

USING ORGANIC FARMING TO IMPROVE FOOD, NUTRITION AND INCOME SECURITY FOR RURAL POOR FARMERS

PREPARED BY:

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT EMPOWERMENT
PROGRAMME
(COSDEP)



Training farmers to secure their future

Community Sustainable Development Empowerment Programme (COSDEP)

P.O Box 132 – 00621, Village Market,

Nairobi-Kenya

Cell: (254) 722460769

Email: coskenya@yahoo.com

Blog address: <http://www.Cosdep.wordpress.com>

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1. Executive Summary

Title of the Project: Organic Farming Promotion through Training and Information Sharing for Food, Nutrition and Income Security.

Introduction and Location: Community Sustainable Development Empowerment Programme (COSDEP) is a registered non-governmental organization (NGO). The organization's main offices are located at Gachie Town, Kihara Location in Kiambu District. It was founded in 2001 as a farmer's training programme in Kiambu and became a full NGO in 2004 covering the entire Central region of Kenya.

COSDEP's Mission Statement: COSDEP is committed to promote sustainable development initiatives particularly amongst the poor small scale farmers in Central region and other adjacent areas through participatory and innovative practices.

Vision: COSDEP envisions a just self reliant community of men and women who are social-economic and environmentally conscious and sustainable

1.5 Core Values In order to serve the community better, COSDEP-Kenya is guided by the following core values; **Hard work, Integrity, Team work, Learning Growth and Sustainability.**

1.6 Long Term Goal: Build the communities capacity to secure their own food, nutrition and income at household level to alleviate poverty.

COSDEP-Kenya mainly focuses on sustainable improvement of livelihoods of small scale farmers through sustainable agriculture and in particular organic farming, a system of farming using locally available materials to improve the soil, yield and farmers standards of living.

Objectives:

The strategic plan of the organization is to empower the local people with knowledge to harness their potential in order to raise their living standards and to make them healthy and environmentally conscious.

The objectives are as outlined below:

- i. To bring awareness on the dangers of conventional farming based on synthetic external inputs.
- ii. To train interested farmers groups on organic farming techniques and practices in order to reclaim the ecological status of the project area and achieve sustainability in food production.
- iii. To monitor and follow up trained farmers to ensure compliance with the learnt organic farming techniques and practices.
- iv. To assist farmers acquire managerial skills

Main Activities

In order to achieve the organization's strategic goal and objectives, the following activities will be implemented.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| v. Awareness Creation | x. Sharing and Networking |
| vi. Trainings | xi. Monitoring |
| vii. Follow Ups & extension | xii. Evaluation and Reporting |
| viii. Exchange Visits | |
| ix. Information | |

Target Beneficiaries

This project primarily targets small scale farmers who form over 70% of the region's population and 65% of them being women. The specific areas will be Kajiado, Naivasha and Geta which have been by participation identified as priority areas for the proposed project period.

Amount requested and Project Period: 2,404,290 shillings for a one year project period.

The breakdown is in the line item budget found at the end of this proposal.

2.0 Introduction

Title:

USING ORGANIC FARMING TO IMPROVE FOOD, NUTRITION AND INCOME SECURITY FOR RURAL POOR FARMERS

The concept of food and nutritional security refers to the ability of all people at all times to have physical and income access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for an active healthy life.

It requires food be available, enough, stable and accessible without which inevitably leads to malnourishment that hinders individual performance. Food and nutrition insecurity is as a result of farmer's lack of knowledge on effective agricultural techniques and ability to meet costs of necessary seeds and equipments because of their limited income among other reasons.

The effects exhibit themselves in hunger which is the extreme expression of poverty, due to small scale farmers' inability to produce enough food for their own consumption and to sustain their communities.

For that reason, any enhancement of the food security calls for farmers' sensitization and encouragement to adopt strategic methods that will not only cater for food and nutritional security but also income at household level and sound management of the environment.

The organization's commitment to making central Kenya a role model in embracing sustainable farming practices in order to improve livelihoods and alleviate poverty serves

as the motivation to initiating participatory practices in promoting sustainable development initiatives among the resource poor rural community members.

Therefore, COSDEP-Kenya takes up the challenge of generating awareness on the dangers of conventional agriculture, training on organic farming as an alternative method and follow ups to ensure proper implementation and sharing information for sustainability.

The target beneficiaries are the small scale holders who are most affected by the prohibitive cost of agricultural production and the escalating land degradation through contamination by toxic inputs and loss of fertility through erosion. The project therefore is aimed at enhancing food security and farmer's participation in environmental conservation for sustainable production during our lifetime and for the future generations.

3.0 Problem Statement

Since the introduction of the scientific agriculture, farmers and consumers have lacked awareness and information on the dangers posed by chemical substances on the conventionally grown products to the growers, consumers and the environment. The conventional agriculture has provided for the usage of toxic materials in crop protection without putting into account the other problems they will generate and their effects.

The soil fertility has been affected most given that in this form of farming, soil is no longer regarded as a living system constituent which should be kept free of pollution by poisonous chemical agents and consequently reducing its productive quality over time thus poor yields and eventually subjecting households to food insecurity.

Human health has been put in danger in at least two major ways; the handlers of the synthetic farm chemicals do not comply with the worker safety rules when in operation and on the other hand residues of chemicals sprayed on crops ends up being ingested by the consumers of these foods. This therefore has been responsible for adverse health effects such as disruption of the hormone, nervous and immune systems.

Conventional agriculture does not consider its impact on the environment either. So much pollution has resulted from environmentally careless practices such as chemical depositing causing decimation of insects and other organisms' populace, fertility decline, water, air and soil pollution. Mechanization has encouraged tree felling and loss of ground cover. This facilitates erosion and later desertification while monoculture which is best associated with mechanization, has brought about the loss of indigenous food stuffs and seed banks hence denial of communities' nutritional security.

Over dependence on external inputs has made small scale farmers fall deeper into debts and progressive poverty levels because majority cannot cope with the ever rising prices of the farm inputs.

Therefore, COSDEP-Kenya endeavors to address and change this situation by invoking communities' consciousness and sensitivity of their responsibility towards themselves, the ecosystem and the future generations.

4. Justification

Organic farming is a system of agriculture that uses environmentally sound techniques for raising crops and livestock that are free from synthetic compound. The methods used in organic farming seeks to increase long term soil fertility, balance insect and organism populations and reduce air, soil and water pollution while maintaining or increasing levels of production.

As opposed to the conventional farming system, organic farming keeps the welfare of every player in mind including the provision for fairness in farm situation and in trade. It stimulates the societal and individual responsibility for the environment hence sustainability.

COSDEP-Kenya therefore, envisions attainment of improved livelihoods, free from poverty, environmentally conscious and assured in sustainability. It is committed to promote organic farming in pursuance of its obligation sustainable development initiatives amongst small scale rural farmers as a means of empowering the communities towards better living.

COSDEP-Kenya has been in operation for the last five years in partnership with Tudor Trust UK and Kilili Self Help Projects (USA) as financial partners and has gained substantial experience in spearheading this important cause following the interactions with the communities in regions the organization covers. The organization has joined networks in order to foster the development of sustainable practices nationally and internationally. More than 5, 000 farmers have been trained and a good proportion has been linked with the markets where they can sell their organic produce. This translates to more people having access to safe quality foods and entrepreneurial gardening.

However, COSDEP-Kenya faces a human and financial capacity limitation and upon finding a financial partner, it will be in a better position in achieving its long term goals and the same time help members of the community who really need better farming methods.

5. Expected Output

This project aims at training 1, 500 farmers every year having raised the figure from previous figure of 800 farmers, and directly benefiting about 5,000 members of their households. The farmers are then followed up to assist in adoption of the ideas and their implementation.

Food security improves as a result of improved and maintained soil fertility. Diversification of crops leads to improved nutritional status of the communities. Food production expectation is a rise by 35%.

Advocacy in environmental conservation and agro forestry will go a long way into reclamation of the lost forest cover. This ensures sustainable ways of acquiring wood products without exerting pressure on the natural forests. The general environmental conditions will largely change for the better.

Increased nutrition and food production will pave way for sale of surplus and therefore increasing the household income levels hence reduced poverty.

Organic farming methods are less costly and utilize locally available materials thereby reducing overdependence on expensive inputs. This translates that the farmer's affordability of required inputs will be increased.

6. Measuring Success

In order to examine the efficacy of the organization towards achieving the goals and objectives, some important pointers are used. They are based on the set targets for the time frame and their extent of changing the conditions of the beneficiaries' lives for better.

They include the number of awareness meetings conducted, number of farmers trained, rate of adoption leading to decreased dependence on external and detrimental inputs as well as the conspicuous change of attitude by the farmers and their neighbours manifested in regular exchange visits and replication of the techniques.

Increased production per unit area as a result of improved soil fertility ensures there is more produce for food and the surplus is offered for sale thus raising the income for households.

7. Impact

Lasting effects as a result of the project includes better living standards and reduced poverty levels among the community members. This will be brought about by the raised income levels and improved health conditions in extension of more and healthy food availability and reduced subjection hazardous practices and inputs.

Sustainability environmental sanitation will be experienced as a result of reduced deforestation increased a forestation and agro forestry practices. Adversities in climatic change such as desertification and effects of global warming will be mitigated.

8. Project Sustainability

The knowledge and information imparted to the community is one that will be used to encourage them utilize resources in an inexhaustible way. This will let communities exploit resources during their lifetime and handover to the future generations in first rate order. These skills will therefore make generations regard themselves as custodians of nature given resources and not consumers.

The system used during knowledge transfer involves institutionalization where trained individual farmers are organized into groups and encouraged to manage their own operations. They establish formal leadership in their respective groups which is directly responsible for group's running and linkages with other developmental networks and for information sharing.

The groups' members are subjected to all the skills relevant to all their undertakings to ensure building the communities' human capital. This will guarantee continuity and at the same time induce intra community knowledge and ideas transfer through schemes like Farmers Field Schools (FFS), Demonstration Plots and Exchange Visits.

Different groups carry out needs assessment and start income generating projects. This is an incentive to hold together and champion other communal activities and needs. Income generating activities increases individual's per capita and is in line with poverty reduction strategy thereby committing members to uphold the projects. The proceeds help in sustaining the intended ecologically sound projects.

Moreover COSDEP has embarked aggressive fundraising, and intends to use part of the obtained funds from Tudor trust to cater for the possible balance of the grant secured from your organization.

9. Risks

The risks that surround the development of these undertakings includes:-

Reversion: Some of the trained farmers may revert back to their old ways of farming i.e. conventional farming.

Weather Conditions: Large number of our target group relies on rainfall for their agricultural activities which has of late been characterized by erratic situations thus interfering with on farm implementations.

Commercial Interference: Some merchants promoting their synthetic products and or transgenic seeds may influence the farmers' perception. This in most cases will occur to individual farmers on the look out or in need of making quick gains.

Group's Disintegration: Sensitized and trained community members might be unable to hold together onto their convenient groupings making it difficult for follow ups and sharing of ideas.

10. Assumptions

Assumptions related to the project includes:-

- 1) The community members will have an interest in sustainable methods of farming – organic farming i.e. avail themselves for the trainings, and play their duly part during training and implementation of the project in order to make a lasting impact.
- 2) The social-economic political and weather conditions will allow for the process of awareness, training and more importantly adoption and implementation of the ideas.
- 3) The change agency (COSDEP) will continue with its mandate without changing focus and its mission.

11. Work scope

Strategies

Below are the major activities involved and include:

11.1 Awareness Creation

The community needs to be sensitized on the dangers associated with conventional farming and the availability of a convenient farming alternative. To achieve this, the deployed field team use different methods. These includes public rallies, field days, church gatherings, posters, visits to existing farmers' groups and impromptu farm visits to establish contacts and enhance outreach. During this stage, importance, advantages and benefits of project and the COSDEPs modus operandi are highlighted and discussed in details. Interested farmers are assisted to form manageable common interest groups (CIG) and the training modalities and community action plans are set.

11.2 Training of farmers

The method used in training involves introductory lessons on organic farming and other sustainable ideas carried out indoors. After this familiarization with the concepts, the trainees are subjected to demonstrations to aid in acquiring of relevant practical skills and finally participatory action based on-farm training.

Discussions and sharing of ideas and experiences is highly encouraged at this stage and upholding is equally emphasized. Thematic approach based on soil conversation, long term soil fertility building, ecological farm management practices and energy saving are stressed.

Course Contents includes:

- Making and using compost and manure to provide long term soil fertility
- Bio Intensive gardening techniques for soil improvement
- Methods of Soil Conservation
- Crop Rotation and Farm Management
- Crop Diversity -Companion Planting and Deterrents
- Ecological Pest Management (EPM)
- Agro forestry and Environment Conservation
- Water Harvesting and Home Technologies
- Animal Husbandry in relation to animal welfare
- Nutrition through promotion of high nutritional crops and indigenous foods
- Farming for the market and organic marketing process
- Gender equity in development

11.3 Follow Ups & extension

Trained farmers are offered post training services geared towards smooth transition to sustainable practices. These include continuous and regular visits by the field based staff

in order to guide, advice direct and motivate them. Planning for real at this stage emerge given that the community members come up with various strategic livelihood improvement projects. The agents usually discuss their priorities with them and then link them with relevant business party.

11.4 Exchange Visits

This is an important activity aimed at facilitating farmers learning from their successive counterparts, discuss and share experiences and gain motivation. Respective trained groups and other interested individuals are assisted in organizing trips to visit other areas and witness for themselves that what they learn is practicable. This enhances farmer's interaction and promotes farmer to farmer learning. This is in line with food and agriculture organization's (FAO) recommendation.

11.5 Information Sharing and Networking

COSDEP-Kenya works very closely with other like minded organizations in order to improve on service delivery. This aids in complementing one another's work, learning from each other and avoid collision or duplication of services. This also helps keep away from confusing the community and wasting time and resources. This therefore has called for formation of corporate networks which are vital in strengthening organization's uniformity, ability and quality of information and services provided to the beneficiaries.

In this respect COSDEP-Kenya attends relevant meetings and workshops to gather knowledge, information and deliberate on important aspects of the sector. Joint collaborative activities such as policy formulation and development, advocacy and public awareness on topical issues across the networks are also taken part in.

Experiences, ideas and information are shared during these gatherings. They are later analyzed and processed to a level that suits the organization and then disseminated to the deserving grassroots recipients. Print materials received from other stakeholders are distributed to the farmers and interested individuals. In addition, COSDEP-Kenya produces a newsletter (ECOSTYLE) that gives the farmers, organizations and individuals a source of learning and platform to share ideas. It provides for farmers to speak out, express and share their views, feelings and ideas.

11.6 Monitoring

Scrutiny on the development of the project is continuous. The work by the field personnel is assessed on quarterly basis where they are supposed to report in writing progressively to the management, and discuss the progress in the staff business meetings held four times per year. The management on the other hand keeps records and presents them for auditing. Compiles progress and general reports, keep them safely and sends to the relevant partners. These reports are used for the evaluations.

11.7 Evaluation and Reporting

The organization's progress is monitored and reported by the respective personnel submitting reports on how well their respective objectives have been met to the management. The management compiles them for documentation and further reporting to the board and funding agencies. The management is responsible for preparing and presenting the financial records to an auditor. The auditor inspects and prepares the audited financial reports which are later sent to the fiscal sponsors.

Evaluations are conducted yearly first by inwardly examining the extent of meeting the set objectives, what factors helped or prevented maximum output. During this, farmers from different areas are visited to provoke discussions. Our partners, depending on their choice, or a consultant appointed by them visit us and some parts of our coverage to get firsthand observation of the work we carry out with the support we get from them. This is usually done at their own convenience.

Besides, external evaluation is conducted by an independent consultant. The consultant writes a report and recommendations which are used for developmental adjustments and more importantly to help the donor assess the organization's extent of use of the grant in meeting the community's needs.

11.8 The Local Population

The Central Kenya region is among the first regions to be inhabited by the mankind because of its favourable climatic conditions for agriculture. The area's mainstay economic activity is farming. Population pressure has over time forced Land fragmentation and exhaustion of the soil because of continuous cultivation.

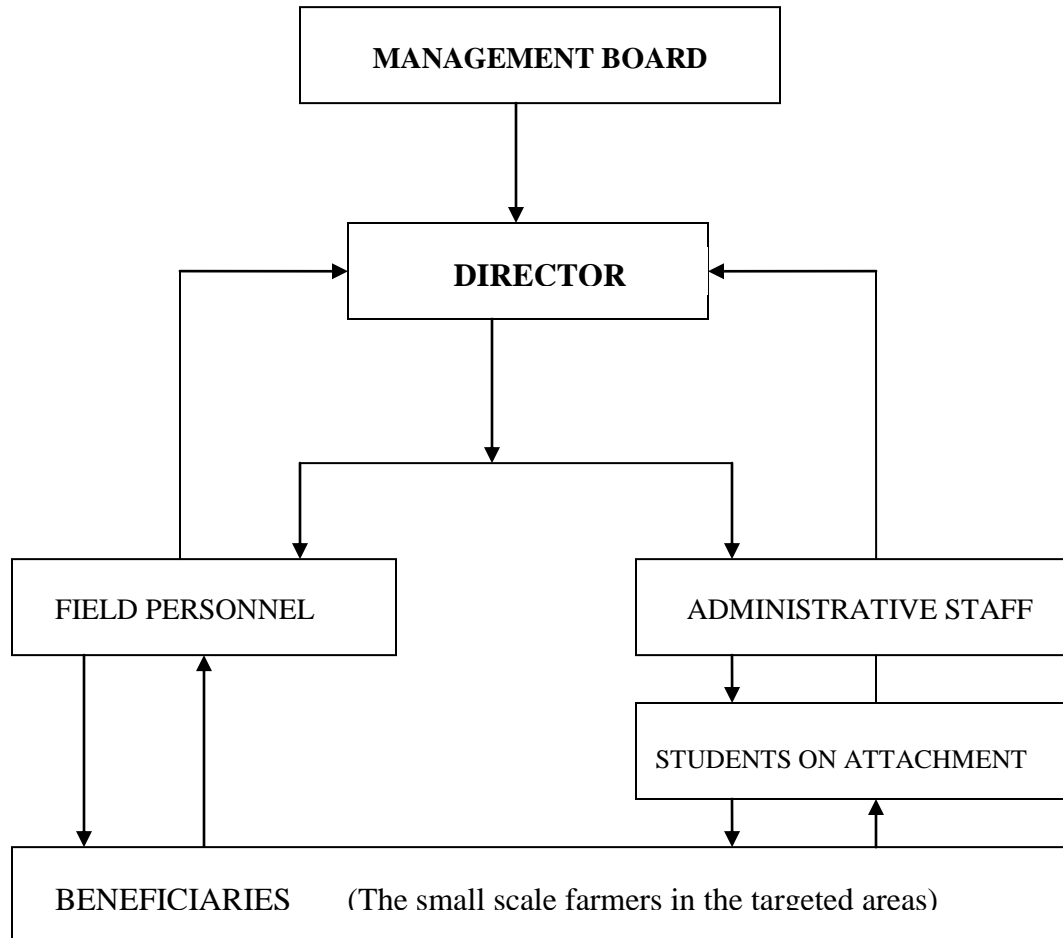
The high population cause high pressure on land and other resources like forests leading to their decimation and consequently ruining the entire environment. With these impacts, farmers can only rely on low producing pieces of land making them vulnerable to food and nutritional security-the worst aspect of poverty. Most holders range between one hectare of land and below one acre.

11.8 Personnel

COSDEP has a qualified, experienced and competent team of personnel consisting of the Director, clerical staff and field based work force as shown in the table below.

Personnel	Post	Qualifications
Stanley Ng'ethe Kinyanjui	Director	Diploma in Bio-Intensive Farming
David Gathuka Karanja	Field supervisor	Diploma in Organic Farming
Cynthia W Mwendu	Farmers' Trainer	Diploma in Organic Farming
Susan W Kiura	Farmers' Trainer	Diploma in Organic Farming
Duncan N. Kariuki	Extension officer	Certificate in Organic Farming
Jane W. Itati	Extension officer	Diploma in Community Development
Stephen Kamau	Extension officer	Certificate in agriculture
Esther W. Kiruthi	Extension officer	Certificate in organic farming
Dorcas W. Gichuhi	Secretary/accounts	Certificate in secretarial studies
George K. Kagewa	Trainer	Bachelor of science –Edgerton Un.

COSDEP'S FLOW CHART



Link of the Project to other Development Initiatives

COSDEP's inclusion of agro forestry, reforestation and conservation of the natural forests in its programme is in line with the UN call to reduce the green house gases. Trees are important in some of the gaseous cycles providing sequestration sites without which climatic change, the global warming is leaving the farmers helpless as a result of the consequential erratic rainfall and loss of yields.

Organic farming discouragement of industrial chemicals facilitates reduction of massive emissions of the gases and the pollution of soil and water. This also is in line with Kenya's Environment Conservation Act (1999).

The project aim of eradicating extreme hunger backs the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The project in general is geared towards building food and nutritional security

and foster income from sale of surplus produce. This is in line with the national poverty reduction strategy. Marketing is done by linking the farmers with the growing and now demand driven organic market with assistance from Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN) - a national coordinating body.

COSDEP is a party to the public awareness initiatives by Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM-Kenya), KOAN and Kenya GMO Concern (KEGCO) on gender parity in development, bio-safety, seed saving, relevant policies and other trends of concern through information sharing and joining hands. It is also a corporate member of the international slow food movement and Promoting Local Innovations in Africa (PROLINNOVA).

Detailed Implementation Plan Below - one year (12 months)

This proposal is intended to cover a time frame of two years- April 2012to April 2013.

DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

OBJECTIVES	MAJOR ACTIVITY (IES)	DETAILED TASKS	EXPECTED OUTPUT	TIME	RESOURCES REQUIRED	IMPLEMENTOR
Community sensitization on hazards of conventional farming and introduction of sustainable farming.	Awareness Creation	Hold rallies, meetings attend groups meetings, church gatherings, farm visits and field days.	Changed attitudes, people aware of organic farming existence.	Continuous	Transport, publicity materials	Management and field staffs
Organize the community for training.	Form Common Interest Groups (CIGS)	Set training modalities i.e. dates and venue.	Groups for training	Beginning of the project period	Transport, Trainers (human resource)	Field staffs
Transfer of knowledge and demonstrate.	Training	Indoor training, on farm coaching and practical.	Knowledgeable farmers. (1,500 in number per year in groups of 20-30)	Continuous	Trainers, transport, training materials (chalks, boards etc)	Field staffs
Train and practice on different techniques.	On -farm demonstrations	Farmers' implementation.	Confident and action based farmers.	Continuous	Demo garden, trainer and equipment.	Field staffs
Assist in transition and implementation.	Follow ups and extension	Visits to guide, advice, train more, share information and learn from them.	Increased capacity and independent farmers, increased production.	Continuous	Information personnel	Field staffs
Enhance farmer to farmer learning and interaction.	Exchange visits	Organizing, learning, discussions, sharing of ideas and experiences by farmers.	High motivation, self confidence, replication and up scaling.	After trainings	Transport, meals and farmers /learners.	Field staffs and information department.

Kept the farmer informed and foster his 'voice' and representation.	Networking and information sharing.	Hold and attend meetings, gather and disseminate information. Distribute written materials.	Updated, erudite and open minded community.	Continuous	Print materials, transport and photocopy services.	Head office, information department and the field staffs.
Ensure commitment to the focus and sticking to the set goals & objectives.	Monitoring	Supervision, assessment & compilation of reports. Staff appraisal.	Overall competence. Meeting of goals and objectives.	Continuous	Administrative costs, (Materials and services)	Management
Attract more support and inform partners.	Fundraising, reporting & documentation	Write and send proposals, reporting to our partners (General and Financial)	Comprehensive reports and understanding between partners.	Continuous and at the end of financial year.	Postage and communication services	Management
Appraise the project	Evaluation	Assessment of the organizations' performance by reviews, visits and discussions.	Evaluation report and the way forward.	End of every financial year.	Consultancy	Management and the assigned consultant, Funding partners

THE BUDGET

A. TRAINING MATERIALS

ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE PER UNIT (KSHS)	TOTALS (in Ksh)
1. Seeds & planting materials during training			50, 000
2. Dustless chalks	50 packets	50	2, 500
3. Felt pens	4 packets	400	1, 600
4. Masking tapes	10 rolls	50	500
5. Dust coats	6	800	4, 800
Total			59, 400

B. COMMUNICATION AND OTHER OFFICE EXPENSES

EXPENSES	MONTHLY (KSHS)	ANNUAL TOTALS (in Kenya shillings)
1. Printing and photocopy	4, 000	48, 000
2. E. Mail and information outsourcing and telephone services.	9, 000	108, 000
3. Postage	3, 500	42, 000
Total		198, 000

C. ALLOWANCES (in Kenya shillings)

PERSONNEL	NUMBER	MONTHLY ALLOWANCE	ANNUAL TOTALS
Director	1	17, 000	204, 000
Field Supervisor	1	12, 000	144, 000
Field Trainers and Clerk	7	10, 000	840, 000
Auditors Fee	1	Once	40, 000
Evaluation Fee	-		50,000
Total			1, 278, 000

D. TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE

EVENT	TIMES	NUMBER	COST PER ATTENDANT	TOTALS (In Ksh)
1. Staff business meeting	4	9	600	21, 600
2. Board meetings	4	7	400	12, 800
3. Local traveling during follow ups, awareness creation and training			10, 000 per month	120, 000
4. Farmers' Exchange Visits	One /group	60 groups	5, 000	300, 000
Totals				454, 400

E. BUDGET SUMMARY

SECTION	TOTALS (in Kenya shillings)
1. Training Materials	59, 400
2. Communication and Office	198, 000
3. Allowances	1, 278, 000
4. Traveling and Subsistence	454, 400
5. Farmers contribution (Commitment in Cash).	300, 000
Total	2, 289, 800
Five percent (5%) Contingency	114, 490
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	2, 404, 290

TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	2, 404, 290
LESS COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION	<u>300, 000</u>
AMOUNT REQUESTED	2, 104, 290 (for one year)

Exchange Rate: 1. USD @ KSh 84 = US \$ 25, 051