the world of creativity and imagination. The following are selected examples of our work in Pastoralist Education in 2014.

## Pastoralist Education

### Highlights of Achievements in Southern Oromia Ethiopia, 2014

- 992 enrolled in preschool children (479 boys and 513 girls) exceeded preschool children enrollment targets by 103%.
- In the higher grades, enrolled 14,032 primary school students – 6,577 boys and 7,455 girls
- 89% increase in enrollment, 77% retention rates (10,840 students), and 93% transition rates
- Increased number of preschool classrooms from 14 to 19 in two pastoral zones, bringing overall number of new schools to 36
- 60 primary school English teachers (81% of teaching staff) trained in teaching reading, writing and comprehension
- Over 8,400 supplementary reading materials for the school libraries; reprints of a colorful storybook, Mijun
- Selected schools provided with 20 solar-powered Notebook laptop computers, teachers trained in their use

### Pastoralist Education Kenya 2014

- 928 enrolled preschool children (566 boys, 362 girls)
- In the higher grades, 14,949 primary school students (7,521 boys, 7,428 girls) have enrolled
- 30% increase in enrollment, 80% retention rates, 60% transition rates
- Eight new classrooms, 1 new dormitory and an additional dormitory rehabilitated and equipped
- 487 pupils (196 boys, 272 girls) attended boys and girls camps and taught life skills, leadership and mentorship
- 45 primary school head teachers trained in school leadership and effective school management
- 3,079 assorted story books and supplementary reading materials distributed to 56 schools in 3 counties
- Community leaders (chiefs, religious leaders, local members of the county assemblies and women leaders) trained on their roles in improving education standards (enrollment and performance) in 3 counties
- 52 local community enrollment committees formed and inducted on child rights and education; these committees successfully enrolled 3,496 out-of-school children (1,905 boys, 1,591 girls) who used to be herding livestock

## Improving early reading

In Ethiopia and Kenya, the Program has sponsored reading competitions and encouraged the reading habit among children. It has also trained and deployed teachers to areas previously unreached by formal education, providing pastoralist children access to quality basic education.

Selected language teachers in Ethiopia and Kenya were trained in early grade reading assessments

(EGRA) and are helping the children read with better comprehension. This is a fundamental skill that will improve their overall learning performance.

Ten years into the Program, IIRR's pastoral education program is achieving the goals of increasing enrolment, keeping pastoralist children in school, helping them transition from evening shepherd classes to regular primary and secondary schools, thus contributing to the overall educational goals of governments in Eastern Africa and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



**The program has encouraged the reading habit among children, opening their minds to the world of creativity and imagination.**





Early pregnancy is one of the main reasons for higher dropout rates in schools.

## Strengthening sexual and reproductive health in schools and communities

With fertility rates at 6.7% and contraceptive prevalence or use of only 4.7%, South Sudan (pop. 8.3M) has one of the youngest but fastest growing populations in the world. It also has the fifth highest mortality and morbidity (death and disease) rates, at 1,700 for every 100,000 population.

In South Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda, IIRR's innovative, community-led and managed Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) Project is addressing these needs through advocacy, developing peer leaders in schools and communities. The SRHR was adapted from the Learning Our Way Out (LOWO) approach pioneered by Jane K. Boorstein, a former trustee of IIRR. The approach taps and trains home-grown champions to initiate discussions among their peers, neighbors, and community members, relating issues of sexual and reproductive health to poverty and underdevelopment. These leaders have formed school and out-of-school SRHR conversation clubs and organized drama and song groups to educate schools and communities. Discussions have revolved around harmful cultural and traditional practices such as unsafe sex, early marriages, unplanned and unwanted pregnancies and gender-based violence. Community peer leaders have challenged traditional and conventional thinking, for instance, that many children are a "gift" from God. They have also served as change agents in their communities, inspiring role models, especially among the youth. The program's village loan and savings associations have provided opportunities out of poverty for many of these facilitators. The two stories of Okot and Vicky on the next page illustrate innovative transformations to some of these leaders who now inspire others in the communities where we work.

## Moving from Darkness to Light Ethiopia's Solar Lights for Pastoralists



Many pastoralist children are out of school for various reasons, but mainly because the majority tend cattle. IIRR employs an integrated approach for these children to access quality basic education.

Pastoralist education interventions encompass such activities as:

- continuous teacher education for teachers deployed in pastoralist areas
- awareness-raising and lobbying for community leadership
- new classrooms, dormitories, libraries and reading shades in these areas
- Early grade reading assessment
- Provision of reading materials suited to the local context
- Installation of solar lights and introduction of information technology and computers in schools
- IIRR and partner, the Polish Center for International Aid, has installed solar lighting in 310 primary schools in 8 woredas or districts, of which 183 were installed in 2014
- The solar lights are used for evening shepherd classes and for children to do their homework and for teaching integrated functional adult education classes
- The solar energy in the schools also powers 20 laptops that have been given to 10 schools.

There is plan to light over 200 schools in 2015; after all, "education is the movement from darkness to light".

## Sexual and Reproductive Health Project

### Highlights of Achievements

- 12 health care professionals trained and now providing youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) services
- 22 health extension workers trained in basic SRHR now providing improved community SRHR services
- 101 local leaders trained and sensitized; their improved knowledge secures greater buy-in to sexual and reproductive health services
- 29 training of trainers facilitators trained and successfully facilitating community conversation and dialogue
- 4,200 copies of information, education and advocacy materials produced and widely distributed, increasing awareness on SRHR issues
- 180 community conversation facilitators (CCFs) trained and effectively facilitating community conversations; as a result 5,272 (1,756 male and 3,516 female) have been referred to for various SRH services and using contraceptives
- 30 community conversation groups formed and conducting dialogues regularly
- 31 school conversation facilitators trained and influencing SRHR behavior change among the youth in and out of school
- Seven (7) SRHR school clubs formed and strengthening and now performing dialogue, drama, poems, songs, dance which has resulted in increased awareness on SRHR
- 10 elders' forums formed and trained are now advising their community against harmful traditional practices by providing local leadership.
- 25,103 people reached through dialogue sessions for positive behavior change

## Transformed, They Inspire and Transform Others

### A tale of two community conversation facilitators

**As a young boy, Okot Noyes, 18, from Nyowa district, Kampala, Uganda always had a fascination for the Arts.** When he was seven, however, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) attacked his village, killing his parents. Noyes escaped death by hiding in the bushes. He grew up under the care of his grandmother, who struggled to put him to school. In 2012, at Grade 8, he was forced to drop out because his grandmother no longer had the means.

In 2013, community leaders nominated him to become a community conversation facilitator for the SRH project. Okot attended the community dialogue facilitators training organized by IIRR, which gave him the confidence to pursue his own dream. He took advantage of the Village Savings Loan Fund established by IIRR to support SRH facilitators. Noyes borrowed USH 200,000 (\$75) and with that small loan bought supplies and materials and pursued Art Design. He began drawing cartoons, developing educational games, designing and printing promotional materials such as t-shirts, posters, certificates and signboards, which started earning him good income. He set up the "Noyes Talent Center" which now earns a net profit of USH 250,000 (\$100) a month, higher than the average income of teachers or nurses in the area.

Okot is now not only making a livelihood, he is also using his talent

and skills to help young people. He leads by example, organizing the youth in his community to perform music, drama and dance to educate the public against early pregnancy, unsafe sex, HIV/AIDs and other harmful practices. He uses his shop to distribute condoms to young school dropouts. These sexually active youth feel more comfortable coming to his shop than to the health center. Okot plans to expand business and train peers – talented and interested young people like himself – in art design, drama and dance.

Okot's "Noyes Talent Center" is a talking wall classroom. From floor to ceiling, the shop is crammed with information and educational materials – posters, games, cartoons, t-shirts – that combine a thriving business and an effective public awareness and advocacy campaign. The Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights Project supports innovative initiatives that have diversified multiplier effects. An IIRR team is mentoring Okot to develop a business plan so he can borrow additional capital from the VSLA fund to expand his social enterprise.

Okot's story is a story of the triumph of talent and sheer determination over early adversity, with timely help from programs like the Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights Project of IIRR and partners providing the innovative push.



Okot in his talking shop



Sample cartoon of risky places for girls

**Atim Vicky, quietly happy to be back in school**

**Atim Vicky, 24, is a classic case of a young girl whose poverty and unplanned early pregnancy made the future appear dim.**

Atim was born in a small village of Pajja in Nwoya district, Northern Uganda. Like Okot, she lost her father to the LRA when she was 12. Her mother raised her and five siblings alone, but when they all reached school age she could no longer afford to send all of them to school. Since Vicky already knew how to read and write, her mother decided she would be the one to stop so she could help in the farm and look after the rest of the family.

This decision made her sad initially, but did not discourage her from dreaming of one day resuming her studies. She worked hard, planting surplus crops so she can save up money for school. At age 19, however, another misfortune befell her: unplanned early pregnancy which used up all the savings she was building up for school. She thought her dream of going back to school had all but gone.

When the Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Project was introduced in Nwoya district, Atim Vicky was chosen by her community to be a Community Conversation Facilitator (CCF) for the youth. After the facilitators training, she started holding dialogues among young people in her community. From training she learned that it was never too late



to go back to school. The challenge remaining, however, was where to get the resources to cover school expenses.

Fortunately, in addition to facilitation skills, Vicky's CCF training taught her business planning and management: how to select viable income-generating activities. This helped her come up with a business plan that would help her raise the money for school. Being a community conversation facilitator, Vicky is automatically a member of the village saving and loans association (VSLA). In January 2014, Vicky was among the first CCFs to take out a loan of UGX 200,000 (US\$75) from the VSLA to start her business. They would buy and sell food stuff in the market out of her loaned start-up capital. She asked her mother to run the business while she attended school.

Vicky is now on her third year at Anaka Secondary School, happy to be back on track with her studies. Her business is growing, and from its income has been

able to pay back her loan. Her mother is pleased that they now have a steady income source against which Vicky and her siblings can draw the resources to pay for school fees and daily expenses. She hopes to expand her business in the future and plans to open a shop in the main market. Vicky's dreams of becoming a teacher is gradually becoming a reality. Becoming a facilitator was a good preparation and a step in the right direction.

Atim Vicky continues to conduct dialogues with community members and has extended the dialogues among her peers at school. They talk about teenage pregnancy, school dropout incidence and other sexual and reproductive health issues. In their area, there can be no better testimony than her own personal experience. Asked about having more kids, Atim has this to say: "I don't want to be disturbed again. I want to concentrate on my books and complete school because I have already lost so much time."

Many girls take to Atim's advice to prevent teenage pregnancy by using preventive methods and are determined to stay in school like her. Atim Vicky is thankful to IIRR's Sexual and Reproductive Health Program for opening her eyes and her future. She pledges to be a role model for other girls who have dropped out, to encourage and support them go back to school.



**Bio-intensive Gardening (BIG) in Cavite, Philippines.**

## Big on BIG

Four million children ages 5-10 in the Philippines (FNRI-DOST, 2008) and many more children in developing countries are undernourished.

In the Philippines, IIRR has experimented with an integrated and complementary approach to address child undernourishment. It combines use of vegetables from school bio-intensive (BIG) gardens to supplement the school feeding program. Together with parents, teachers, the Department of Education and communities, IIRR's Integrated Food and Nutrition Security uses schools and community bio-intensive gardening as platforms for various interventions. Bio-intensive Gardening (BIG) is a

## Food and Nutrition Security

### Highlights of Achievements, Philippines, 2014

- 153,940 elementary school children benefitting from 70 diverse school gardens enhanced through bio-intensive gardening (BIG)
- 217 children ages 3-5 benefit from 6 day care centers practicing BIG
- 3,136 children (1,647 boys and 1,489 girls) grades 1-3 given nutrition education through curriculum integration
- 509 Department of Education teachers from 241 schools in region 4-A trained on enhanced school nutrition intervention
- 23 daycare teachers trained on various nutrition approaches
- 217 children ages 3-5 provided nutritious lunch meals for six weeks to test impacts

Results of research in supplementary feeding in two schools 146 schoolchildren for 100 days feeding program in Cavite, Philippines

- Reduced wasting (17.8%-13.7%) and stunting (11.0 - 4.1%) prevalence
- Significant decrease in underweight children (63%-34%)
- Reduced anemia prevalence from 20.8 - 4.2%
- Improved nutritional knowledge (65.3 - 76.2%) and attitudes (78.2 - 89.1%) among children on the importance of home gardens and proper nutrition based on knowledge, awareness, practice survey results

BIG in  
Cambodia



BIG in South  
Sudan



small-scale gardening approach that promotes a wide range of nutrient-rich local vegetables grown organically.

The project achieves four interrelated goals: raises awareness among children and school community about the importance of sustaining our environment. It gives children first-hand experience with climate-smart agricultural practices while effectively addressing malnutrition. Finally, BIG revives over a hundred varieties of indigenous vegetables previously threatened with extinction from lack of planting and use.

In the process:

- Children learn by doing, establish garden plots and grow their own vegetables

- Harvests from these gardens are used in school supplementary feeding for malnourished children
- Attractive and creative cooking demonstration increase interest and enthusiasm among children and mothers for nutritious meals out of vegetables the children themselves have grown
- Schoolchildren take seeds and seedlings to their homes and introduce vegetable growing to their families' home gardens
- Climate concerns are integrated in teaching BIG and climate change adaptive measures are incorporated

The project was piloted in 27 public elementary schools in the province of Cavite, Philippines. BIG has now been adapted in 77 schools throughout the

## BIG offers a potential model for addressing malnutrition among children in developing countries. It is also an excellent approach to climate change adaptation.

Philippines, in 15 schools in South Sudan, and piloted in three schools in Cambodia. In the Philippines, there is a plan to strengthen vegetable gardens in 42,000 schools nationwide as a way of addressing malnutrition. Our BIG project is proving to be effective in transforming nutrition levels among schoolchildren and providing a pilot model for large-scale replication and scaling-up. It may provide a potential model for addressing malnutrition among the young in developing countries.

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**The Nutrition Security Program using BIG is generously supported by George SyCip, Wendy O’neill, Newman’s Own Foundation, and IDRC.**

## BIG on Nutrition: two teachers and a mother’s testimony

**Candido Aquino, agriculture teacher at General Aloña Elementary School, Cavite, Philippines**

“Before the project the school garden was not a priority. Now the Division of the Philippine Department of Education has encouraged agriculture and home economics. Administrators and teachers now realize that by encouraging students to grow their own nutritious food, the basic goal of education—improving the quality of children’s lives, can be realized.

BIG introduced teacher Candido Aquino to environmentally-friendly and climate-smart agricultural techniques that have improved yields of vegetables in the school gardens, providing a steady supply of more nutritious food for the school’s feeding program.

*“What stood out the most for me was the involvement of parents. We met and had workshops with them, some parents have adapted BIG in their homes to provide nutritious meals for their own families. I am happy to see parents making an effort and prioritizing the precious health of their children.”*

### **Romeo Dela Cruz of San Roque Elementary School**

Romeo Dela Cruz who has been introduced to bio-intensive gardening techniques now makes his own organic fertilizers.

*“I mix a sack of the ‘kakawate’ (*Gliricidia sepium*) leaves with a drum of water, leave it for a couple of days for the water to absorb the nutrients of the kakawate, then use the mixture to water the garden.’ Because kakawate is a legume, it is useful for fixing nitrogen in the soil, thus improving soil quality and increasing crop yields.*

Dela Cruz has been asked to speak in several other schools to explain how the BIG approach can improve productivity and nutrition.

*“These new opportunities have improved my communication and teaching skills. But even more important, the changes the project has made on our school garden, and the children’s nutrition and health – those are immeasurable.”*



**Mrs. Xiela Duran now enjoys the positive impact of BIG on their families health and nutrition.**

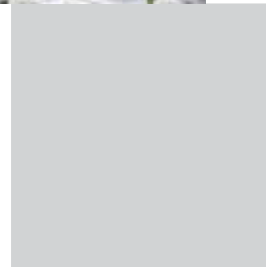
When the BIG program started two years ago, Mrs. Xiela Duran’s youngest son, Alex, a undernourished child, was made part of feeding program at General Aloña Memorial Elementary School. He was declared healthy and normal at the end of the feeding program experiment.

Ms. Duran herself attests to the big difference in Alex. The biggest change was in his personality. Alex used to be timid and shy, almost anti-social. Being part of the program has helped him come out of his shell. He now interacts with people. With his newfound confidence, he has also become more independent, he even excels in school. The healthier diet and his newfound confidence have made all the difference.

*“As a mother, this gives me a great feeling!”*

Ms. Duran and other parents like her now grow indigenous vegetables in their own small gardens. This project has made such a positive impact on their families’ health and nutrition – priceless contribution.

# SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS



**Sustainable livelihoods are among the most significant ways of addressing rural poverty, leading the poor to a productive life of dignity, self-worth, and transformation.**

The goal of IIRR's Food Security and Sustainable Wealth Creation Program is to enable communities, smallholder producers and young entrepreneurs including women, to become productive, while ensuring that their practices are sustainable and protect the environment on which most of these livelihoods depend. At the individual, household and community levels, the program seeks to ensure food security, freedom from hunger.

IIRR has been assisting farmers, women and youth in accessing knowledge on sustainable practices, human and financial capital, and technical inputs to gain access to markets, participate in value chains, and build their capacity to increase assets and generate wealth. It has also enhanced the capacity of small-holder producers to grow high-value crops using environmentally sound methods and to develop business skills and practices that generate higher income. The stories in this section illustrate some of our work in this arena in 2014.

### **Agribusiness multiplies income**

IIRR partnered with the International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC) to promote the agri-business concept among farmers, coaching 36 farmer cluster groups comprising 1,335 farmers who were trained and mentored in farming as an enterprise. This has increased farmer incomes and productivity and at the end 2014, farmers were earning gross incomes of Ugandan Shilling (UGX)1,998,678,000 (US\$768,722) as a result. Collective marketing and access to agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizer, bulk purchases of inputs, credit and access to market information have contributed in sustaining productivity and increasing profitability.

The Kinyafugwe Farmers group, after receiving IIRR agri-business mentoring support, for example, has learned to collectively produce, process, and sell products in bulk. IIRR linked the group to potato buyers and related agri-business development ventures such as

## Potato Agri-business Clusters IIRR-IFDC Project

Highlights of Achievements in South Western Uganda Kisoro and Kanungu Districts-Uganda, 2014

- Reached 35 farmer clusters (118 farmer groups, 57% of which were women farmers) comprising 6,125 beneficiaries
- 87% of beneficiaries reduced production cost per acre of potato by 19%
- Herbicide application reduced labor costs for land opening and weeding from UGX 230,000 (\$90) /per acre to UGX 100,00 (\$40)
- Farmers earned extra US\$2 per bag of sorted and graded potatoes as the result, compared to individually selling unsorted and ungraded potatoes
- 7 sub-county cluster marketing committees legally registered
- 23% increase in production and productivity from 9000 kg per acre to 11,760 after adopting improved farming practices
- 23% increase in farmer gross incomes, from UGX 5,400,000 (\$1862) per acre to UGX7,056,000 (\$2433) as a result of agri-business coaching
- 1,335 farmers harvested 3,750,200kg (37,502 bags), collectively sold 3,040,500 kg (30,405 bags), earning a gross income of UGX1,998,698,000 (\$ 689,206)
- Farmers are collectively linked to input suppliers, processors, financial services providers, and transporters

agricultural input loans, seeds and fertilizers. Farmers under the program have increased potato yields dramatically from 1560 bags to 2025 bags, and earned UGX 80,880,000 (US\$26,685) in one season.

Farmers who are exposed to agri-business have increased their demand for quality seed and agro-inputs. They are tapping loan opportunities from village savings and lending associations (VSLA) and the Kisoro Potato Processing Industry (KPPI). Encouraged by the results, farmers have increased demand for coaching in agr-business development services which has resulted in significant increases in farmer income.

“Our strategy was to reduce production costs by bulk-buying fertilizers, practicing proper spacing as we have been trained, timely and sparing use of pesticides, meticulous records-keeping, borrowing from our village savings and loan associations, producing and processing potatoes in bulk and linking up with potential buyers,” sums up Chris Byaruhanga of the Farmer’s group. These groups are grateful to IIRR for assistance of linking them to the International Fertilizer Development Centre and markets.

“Now we can plan for our business, we now know when the prices are high, we have a better understanding of production costs, know better about good farming practices and will always access market information first before selling.”

**Angella Turyahabwa, a retired teacher, is an excellent example of one of the beneficiaries.** In 2014, along with 18 other potato farmers, Angella participated in an exposure visit organized by IIRR for farmers to selected output and fast food markets in Kampala, Uganda. This exposure was an opportunity for farmers to know where the potatoes they grow are going, and to acquaint themselves with the markets. The visit was an eye-opener for Angella, who saw a venture opportunity in processing value added quality potatoes.

Now emerging as a promising woman entrepreneur in the district, she was selected to participate in the International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC)-business plan competition. She sought \$20,000 to move from a basic toolkit to an industrial crisp potato-making equipment. With an industrial potato-making equipment, she no longer needs to





**Small-scale potato agri-processing has improved incomes among farmers in Southwestern Uganda.**

wait four months to sell crisp potatoes. In fact, Angella cannot even meet the high demand for crisps. She has an assured market and can still increase crisp production.

In Ethiopia, IIRR is working with Women Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development in Amhara (EWSDA) to:

- Diversify incomes for 4,000 members
- Strengthen membership in women's entrepreneurship, building women's capacity for enterprise development
- Improve service delivery through collective action
- Mainstream crosscutting issues including gender and good governance in entrepreneurship.

IIRR's Food Security and Wealth Creation Program supports initiatives such as these for small-holder farmers and women's groups. The goal is to produce and process products in bigger quantities and develop innovative agri-businesses for potatoes and other agricultural crops, and to develop women entrepreneurs.



## Climate-Smart Agriculture

Assisting the rural poor gain access to credit and markets is not enough in a rapidly changing climate. IIRR is also helping smallholder farmers cope with the stresses and risks caused by climate variability and increasingly frequent disasters. Climate-smart agriculture helps farmers adapt to these changes using approaches considered to create only a small carbon foot print – that is, reduced inputs, less transportation, low greenhouse gas emissions, among others. These climate adaptation measures rely on simple methods that farmers slowly and continually adapt further to and incrementally enhances their capacities to cope with impending change.

Climate-smart agricultural practices are being undertaken in our learning communities in Guinayangan, Quezon and Rosario, Cavite, Philippines. These areas were badly hit by cyclone Rammasun (known locally as typhoon Glenda). In mid-2014, it affected 80% of agricultural crops and livelihoods, destroyed fishing gear of fisherfolk, and displaced communities along the coast.

## Climate-smart agriculture helps farmers adapt to the changes brought by changing climate. Simple low-carbon footprint technologies relevant to local conditions are its fundamental benchmark.

**Climate-smart agricultural practices** in IIRR's communities include use of:

- low external inputs which allows regeneration of natural resource capital – land, forest, water; this improves production and contributes to mitigation
- green leaf manure for rice and vegetable production, which has reduced fertilizer costs significantly while contributing to reducing carbon footprint
- more effective use of residual moisture in the soils
- planting legumes following rice harvest, which was practiced traditionally in the area; legumes enrich the soil, they also enrich family diets

- alternative feeds for swine using locally available materials such as root and tuber crops and rice hull that abounds in the villages, as opposed to buying commercial feeds

As the result, women farmers are now able to raise swine whereas before only well-off farmers were engaged in this enterprise. Some of these women are now able to use income from swine-raising to cover their medical expenses instead of going to money lenders who charge high interest rates.

Farmers who practice climate-smart agriculture have reduced seed requirement significantly, which subsequently reduces planting costs. Crop diversification is another principle of climate-smart

agriculture. A diversified farm promotes nutrient cycling which reduces external input; plant wastes are used for livestock feeds or incorporated in the soil as organic fertilizer to improve farm productivity. Multiple and integrated farming systems provide diverse sources of income and food stock, especially during seasonal stresses such as droughts and severe storms. Connie's farm (Box story) demonstrates an integrated farm that supports her household even after cyclone Rammasun hit Guinayangan in July 2014. When her coconut trees were destroyed by the typhoon, her goats and pineapples which survived became her fallback. The stories of Connie and Gregorio illustrate our climate-smart and integrated farming system.

# System of Rice Intensification

## Transforming the Lives of Small-Holder Farmers



System of rice intensification (SRI) is based on straight planting rice in wider spacing to give the roots more room to grow and provide a canopy that stimulates growth, ultimately increasing crop yield. The practice has been particularly beneficial for the “magtataloks” (women who transplant seedlings from seedbeds to paddies), who now spend less time transplanting and weeding.

Gregorio B. Comia, 76, ‘Tatay Oyong’ to many in his barangay (village) in Guinayangan town, Quezon, Philippines, farms an 8,000 sq m rice and coconut farm, his livelihood. Tatay Oyong first heard of SRI from an IIRR orientation seminar, where a team from IIRR demonstrated how the seed beds are prepared under this method, how to transplant seedlings and how to keep rice plots moist. They also learned to conserve water, prepare for the dry season, and to use kakawate leaves (*Gliricidia sepiu*) in place of chemical fertilizers. At the end of the seminar, Tatay Oyong left determined to try this new approach in one of his 700-sq m rice plots.

He was amazed by the results. He was able to harvest 385 kg of palay (unmilled rice) from his SRI plot, with just one-kg of rice seeds. Before shifting to SRI he would have to plant 8 kg of seeds to harvest just 220 kg of palay. Encouraged by this success, he decided to use the SRI approach for his entire 8,000 sq m rice farm. This time he used only 15 kg of rice



Tatay Oyong shares his lessons with other farmers.

seeds for the entire farm, 183 kg less than what he used before, which saved him PhP2,013 (US\$45) for one cropping season. With the money saved, he expanded his farm to grow other cash crops like high value ginger.

For his second harvest, Tatay Oyong is expecting to harvest 2200 kg of palay. This, despite the long dry season that Guinayangan experienced in 2014. His target is 500 kg more than his highest harvest using conventional methods, yielding almost PhP10,000 (US\$225.76) in additional profit, or an estimated PhP 24,000 (US\$542). Money saved from fewer seeds and use of naturally available fertilizer means that Tata Oyongs’ livelihood – and the livelihoods of his fellow farmers – is much more secure than they used to be.

Two years ago, when IIRR first introduced SRI in Guinayangan, there was very low up-take and only three farmers adopted the technique. After seeing the success of Tatay Oyong and other early adaptors, the number of small-holder farmers who have adapted SRI has grown to 30.

Stories like Tatay Oyong’s show that accessible technologies, combined with community organizing and shared learning can protect farmers whose livelihoods are at-risk to climate change. These farmers can now dare to hope for a better future for themselves and their families despite changing climate.



SRI advisor counts panicles of SRI rice harvest.



IIRR Learning Community Coordinator inviting farmers during the Farmer’s Field Day to ask questions from a woman farmer who has adopted SRI.

## The Multiplication of Goats and Hope



Manang (elder sister) Connie never imagined her two pregnant goats will multiply so fast to become 11 goats in just 11 months and become her sustained source of livelihood when the cyclone struck down her coconuts and other crops in 2014.

In Guiningayan, Quezon, IRR is implementing a goat dispersal project that aims to diversify livelihoods for coconut farmers. In January 2013, Connie joined a small livelihood support group this project supported through a Strategic Investment Fund. In order to qualify for a goat, farmers had to fulfill a few minimum requirements: establish an intensive feed garden, fence an area where goats can roam freely, and construct a safe goat shed. Farmers also

have to sign an agreement with the project to pass on two goats to the next deserving neighbor.

Connie set to work and qualified, and was presented with two pregnant goats in April 2013. With a dose of beginner's luck, one of Connie's goats gave birth to twin kids just four days after she received her goats. Four months later, the second one delivered a kid, which increased her goat population to five. After a short period of lactation, the two mothers and one of the kids became pregnant and each gave birth to twins, adding six more kids to her goat population. Some of these goats have become her granddaughter, Emiline's pets.

With five of the young kids now pregnant and with a solid history of twin kidding, Connie is expecting 10 new members to her quickly multiplying family of goats. Soon this lucky elder sister will be the proud and prosperous owner of more than 20 goats! Her husband, Nomer, who was skeptical about his wife's new venture, is now her most enthusiastic supporter. He now even helps care for the goats.

Amidst the apparent madness of such rapid multiplication of livestock, there is sound method. For these farmers, goat breeding introduces the

concept of diversification, a crucial notion that will help farmers and communities build resilience to natural disasters and the unpredictable effects of climate change. With the requirement to pass on goats to needy neighbors, it also encourages community resource-sharing which is important, as they work together to achieve sustainable



livelihoods and better protection against environmental problems brought about by extreme changes in climate.

Connie takes great pleasure in the care of her goats. They are easy to keep and eat grass, weeds and a variety of wild shrubs in the coconut plantation. They don't require external inputs like medicine or concentrated feeds. She uses goat manure for her vermiculture and organic vegetable garden. Manang Connie agrees that goat meat is healthier than most other artificially-fattened meat available in the local market. She can sell some of her goats anytime – they fetch good prices – to meet her family's practical needs.

Manang Connie keeps an accurate record of her goats on her wooden bedroom window. With a felt-tip marker, she writes the birthdates of her goats. When asked why she writes on her window, she declares, "I can see it all the time!"

Connie plans to keep up to 50 goats, after which she will start disposing of some of them. IIRR will be working with Manang Connie as a potential breeder of goats for distribution to other farmers. Goat-raising will provide her a sustained income in addition to her crops, plus the pleasure of caring for nature's animals which also results in a healthy, happy life for Connie and her family. From being focused only on coconuts 11 months ago, Manang Connie has diversified her farm and also grows pineapples. Her story illustrates that it is possible not only to alleviate household poverty but to bring lasting joy and dignity to the entire family, and the luck gets passed on from a neighbor to another, and another.

**Amidst the apparent madness of such rapid multiplication of livestock there is sound method. For the farmers, goat breeding introduces diversification, that will help farmers and communities build resilience to natural disasters and changing climate. Passing on the goats to needy neighbors also encourages community resource-sharing, crucial in communities where resources are scarce.**

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These and many similar economic and social innovations were generously supported by Starr International Foundation.

# COMMUNITY-MANAGED DISASTER RISK REDUCTION



**The World Bank estimates that, on average, countries can save \$7 in recovery costs for every \$1 spent on risk reduction measures. Keeping to these principles, the aim of IIRR's program on Community-Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) and Climate Change and Adaptation (CCA) is to ensure that communities are resilient to increasing disaster risks and able to adapt to climate change.**

These conditions affect the lives and livelihoods of the poor, especially the most vulnerable and unable to cope.

The program enables communities to continuously assess risks at their levels, take effective preparedness measures, and implement timely response that will minimize the impact of hazards.

### **Reducing Disaster Risk and Adapting to Climate Change**

In 2014, IIRR implemented several DRR/CCA projects in Asia and Africa. In partnership with Give2Asia, we implemented the first year of a three-year regional program called 'NGO Disaster Preparedness'. The program links international philanthropy with innovative and effective community programs on disaster preparedness. Within three years, the program will identify and support local initiatives in community preparedness to reduce disaster risks through a combination of learning exchanges, consultations, and grant-making. It will train local organizations in six of the most vulnerable countries

in Asia to build capacities to design and implement community-managed disaster risk reduction and management.

To understand community-based interventions and the opportunities for supporting these, IIRR and Give2Asia conducted a series of conferences that brought together 145 participants from organizations actively working on building community resilience in six of the most vulnerable countries. The conferences were conducted in strategic locations: at IIRR's Headquarters in Silang for organizations from Philippines and Indonesia; Dhaka, Bangladesh for participants from New Delhi, India, and Yangon for participants from Myanmar and Vietnam.

In grant-making, the program reached out to more than 300 non-profit organizations, of which 225 submitted concept notes. The concepts ranged from leveraging technology for disaster preparedness to building livelihood resilience and protecting the vulnerable, such as persons with disabilities, women, elderly and children. Six projects were selected and will be supported in the next three years. The concepts were chosen based on quality of lessons

they contribute in the global and regional discussions on risk reduction in Asia. (See box below for six selected projects)

In the next two years, IIRR and Give2Asia will also conduct an international course on disaster risk reduction for selected local organizations in Asia, publish learning materials and facilitate learning exchanges among local DRR practitioners.

## Selected Participants NGO Disaster Preparedness Program

- AOSED in Bangladesh: Leveraging technology to protect fishing communities, using SMS and GPS to provide early warning services for small fishers
- Aaranyak in India: Early warning systems for flashfloods in a remote and underserved region of India
- Yayasan IDEP in Indonesia: Community-managed disaster risk reduction for complex disasters in the often-ignored parts of Bali, Indonesia
- Lanthit Foundation: CMDRR focusing on the youth, women, the elderly and disabled as agents of change in Myanmar
- Lanao (LAFCCOD) in Mindanao: CMDRR and coastal zone management in a conflict zone, where national/international organizations cannot reach or work
- AEPD in Vietnam: Integrating the needs of persons with disabilities into disaster planning in Vietnam's province with highest unexploded ordinance (UXO) concentration and highest population of disabled.

## Bottom-up Planning for Disaster in Rosario, Cavite, Philippines

Since 2011, IIRR has been building the capacity of community leaders and local government officials in hazard mapping in 20 barangay communities of Rosario municipality in Cavite, Philippines and conducting participatory risk assessments. In the process, IIRR trained community leaders in hazards mapping and vulnerabilities and capacities assessment to respond to disaster risks, helping develop disaster risk reduction plans at local levels.

The community level plans has formed the basis for 20 barangays to formulate individual Five-Year Barangay or community level Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (BDRRM) Plans. The local government unit of Rosario formulated a Five-Year Municipal DRRM Plan based on DRRM plans made by the 20 barangays. Such bottom-up planning approach is a paradigm shift in planning, in contrast to the traditional planning approach where plans have always been handed top-down from a higher office to lower units, from municipal to barangay levels. IIRR has also built and improved the capacities of barangays or local communities to respond to disaster, organizing

community emergency response teams, contingency plans and barangay disaster drills.

Planning alone is not enough. In 2014, 50% of barangay DRR projects were allocating barangay DRRM trust funds – the most tangible proof of seriousness to implement such plans. On average, each barangay spent about PhP 200,000 (approx. USD 4,500) annually to implement barangay DRRM plans, proving that prevention indeed is better and less costly than cure.

### Disaster Recovery: the Development Approach

In mid-2014, cyclone Rammasun hit our learning communities in Guinayangan, Quezon and Rosario, Cavite, destroying 80% of agricultural crops and fishing gear of fisher folk. The 1.8m storm surge also affected four coastal barangays, destroying homes made of light materials.

IIRR's Glenda Project, in partnership with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) responded







to address the immediate needs of our affected communities in a way that does not perpetuate dole-outs but creates opportunities instead for rebuilding the capacity of our communities to cope, recover and build resilience against future disasters.

- First, a rapid participatory livelihood assessment was conducted to determine what opportunities communities may have to bounce back quickly.
- Second, an element of emergency response by way of cash-for-work and provision of planting materials for farmers generated temporary employment and income to affected households and communities. It also provided funds for the repair of their boats and fishing gear.
- Livelihood seminars were conducted to increase farmers and fisher folk awareness and knowledge on how to improve and diversify livelihoods. Climate-smart agricultural techniques such as goat-raising and system of rice intensification were introduced in Guinayangan (articles on these in previous pages).

- Finally, a community-managed disaster risk reduction planning exercise has transformed an unfortunate disaster into a platform and opportunity to introduce and adopt a community-managed disaster risk reduction planning and response.

Local government and barangay community members assessed and evaluated disaster preparedness and response in their respective areas. They also identified areas to enhance DRR measures and build community resilience. Municipal and community officials learned about the importance and advantage of having a simple weather monitoring equipment as an early warning system. In bringing climate information and services and monitoring of climate impacts to the local level, these communities are now better prepared to adapt to and respond to future disasters brought by changing climate.

## Painting the Trees Red

### A Kenyan community initiative to conserve trees also becomes a channel for peace

The Rendile community in Ngurunit areas of Marsabit, northern Kenya has marked species of Acacia trees (*Acacia nilotica*) red as a warning against cutting them down for firewood or charcoal. Such a simple measure has made communities living along these arid and semi-arid lands preserve this tree species in Kenya, where trees are vital to preventing desertification. Among the Rendile people who live in Ngurunit and Songa districts of Marsabit county, it is an act of abomination to cut down trees painted red. An IIRR-community partnership in 2014 worked with these communities to continuously value their trees and protect the environment as well as their natural water sources.

The arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya are characterized by a fragile ecosystem. People who live in these regions are generally pastoralists whose livelihoods have disintegrated because of degraded rangelands. Up to 42% of residents in these three areas live below the poverty line, earning less than US\$ 1.25 a day. Poverty and encroachments on forests – two sides of the same coin – have been on the rise as pastoralist communities started settling down and practicing small-scale mixed agriculture. They have ventured into the forests to cut down trees for timber, firewood, charcoal, and to clear the fields for agriculture.

There is no magic to painting trees red; the act is symbolic of the communities' commitment to preserving their environment. Significantly, it also binds the communities



**Poverty and encroachment on forests: two sides of the same coin.**

together. Other communities are learning from this solidarity action. IIRR and local partners are strengthening community institutions by training local leaders in advocacy. Other community members are learning from the initiative through organized community leaders' exchange visits, where one community learns from the other the local ways to transformation.

The red paint strategy has become a 'faithful watchman' guarding against the destruction of endangered tree species in both Marsabit and Kirisia forests. In Marsabit, the Songa and Jaldesa communities used to be sworn enemies.



**A community forest conservation group meeting in Songa, Marsabit county, North Kenya**

The Songa come from the Rendille community of agro-pastoralists while the Jaldesa are Borana people are basically pastoralists. Intermittent conflict arising from competition over access and use of natural resources such as forest has made these two communities adversaries. Since the project, the two communities have been able to sit down and interact to exchange common solutions. Thanks to the red paint project, these warring groups have dropped their weapons and learned to coexist peacefully as neighbors, collectively searching for solutions to protecting their forests.

## Building the Capacity of South Sudan Organizations for Managing Disaster at the Community Level

In South Sudan, most local and international NGOs use the conventional disaster management approach which is reactive, top-down, not addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability. They also do not establish links between relief and long term development. CMDRR, on the other hand, places the communities at the center of decision-making and management of disaster risk reduction measures that allow communities to respond quickly.

In 2014, IIRR developed the capacity of nine Cordaid partners in five states in South Sudan for managing community DRR efforts. The objective was to create and strengthen the capacity of local partner organizations to apply the CMDRR approach. IIRR facilitated a series of training courses, exchange visits for the staff of these organizations, and provided onsite mentoring and coaching support. It also helped these organizations document lessons learned during project implementation for the benefit of others.



### Tangible results include:

- Trained staff of nine local partner organizations adopted the CMDRR approach that enabled these organizations to secure funding for CMDRR projects
- The nine local partner organizations ensured that in each community, leadership in charge of CMDRR projects such as committees and self-help groups have been formed and strengthened
- The approach also ensured livelihoods diversification for project beneficiaries, one positive way towards adaptation and resilience building

The course themes and content are reviewed regularly and modified according to needs of our clients and trends in development. They continue to be fine-tuned and improved – validated by practice – and taking into consideration evaluation and feedback from participants.

**The approach places the communities at the center of decision-making and management of disaster risk reduction measures and allows communities to respond quickly.**

# APPLIED LEARNING, TRAINING and PUBLICATIONS



**IIRR continues to be an international training and enabling institution of choice for development practitioners, backed by more than 50 years field practice and experience in Asia and Africa. Since the first training program in 1965, IIRR's training courses continue to evolve with time.**

For these reasons, training at IIRR continues to be relevant and attract development practitioners from NGOs, governments and others from around the world. We offer regular demand-led training, customized courses tailored to the needs of specific organizations. We also provide documentation and knowledge management support through our innovative process called the 'writeshop'. The following are training activities our teams have implemented in 2014.

### **Customized Courses**

Lately, there is an increasing demand for customized courses. This trend reflects a growing interest among clients to participate actively in designing their own training, structure, content and implementation.

In 2014, our teams in Asia and Africa conducted:

### **International Training, Study Programs / Customized Courses**

#### **Asia region**

- Total number of training courses – **14**
- Total number of participants – **411**
- Gender representation – **260 males, 151 females**
- Number of organizations represented – **77**
- Number of countries represented – **21**
- Types of organizations represented – governments, local NGOs, international NGOs

#### **Africa region**

- Total number of training courses – **14**
- Total number of participants – **249**
- Gender representation – **169 males, 80 females**
- Number of organizations represented – **83**
- Number of countries represented - **28**
- Total no. of trainings/writeshops - **28**
- Types of organizations represented – United Nations, governments, local NGOs, international NGOs, research and educational organizations



We have shared our field lessons with the global development community and, in 2014, built the technical and professional capacities of 660 development professionals (of which 231 were women) from 160 organizations in 49 countries.

## Writeshops

IIRR developed a participatory documentation process now used by many development organizations including the UN, called the 'writeshop'. A writeshop is an intensive participatory knowledge exchange to produce a publication. Writeshops are most useful where: a) information is in various places, or with various sources, sometimes people from different fields of discipline and there is a need to synthesize and consolidate the views for a particular purpose or publication; b) there are many different perspectives

and dimensions in writing and preparing materials, or c) there is a need to bring written materials to a different level, for example, from highly technical and scientific to one usable by community development workers. Some publications have been translated into the local languages and illustrated for our unschooled partners.

The distinct strength of the writeshop is its ability to capture and consolidate multiple perspectives and disciplines within a short time, capitalizing on the presence of experts from various disciplines and many stakeholders in one gathering. The beauty of the process is that it can document the views of farmers, women, the unschooled and the marginalized. The presence of stakeholders, development workers, authors and editors in a writeshop setting enables their views to be captured, synthesized and documented.

## 10 ways to improve milk marketing



IIRR



## Writeshop Book Spins Off Five New Knowledge Products

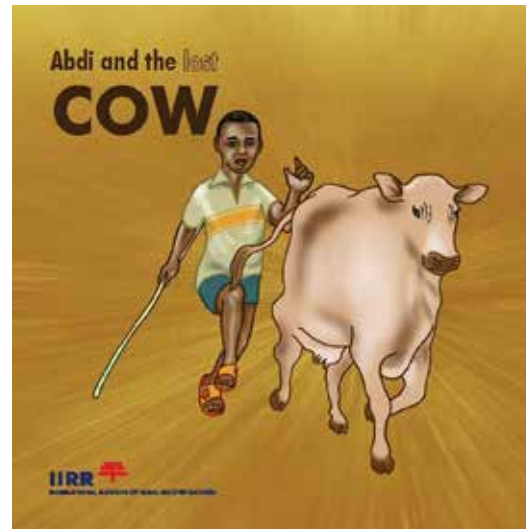
In 2014, IIRR-Africa, using the writeshop approach in partnership with the Technical Center for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and FAO, simplified and produced five spin-off products from *Moving herds, moving markets: Making markets work for African pastoralists* publication.

There used to be very little interest in pastoralist livestock and its value chain, and scant literature

## Organising to market animals and milk



IIRR 平



available on the subject until the book, *Moving Herds, moving markets* in 2013. A year later, a need arose to simplify and widely disseminate the content of the book to diverse groups. With the support of CTA, IIRR brought together pastoralists, school teachers, traders, value chain experts and trainers in a mini writeshops to develop spin-off publications out of the original book. The results are five spin-off products knowledge from the original:

- Story booklets for schoolchildren in Primary levels 4-7
- Five practical guides on different topics from the book
- Policy brief on pastoral issues
- A training curriculum on livestock value chain development, and
- Posters with five key messages for community and public use

The drafts of these five spin-off products were field-tested in schools and villages and validated at a training event. Schoolchildren, community leaders, teachers, extension workers, and policy makers were involved in simplifying the book. For example, most school children in east Africa, including pastoralist children, learn about mainstream agricultural practices such as tea, coffee, and dairy production but nothing about pastoralist livestock production, their main livelihood.

The children's story booklets on livestock became a big hit right after the publication. Children who read the storybooks shared them with their parents – topics like how to improve livestock production, for example.

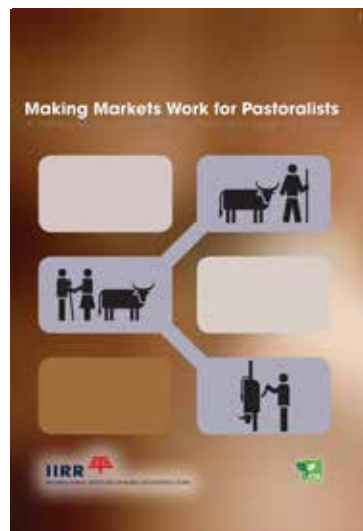
### 1. Booklets for Primary Schoolchildren

These simple, easy-to-read, illustrated storybooks serve as reading materials for schoolchildren. They teach

about the pastoral context in which pastoralist children live. The four titles tell the story of children who get involved in aspects of pastoralist livestock value chains development early. This way, they grow up knowledgeable about the benefits of developing value chains in livestock, their means of livelihood.

*Asha and the spoilt milk* is a story about the benefits of taking milk to the market as soon as possible and using appropriate storage containers. *Abdi and the lost cow* talks about the benefits of having a market with services such as paddocks, holding ground, and a toilet. *Abdi and the sick cow* extols the virtues of keeping animals healthy, while *A visit by the County Extension Officer* educates children about opportunities that exist for pastoralist livestock production. In all these titles, the child becomes the natural channel for informing and educating their pastoralist parents who, in most cases, do not read or write.

*“By developing these spin-off products from the main book, IIRR has made a very powerful statement. The fact that this process can develop spin-off products targeting specific segments of the community is in itself a powerful way of communicating with communities and stakeholders. This is the way to go. Writeshops still remain the most effective way of documenting community development experience,” says IIRR President, Dr. Isaac Bekalo.*



### 2. Practical Guides

Six titles have been developed in this category:

- Organizing to market animals and milk
- 10 ways to improve milk marketing
- Services for marketing animals and milk
- 11 ways to improve animal marketing
- Producing animals and milk for markets, and
- Marketing animals and milk

These guides target extension workers who interact regularly with pastoralists. The ultimate aim is to improve livestock production and marketing.

### 3. Policy Brief

The policy brief addresses policy makers on pastoralist livestock value chains development. It calls for livestock-friendly policies that can facilitate

production, marketing and services for pastoralist livestock and livestock products. Existing policies and laws are either silent on pastoralist livestock value chains or have been eschewed in favor of livestock production in other areas. This policy brief is an attempt to push for policies that promote the pastoralist livestock value chain.

### 4. Posters

Five posters with different messages on production and marketing of pastoralist livestock and livestock products, talk directly to local pastoralist herder, trader, extension officer and policy maker. They commend the benefits of keeping a healthy herd, how to get milk to the market, and why it is beneficial to belong to an organized group of livestock producers and traders.





## 5. Training curriculum

The curriculum is targeted at government and NGO trainers, extension officers and field practitioners in pastoralist livestock value chain development. The uniqueness of the course lies in the fact that it is based on real-life examples of pastoralists' value chains in Africa.

## What participants say about our courses

*"Training was informative, relevant, thought-provoking, lively environment."* Unnamed participant

*The philosophy of putting farmers at the center of solving their own problems is the best way possible to turn around the challenges currently being experienced in economic research. The training is timely and important. The organization (IIRR) is doing well and I urge management to maintain the good work.*

Kondwani Makoko Research Economist  
Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, Malawi

*The institution is great help in providing services for rural development such that many African countries can benefit from it. There is need to increase visibility in African institutions and government agencies. IIRR must consider conducting follow-up courses to continue upgrading the knowledge of participants.*

Nditani Maluwa National Program Officer  
Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, Malawi

# Y.C. JAMES YEN CENTER



**The Yen Center – named after IIRR founder, Dr. Y.C. James Yen – is a glorious 50-hectare campus of foliage, birds and insects, fenced in by a greenbelt mini-forest. The Center is the headquarters of the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR), Regional Center for Asia, and Philippine Country Program. It also houses Yen Center conference facilities, in an environment away from the hustle and bustle of the city, conducive to reflection, recreation and learning.**

The Center hosts workshops, writeshops, training, reflection and retreat, or planning and teambuilding activities for development organizations. It has facilities for outdoor games and recreation as well as other social functions. Function halls, hostels, dining services, a camp site with amenities serve the many needs of training and workshops of these organizations.

Inside the campus are two learning and demonstration centers of IIRR's work: a bio-intensive garden demonstration center of climate-smart agro-ecological practices and a Mother Crop Museum of native planting materials, and a Livelihoods Learning Center which features an integrated trial farm. It has agro-forestry, a fodder garden, composting sites and various livelihood options such as indigenous chicken-raising, aquaculture and goat production, and additional bio-intensive garden plots. The development and maintenance of the Livelihood Learning Center is made possible through the generous support of IIRR former Chairman of the Board, Mr. Anthony C. Gooch, and Ms. Florence Davis, President of Starr Foundation.

### **Tribute to Valued Partners**

Year 2014 marked the Yen Center's stronger partnership with the US Peace Corps. From a single event in previous years, the Center now holds more. The strategic partnership with Peace Corps attract other development organizations like Plan International-Philippines, Save the Children-UK, World Vision, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), among them, and other government and nongovernment organizations.

Through the revenue it generates, the Yen Center was able to support and keep the Philippine Program growing. The Livelihood Learning Center has become a place for education for young agriculture students from MFI Farm Business Institute, facility users and other walk-in visitors.

Over the past year, the Yen Center has hosted 155 events and a total of 14,700 visitors. For 2015, the Center enters into an agreement with National College of Science and Technology, Institute of Industrial Research and Training. The National



College of Science and Technology and IIRR shares a common vision of creating opportunities for poor young but poor Filipinos from marginalized families to access relevant education and training that will help them acquire employable agricultural, vocational and other skills.

**The Center can host both small and large group events such as training and workshops.**

## Testimonial

*IIRR is our “home away from home”. We keep coming back to this relaxing, wonderful and homey training venue because of all the good things it has provided us for four years now. It’s not only the comfort that we get when we do our training events here, it’s the total package that IIRR has to offer.*

*For starters, the environment is not only conducive to learning but also allows us to conduct various activities that fit our training curriculum. The staff is amazing and helpful...from setting-up the conference rooms to arranging lodging accommodations of our participants...and is responsive to all our needs...The food is sumptuous and suits everyone’s palate, with a complete assortment and a huge array of Filipino food and American menu. They really go out of their way to accommodate our various needs. I couldn’t ask for more. All I can say is a sincere thank you to the staff and management of IIRR.*

*Maraming salamat for making my job a hundred-fold easier!*

Bonifacio A. Bucol, Jr.  
Regional Manager  
US Peace Corps – Philippines

# Financial Performance in 2014

## Overview

In accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as applied to not-for-profit corporations, IIRR showed a surplus of \$579,859 in 2014 before currency translation loss, as compared with the 2013 deficit of \$1,822,091. This improvement was mainly attributable to substantial multi-year grants obtained and recorded during 2014 for use in that year and subsequent years. The 2014 Operating Basis showed IIRR recorded a surplus of \$248,425, as compared with a surplus of \$237,235 in 2013.

Of total revenues, gains and other support (\$6,697,884) in 2014, \$5,426,506 (81%) consisted of contributions and grants, and \$1,271,378 (19%) consisted of earned income from training courses, technical assistance, workshops, study programs, use of campus facilities, publication sales and other earned income.

## Revenues, gains and other support

### Contributions and grants

Total contributions and grants in 2014 were \$5,426,506, an increase of \$3,260,891 (151%) from 2013, principally because of the recognition of significant multi-year grants in 2014. Notable grants in 2014 were from the Department of International Development (DFID) (\$904K) for the project 'Key Essential Education Program in Pastoralist Areas' (KEEPS); grants from the Catholic Organization for Relief and Development (Cordaid) (\$848K) for the project, 'Sexual Health and Reproductive Rights' in Kenya; grants from the Organization for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara (ORDA) funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), (\$650K) for 'Harvest+: Smallholders, Women and Youth Economic Empowerment Project' in Ethiopia; grants from Give2Asia (\$573K) for the project, 'NGO Disaster Preparedness Platform in Asia'; grants from the Ford Foundation (\$460K) for the project 'Virtual Learning School and Global Learning Alliance'; and grants from Wellspring Advisors, LLC (Wellspring) (\$400K) for the project 'Giving Girls a Second Chance in Education in Uganda'.

## Training courses, technical assistance, workshops, study programs, use of campus facilities and other earned income

Aggregate income in these categories was \$1,271,378, a decrease of \$1,161,397 (48%) from 2013. The significant decline was attributable to the growing competition from various institutions offering similar activities.

## Expenses

### Program services

Program service expenses are classified in accordance with IIRR's current program components: the Learning Community Program and the Applied Learning Program. Aggregate program expenses were \$5,297,381 in 2014, a decrease of 6% over 2013, which arose from two categories: Learning Community Program and Applied Learning. Expenses of the Learning Community Program decreased by \$164,665 (4%); the decrease was attributable to the implementation of the remaining fund balance of multi-year grants from earlier years, since most of the current year 2014 revenues from contributions and grants were approved in the last

quarter of 2014, thus, implementation of the Learning Community Program expenses for these newly funded projects will happen in 2015. Expenses for the Applied Learning Program decreased by \$201,388 (13%). This decline was attributable to corresponding decreases in revenues from training courses, technical assistance, workshops, study programs, use of campus facilities, publication sales and other earned income.

## Supporting services

Aggregate expenses for supporting services were \$820,644, or 13% of total expenditures in 2014, compared with \$757,047 (12%) in 2013.

## Liquidity and capital resources

Cash at year's end was higher in 2014 than in 2013; the increase was attributable to the collection of grants. Total net assets were 11% higher on 31 December 2014 than on 31 December 2013, because of surplus as discussed above. Of total net assets at 31 December 2014, \$1,209,722 (25%) were unrestricted, \$2,926,290 (60%) temporarily restricted, and \$717,982 (15%) permanently restricted endowment funds. Temporarily restricted funds will become available for use in 2015 and subsequent years upon compliance with donor restrictions and agreements.

### STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS in US Dollars

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total 2014	Total 2013
<b>REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>					
<b>Contributions/Grants:</b>					
Foundations	\$22,836	\$4,264,230	\$ -	\$4,287,066	\$1,846,119
Individuals	35,924	78,817	-	114,741	201,240
Governments	-	348,379	-	348,379	50,919
Corporations	18,463	657,857	-	676,320	67,337
Training courses, study missions and technical assistance	678,250	-	-	678,250	1,411,334
Use of campus facilities	395,950	-	-	395,950	415,085
Workshops	92,131	-	-	92,131	314,970
Gain on changes in market value of investments - net	47,310	-	-	47,310	118,176
Publication sales	4,991	-	-	4,991	7,581
Others - net	52,746	-	-	52,746	165,629
<b>Net assets released from restrictions:</b>					
Satisfaction of program restrictions	5,700,521	(5,700,521)	-	-	-
Expiration of time restrictions	175,000	(175,000)	-	-	-
	<b>7,224,122</b>	<b>(526,238)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,697,884</b>	<b>4,598,390</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
<b>Program Services:</b>					
Learning community	3,913,156	-	-	3,913,156	4,077,821
Applied learning	1,384,225	-	-	1,384,225	1,585,613
	<b>5,297,381</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,297,381</b>	<b>5,663,434</b>
<b>Supporting Services:</b>					
Management and general	612,742	-	-	612,742	574,093
Fund raising	207,902	-	-	207,902	182,954
	<b>820,644</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>820,644</b>	<b>757,047</b>
	<b>6,118,025</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,118,025</b>	<b>6,420,481</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT OVER EXPENSES</b>					
	<b>\$1,106,097</b>	<b>(\$526,238)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$579,859</b>	<b>(\$1,822,091)</b>
Translation Gain (Loss)	(110,397)	-	-	(110,397)	(120,736)
<b>CHANGED IN NET ASSETS</b>					
	<b>\$995,700</b>	<b>(\$526,238)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$469,462</b>	<b>(\$1,942,827)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>					
	<b>\$214,022</b>	<b>\$3,452,528</b>	<b>\$717,982</b>	<b>\$4,384,532</b>	<b>\$6,327,359</b>
<b>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</b>					
	<b>\$1,209,722</b>	<b>\$2,926,290</b>	<b>\$717,982</b>	<b>\$4,853,994</b>	<b>\$4,384,532</b>

#### Learning Community Program

This Program aims to: (1) enable people and their communities to effect meaningful change in their lives through research and learning processes; and, (2) generate knowledge about participatory human development through practical experience. Capacity building of people and their institutions is achieved at the community level through this program.

#### Applied Learning Program

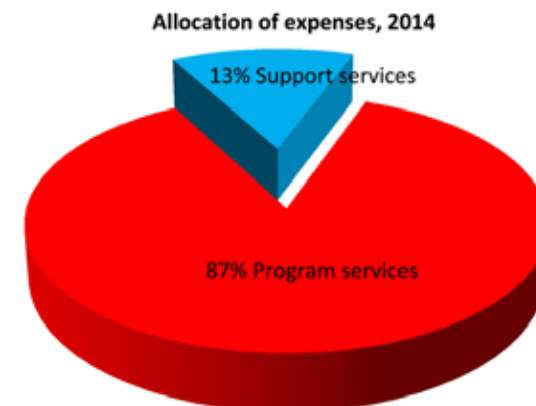
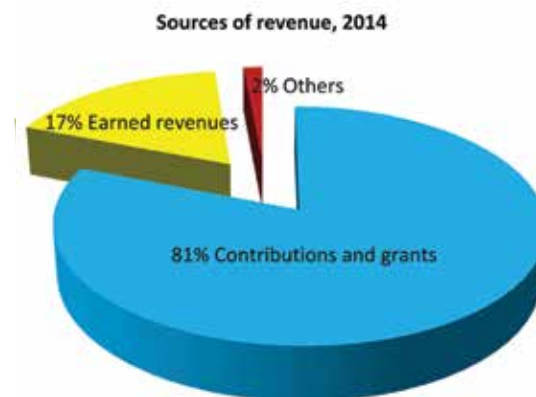
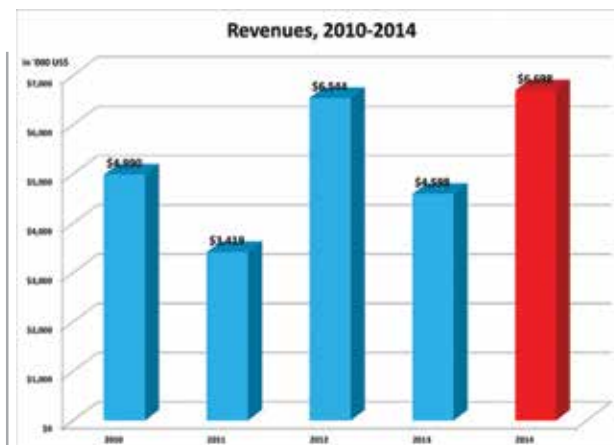
This program aims to contribute to the global body of knowledge on organizational and program effectiveness and good governance through practical trainings, workshops, conferences, technical assistance, study programs and publications. The focus is to transform field experience into a unique, informed, evolving and on-site learning through interaction between community members and development practitioners engaged at national, regional and global levels.

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

in US Dollars

	As of December 31	
	2014	2013
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,011,991	\$1,462,588
Investments	750,219	1,086,229
Contributions receivable	2,474,609	1,387,577
Other receivables	322,945	559,901
Property and equipment - net	271,631	236,572
Prepayments and other assets	20,063	18,003
	<b>\$5,851,458</b>	<b>\$4,750,870</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Accounts payable and other current liabilities	\$997,464	\$363,341
Pension liability	-	2,997
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>997,464</b>	<b>366,338</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Unrestricted	\$1,209,722	\$214,022
Temporarily restricted	2,926,290	3,452,528
Permanently restricted	717,982	717,982
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>4,853,994</b>	<b>4,384,532</b>
	<b>\$5,851,458</b>	<b>\$4,750,870</b>

- 1 Data extracted from the audited financial statements of IIRR for the year ended 2014. The audited financial statements for 2014 and prior years are available by writing to IIRR.
- 2 Latest annual report filed with the Attorney General of the State of New York is available from IIRR or from the offices of the Attorney General of the State of New York, Department of Law, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.
- 3 The Institute is exempt from Federal income taxes under Section 501 (c) (3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code and has been classified as an organization which is not a private foundation under Section 509 (a). The Institute qualifies as an organization to which contributions are subject to special limitation provisions under Section 170 (b) (1) (a) of the Code.



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At IIRR, we are very grateful to our donors and take this special opportunity to acknowledge the following institutions and individuals for their commitment to the rural poor. Your generosity and support are helping us enable communities to reach their full potential and implement solutions to poverty. Thank you!

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- Combined Federal Campaign, United States
- Danish International Development Agency (Danida)
- Department of International Development (DFID)
- Direct Aid Program (DAP), Australia
- Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Ethiopia
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
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- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- The Federal Republic of Germany, Ethiopia
- Uganda Water and Sanitation Network (UWASNET)

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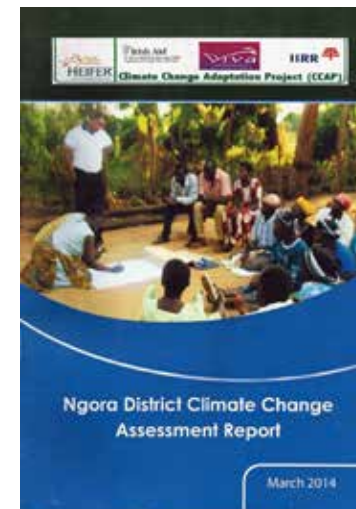
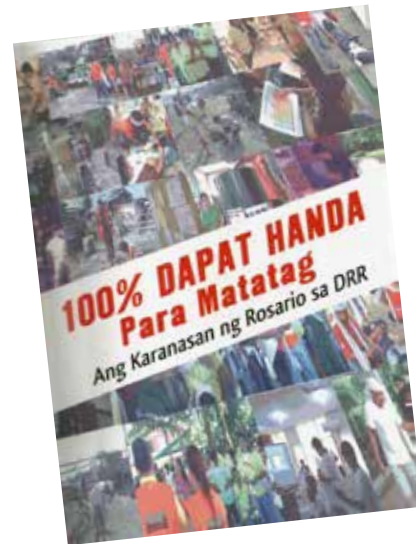
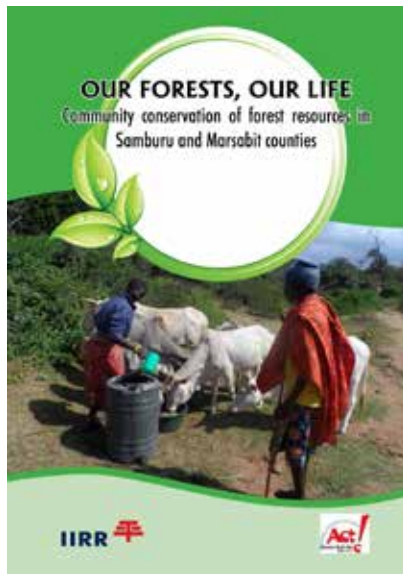
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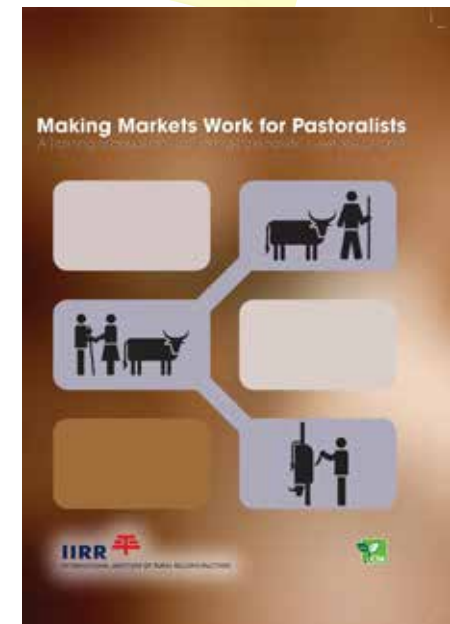
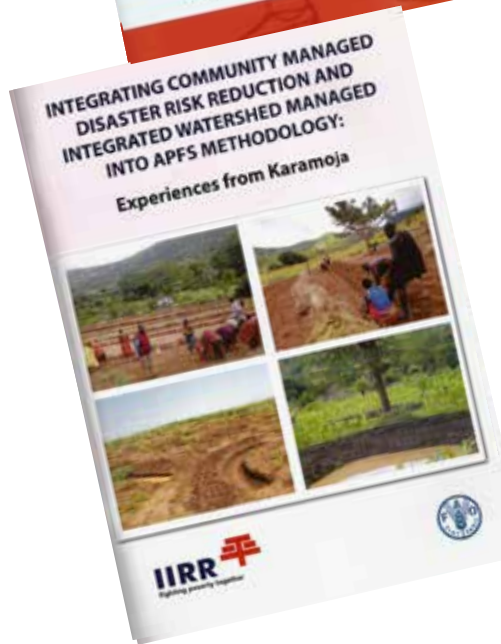
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**IIRR's Board of Trustees created the Jimmy Yen Society to honor supporters who have included IIRR in their estate planning. These supporters include those who have made a bequest to IIRR in their wills, those who have named IIRR as a beneficiary of an insurance policy, and those who have endowed a fund or program managed by IIRR. If you or a family member should be added to this list, please let us know by contacting us. We extend our thanks to the following members of the Jimmy Yen Society:**

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## Abbreviations

DRR & CCA	Disaster Risk Reduction & Climate Change Adaptation
ESEY	Economic and Social Empowerment of Youth
EWESDA	Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development in Amhara
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
VLSA	Village Loan and Savings Association



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