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ROCKWOOL FOUNDATION RESEARCH UNIT

RIPAT PILOT PROJECTS: AN OVERALL ASSESSMENT

By Eva Kaas Pedersen

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RIPAT Pilot projects: An Overall Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains the main findings of the evaluation of the two one-year pilot projects sponsored by the Rockwool Foundation and implemented by RECODA in the districts of Hai and Karatu in Northern Tanzania. The aim of the pilot project in Hai was to test a cost-efficient one year *implementation model* - called 'RIPAT Quick' - which hopefully would have a chance of being funded by district governments and other donors. The aim of the one year spreading project - called 'RIPAT Spreading' - was to develop and test a cost efficient one year spreading model which should support the spreading of RIPAT groups after the implementation of a 'RIPAT Basic' project. The implementation models were based on a 'RIPAT Basic' project but in order to make it more cost efficient they only had a one-year implementation period; the farmers were trained on a reduced 'basket of options' and group members had to pay for their own farm inputs. In the spreading project, the groups were furthermore facilitated by Super Farmers and Extension Officers instead of RECODA staff.

The main findings are:

- In terms of spreading of groups both pilot projects have been successful and the pilot project setup does thus not seem to significantly influence the potential for multiplication of the RIPAT groups compared to a 'RIPAT Basic' setup. Especially the positive synergy that is created between the VSLA and the banana plot contributes the commitment to the group.
- When looking at the spreading of the 'basket of options' we find that especially the one year project period constitute a hindrance for the successful spreading of technologies and crops as it does not allow enough time to experiment with the new crops and technologies. And in cases where the harvest has failed there are no second chances.
- Especially in Karatu, the one year project period seemed to constitute a challenge. This can be explained by the fact, that the groups in Hai were facilitated by skilled RECODA staff and that the implementation model targeted the best farmers from the onset. It is also suggested that the economic status of the farmers might influence adoption and agricultural performance as wealthier farmers are less risk averse.
- As a *general* implementation model, the one year project models appear to be too vulnerable to any unforeseen obstacles and challenges.
- The spreading project in Karatu was generally less successful than the implementation project in Hai, however when looking merely at the stated objectives of spreading groups, the project appears to have great potential.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since 2006 the Rockwool Foundation has been involved in developing what they have come to term 'RIPAT Basic' projects. A 'RIPAT Basic' project runs for 3-4 years aiming at alleviating poverty and increasing food security among small scale farmers by promoting the use of improved and sustainable agricultural technologies through group based learning (see box below).

THE 'RIPAT BASIC' APPROACH

'RIPAT Basic' is a RIPAT project which is implemented in a new area. A typical RIPAT project has a 3 year implementation period and targets eight villages. Two groups are established in each village, each group being made up of 30-35 farmers – typically selected from the lower middle class in the community. Each group is required to rent a demonstration plot. Over a three year implementation period, RIPAT transfers a 'basket' of agricultural technology options, including various crops and livestock as well as a saving scheme (VSLA). Each individual chooses which options to adopt on his or hers own farm. The groups are facilitated by professional RECODA staff based on joint, experiential and participatory learning on the demonstration plot. During project implementation, the group elects a group of Super Farmers. Super Farmers are individuals who during project implementation have proved to have grasped the knowledge provided through the RIPAT training and successfully implemented at least one RIPAT-facilitated technology. The Super Farmers undergoes special training by RECODA and should help spread the knowledge gained from the project to other farmers and/or other groups.

A significant element of the RIPAT approach is the promotion and adoption of RIPAT technologies and inputs from RIPAT farmers to non-RIPAT farmers in the community, as well as the spreading of RIPAT groups neighboring villages. Furthermore RECODA has been trying to 'sell' the project as a whole to other stakeholders. As a part of this effort, RECODA and the Rockwool Foundation launched two pilot projects in October 2012 which has been termed 'RIPAT Quick' and 'RIPAT Spreading'. The aim of the two pilot projects was to develop end test project models for 1) cheaper implementation of the 'RIPAT Basic' model and 2) formalized spreading of RIPAT groups from 'RIPAT Basic' villages to neighboring villages.

'RIPAT QUICK' IN HAI

The 'RIPAT Quick' model was developed in an effort to test a cost efficient project model for implementation RIPAT in a new area. The aim was to promote the spreading of the RIPAT concept by designing a project model that would have a better chance of being funded and implemented by

outside donors compared to a three year 'RIPAT Basic'. Eight groups were established in four villages in Hai district, with 35 farmers in each group. The model was based on a 'RIPAT Basic' project and the groups were facilitated by professional RECODA staff. However, in order to make it cost-efficient the project only had a one year implementation period; farmers were paying for their own farm inputs and the 'basket of options' contained fewer crops and technologies compared to the 'basket of option' introduced in a 'RIPAT Basic' project. The project targeted 'better-than-average' farmers from the outset of the project in order to ensure effective knowledge transfer within the short project period. Towards the ending of the 'RIPAT Quick' project, the best farmers from each of the eight groups was 'employed' to facilitate new groups in cooperation with local Extension Officers – thus targeting an additional 4 villages / 8 groups – in a one year spreading effort similar to the 'RIPAT spreading' project in Karatu (see below).

'RIPAT SPREADING' IN KARATU

A 'RIPAT Basic' project was successfully completed in Karatu district in July 2012. Whereas the promotion and adoption of RIPAT technologies and inputs from RIPAT farmers to non-RIPAT farmers seemed to happen spontaneously, an automatic spreading of groups did not take place. RECODA and the Rockwool Foundation thus identified a need to develop a model for a more formalized spreading of groups which local governments could manage and adopt. The one-year 'RIPAT Spreading' project in Karatu was thus aimed at enlarging the RIPAT 3 circle by letting eight Super farmers from the original 'RIPAT Basic' groups train eight new groups in four neighbouring villages in cooperation with local government paid Extension Officers. During project implementation the Extension Officers and Super Farmers were trained together by RECODA staff in order to make sure that they had the required technical and pedagogical competencies to establish solid groups and work as facilitators. In terms of sensitization/mobilization of groups, selection of leaders, finding group demonstration plots and training in a 'basket of options', the spreading project followed the 'RIPAT Basic' setup. However, the basket of options was reduced, farmers had to pay for their own farm-inputs and RECODA was only involved as external supervisors. At the beginning of the project both Super Farmers and Extension Officers were supposed to visit the groups on a weekly basis to ensure that proper mobilization and sensitization were done. After two months the Extension Officers should meet with the groups every 2nd week of the month for the next 10 months while Super Farmers should continue meeting the groups on a weekly basis. The aim was to test whether it was possible to ensure that RIPAT groups spread following a 'RIPAT Basic', by using RECODA trained Super Farmers and Extension Officers as facilitators.

THE EVALUATION

This report is based on the findings from the process evaluation initiated together with the launching of the two pilot projects. The evaluation involved two field visits. The first evaluation exercise was conducted in April-May 2013 which was half way through the 'RIPAT Quick' project in Hai and half way through the 'RIPAT Spreading' project in Karatu. The evaluation was done with the purpose of looking at project progress and assess the potentials for spreading of the 'basket of options' and groups (see appendix 1). The second field mission was conducted in March-April 2014. This was six months after termination of the two pilot projects in Karatu and Hai. The focus of the second field mission was on the short term sustainability and effect of the pilot projects in Hai and Karatu as well as the project progress of the 'RIPAT Spreading' in Hai (see appendix 2). The evaluation was based on anthropological methodology including participant observation, individual interviews and group interviews. Interviews especially focused on farmer group members, Super Farmers, Extension Officers and RECODA-advisors.

FIELDWORK OVERVIEW

	'RIPAT SPREADING'	'RIPAT QUICK' (+spreading)
1ST FIELD TRIP	Focus on implementation of new groups facilitated by Super Farmers and Extension Officers; knowledge transfer, challenges, groups dynamics and collaboration.	Focus on implementation of the one-year RIPAT model; knowledge transfer, challenges, groups dynamics and collaboration.
2ND FIELD TRIP	Short term sustainability: How are the groups doing after completion of the project? What are the effects of the spreading project? What crops have been adopted?	Short term sustainability: How are the groups doing after the Super Farmers and Extension Officers have taken over? What are the effects of the one year project? What crops have been adopted? Implementation of 'RIPAT Spreading' in Hai

This report is a concluding report and contains the main findings of the two evaluation rounds. The overall objective is to assess how and to what extent the new features in the spreading and implementation model might promote and/or hinder spreading of 'the 'basket of options' and of groups. The key new features we were interested in were:

- The one year implementation period – relevant for both projects.
- The facilitation by and cooperation between Super Farmer and Extension Officers – relevant for 'RIPAT Spreading'.
- The self-payment of individual inputs – relevant for both projects.

Even though the two pilot projects had different objectives and different project setups, the groups from 'RIPAT Quick' and 'RIPAT Spreading' followed the same implementation schedule (group formation, introduction of crops and technologies etc.) and the crops and technologies introduced were the same. Several of the findings thus apply to both projects. However, despite correlating findings, the overall assessments still differs because the two pilot projects have different objectives.

The 'RIPAT Quick' was developed in an effort to test a cost efficient model for implementing RIPAT in an area which had not previously been exposed to a RIPAT intervention. RIPAT quick is thus assessed in comparison with a 'RIPAT Basic' project which means that there are rather high requirements to the quality of the project both in terms of knowledge transfer, group stability and in terms of potential for spreading of technologies and groups after project termination. The 'RIPAT Spreading' project on the other hand, was developed in an effort to test whether it is possible to ensure that RIPAT groups spreads through a carefully designed spreading project based on the use of RECODA trained Super Farmers and Extension Officers as facilitators following a 'RIPAT Basic' project. This means that evaluation primarily was concerned with the successful formation and stability of groups.

This is not to say, that the adoption of the 'basket of option' is not important in the 'RIPAT Spreading' project. You might have a successful model for spreading groups, but if the actual knowledge transfer taking place in these groups is not effective, the impact of the project might still not be very big. The evaluation of the 'RIPAT Spreading' project thus also involves looking into to what extend the 'basket of option' has been adopted within the group, but because the facilitation of groups primarily was done by local farmers, there are less expectations towards the outcome compared to the 'RIPAT Quick' which is supposed to serve as a substitute for a 'RIPAT Basic'.

In the following we will firstly sum up the findings in regards to how and to what extent the new features in the two pilot projects might promote and/or hinder spreading of 'the 'basket of options' and of groups. This will be followed up by an overall assessment of 'RIPAT Spreading' and 'RIPAT Quick'. As mentioned this is a concluding report, more details on the findings described in this report can be found in appendix 1 and 2 which contains two separate reports from the two evaluation rounds.

2. THE ONE YEAR PROJECT PERIOD

The one year implementation period was a feature in both pilot projects and appears to be the biggest hindrance for the successful adoption of the components in the 'basket of options'.

Firstly, facilitators of the two projects expressed concerns that the training schedule was too tight. In a 'RIPAT Basic' project the groups follow the lifespan of a crop over 2-3 seasons which makes the training rather thorough. In the pilot projects, the facilitators only have one season to teach group members on the same matters. Super Farmers and RECODA staff explained that short implementation period influenced the quality of the implementation and made the project vulnerable toward problems with low attendance. Because the facilitators knew, that they only had one planting season to teach the group members on various issues, it was important that all group members attended the trainings every week. However, all groups experienced problems with low attendance – especially in the beginning of the projects - which meant that the facilitators sometimes had to teach the same things several weeks in a row and with a tight training schedule most groups were behind schedule. A lot of their teachings did thus not settle properly among the farmers and the facilitators often experienced, that farmers forgot simple instructions from week to week, because the trainings was too intense.

The group members also voiced their concerns. When interviewed during project implementation, group members agreed, that one year was enough to learn the things included in the 'basket of options' and that they would be able to remember the things they had learned in years to come; both because they were writing things down and because they as a group could help one another remembering the things learned. However, during the fieldwork conducted after project implementation, several group members explained that even though they had the theory of how things should be done, they did not have enough practical experience to be completely confident in their skills. This issue both constitute a problem for the successful adoption of crops and technologies from the group field to individual farms after project termination and for the potential of the spreading of crops and technologies from RIPAT farmers to non-RIPAT farmers.

Another issue is the fact, that the facilitators only had one planting season to convince the farmers that they should adopt and spread the components contained in the 'basket of options'. They had, in other words, only one 'shot' in showing that the new crops and/or technologies performed better than traditional ones and there was very littleroom for trial and error. This made the one year project very vulnerable to unforeseen challenges and obstacles. Firstly, it constituted a challenge with crops that were unknown to the farmers or with technologies that showed the best results when implemented over several planting seasons – such as conservation technologies. Many farmers interviewed opted to

wait with the adoption of unknown crops or technologies until they saw how these performed on the demonstration plot and if these crops failed to show good results during the implementation period farmers were unlikely to adopt them. Secondly, if a crop failed during the implementation period, a group could lose all its seedlings. This was especially the case for some of the groups in the 'RIPAT Spreading' project in Karatu where the weather conditions were less favorable compared to Hai where the 'RIPAT Quick' was implemented. This meant that even though some farmers were ready to adopt a certain crop they did no longer have planting material available to do so.

This is not to say that no adoption was taking place but the success of different crops and technologies varied a lot from group to group depending on weather conditions, the time of planting and management of the specific crops during project implementation. This suggests that one year and one planting season, is not sufficient to secure an effective and consistent implementation of the components in the basket of options.

In terms of group, on the other hand, our findings suggest that one year is sufficient to create strong groups with committed group members. Our findings show, that of the 16 groups formed in 2012 (eight in Hai and eight in Karatu) all groups were still active six months after project termination and all groups interviewed met up once a week on their shared demonstration plot. It appears that especially the VSLA and bananas are two important incentives for continuing to meet up. Because the bananas are a perennial crop, there is a constant need for maintenance which appears to be an important motivator for the group's to meet up regularly. The bananas are also a valuable source of income for the groups, and together with the money accumulated in the VSLA they give group members and shared assets and creates a positive synergy that seems to be crucial in terms of securing the long term sustainability of the groups.

3. SELF-PAYMENT OF INPUTS

Self-payment of inputs for individual farms was also a feature in both projects and might also have contributed to a relatively low adoption rate of crops. The three year implementation period in a 'RIPAT Basic' projects, allows farmers to experiment with different crops and make gradual investments in piecework for the digging of banana holes, materials for goat and poultry housing etc. In a one year project, the farmers do not have the same opportunity. With a one year implementation plan the whole 'basket of options' is introduced to the farmers within few months. The adoption of a new technology, crop or livestock requires a certain amount of resources from the individual farmer – either in terms of

time or money for materials and/or casual labor. For instance, if a farmer opts to adopt goats, bananas and maize, he or she only have a few months to find the resources for building a goat house, digging the banana holes and preparing the maize field. For most farmers these are rather big investments. Especially in Karatu, many farmers chose not to invest in an improved cock because they could not afford the expenses.

It is not possible to predict whether self-payment of inputs directly have hindered individual adoption of crops during project implementation, but considering the increased resource requirements that a one year project necessitates coupled with a certain amount of risk aversion towards trying new crops and technologies, giving out seeds for free might have promoted the adoption of crops.

4. FACILITATION BY SUPER FARMERS AND EXTENSION OFFICERS

One of the key focus areas in evaluation of the 'RIPAT Spreading' project was the facilitation done by Super Farmers and their cooperation with local Extension Officers. We were thus interested in finding out how this feature influenced the group formation process, knowledge transfer and the potential for spreading of crops, technologies and groups.

The evaluation finds that in terms of knowledge transfer, there were no apparent difference between 'RIPAT Quick' groups facilitated by RECODA staff and 'RIPAT Spreading' groups facilitated by Super Farmers. Findings from the first fieldwork, conducted during project implementation, thus showed that the group members in the 'RIPAT Spreading' project were very content with the training they received from their facilitator which suggests that the training of that Super Farmers receives from RECODA coupled with the experience they have gained from being in a 'RIPAT Basic' project is adequate in terms of training new groups and passing on knowledge.

The same applied in terms of group dynamics. When looking at commitment to the group there were no apparent differences between 'RIPAT Quick' groups and 'RIPAT Spreading' groups and generally the groups and group fields appeared equally well managed – both during project implementation and after project termination.

However, despite well managed demonstration plots, the success rate of the different crops was generally lower in the 'RIPAT Spreading' project and so were the adoption rate of crops from group field to individual fields. Some of these differences can be attributed to the fact that the soil and weather

conditions in Hai district, where the 'RIPAT Quick' project was implemented, are better than in Karatu where the 'RIPAT Spreading' project was located. However, our findings also show that the differences found between the two projects can be attributed to authority issues.

RECODA staff naturally has an authority because of their position as professional agriculturalists. Furthermore RECODA staff has extensive experience with passing on the components from the 'basket of options'. This made their implementation smooth and consistent, both in terms of knowledge transfer and in terms of handling conflicts and unforeseen challenges. The same did not seem to apply for the Super Farmers. Because Super Farmers were "just" local farmers they did not have the same pre-given authority compared to RECODA staff. This did not influence the actual training or knowledge transfer, but in terms of persuading farmers to make use of new crops or farming technologies and in terms of handling conflicts or other unforeseen obstacles, the Super Farmers were less competent.

This finding should be seen in correlation with the short implementation period and the self-payment of inputs. Because there is not necessarily enough time to demonstrate the full potential of a crop or a technology within one year – trying a new crop and paying for farm inputs (unless you can get planting material from the demo-plot) can be a high risk for a small scale farmer. Convincing a farmer to take such a risk necessitates a rather high level of authority from the facilitator and not all of the Super Farmers had such an authority.

In theory this is taken care of, as the project design for the 'RIPAT Spreading' project involve close partnership between Super Farmers and Extension Officers in the facilitation process. This cooperation is based on the assumption that professional Extension Officers has more authority than Super Farmers. However, interviews revealed that the involvement of Extension Officers varied a lot from group to group depending on the Extension Officers personal commitment and generally the Extension Officers were much less involved in the facilitation than intended in the project design.

Possibly for the same reason, the Super Farmers and group members stressed the importance of receiving visits from RECODA's presence in a project area, in order to encourage them and confirming that they were on the right track.

5. SPREADING PROJECT IN HAI

Based on the findings from the first fieldwork, the researcher was rather skeptical about the spreading project that was supposed to be initiated after the termination of the RIPAT Quick project. The reason

for this skepticism was that since the Super Farmers in Karatu who had been involved in a RIPAT project for three years were faced with authority issues, it was unlikely that Super Farmers who would only have had one year RIPAT experience, would be very successful (see appendix 1). The researcher was also skeptic whether the Super Farmers from the 'RIPAT Quick' project would have enough practical experience with the technologies they were supposed to pass on. However, findings from the second fieldwork showed that the skepticism was unjustified. There were no notable difference between the spreading project in Hai and the spreading project in Karatu when comparing project progress after six months. The group members were very positive about being part of the project, and stressed the fact that the project was much more serious – and required much more hard work – compared to other 'hit-and-run' projects that frequently were initiated in the area. Group members also seemed to be happy with their facilitators.

The Extension Officers however were not very active in the project. Findings from the spreading project in Karatu suggested that the EO' involvement in the project was important for the group members because they, as agricultural experts, had an authority which the Super Farmers did not have as ordinary community members. Hai however, is situated relatively close to Arusha where RECODA has their head office. This meant that RECODA staff was able to be much more involved in the project implementation than was the case in Karatu. The manager of the spreading project in Hai thus visited the spreading groups several times a month and his encouragements and backup of the facilitators work was much appreciated both by facilitators and group members. This circumstance does most probably contribute considerably to the success of the project and stresses the importance of ongoing monitoring and support.

6. AN OVERALL ASSESMENT

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT IN HAI

The aim of the 'RIPAT Quick' project in Hai was to test a one-year substitute for a 'RIPAT Basic' project. More specifically RECODA and the Rockwool foundation wanted to find out whether it was possible to implement a quality RIPAT project within one year if the best farmers in a community were targeted from the onset.

The findings from this evaluation show, in terms of spreading of groups, the 'RIPAT Quick' project setup does not seem to play a vital role compared to a 'RIPAT Basic' project. The groups were functioning well after project termination, and if we ignore some problems with dropouts in the initial stages of the pilot

projects, all group members in the 'RIPAT Quick' groups expressed a wish to stay in the group for several years to come.

In terms of adoption and spreading of crops, the most imperative challenge is the one year setup. Firstly the one year setup made the projects vulnerable towards any unforeseen events that could delay the training schedule, secondly there were very little time to convince the farmers that they should adopt and spread the components contained in the 'basket of options' and thirdly many of farmers did not have the resources to try all the components in the 'basket of option- within one year. But even though the quality of the project does not compare to a 'RIPAT Basic' and fewer crops has been adopted and spread, the project has still been relatively successful. A variety of crops and technologies from the basket of options had been adopted and some had also spread, and Super Farmers were busy facilitating new groups that also seemed to perform well.

However, even though the project has been successful, the one year setup is not recommended as a general model for implementing RIPAT in a new area. The reason for this is that findings from the first fieldwork suggest that the economic status of the farmers might influence adoption and agricultural performance. Hai district is mainly inhabited by Chagga people who are widely known for their entrepreneurial and business skills. Most of the farmers in the implementation project thus supplemented their farming income with some kind of small scale business or paid employment and they were general wealthier than farmers involved Karatu. This made the farmers in Hai more willing to take risk and try out new technologies. More farmers in the 'RIPAT Quick' project had thus chosen to adopt the new crop varieties to their individual farms *during* the project period as compared to the group members in the 'RIPAT Spreading' project in Karatu where many farmers opted to wait with the adoption until they had seen the results on the group plot. The potential for further adoption of crops in Hai is thus less dependent on the collective performance on the group field and more dependent on personal outcomes. For instance, one farmer in Hai had opted to grow pigeon peas on all his land and since pigeon peas is relatively unknown in the area his performance can be crucial for the further spreading of the crop in the area. Such willingness to take risks, coupled with favorable weather conditions and the possibility of close monitoring from RECODA due to the location of the project area have most probably influenced the positive results of the project

Ideally any RIPAT project should be implemented with sound regard to the social, economic and agricultural context of the project area. If group members are relatively wealthy – and thus willing to take risks, if close monitoring is possible and if weather conditions a favorable, a one year

implementation setup might be successful. However, our findings suggest that as a one year implementation period would be too short in less favorable contexts.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE SPREADING PROJECT IN KARATU

The aim of the 'RIPAT Spreading' project was to test whether it was possible to ensure that RIPAT groups spread through a carefully designed spreading project based on the use of RECODA trained super-farmers and Extension Officers as facilitators following a 'RIPAT Basic'.

We find that, as with the 'RIPAT Quick' project, the one year project period constitute the biggest challenge for the project and for the same reasons; Firstly the one year setup made the projects vulnerable towards any unforeseen events that could delay the training schedule, secondly there were very little time to convince the farmers that they should adopt and spread the components contained in the 'basket of options' and thirdly many of farmers did not have the resources to try all the components in the 'basket of option- within one year.

In terms of facilitation, the evaluation finds that the Super Farmers were skilled and group members were generally very satisfied with the level of knowledge that the Super Farmers possessed. However, the evaluation also finds that the project model had some weak spots. Especially the commitment from the Extension Officers varied a lot and the Super Farmers did not always have the necessary skills or authority to handle unscheduled challenges or convince farmers to try new crops or technologies which also had a negative impact on the adoption of crops and technologies.

This is not to say, that adoption from group field to individual fields has not taken place but the adoption was rather inconsistent from group to group in comparison to the 'RIPAT Quick' project which followed the same implementation schedule but was facilitated by RECODA staff.

Despite these issues, when looking at the stated project objectives of spreading groups, the project has been successful. Most of the groups appeared to be strong, with committed group members who still met up on a weekly basis six months after project termination. Especially the positive synergy that is created between the VSLA and the banana plot seemed to contribute to the commitment to the group. As such, the 'RIPAT Spreading' project model has great potential as a general model for spreading. It is suggested however, that considering the Super Farmers authority issues and the varying commitment from Extension Officers, closer supervision and support from the implementing partners would be important in order to ensure a more effective and consistent spreading of crops and technologies.

APPENDIX 1: 1ST EVALUATION REPORT POTENTIALS FOR SPREADING OF 'BASKET OF OPTIONS' AND GROUPS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains the main findings from the first evaluation fieldwork of the two one-year pilot projects sponsored by the Rockwool Foundation and implemented by RECODA in the districts of Hai and Karatu in Northern Tanzania. The focus of the evaluation is lessons learned with a particular focus on the future potentials for the formalized spreading of the 'basket of options' and of groups. More specifically the study aims to identify factors affecting the spreading processes in the implementation project in Hai and the spreading project in Karatu and assess how and to what extent they might promote and/or hinder the spreading of 'the 'basket of options' and of groups.

One of the biggest challenges that the two pilot projects are facing is the one-year time span:

- Firstly there is only one planting season to convince the farmers that they should adopt and spread the components contained in the 'basket of options'. Consequently the facilitators only have one 'shot' in showing that the new crops and/or technologies performs better than traditional ones. This is especially difficult with crops that are relatively unknown to the farmers or technologies that show the best results over a period that exceeds the one year time span (such as conservational technologies).
- Secondly the facilitators of the two projects expressed concerns that the training schedule was too tight. In the 3-4 years RIPAT projects the facilitator could use 2-3 training sessions to teach farmers on one topic. Facilitators experience that a lot of their teaching does not settle properly among the farmers and that the farmers have difficulties remembering all the details from one week to another. Furthermore they expressed concerns that the tight schedule made the project very vulnerable towards problems with low attendance.
- Thirdly many of farmers does not have the resources to try too many of the components in the basket of option within one year. Digging banana holes, building goat and poultry houses and buying seeds is both costly and time consuming, which means that most farmers choose to adopt only one or two things from the basket of option

The skills of the facilitators, is another factor, critical for the successful implementation of the one-year pilot projects. When comparing the groups in Hai implemented and facilitated by RECODA staff with the groups in Karatu facilitated by Super Farmer's (Super Farmers) there is quite a big difference. Both group members in Hai and Karatu seem content with the education they receive by their facilitator. The level of knowledge does thus not seem to be an issue rather, what seems to be the defining factor is their teaching skills and the level of authority that the facilitator owes. RECODA staff naturally has authority because of their position as professional agriculturalists coming directly from the implementing organization. Furthermore most of the staff have a lot of experience with passing on the

components in the 'basket of options'. This makes their implementation smooth and consistent, both in terms of knowledge transfer and in terms of handling conflicts and unforeseen challenges. The same does not seem to apply for the Super Farmers. The group members in Karatu generally value the knowledge that the Super Farmers have gained as group members in a RIPAT Basic, but because they are "just" local farmers they do not have the same pre-given authority compared to RECODA staff. Super Farmers thus seems to have bigger difficulties in terms of persuading farmers to make use of new crops or farming technologies.

As a consequence of their lack in authority, most Super Farmers are dependent on help from RECODA staff, village government and/or Extension Officers (EO's). In theory this is taken care of, as the project design for the spreading project in Karatu involves close partnership between Super Farmers and EO's in the facilitation process. Interviews reveals however, that the involvement of EO's varies a lot from group to group and that the EO's are generally less involved in the facilitation than intended in the project design. For most groups however, it appears to constitute a challenge for the group members and their belief in the project. Such groups also seem much more vulnerable to conflicts and unforeseen challenges. Because of the status and experience of the RECODA staff in Hai, problems in the groups are being identified and handled quite fast - often without the need of involving village government or EO's, and even if the village government is involved, RECODA as a respected NGO, is in a position where village leadership are willing to listen and take timely action if necessary. The Super Farmers in Karatu are not in the same position which means that problems are handled in a slower pace. With only one year of implementation such non-calculated issues can seriously affect the implementation process.

Since the first fieldwork took place half way through project implementation, it is not yet possible to conclude whether the groups in Karatu will be strong enough to continue after project determination and whether the Super Farmers in Hai will be able to found and facilitate new groups. However, based on interviews and observations made, it appears that in terms of group dynamics and commitment to the group, the projects are successful and the group members are happy about the initiative. However in terms of further spreading of groups and adoption of components in the 'basket of options' the one year setup and the facilitation by Super Farmers seems to constitute two rather substantial challenges.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report contains the main findings of the first evaluation round of the two one-year pilot projects sponsored by the Rockwool Foundation and implemented or monitored by RECODA in the districts of Hai and Karatu in Northern Tanzania.

The aim of the pilot project in Hai is to test a cost-efficient one year *implementation model* which hopefully will have a chance of being funded by district governments and other donors. The implementation model is based on a Basic RIPAT project. The project is thus implemented by RECODA staff but it only has a one-year implementation period and the farmers will be trained on a reduced 'basket of options' containing Banana farming, conservation agriculture and crop diversification (improved crops include: maize, cassava, sweet potato, pigeon pea (PP), lablab), Poultry and Goats.

After the one year implementation period, the project in Hai will be followed by a spreading project similar to the spreading project in Karatu (see below).

The pilot project in Karatu is a one year *spreading project* following a three year RIPAT project, implemented and facilitated by EO's and Super Farmers and monitored by RECODA. The aim of the one year spreading project is to develop and test a cost efficient one year spreading model which will further the spreading of RIPAT groups and hopefully will have a chance of being funded and implemented by district governments and other donors following a 'RIPAT Basic' or a one year 'RIPAT Quick'.

Based on the implied assumptions for successful spreading and best practices contained in the one-year implementation model and the one-year spreading model, the evaluation aims at understanding the mechanisms of the spreading processes in more details and to gain knowledge from best practices in general. This report thus contains the main findings in regards to lessons learned from the two pilot projects with a particular focus on the potentials for spreading of the 'basket of options' and groups.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study is based on four weeks of ethnographic fieldwork carried out from the 7th April - 4th May 2013. 12 days was spent on the implementation project in Hai, 10 days was spent on the spreading project in Karatu. The remaining time was spent in Arusha interviewing RECODA staff and writing of field reports.

BOX: 2: THE PROJECT AREAS

KARATU

The project area for the spreading project is in Karatu District Council which is in the Northern part of Tanzania (160 kilometers from Arusha town) in Arusha Region. More specifically the project targets four villages namely Endanyawet, Buger, Ng'aibara and Kambi ya Simba. All four villages are mainly dominated by people from the Iraqw tribe who are traditional agro-pastoralists, living by a mixture of agriculture and livestock herding. Maize is the most commonly grown subsistence crop while pigeon pea is a widespread cash crop in the area. The area receives relatively good rainfall with some 900 - 1000 mm per year. Normally the District get good rain in March, April and May and short rains in November, but due to the climate change the farmer has in the latter years often experienced that rainfalls stay away or come later. The four villages are situated in three different wards; Buger Ward (Endanyawet village and Buger village), Kansay Ward (Ng'aibara village) and Mbulumbulu Ward (Kambi ya Simba village). Endanyawet, Buger and Ng'aibara village are all positioned within a 20km radius while Kambi ya Simba is located some 60 kilometers away from the other villages.

HAI DISTRICT

The Hai District is situated in north-eastern Tanzania and is one of the seven districts of the Kilimanjaro Region of Tanzania. The eight project groups are placed in the four villages; Rundu Gai, Orori, Mundio and Kware with two groups in each village. Mundio and Kware are placed a few kilometers apart up at Mount Kilimanjaro. Orori is also placed at the upper plains of Mount Kilimanjaro but some 15 kilometers from Kware and Mundio. Rundu Gai is placed on the lower plains – an area with less

population density and thus easier access to land. All four villages are mainly inhabited by Chagga people who are widely known for their entrepreneurial and business skills. Most of the farmers in the implementation project thus supplements their farming income with some kind of small scale business or paid employment and are in general wealthier than farmers involved in other RIPAT projects.

Due to ideal climatic and topographic conditions for farming, the area is densely populated, especially at the upper plains. Most group member thus typically have a small home garden up at the mountain, where they have build their house and where they grow bananas and coffee together with various green vegetables which are the main crops in the area and are used for consumption and for sale. In addition, all group members have access to an area of lower altitude land, on which the main crops grown is maize, beans and sunflowers. Livestock husbandry is also a significant component of livelihood construction for most Households involved in the project. These animals are typically kept in a shed or stable next to the homestead. The only exception were the farmers in Rundu Gai who - due to the lesser population density on the lower plains – had their fields for main crops relatively close to their homestead and access to land for free grazing for their livestock.

The data was collected through various kinds of interviews (formal, informal, in-depth, structured and semi-structured); direct observations; analyses of written project documents and focus group discussions. A total of 143 group members were interviewed as well as 9 Super Farmers, 3 EO's and 2 district project coordinators.

Furthermore the fieldwork involved the use of traditional ethnographic fieldwork methods, including case studies and participant observations – i.e., experiencing continuous interaction with local people and observing local life through participation in daily activities and engaging in informal conversations. In Hai the researcher also made use of Participatory Rural Appraisal methods to map the farmers farming priorities and wealth ranking. During the fieldwork the researcher stayed with local farmers who made living space available, allowing the researcher to have close daily contact with farmers in the area and gain a basic understanding of the living conditions, opinions, and priorities of local families. The researcher also participated in several training sessions in the farmer groups as well as in a four day RECODA Academy course in Hai district for Super Farmers and EO's involved in the implementation project.

The qualitative evaluation of the two interventions is primarily concerned with the implementation of the two projects as well as the potential for spreading of components from the 'basket of options' and the spreading of groups. Since this is a qualitative study and 'only' take place over a two-year period, the impact and long term sustainability of the project will not be measured. The evaluation rather takes the form of a process analysis with the purpose of evaluating how the program is being implemented and determines whether the components identified as critical to the success of the program are in place. The evaluation design and key questions are thus based on a range of assumptions of what it requires for groups, crops and technologies to spread.

BOX 3: FIELDWORK OVERVIEW

LOCATION/ TIME SPEND:	NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS :	PARTICIPANTS IN FGD'S :	PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES :
Hai District 12 days	10 individual interviews (3 Super Farmers, 1 district project coordinator, 2 EO, 4 group members). 6 Field group discussions (whole groups)	63	Four days RECODA academy. 3 training sessions
Karatu District 10 days	11 individual interviews (6 Super Farmers, 1 district project coordinator, 1 EO, 3 group members). 7 Field groups discussions (3 with groups, 4 with groups leaders)	46	Agricultural training, home visits, five days stay with a volunteer.
3 Arusha	6 interviews (RECODA staff)		

Based on previous evaluations of the 3-year RIPAT projects, the study focus on factors which previously have proven to be of importance for the successful establishment, training and sustainability of farmer groups such as; the relevance of the crops in the 'basket of options'; the group facilitators ability to train and convince farmers to use the new technologies; the cohesiveness of the group; farmers motivation for being in a farmer group etc. The key evaluation questions for this first field visit are listed below. It is important to point out however, that the evaluator throughout the data collection process made use of an explorative approach which allowed the researcher to develop and ask new questions during the data collection process – and in some instances leave out some of the predefined questions if they proved to be of little importance for the success of the project.

Questions for the implementation project In Hai

- Mapping the members of the 'RIPAT Quick' groups. How many of the group members are 'better than average'? What does 'better than average' entail? (Factors: more land? Wealth status in general? More respected? Known as being entrepreneurial?).
- How are the 'better than average' members perceived by the other 'average' / 'below average' members of the groups? (and vice versa).
- How do the new features in the one year project setup (selection criteria's, many Super Farmers etc.) influence group dynamics, commitment to group, work, knowledge transfer etc.?
- How many components from the basket of option is being adopted (and possibly spread) by group members – and which ones?
- What is the (average / better than average) farmers' motivation for being in a RIPAT group?
- How is the cooperation between EO's and Super Farmers
- What are the farmers' thoughts on future involvement in spreading of 'basket of options' and forming new groups?

- To what extent is the initiative reaching the original RIPAT target group?

Questions for spreading project in Karatu

- To what extent are (and do) the Super Farmers and EO's (feel) equipped/ qualified to take on the role of facilitators of a RIPAT group? (Knowledge transfer, persuasion, authority, trust, group dynamics, group constitutions etc?)
- How do group members perceive their facilitators i.e. Super Farmers and EO's? (trust, respect, knowledge)
- How is the collaboration between EO's and Super Farmers? To what extent are they capable of facilitation groups as a joint effort? (is the collaboration good, any jealousy? any competition?)
- How do EO's and Super Farmers in practice divide the group facilitation task between them?
- To what extent does Super Farmers and EO's feel committed their task?
- What are the main challenges faced by the EO's and Super Farmers? Time, resources, transport, know-how, authority?
- How does the work of facilitating RIPAT groups interfere with other tasks of the EO's and Super Farmers?
- How does the collaboration with governmental agencies and political institutions affect the conditions for spreading?
- Assess the quality of the spreading groups (as compared to the R3 groups; the spreading project is only one year as compared to 3 years for a RIPAT basic):
 - leadership, constitution, election of leaders
 - group resilience
 - basket of option, adoption

2.1 OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

The results of the fieldwork are presented in the remainder of this report. First the implementation progress of the two projects will be outlined together with a short overview over the crops and technologies that group members are adopting. This is followed by four sections each describing how the four most imperative new features of the pilot projects in Hai and Karatu seem to influence the project. More specifically the four sections will focus on; the one year project phase; the facilitation and collaboration between Super Farmers and EO's in the spreading project; the targeting of 'best farmers' and lastly the training of Super Farmers in Hai. Lastly will be a discussion of how these factors might affect the spreading processes in the implementation project in Hai and the spreading project in Karatu and assess the potential for spreading of the 'basket of options' and of groups.

3. PROJECT PROGRESS

3.1 HAI

Interviews in the project area indicate that the project is very popular among the group members and that the groups are functioning relatively well. All groups spoke of several group members dropping out

in the beginning of the project, when they found out that there were no access to free handouts and that being in the group meant hard work. These members however have been replaced and all groups now have approximately 35 members as planned from the outset and the attendance record is stable. Especially in Mundio RECODA staff has faced some challenges in regards to attendance, but after RECODA involved the village government, the problem seems to have been solved.

When asking group members about their motivation for being in a group, the most common answer was “because we get good education”. Especially the quality and frequency of the RECODA training and the fact that the project gives them an opportunity to improve on the cultivation of crops that are already well known, was mentioned as something that sets the project apart from other projects that the group members have been involved in. This was confirmed by two EO’s and the district project coordinator. All three agreed that RECODA’s trainings are high quality and that the groups are exceptionally stable (compared to other farmer groups) due to the frequent and relevant trainings by RECODA.

Besides a group leadership, the groups have established five sub-committees with five members in each. Each committee is responsible for a component in the ‘basket of options’ and are getting extra training and functions as experts on this particular area. Each group thus have a banana committee, a CA committee, a goat committee, a poultry committee and a committee who are in charge of the demonstration plot. Furthermore two group members from each group have participated in training on VSLA and five group members have been democratically selected as diffusion Super Farmers.

The Super Farmers will be trained at five RECODA Academy sessions with the purpose of enabling them to spread groups and technologies from the ‘basket of options’ after project determination. So far the 40 Super Farmers have participated in one RECODA academy training which took place during the fieldwork. 40 Super Farmers attended together with four EO’s and the district project coordinator.

3.2 KARATU

The group members in Karatu seem less enthusiastic about the project, compared to the project participants in Hai. They are in general happy about the education they receive and are especially happy about the bananas and livestock included in the project. However, the group dynamics and progress of the training varies a lot from group to group. A couple of groups performs well and are following the training schedule while other groups have been facing problems of different kinds which means that they are behind schedule. Some have had problems finding a demonstration plot; some have been struggling with poor leadership while others are struggling with low attendance record. Consequently most group members interviewed doubts that one year would be enough to learn all the things contained in the ‘basket of options’. It was also obvious when inspecting the group fields that the spreading project in Karatu is progressing slower and with more varied results than in Hai. Some groups have well maintained demonstration plots with all the different crops from the ‘basket of options’ on display including banana plants that are well on their way. Other groups have only just planted their bananas and have only chosen to grow some of the crops from the ‘basket of options’ – either because they do not have sufficient space to grow all the crops or because they are running late due to problems in the group. The best performing groups seems to be the groups in Endanyawet and Buger.

Because these groups have existed as banana groups since 2011 (i.e. box 1), their banana fields are fully developed and they thus have time to concentrate on the new crops and technologies introduced in 2012. But even in these groups the group members doubts that they will be able to learn the newly introduced technologies within one year.

The groups are trained by the Super Farmer but the training topics are decided by RECODA. RECODA thus provide a training schedule that the Super Farmers should follow from week to week. As with the implementation project in Hai, the groups are trained on a reduced 'basket of options' containing goats, poultry, banana farming and conservation agriculture (CA) and crop diversification using maize, cassava, sweet potato and pigeon peas. All EO's have been attending the RECODA Academy training, but none of the EO's have been assisting the SF to the extent that it is stated in the project design (every week the first two month and every second week the next ten months). We shall return to this issue in section 5.1.

Apart from a group leadership, each group has selected one farmer who functions as an assistant SF and participates in the five RECODA Academy trainings together with the SF. The assistant Super Farmers should, according to the project design, also be encouraged to continue facilitating the spread of the RIPAT components in their village and if possible in conjunction with the EO in their ward after project determination.

3.3 ADOPTION OF CROPS AND TECHNOLOGIES

When looking at the adoption of the crops and technologies in the 'basket of options', the picture is generally the same as with the basic RIPAT projects. Banana's is by far the farmers' preferred option and the only crop that everyone interviewed have adopted. Many farmers in both Karatu and Hai are also interested in cassava and beans, but many are opting to wait planting these crops until next planting season (we shall return issue in section 4). In Karatu, the pigeon pea is also a popular option because it is a common cash crop in the area in. In Hai, on the other hand only two farmers interviewed had planted pigeon peas because the crop is unknown to the area.

The technology that farmers in both Karatu and Hai are most skeptical about is the new maize technology. When asking them about their skepticism the most common answer was, that it was very time consuming. In Karatu, many farmers do not believe in the benefits of the new technology and considers it the least relevant of all the things they had been taught. In Hai, they are more positive and many farmers are willing to try it on a small piece of land, but they still have reservations. Especially the six groups placed on the upper plains of Mount Kilimanjaro are skeptical about the "new" maize cultivation method. The farmers in these groups are all situated in the coffee-banana belt and thus have their main farming land far away from their home and livestock. The maize cultivation method (which is part of conservation farming) included in the basket of option, promotes the use of manure, but since the farmers' livestock are kept up on the mountain and their maize fields are placed on the lower plains, they have to pay for the transport of manure which amounts to between 35000 and 80000 TSH. Another issue in regards to the "new" maize method has to do with labor. All farmers I spoke to in the Hai project rented a tractor for planting of maize. The new cultivation method however requires manual labor and the use of a Zambian Hoe. This is a time consuming task compared to the preparation

of land using a tractor. Many farmers fail to do it themselves and thus hires labor which means, that the money spend on piecework sometimes exceeds the money used on a tractor. Some farmers also expressed, that they felt it was a step down the “development scale” having to use manual labor when they were used to using automatic machinery.

4. THE ONE YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The biggest difference between a RIPAT basic and the current two pilot projects, and a crucial issue of the evaluation, is the one year implementation phase. The question is, whether one year is enough to teach the farmer about the components in the ‘basket of options’ and how the short implementation period influences the implementation in general.

When asking the group members in Hai, they all agrees, that one year is enough to learn the things included in the ‘basket of options’ and that they would be able to remember the things they have learned in year to come; both because they are writing things down and because they as a group can help one another remembering the things learned. In terms of commitment to the group, they are equally positive and everyone interviewed expects to continue as a group as long as the lease for the demo plot lasts, which is five years for all groups interviewed.

In Karatu, the group members are more skeptical about the one year time span. Even though all groups in Karatu also expects to continue as a group for as long as their lease lasts, none of the groups interview are confident that one year is enough to learn and remember all the things contained in the ‘basket of options’ and several group members interviewed expressed a wish for RECODA to extend the project with one year. Two of the Super Farmers are willing to continue facilitating their groups after project determination without compensation. The other Super Farmers interviewed has the will to continue their facilitation, but does not believe they will have the resources to do it without some kind of compensation. Especially the transport is seen as problematic. All Super Farmers have been given a bicycle, however the area is very hilly, which means that some of the Super Farmers leaves their bicycle at home and instead pays money for a motorcycle taxi. Other simply walks. Two of the Super Farmers have to travel some 70 km to reach their groups which necessitates the use of public transport and without the money they get from RECODA it would not be possible for them to continue travelling every week.

The Super Farmers in Karatu agreed that one year was not enough. Many Super Farmers experiences problems with fluctuation attendance records, which means they sometimes have to teach the same things two weeks in a row and with a rather tight training schedule most groups are thus behind schedule. When asking RECODA staff who facilitated the groups in Hai about the one year time span, they seem to agree with the Super Farmers in Karatu. They also find the tight time schedule very challenging. Due to the high dropout rate in the beginning of the project, RECODA had to find new group members, which meant that the project launch was delayed and they were behind schedule from the start. Subjects that they previously had a month to implement now have to be taught in one training session. Sometimes several subjects are taught during the same training session and if there

are farmers that have not attended the previous weeks training session, last week's lessons have to be repeated on top of that. It is their general impression, that the tight training schedule influences the quality of the implementation and they often experiences, that farmers forgets simple instructions from week to week, because the trainings are too intense.

Another issue that both the facilitators in Karatu and Hai find challenging, are the increased resource requirements that a one year project necessitates. The three year implementation period in the RIPAT basic projects, allowed farmers to experiment with different crops and make gradual investments in seeds, piecework for the digging of banana holes and materials for goat and poultry housing. In a one year project, the farmers do not have the same opportunity. With a one year implementation plan the whole 'basket of options' have to be introduced to the farmers within few months. The adoption of a new technology, crop or livestock requires a certain amount of resources from the individual farmer – either in terms of time or money for materials and/or casual labor. For instance, if a farmer opts to adopt goats, bananas and maize, he or she only have a few months to find the resources for building a goat house, dig the banana holes and prepare the maize field. For most farmers these are big investments. Many group members are thus not able to adopt all the crops or technologies they want to during the implementation period but have to wait until next planting season either because they are too late (the planting season was over) or because they can't afford the risk of such big investments.

Another issue is the fact, that the facilitators only have one planting season to convince the farmers that they should adopt and spread the components contained in the 'basket of options'. They have, in other words, only one 'shot' in showing that the new crops and/or technologies performs better than traditional ones and there are thus no room for trial and error. This is especially a challenge with crops that are unknown to the farmers or with technologies that shows the best results when implemented over several planting seasons. For instance in Hai district, pigeon peas are not traditionally grown, so it is difficult to convince the farmers to grow them, since they are not familiar with the marketing possibility and the stability of the crop. Another example is the conservation farming. Conservation Farming is a long term investment, which the farmers found complicated and time consuming. Furthermore it normally takes three years before a farmer will be able to see any significant effect from their efforts. Additionally, the rains have been plenty this year for the first time in almost a decade. This means that crops that are planted using traditional planting technology are performing almost as well as improved crops planted with new technologies. Many farmers thus opt to wait with the adoption of certain crops until they see how they perform on the demonstration plot. Several farmers – especially in Hai - also expressed a wish to go and visit previous project areas in order to see how former RIPAT members were performing.

5. COLLABORATION AND FACILITATION BY SF'S AND EO'S

Previous research shows, that the weekly facilitation by professional RECODA staff is a determining factor for the success of the RIPAT groups. Consequently the facilitation of the groups in Karatu, which is done by Super Farmers, becomes an important research topic in the current research. More

specifically the focus is on to what extent the Super Farmers are (and feels) equipped and qualified to take on the role of facilitators and how the group members perceives their facilitators in terms of expertise, persuasion, authority, trust etc.

5.1 FACILITATION SKILLS

When comparing different groups' attitude towards the project it is clear that the skills of the facilitator indeed plays a crucial role for the implementation. In the implementation project in Hai, where the groups are facilitated by RECODA staff, group members are very positive and have hardly any objections towards the project. In Karatu, where the facilitation is done by local Super Farmers, the groups' attitudes towards the project is more tentative.

No group member interviewed in Hai questioned the RECODA staffs skills or knowledge. Most of the RECODA staff has a lot of experience with passing on the RIPAT concepts and technologies and they have a pre-given authority because of their position as professional agriculturalists directly from the implementing organization. Their implementation appears smooth and consistent, both in terms of mere knowledge transfer and in terms of handling conflicts and unforeseen challenges. Consequently the progress of the different demonstration plots in Hai appears to be much more in synch in comparison to the group plots in Karatu.

BOX 4: CASE REGARDING FACILITATION SKILLS

On the second day of the fieldwork I Karatu, I visited group member Mary. We talked about the facilitator of her group and it was obvious that she was happy about his efforts. The following is an extract from the interview:

Question: What makes him a good facilitator?

Mary: "He is good at encouraging us and we can see the results of what he teaches us, so we respect his knowledge [...] He is also trustworthy, we can see that he doesn't keep any assets for himself and he keeps his promises. For instance if he says he will show up at 9am we can be sure he will be there on time".

Question: What about RECODA, how important is it for the group that they are monitoring the project?

Mary: "It is very important that RECODA comes and look at what we are doing. We have seen some of the work that they have done in a neighboring village and we want the same to happen here, so it is very important that they come and encourage us. Don't get me wrong, we really like our facilitator, but he is just a local person. He could have a bad looking field and then you could think, what can he teach us? So it is important that RECODA comes and tells us that we are on the right path and that our facilitator is teaching us the right things."

Question: "You say you respect the facilitator's knowledge, and that you can see the results of what he is teaching you. Isn't that enough?"

Mary: No, RECODA are the best teachers, their teaching goes directly to the brain compared to the training done by one of our own. You see, the knowledge might be the same but our facilitator has to ask RECODA first, his knowledge is second hand knowledge. We trust

RECODA even without seeing any results. It would be very nice if they would do more checkups. A teacher is also checked by his headmaster, that's important even though the teacher is very good"

When asking the Super Farmers about their motivation for facilitating new groups, most of them answered good-heartedness and pride. The Super Farmers are thus proud to have been selected by RECODA to start new groups and they said they did it because they would want others to learn what they had learned. None of them mentioned the salary they got, on the contrary most Super Farmers think that they are given too little compared to the work they do and the time they spend away from home. Furthermore they also agree that the extra training they get at RECODA Academy is valuable for their own productivity.

They Super Farmers also, generally feel confident about their skills as farmers and about the fact that they possess a knowledge that other farmers can gain from. The area where the Super Farmers feel most insufficient is in terms of livestock keeping and disease control.

When interviewing the group members in Karatu it is clear that they are aware of the effects of the RIPAT basic and they value the knowledge that their facilitators have gained as group members of a former RIPAT group. However, because the Super Farmers are "just" local farmers, they do not appear to have the same pre-given authority as RECODA staff has.

The facilitator that Mary describes in the excerpt above is probably the most respected one of all the SF. And of all the groups visited, Mary is part of one of the best functioning groups in the project. The group has existed as a banana group since 2011, their demonstration plot shows good results and the facilitator is an experienced SF. He is a respected man in the community as a whole and very committed to his task. Other groups are much more critical about their facilitators and consequently have much less belief in the project.

A few Super Farmers expressed, that they feel able to handle issues or conflicts in the group, also if it means involving village authorities, but they still believe that the involvement and monitoring from RECODA is important for their group members. Other Super Farmers are much more challenged by their level of authority and do not think they can facilitate a group without the help from RECODA and the EO's – especially when it comes to convincing and encouraging group members to try new crops and technologies.

5.2 EO'S: THE INVOLVEMENT AND COLLABORATION

As a consequence of their apparent lack in authority, most Super Farmers feel dependent on help from RECODA staff, village government and/or EO's. This was predicted by RECODA prior to the launch of the project which is one of the reasons why RECODA has involved EO's in the project design. The initial plan was, that there should be a close collaboration between the SF and the EO's in sensitization, mobilization, training, reporting and monitoring. At the beginning of the project both Super Farmers and EO's should visit the groups on a weekly basis to ensure proper mobilization and sensitization. After two months the EO's are only obliged to meet the groups every 2nd week of the month for the rest of

the project, while the Super Farmers should be in charge of the weekly meetings and monitoring of individual plots among the group members. The collaboration between EO's and Super Farmers and their ability to train and mobilize the groups as a joint effort was thus another crucial issue that was explored during the fieldwork.

CASE 5: CASE REGARDING EO'S

Me: "You say you want RECODA to do more checkups because they have more authority than your facilitator, but I know that RECODA is asking the EO to help doing checkups. Doesn't that suffice?"

Mary: "No, the EO is covering a very large area, so he is not really available, so we trust our facilitator more because he is here all the time, and he knows the same things as the EO."

Me: "So how many times has the EO been visiting the group?"

Mary: "Last year he was here three times and this year he has only been here two times. "

Me: "So what does he do when he visit you?"

Mary: "Well, he encourage us and once he taught us about planting Cassava and digging banana holes, but he was here at the same time as RECODA visited us, so he did not really have had to be there."

The EO's connected to the project are generally less involved in the facilitation than intended in the project design. Apparently none of the EO's have participated on a weekly basis in the initial stages of the project as described in the project document. Only one EO have been attending trainings regularly and on own initiative. Two of the EO's collaborated with the Super Farmers, but only attended trainings if they were specifically asked to do so. The last EO had hardly been involved and had only been present at three trainings since project start.

When interviewing Super Farmers and asking them about their collaboration with the EO's, the answers varies. Some Super Farmers are happy with the collaboration and satisfied with the effort of their EO. For some Super Farmers the collaboration is found necessary for the success of the project. For instance one of the Super Farmers said that she used to call the EO every time she introduced a new crop or taught a new technology, because he had more authority than her, and he could thus tell the group members that what she was saying was true. Other Super Farmers does not seem to worry too much about whether the EO is available or not, but calls RECODA staff when they have questions.

Especially in terms of training in livestock keeping and decease control most Super Farmers appreciates the help from the EO, but apart from that the Super Farmers generally feels they have sufficient knowledge to train the groups on their own. Some Super Farmers believes they have more expertise on the 'basket of options' compared to the EO's. Some of the Super Farmers thus calls another SF or RECODA staff if they have questions rather than the EO.

The general impression is thus, that the EO's functions more as external consultants that constitutes an official link to the local government and who is called when the group needs special advice, rather than close collaboration partners to the SF.

6. TARGETING OF BEST FARMERS

In the RIPAT basic project Super Farmers are selected over a 3-4 years period based on their good performance. In Hai this should be done within only one year. RECODA is well aware, that is a challenge. In order to address this problem, the strategy was to preselect the 'best' farmers in the communities from the onset and focus the RIPAT intervention on them. This was done based on the assumption that such farmers would learn faster and have more resources to implement and spread the crops and technologies contained in the basket of option.

It has however, proved difficult to follow this particular criterion. Firstly, RECODA had difficulties filling out the spaces in the farmer groups due to the relatively large dropout rate in the beginning of the project, and they were thus not able to only pick the best farmers but had to allow anyone to join. Consequently RECODA changed the selection criteria from "best farmers" to "average or better than average farmers".

Secondly, it has proved difficult for RECODA to define what "better than average" entails. Previous RIPAT projects were implemented in poor rural area where people primarily were dependent on agricultural activities. Consequently, a farmer's skills could to a large extend be measured by the family's wealth and size of land. In Hai however, neither people's wealth nor the size of peoples farming land are necessarily very good indicators of a farmers farming skills. Because of the high population density people simply cannot owe much land (at least not up at the mountain) and most farmers interviewed thus supplements their income with other businesses and are generally better off economically compared to farmers interviewed in previous RIPAT projects. In Hai all farmers interviewed thus uses tractors for cultivation; they are as good as food secure all year around; hardly any of the farmers interviewed have to keep children at home due to lack of money for school fees and their hoses are all made of bricks and with tin roofs. In that sense, it was difficult to explore to what extend the "better than average" criterion had been followed and how this criteria influenced implementation and group dynamics.

6.1 TRAINING OF SUPER FARMERS

Despite the challenge of identifying the 'better than average' farmers in Hai, RECODA have still managed to find 40 group members who have been titled Super Farmers. They have been democratically elected by the group members and they are now being trained to become spreading agents in their communities.

The Super Farmers have been told that they are selected with the purpose of promoting Quick RIPAT spreading through their effort. However, by the time of the fieldwork, the group members were not aware that only one SF from each group would be selected and be paid to start new groups. This means that for now, all volunteers are under the impression that the facilitation of new groups is voluntary and the Super Farmers interviewed during the RECODA academy training all responded that it was something they were willing and happy to do.

The researcher got to spend four days at a RECODA Academy training where RECODA staff took turns training the Super Farmers and EO's on different issues contained in the RIPAT manual; What is RIPAT?; the thoughts behind the approach; the super household model; group formation; record keeping as well as some of the technologies from the "basket of options". The Academy finished by a short session where the Super Farmers from each group were asked to make a plan for how they were going to disseminate the knowledge gained through the project and write down names of nearby villages where they could establish new groups.

The Super Farmers were in general very happy about the training they received, however many still had difficulties defining their exact responsibilities as Super Farmers. In terms of the informal spreading from farmer to farmer they did thus not seem to be aware of having of any special role to play compared to the rest of the group members and a week after the first RECODA academy training, the Super Farmers interviewed all had a hard time remembering what they had been taught at the training.

The only thing they all mentioned was the responsibility of starting new groups after project determination, however no one imagined that it would be something they should or could do by themselves. When interviewing the Super Farmers it appeared that most of them had been selected due to their position as leader of a sub-committee (i.e. section 3.1). Their responsibility as diffusion Super Farmers is thus typically seen as a part of this leadership and when asking the Super Farmers how they were going to start and facilitate new group, most Super Farmers thus envisaged that would do it in collaboration with the other sub-committee leaders and that each of them would train the new group based on their expertise. None of the Super Farmers imagined that they should facilitate a group on their own. Partly because they during the RECODA Academy training had been asked to plan the spreading as a group and partly because no one thought they would be able to handle the responsibility themselves.

7 CONCLUSION: THE POTENTIALS FOR SPREADING

The overall purpose this study was to assess the potentials for spreading contained in the two pilot projects. More specifically the evaluation aimed at exploring how and to what extent the new features in the spreading and implementation model might promote and/or hinder spreading of the 'basket of options' and of groups.

It is important to notice this distinction between the spreading of the 'basket of options' and of groups. The issue of the spreading of the 'basket of options' is mostly concerned with the actual implementation of the projects i.e. how does the project setups promote/hinder the spreading of technologies and crops from a facilitator to a group. The issue of spreading of groups on the other hand is mainly concerned with how the setup as a whole constitute successful model for the formal spreading RIPAT concept i.e. how does the project design promote/hinder the multiplication of groups. Both issues are critical for the success of RECODA's work. On one hand you might have a very effective implementation setup, but if it does not multiply it only reaches few families (which were the reason for the launch of the current pilot projects). On the other hand you might have a successful model for spreading groups, but if the actual knowledge transfer taking place in these groups is not effective, the impact of the project might not be very big despite the fact that you are reaching many families. In the

following we shall thus assess whether RECODA and the Rockwool Foundation, with these two pilot projects have found a spreading model that both ensures a successful knowledge transfer within the groups and the prospects for multiplication of these groups.

7.1 IMPLEMENTATION AND SPREADING OF BASKET OF OPTIONS

In terms of adoption and spreading of crops, the fieldwork showed that the most imperative challenge for both the spreading project in Karatu and the implementation project in Hai appeared to be the one year setup. Firstly the one year setup made the projects vulnerable towards any unforeseen events that could delay the training schedule, secondly there were very little time to convince the farmers that they should adopt and spread the components contained in the 'basket of options' and thirdly many of farmers did not have the resources to try all the components in the 'basket of option- within one year.

The challenge of convincing farmers about the advantages of implementing the components in the basket of options was particularly challenging with crops that were relatively unknown to the farmers or technologies that showed the best results when implemented over several planting seasons. Many farmers opted to wait with the adoption of new crops and technologies until they saw how they performed on the group field, which in many cases would only be observable after project termination and the question is thus whether the farmers in the groups pays enough attention to the teaching about specific crops when they do not yet know whether the teaching is relevant to them on an individual level. The familiarity of the crop thus seems to be an important factor for the successful adoption of crops as education on crops that farmers are used to grow is naturally considered more relevant than education on crops that people do not normally grow. This was both obvious in Hai and Karatu where the farmers predominantly had chosen to adopt crops they were familiar with as it made the risk of adopting them smaller.

For the pilot project I Karatu, another challenge for the successful implementation of the project was the lack of authority among the Super Farmers which meant some were facing problems with convincing the group members about the advantages of the new crops and technologies. Furthermore, the Super Farmers in Karatu were less experienced in facilitating groups and handling conflicts as compared to RECODA staff which meant that the groups in Karatu were rather vulnerable towards any non-calculated problems that could occur.

As a consequence of their lack in authority, most Super Farmers were dependent on help from RECODA staff and EO's, however the involvement of EO's varied a lot from group to group. In some groups this did not affect the facilitation much because their Super Farmers possessed personal authority. For most of the groups however, it constituted a challenge for the group members and their belief in the project. RECODA is aware of this issue, and through a close cooperation with the district government they do what they can to handle the problems with the EO's. However, at the end of the day the EO's are to a large extend in charge of their own working schedule and their involvement in RECODA's groups are very much dependent on each EO's work ethics and own interest in RECODA's work.

The pilot project in Karatu, where the implementation and facilitation is mostly dependent local farmers, thus appears to be more vulnerable compared to the pilot project in Hai and the performance of the groups in Karatu are to a greater extend dependent on conditions that are difficult to cater for in

a project design such as the individual Super Farmers' persuasion skills; the quality of the group leadership; the involvement of the EO and the cooperation with the village leadership.

As a consequence of these issues many of the groups in Karatu were behind schedule and all group members expressed a wish for the project to continue for at least another year. When asked, the Super Farmers expressed a willingness to continue the facilitation, but only few could see it happen without some kind of compensation. It is recommended that RECODA facilitates a setup where the group members all contribute a small amount of money in order to compensate their Super Farmer.

7.2 FORMAL SPREADING OF GROUPS

In terms of spreading of groups, the one year setup does not seem to play a vital role. If we ignore some problems with dropouts in the initial stages of the pilot projects, all group members in both Karatu and Hai expressed a wish to stay in the group for several years to come primarily because of the shared asset they have in the demonstration plot as well the possibility of helping each other with advice and guidance after the facilitation terminates. In that sense, the one year implementation setup might actually promote the sustainability of the groups, as the group members will be more dependent on each other's memory compared to farmers who participate in 3-4 year RIPAT basic and thus have more years to learn and memorize. Based on interviews and observations made, it thus appears that in terms of group dynamics and commitment to the groups, the two current pilot projects are successful and the group members are happy about the initiative.

The one year setup and the authority of Super Farmers thus seem to constitute the two biggest threats to the further spreading of groups and adoption of components in the 'basket of options'. Despite the more or less successful cooperation with the EO's, the group members in Karatu know RECODA's work and respect the Super Farmers knowledge due to their partnership with RECODA. They are thus generally happy with the education they received from their facilitator. It is however doubtful that the Super Farmers in Hai will have the same respect. Considering the challenges that the Super Farmers in Karatu are facing coupled with the fact that the Super Farmers in Hai only will have had one year of training behind them it is thus reasonable to question whether it will be possible to successfully spread group after a one year implementation project. Firstly the Super Farmers will not gain the same level of expertise compared to Super Farmers from a RIPAT basic. Secondly the Super Farmers are being elected very shortly after project start which means that neither RECODA nor the group members have had a very good basis for choosing the most skilled farmers. Thirdly, it is doubtful that Super Farmers in Hai will have the same advantages as the Super Farmers in Karatu in regards to their partnership with RECODA, since RECODA have only had one year to build up a reputation in the area. Furthermore it appears that the Super Farmers in Hai are not fully aware of what their responsibility might – or might not - include since they have not been fully informed about the fact that only one Super Farmer from each group will be facilitating new groups. It is recommended that RECODA thoroughly considers whether this is the best possible setup for the training and preparation of Super Farmers. It could for instance be considered whether it would be more appropriate to let the five SF in each group facilitate new groups together, as it would both strengthen the quality of the training and hopefully give more authority and trust to each SF as he/she would be part of a bigger team who backs up the training.

Since the first fieldwork took place half way through project implementation in both Hai and Karatu, it is not yet possible to make any final conclusions regarding the spreading of components from the 'basket of options' and groups in Hai and Karatu. However, the lessons learned so far might give an indication of the challenges that future spreading projects might face and what we have seen is, that while the potential for spreading groups seems promising due to a good formal setup, the actual implementation and knowledge transfer in these groups suffers from the short implementation period especially for groups facilitated by local Super Farmers which makes them vulnerable towards any uncalculated occurrences. There are thus still issues to be handled, and this is a trial and error process, but hopefully experience, further research and the literature study included in the evaluation will give helpful inputs on these matters for a further refinement of the approach.

APPENDIX 2: 2ND EVALUATION REPORT

SHORT TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF 'BASKET OF OPTIONS' AND GROUPS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains the main findings from the second evaluation fieldwork of the two one-year pilot projects sponsored by the Rockwool Foundation and implemented by RECODA in the districts of Hai and Karatu in Northern Tanzania. The focus of the evaluation was the short term sustainability of the 'basket of options' and of groups.

The findings suggest that in terms of building strong groups, the projects have been successful. The groups are still meeting up once a week and with the exception of two groups, the attendance records are relatively stable with only few dropouts after project termination. The groups also appear confident that they will continue to meet up in the future – at least as long as they have a shared group field.

In terms of continuation of group activities the results are more varying. Bananas are once again a big success. Group members are starting to sell the bananas from the group field. The majority of the group members have planted bananas at home and many are expecting to expand their banana plots. Spreading of bananas to non-group farmers has not taken off because the seedlings are still in demand within the farmer groups, but provided that the bananas continue to grow successfully this will most probably happen in the nearest future as there is a seemingly big interest in the community. In terms of the other crops and farming technology in the basket of options, the picture is much more blurry, as the success of the different varies from group to group depending on many different factors that would be difficult to account for in a project design.

The biggest hindrance in this regard appear to be the one year project period which does not allow enough time to experiment with the new crops and technologies. And in cases where the harvest has failed there are no second chances. This suggests that one year and one planting season, is simply not enough to successfully implement all the components in the basket of options, as it makes the chances for success too small – especially in areas where the population is poor.

In areas where people are wealthier – and thus less risk averse - a one year project implementation might be sufficient. This was the case in Hai where more farmers had chosen to adopt the new crop varieties to their individual farms *during* the project period as compared to Karatu where many farmers opted to wait with the adoption until they had seen the results on the group plot. This also means that the future spreading 'patterns' in Hai is less dependent on the collective performance on the group field and more dependent on personal outcomes as compared to Karatu where the potential for spreading is more dependent on a continuation of regular group activities which in turn is

dependent on the collective necessity of such group activities. In this regard, VSLA might prove to play a crucial role. The VSLA is a success especially as it is a good way of storing and accumulating the money from the banana sale. The VSLA and the shared assets on the group field thus create a positive synergy and the findings suggest that this synergy will be important in terms of securing the long term sustainability of the groups.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report contains the main findings of the second evaluation round of the two one-year pilot projects sponsored by the Rockwool Foundation and implemented by RECODA in the districts of Hai and Karatu in Northern Tanzania.

The aim of the pilot project in Hai was to test a cost-efficient one year *implementation model* which hopefully would have a chance of being funded by district governments and other donors. The implementation model was based on a basic RIPAT project. The project was thus implemented by RECODA staff but it only had a one-year implementation period and the farmers was trained on a reduced 'basket of options' containing Banana farming, conservation agriculture and crop diversification (improved crops include: maize, cassava, sweet potato, pigeon pea (PP), lablab), Poultry and Goats. After the one year implementation period, the project in Hai has been followed by a spreading project similar to the spreading project in Karatu (see below).

The pilot project in Karatu was a one year *spreading project* following a three year RIPAT project, implemented and facilitated by EO's and Super Farmers and monitored by RECODA. The aim of the one year spreading project was to develop and test a cost efficient one year spreading model which should support the spreading of RIPAT groups and hopefully would have a chance of being funded and implemented by district governments and other donors following a 'RIPAT basic' or a one year 'RIPAT Quick'.

A process evaluation was initiated together with the launching of the projects. This was done in order to assess to what extent the targets of the projects were being met and provide inputs to possible quality improvements. The main objective of the evaluation was to assess how and to what extent the new features in the spreading and implementation model might promote and/or hinder spreading of 'the 'basket of options' and of groups'.

The first evaluation exercise was conducted in April-May 2013 which was half way through the Hai implementation project and half way through the RIPAT 3 spreading project in Karatu. The evaluation was done with the purpose of looking at project progress and asses the potentials for spreading of the 'basket of options' and groups.

The second field mission was conducted in March-April 2014. This was six month after project determination of the Hai implementation project; six month after project determination of the RIPAT 3 spreading project in Karatu; and half way through the Hai spreading project following the 'RIPAT Quick'. The focus of the second field mission was on the short term sustainability and effect of the implementation and spreading projects in Hai and Karatu as well as the project progress of the Hai spreading project. This report contains the main findings from this second field mission.

This report should be read as a continuation of the first evaluation report. A thorough description of the project area, project designs and the background for the launching of the two pilot projects are thus to be found in the first evaluation report.

2. METHODOLOGY AND KEY QUESTIONS

The findings from the second evaluation round are based on three weeks of ethnographic fieldwork carried out from the 17th March - 4th April 2014; 8 days were spent on the implementation and spreading project in Hai; 9 days were spent on the spreading project in Karatu; and two days were spent at the RECODA office interviewing relevant staff.

The data was collected through various kinds of interviews (formal, informal, in-depth, structured and semi-structured); direct observations; analyses of written project documents and focus group discussions. Furthermore the fieldwork involved the use of traditional ethnographic fieldwork methods, including case studies and participant observations. During the fieldwork the researcher stayed with local farmers who made living space available, allowing the researcher to have close daily contact with farmers in the area and gain a basic understanding of the living conditions, opinions, and priorities of local families.

In Karatu two ward extension officers (from Buger and Kambi ya Simba), who both were assigned to monitor and supervise the spreading groups made themselves available as field assistants to the researcher and they thus became key informants as they provided the researcher with a lot of useful knowledge and information about the project and the project area through informal interviews and conversations. Apart from these informal interviews, a total of 212 group members were interviewed as well as twelve Super Farmers (Super Farmers), and four ASFs (ASuper Farmers). In Karatu all eight groups from the RIPAT3-S projects were interviewed, in Hai, four groups from the Hai-I project and four groups from the Hai-S were interviewed.

The focus of the field work was the short term sustainability and effect of the implementation and spreading projects in Hai and Karatu as well as the project progress of the Hai spreading project. The spreading project in Karatu and the implementation project in Hai were launched in October 2012 and terminated in October 2013. By the time of the fieldwork in April, the RIPAT3- S groups in Karatu and the Hai-I groups had been 'on their own' for six months. The groups were thus no longer facilitated or trained by Super Farmers or RECODA staff but had to manage the group and their group field on their own.

Because of the short time span, RECODA did not pursue to reduce food insecurity or poverty within the project period. The main objective was rather to establish good and strong farmer groups and build enough capacity over the 12 month period for the groups to continue the project activities and mentor the groups on their own. The hope was, that with the continued assistance of the Super Farmers and EO's, the farmer groups would continue to prosper and spread after project determination (see project description).

When assessing the short term sustainability of the pilot project, the researcher was thus primarily concerned with the potential for continuing the group activities beyond the termination of initial support via the. This included looking at the stability of the groups, looking at whether the groups had the confidence and skills to continue the activities on their own and looking at the availability of inputs

for continued growth of the crops and breeding of livestock. Interviews thus revolved around the following key questions or issues.

- Are the groups still active and to what extend?
- The quality of the groups (attendance, leadership, group field)
- Are Super Farmers and EO's still collaborating in facilitating groups?
- Why or why not have groups stopped or are continuing
- What technologies are being adopted and what technologies have been spread?
- To what extend does the group feel capable on managing the groups on their own?
- What are the group members' attitudes towards the project?
- How are the new groups in Hai functioning?
 - To what extend are the super farmers equipped to take on the role as facilitators (after just one year of training)
 - What is being adopted?
 - Are super farmers en EO's cooperating – and to what extend?
 - What are the super farmer's main incentives for establishing new groups and/or spreading the basket of options?

3. SUSTAINABILITY OF GROUPS

The attitude and enthusiasm about the project and farmer groups varied from group to group. In general however, the farmers were positive and of the 16 groups formed in 2012 (eight in Hai and eight in Karatu) all groups were still active six month after project termination and all groups interviewed met up once a week on their shared demonstration plot.

The group which performed best in terms of active group members and weekly attendance still had 35 active members with an average of 27 people showing up every week. The group with the lowest attendance had 24 registered group members with an average of 14 people showing up every week¹.

When asking the groups what made them stick together and meet up on a weekly basis, the answered varied. Previously research on the RIPAT project suggests that the VSLA is an important factor for the continuation of groups after project termination. Four of the eight groups in Karatu had started VSLA and they all confirmed this, by explaining that the VSLA was the most important motivational factor for meeting up. The same applied in Hai where all groups had formed VSLA. These groups would start their meetings with the VSLA component and continue with working on their group field. Maintenance of the banana plot was also an important reason for meeting up, but according to the group members it did not needed tending every week. The groups who had started VSLA thus believed that if it wasn't for the VSLA component they would not necessarily meet up once a week.

It should be noted however, that VSLA is not the sole reason for group stability. The four groups in Karatu who had not started VSLA, also met up on a weekly basis to work on their shared group field and

¹ Average attendance over the last two months.

when comparing the attendance record between the groups who had started VSLA with the groups who had not started VSLA there was no apparent differences. For these groups, maintaining the group field was enough motivation for meeting up together with the penalty fees associated with not attending group meetings.

It also appears that the project area might influence group stability. The groups who seemed most enthusiastic about their groups were both from Kambi ya Simba which is an isolated area around 80 kilometers from the other three project villages. Both groups in Kambi ya Simba had many group members showing up for interviews and they had set aside the whole day to spend with the researcher. They were eager to answer questions and all insisted that the researcher should see their fields at home and take pictures of the goats and pigs given to them by RECODA. The two groups in Kambi ya Simba were also the only groups who did not complain or inquire about handouts of any kind from RECODA and even though their agricultural performance were not notably different from other groups visited, they generally seemed more proud of their group and appreciative over the project compared to any other groups interviewed during the fieldwork. When talking to the ward extension officer in the area about this keenness, he explained that the area had not been exposed to many external development interventions and working in groups was new to the majority of the inhabitants in the area. This was very different from the other project areas in Karatu and Hai where people had been much more exposed to development initiatives from various NGO's. This suggests that groups initiated in areas that only have had little exposure to development projects previously are more likely to be committed to a project like RIPAT.

On the other hand, the one thing that characterizes the two groups with the lowest attendance record is a late harvest. One group had to change field half way through the project implementation due to bad soil condition and the other group had problems finding a plot in the first place. This meant that they had not harvested any crops by the time of project termination. This was discouraging for the group members and resulted in a high dropout rate and low attendance. The group who had to change field however, were still active and they seemed confident that people would start to meet up regularly as soon as they started harvesting crops.

In the other group however, the prospects appeared less promising. Many of their problems seemed to have its roots in leadership problems. While interviewing the group, it became clear that the group were not functioning well. Only five people showed up for the group interview and the ones attending seemed very reluctant to answer questions. When asked what part of the project they were the most appreciative about no-one answered and in general the group members were hesitant and quiet. When asked questions about their VSLA component no one seemed to know what VSLA was and their group field was poorly managed. Later we discovered that the sub-village at stake was notoriously known for being difficult to work with and that there had been difficulties with the group from the beginning. There were apparently a lot of internal quarrels which had divided the group into two parts; one smaller part that appreciated the leadership of the group and a bigger majority who were not satisfied with the leadership. By the time of the election, the leaders of the group had not turned up and no elections had thus been held since there was no one to facilitate the process. Furthermore there

seemed to be problems between the Super Farmer and the group because they were supporting two opposing political parties.

In terms of creating strong farmer groups, a one year project period thus appears to be sufficient providing that group member's sees tangible results of their efforts before the project is terminated. It is therefore important that a lot of effort is put into securing a smooth start-up and make sure that crops are planted as fast as possible. Furthermore a strong and respected leadership is crucial for a successful continuation of the farmer groups. The previous fieldwork showed that especially the latter is a weak spot in the project design because super farmers do not necessarily have the experience or authority to solve conflicts between group members. The implementing organization should therefore pay special attention to such issues in their monitoring and coaching efforts.

3.1 GROUP FACILITATION

All groups were primarily relying on the group chairman and the assistant Super Farmer (ASF) in terms of facilitation. Typically, the chairman was responsible for administrative issues and in consultation with the ASF he/she decided on the activities on the group field from week to week. The actual work done by the group was supervised by the ASF.

These results comply with the project design as it is expected that the ASFs take over the facilitation after project termination. It appeared however, that not all groups had been properly prepared for taking over the facilitation on their own. During the last fieldwork - halfway through project implementation – most group members had problems explaining the role of the ASF and some groups were not even sure who their ASF was. The ASFs had thus been bestowed a much more central role than expected. Some groups also indicated that that they felt 'left behind' and they were not completely confident that they could manage on their own. Regular tasks such as weeding, planting and harvesting were not an issue, but if they were experiencing problems with diseases on crops or animals they were not sure how to handle it. Some groups could call the super farmer and ask him or her to show up for assistance. The problem however, was transport which made it difficult for some super farmer to make it. Super farmers who lived in relatively short proximity of the group field was thus more likely to offer support compared to super farmers who had to travel far.

In Hai the groups had the clear advantage that they had a group members who where facilitating new groups. These group members were thus partaking in RECODA academy and had a direct contact with RECODA staff. This made it easier for them to remember specific technology details and they had easy access to expert help if necessary.

It suggested that more efforts are put into preparing groups for being on their own. This should involve clearer communication if possible but more importantly the implementing organisation should invest more in the ASF during project implementation for instance through training and by insisting that the ASF should be actively involved in facilitating his/her group together with the Super Farmer. This would hopefully give the ASF more confidence and respect among fellow group members. Given the rather crucial role of the group chairman – also in term of facilitation – it could also be considered whether he/she should partake in RECODA Academy together with the ASF.

4 BASKET OF OPTIONS

Whereas the fieldwork found, that the groups were relatively stable six months after project termination, the agricultural performances were more unstable and varying depending on different circumstances and conditions. Most of the farmers and groups interviewed agreed that one year was enough to learn the basics of the components in the basket of options but it was not enough to make the teaching settle properly - as one farmer put it: "They (the facilitators red.) left us when we were still babies. We were taught how to walk, but they are not there to help us when we fall".

On a general level, the group fields in Hai were more developed than the group fields in Karatu, more crops had been adopted by individual farmers and the spreading appeared to be more consistent. This finding complies with the findings from the previous field work which found that the spreading project in Karatu was progressing slower and with more varied results than in Hai. In Hai the groups had thus already started selling banana bunches in November whereas the groups in Karatu were only just beginning to harvest bunches from their group field².

On a more specific level however there are many factors that seem to influence the possibility for future success in regards to the specific farming activities from group to group. In the following we go into detail with the five main components in the basket of options namely conservation agriculture, promotion of new crops for crop diversification, bananas, livestock improvement and VSLA³.

4.1 BANANAS

The bananas have once again proved to be a significant component of the basket of options. All farmers interviewed confirmed that the banana was the most highly valued crop of all the crops and technologies introduced through the project.

In Hai where bananas traditionally are an important part of people's stable diet, the new banana varieties introduced by the project were especially valued because they could both be cooked green and used as fruit. Furthermore they experienced that bunches fetched a better price compared to traditional bananas because they generally were bigger and because all bananas in a bunch had an even size. The new planting technology was also much appreciated as farmers experienced that it made the banana's grow faster and made them more draught resistant – an advantage that could also be applied when planting traditional banana varieties.

In Karatu, where bananas are not a traditional part of people's stable diet, farmers were especially thrilled over having access to a new drought resistant crop which could supplement their diet when other types of crops would fail to make any produce. Its advantages as a perennial crop - which meant it provided households with food and/or income all year around – was also frequently mentioned as well as the possibility of using the leaves for animal fodder. Many of the women in Karatu however, were a bit uncertain how to cook the bananas. Some women complained that their men would not eat

² An exception is of course the groups in Buger and Endanyawet who had established their group field in 2011.

them and they inquired whether RECODA could invite women from Arusha region to give them a cooking course.

On group level, the banana fields were mentioned as being valuable to the cohesion and stability of the group, as the banana field gave the groups a shared asset which gave the groups a reason to continue meeting up and cooperate. Four of the eight groups Karatu, had existed since 2011 where four groups were established, facilitated by a super farmer from the original RIPAT project in the area⁴. These groups did qualify as a real 'RIPAT groups' in their first year, since some of the cornerstones of the RIPAT approach was not implemented (i.e. basket of options, leadership, advocacy etc.), but the groups have had knowledge about and access to bananas seedlings since 2011. They had thus been able to sell bananas bunches from their plot for almost a year and they especially appreciated how the banana helped generating money for their VSLA scheme.

The farmer's appreciation of the banana was also reflected in the adoption rate. According to RECODA's household monitoring data from October 2013, 88% of the farmers in Karatu have planted bananas. During the field visit no systematic count was done to confirm this number, but out of 98 farmers interviewed in Karatu, 83 had opted to plant bananas with various success. Some farmers had experienced problems with lack of moisture which caused some of their plants to die while others had planted – or were expecting to add more seedlings to their current banana field. The farmer with the most banana plants had thus planted 150 plants while the farmer who had lost most bananas was left with only three banana trees.

Banana seedlings planted	Number of farmers
0 plants	8
1-5 plants	3
6-10 plants	47
11-20 plants	12
21-30 plants	5
31-50 plants	6
51-100 plants	4
101-150 plants	2

⁴ See previous field report for further explanation.

The farmers interviewed, who had not opted to plant bananas, explained that they did not have suitable land for production of bananas. A couple of farmers furthermore told, that they had not managed to have the banana holes prepared by the time RECODA handed out seedling but that their land were now prepared and that they were waiting to buy banana seedlings from the group field.

Considering the relatively high adoption rate (from group field to project farmer) and the farmers' enthusiasm about the new bananas, it is most likely that the bananas will continue to spread in the project areas. This is supported by the fact that of the 17 farmers, who had planted more than 20 bananas on their own field, 14 were part of a group who had existed since 2011. This suggests that the current numbers of bananas planted is only preliminary and that it can be expected that farmers from the 'new' groups will continue adding more bananas to their own plots. The farmers themselves confirmed this. They explained that that many people outside the groups had showed interest in the new bananas but of the same 98 farmers interviewed only 11 had given out seedling to people outside the group. The reason for this low spreading rate (from project farmers to non-project farmer) appeared to be that the project farmers were still planning to add more bananas to their own field. The banana seedlings were thus still primarily spread within the group.

4.2 LIVESTOCK

Next to the bananas, the livestock component was mentioned as being the most valued component in the basket of options. Especially the goats were highly valued and taken well care of – both because they could give milk, but also because owning a valuable goat made it easier for its owner to lend money from other people as the goats could secure the loan. As one farmer in Kambi ya Simba put it: “you cannot be trusted unless you have a good goat”

The solidarity chain also seemed to be working as all female offspring's had been given - or were planned to be given away to new group members. There was thus no indication that the component should not be sustainable. The only possible threat identified during the fieldwork was goats dying. RECODA staff confirmed this concern. The farmers who had received goat were well aware of their value and the goat houses build were generally in a good condition and the goats were well fed. The specific goat breed – the Toggenburg – is also known for being able to tolerate a wide range of environmental conditions however illnesses cannot be completely hindered and not all farmers seemed to be aware of the importance of vaccination. Many farmers had thus waited to until their animal got sick before paying for a vaccine which in some instances were too late. Of the 32 goats handed out to the 8 groups in Karatu 10 had given offspring's, 12 were pregnant and one had died. Of the 16 goats given out to the four groups interviewed in Hai 9 had given offspring, 7 were pregnant and 4 had died – apparently due to a lung decease.

In some areas the farmers complained that access to vaccines and veterinary assistance was lacking which meant that it was difficult to get someone to treat their goats. The capability of keeping the goats in a good condition in the future was thus a general concern among many farmer groups – and the most frequently mentioned issue when asking the farmers of their main concerns. For the same reason, being part of the goat committees were also perceived as the most demanding and important task next to the task of being a group chairman.

In comparison to the goats, the pig production in Karatu was less successful. Each group was given 3 female pigs and 1 male. In four groups all pigs were still alive, but none had given birth as the pigs they received were still young. The numbers for the remaining four groups are listed below.

Pigs Alive	Pigs given birth	Piglets born	Piglets died
4	2	10	7
3	1	8	6
3	2	21	15
1	0	0	0

As the numbers shows, of 39 piglets born, 28 have died. There is no clear explanation for this high mortality rate. Apparently most piglets died within a few hours after birth. Some farmers explained that the sow did not have enough milk and others had no explanation. When asking the extension officer about the issue, he explained that it most probably had to do with bad housing and feeding as well as lack of vaccination and de-worming. RECODA made the same assessment and explained that as with the goats, farmers tended to wait until the pigs got sick before treating them. Furthermore, pigs are much more exposed and vulnerable to maltreatment and thus much more likely to catch deceases compared to goats.

It is likely to presume that given the high mortality rate among the piglets hitherto, farmers further down the solidarity chain will not invest much in quality pig houses and it is thus doubtful whether the pig component will be very sustainable.

In terms of improved poultry production, the results also seem to be lacking – especially in Karatu where farmers had been reluctant to choose poultry keeping from the basket of options. Farmers had been trained on the importance of vaccination as well as on how to build poultry houses and keep their chickens indoor. Furthermore farmers have been offered to buy improved cocks for the reduced price of 15000 TZs. However, most farmers in Karatu had opted not to buy the improved cocks as they thought the price was too high. Many farmers also mentioned the fact that they did not have proper access to veterinary services and thus no proper vaccination system for poultry. In Hai the results were slightly better as more farmers had chosen poultry keeping from the basket of options. One group in Hai for instance, had thus opted to buy 35 cocks for the whole group. There is no clear explanation for this difference between Hai and Karatu. One explanation could be the better veterinary services available in Hai. Another explanatory factor is the better economic standard among the farmers in Hai. The latter explanation would confirm findings from the previous fieldwork which found that the groups in Hai were more willing and/or capable of taking the risk of investing in new technologies because they were in a more favorable economic position compared to the farmers in Karatu.

4.3 CROP DIVERSIFICATION

Farmers in both Karatu and Hai were trained on how to diversify their production through the introduction of improved cassava and sweet potato seeds as well as improved legumes seeds (lablab and pigeon peas). Very few farmers however, had planted these crops on their home field because the majority had opted to wait adopting the improved crop varieties and technologies. The reason given was that they wanted to wait until they had seen the results on the group field and that they would not spend money on these crops before they had seen their advantages.

Due to the short project period farmers had only had one planting season to 'experiment' with the new crops and by the time of the fieldwork none of the farmers or farmer groups had started to plant seeds or seedling for the coming planting season. The answers given as to what crops farmers wanted to adopt, were thus only indication of people's intentions and not an accurate picture of the actual spreading.

In Karatu the most popular of the improved crop varieties introduced seemed to be the cassava followed by sweet potatoes. However, not all group members were able to grow them on their home field. In one group all the cassava on the demonstration plot had dried out due to lack of moisture. Two other groups explained that their sweet potatoes had died apparently due to disease. This meant that there was no seedling to replant on the group field or to distribute among the individual farmers.

In groups where the cassava and/or sweet potatoes had been planted and harvested successfully, there were still not enough seedlings for everyone. The groups had tried to resolve this problem in different ways. One group had opted to give out seedlings to the farmers who had prepared their field first. Another group had chosen to draw lots. One group had made a rotation schedule so that five people were given seedlings from the group plot this year, another five would be given seedlings next year and so forth. In one group they had only managed to harvest very little sweet potatoes due to lack of moisture. In order to reestablish their stock of seedlings they had opted to let one farmer, who had access to water, take care of the remaining seedling on behalf of the whole group, later they would make a plan on how the seedlings should be distributed.

The improved legumes seeds introduced were less appreciated. During group interview, when asking what crops the farmers had been introduced to via the project, pigeon peas and lablab was always mentioned last (two groups even forgot to mention them). This does not mean however, that they are not a successful part of the basket of option. One group in Karatu explained that pigeon peas was very well known to the area (often intercropped with maize) and that the improved variety was not notably different from the variety they were used to grow – hence they did not see it as a crop of great importance.

In Hai the cassava was generally less valued compared to Karatu. Especially among the two groups in Rundu Gai who explained that the soil in the area was not suitable and that the cassava that did manage to grow had been eaten by the many free ranging animals in that area. The sweet potatoes on the other hand seemed more popular and several farmers had already given out seedlings to people outside the group. Pigeon peas and lablab were also appreciated. Lablab was typically intercropped with the bananas and especially valued as nutritious fodder for livestock. Pigeon peas were valued as a

cash crop. It was however a relative unknown crop in the district so several farmers complained that they were lacking a market for sale.

4.4 CA

Few farmers in Karatu had adopted conservation farming (CA). The most common explanation was that although the hybrid maize was valued, the technology of using the chagga hoe was tedious and hard work and because it took several planting seasons before noteworthy results were seen, many farmers had opted to use the traditional cultivation methods. One farmer explained that because the rains in the area were sufficient, there was no need for using CA. Two groups explained that they had opted out on CA due to the requirement of herbicide. The problem was that herbicide was a costly investment, and since they had experienced that the herbicide had been washed away due to heavy rains, they were not willing to take that risk again. In one group they explained that the chagga holes they had prepared had been flooded and washed away. Another group had not managed to rent a field for maize cultivation. Some women told that they could not convince their husbands of the advantages of using CA.

Lastly several farmers explained that the reason they were not using CA methods was because of late rains. Normally farmers would plant maize in ridges during January and then wait for the rains. With CA, farmers should prepare the holes made by the chagga hoe and only start planting seeds when the rain begins. When using the CA technology the maize is thus planted much later than farmers are used to and since the rains were later than normal this year, they did not dare to take the risk of waiting to plant maize as it was something they were unfamiliar with. Of all groups interviewed only two groups had planted maize on their demonstration plot and there were only three accounts of farmers who were using CA at home.

In Hai the results were better with more accounts of people growing maize using CA. In one group everyone had agreed on trying using CA on some of their maize plots at home and it was seen as one of the three most valuable components in the basket of options. Most groups however thought it was too laborious and opted out.

4.5 VSLA

Eight of the twelve groups interviewed were actively involved in saving up money through VSLA. Of the remaining four groups, two groups explained that they could currently not afford the contributions as many members were already part of other saving groups. One group was waiting for RECODA to equip them with the acquired materials, and one group had no explanation for not having VSLA. Generally however, people were very positive about the prospect of being part of VSLA.

When asking groups what they had gained from being part of the project, VSLA was often one of the first things they mentioned. Saving schemes were well known in both Karatu and Hai and many farmers interviewed were also part of other saving groups. It seemed however, that the farming activities and the VSLA activities created a positive synergy that made VSLA a preferred option compared to the other saving schemes. Being enrolled in VSLA did thus not only have the obvious advantage of being an effective way of saving money. As pointed to earlier, it also gave the groups an incentive to meet up

every week which made it easier to plan activities on their group field. Furthermore the farmers predicted -and some had already experienced – that it was easier accumulate money in VSLA compared to other saving schemes because of the produce sold from the farming activities on the group field. The two groups who could not currently afford saving up through VSLA was thus planning to skip their activities in other saving groups in order to concentrate on VSLA.

5 SPREADING PROJECT IN HAI

The findings from the previous fieldwork in Hai suggested, that it would be very difficult to successfully establish a spreading project in Hai considering that the Super Farmers would only have one year of experience with the technologies they were supposed to pass on. However during the current fieldwork the researcher spoke to four of the eight newly started spreading groups in Hai, and they all seemed to be doing well. When comparing last year’s results from the implementation project in Hai or the spreading project in Karatu with the current spreading project, there were thus not any notable differences.

All four groups had planted bananas intercropped with lablab, maize intercropped with pigeon peas and elephant grass. They had prepared the land for cassava and sweet potatoes and where expecting to receive goats soon. Individually all group members interviewed had – or were expecting to – plant 10 banana seedlings. Of the 48 farmers interviewed all had bought the hybrid maize from RECODA and 27 had planted these using CA technologies. By the time of the fieldwork the group members had not yet started to plant the rest of the improved crops in the basket of options. However, even though the numbers below only are indication of what the farmers are expecting to plant, the table suggests that the group members are eager to try on the new crops at home.

No. of group members interviewed in each group	15	13	13	7
No. of farmers expect. to plant cassava	7	13	8	
No. of farmers expect. to plant sweet potatoes	16	13	11	
No. of farmers expect. to plant lablab		13	13	7
No. of farmers expect. to plant Pigeon Peas		8	13	7

The group members were very positive about being part of the project, and stressed the fact that the project was much more serious – and required much more hard work – compared to other ‘hit-and-run’ projects that frequently were initiated in the area. Group members also seemed to be happy with their facilitators.

The extension officers however were not very active in the project. Findings from the spreading project in Karatu suggested that the extension officers’ presence in the project was important for the group members because they, as agricultural experts had an authority which the super farmers did not have as ordinary community members. Hai however, is situated close to Arusha which meant that RECODA staff were much more present during project implementation than was the case in Karatu. The

manager of the spreading project in Hai had been visiting the groups several times a month and his encouragements and backup of the facilitators work was very much appreciated and his name was frequently mentioned. This circumstance does most probably contribute to the success of the project and the absence of the extension officers became of less importance.

The Super Farmers who facilitated the new groups did voice some concerns – especially regarding the one year project period. Whereas the facilitators did not question their own capabilities they were much more concerned about the farmers they were training. They explained that some of the farmers were very slow learners and asked the same questions over and over again – especially the masai group members, who were not used to doing agriculture on a large scale. They suggested that the project period would be extended so it at least covered a full planting circle for all crops.

Another concern was the acquirement of a group plot. In Hai, land is in high demand which makes it expensive to rent land and it was difficult for group members to pay the fee. Some group members were also reluctant to spend money on a demonstration plot because they were not yet sure of the results from the project. In one group they had thus not been able to acquire a plot for maize because the group had refused to pay the fee of 100000 Tsh a year for half an acre.

The Super Farmers who were facilitating the groups in Hai had been chosen by RECODA who had made an assessment of the 40 Super Farmers who had been trained at RECODA Academy during the implementation project. All Super Farmers had undergone a 'job interview' and eight had been chosen to facilitate new groups. Contrary to the concerns voiced by the researcher based on the findings from previous fieldwork, this selection process had apparently not caused any problems or issues of jealousy among the 40 super farmers. On the contrary the Super Farmers were content with facilitating the groups on their own because it made it easier to plan and do follow-ups. RECODA's assessment of their capability as well as the 'job interview' also seemed to give the Super Farmers as sense of importance and made them confident that they were properly equipped to undertake the task they were assigned to do.

The facilitators were given a bicycle and 15000 T.sh a week for the job they did. They were only informed about this 'reward' after they had been chosen as facilitators. The motivation for spreading the basket of options was thus not the money but rather a sense of obligation towards their community as well as towards RECODA.

6 CONCLUSION

This report has been concerned with the short term sustainability of implementation project in Hai and the spreading project in Karatu. More specifically it has focused on whether the one year pilot projects has managed to establish good and strong farmer groups and build enough capacity over the 12 month period for the groups to continue the project activities and mentor the groups on their own.

The findings suggest that in terms of building strong groups, the projects have been successful. The groups are still meeting up once a week and with the exception of two groups, the attendance records are relatively stable with only few dropouts after project termination. The groups also appear confident that they will continue to meet up in the future – at least as long as they have a shared group field.

Some groups were also making plans to buy a new group field in order to continue their group activities after the five year lease of the current group field.

In terms of mentoring and facilitating groups on their own, there seemed to be a good cooperation between the ASFs and the group leadership who helped each other with the facilitation. Considering the role of the ASuper Farmers and the group chairman it is suggested that the implementing organisation are investing more in the given these actors during project implementation.

In terms of continuation of group activities the results are more varying. Bananas are once again a big success. Group members are starting to sell the bananas from the group field. The majority of the group members have planted bananas at home and many are expecting to expand their banana plots. Spreading of bananas to non-group farmers has not taken off because the seedlings are still in demand within the farmer groups, but provided that the bananas continue to grow successfully this will most probably happen in the nearest future as there is a seemingly big interest in the community.

The VSLA is also a success especially as it is a good way of storing and accumulating the money from the banana sale. The VSLA and the shared assets on the group field thus create a positive synergy and the findings suggest that this synergy will be important in terms of securing the long term sustainability of the groups. It is noteworthy, that the three groups in Karatu with the highest dropout rates are groups that are not involved in VSLA. This suggest that being involved in VSLA is an important personal motivator for the individual group member and presuming that the accumulation of wealth will increase over time – especially as the groups begin selling more bananas and other crops from the group field – this motivator will most probably only become stronger.

The biggest success is thus without doubt the bananas and the VSLA. Goats are also rather successful and the solidarity chain seems to be working. There are thus no indications that the component should not be sustainable. In Karatu, many pigs have died and it is doubtful whether the improved pigs will be able to spread to the whole group.

In terms of the other crops and farming technology in the basket of options, the picture is much more blurry, as the success of the different varies from group to group depending on many different factors that would be difficult to account for in a project design. One of the ideas behind the basket of options has been to account for such differences and circumstances by letting farmers choose crops that suit them the best. It has thus never been anticipated that all crops would be successful within a group. That said the success rate within these pilot project groups are rather low compared to the RIPAT basic groups. The biggest hindrance in this regard appear to be the one year project period which does not allow enough time to experiment with the new crops and technologies. And in cases where the harvest has failed there are no second chances.

This suggest that one year – and one planting season - is simply not enough to successfully implement all the components in the basket of options as it makes the chances for success to small – especially in areas where the population is poor. In areas where people are wealthier – and thus less risk averse - a one year project implementation might be sufficient. This was the case in Hai where more farmers had chosen to adopt the new crop varieties to their individual farms *during* the project period as compared

to Karatu where many farmers opted to wait with the adoption until they had seen the results on the group plot. This also means that the future spreading 'patterns' in Hai is less dependent on the collective performance on the group field and more dependent on personal outcomes as compared to Karatu where the potential for spreading is more dependent on a continuation of regular group activities which in turn is dependent on the collective necessity of such group activities.

Currently the need for maintaining and cultivating the group field is enough incentive for group members in Karatu to meet up on a weekly basis. The question is whether such incentive will last. Since the fieldwork was carried out only six month after project termination the group farmers were still in the process of cultivating crops which were planted within the facilitation period. It is therefore not currently possible to predict whether the groups are capable of successfully cultivating and develop the group field in the coming planting seasons and whether the enthusiasm and interest in the agricultural activities on the group plot will last.