

I. AREAS OF INTERVENTION OF PELUM DRC

AREA NO. 1: SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF LAND, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

PELUM - DRC (Participatory Ecological Land Use Management) is a network of civil society organizations that promotes the sustainable management of land and natural resources, as well as the adoption of agroecology in the Democratic Republic of Congo, particularly among small-scale agro-pastoral farmers. This is achieved by strengthening the capacities of its member organizations (MOs) that support and assist farmers. The program aims to strengthen the capacities of farmers and livestock breeders, improve their livelihoods, and promote sustainable agricultural practices to address the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation.

-Sustainable Land and Natural Resource Management:

PELUM-DRC works to support the implementation of sustainable land management (SLM) by encouraging the adoption of agro ecological, organic, and biological (AEOB) farming practices that conserve natural resources, improve land productivity, and strengthen the resilience of local communities to climate change. This is achieved through practices such as soil conservation, crop diversification, water management, and integrated pest management.

-Agroecology:

The program emphasizes agroecology as a holistic approach to improving the sustainability of food systems. Agroecology involves using the 13 agro ecological principles listed below to design and manage productive, resilient, and environmentally sound farming systems.

PELUM DRC promotes agro ecological practices such as crop rotation, composting, biological pest control and the reduction or abandonment of the use of chemical products and the adoption of the use of AEOB.

-Program Objectives:

The Sustainable Land and Natural Resource Management Program, promoted or implemented by PELUM DRC and its member organizations, pursues several key objectives, including:

- Strengthening the capacities of network member organizations and small-scale agro pastoral farmers.
- Promoting the integration of agroecology into agricultural and food policies in the DRC.
- Improving the livelihoods of small-scale farmers through training in innovative new agricultural techniques and the adoption of sustainable farming practices.
- Strengthening the resilience of local farming communities to climate change and soil and environmental degradation.
- Actively involving women and youth in land and natural resource management.

-Partnerships:

PELUM DRC intends to work in collaboration with various stakeholders, including its member organizations, other civil society organizations, government institutions, international organizations, and farming communities. These partnerships are essential to support programs and projects, ensure the dissemination of knowledge and good agro ecological, organic and biological practices, the sharing of experiences and the effective implementation of programs and projects.

-Impacts:

During the pilot period from January 2022 to June 30, 2025, the initial trials of intervention programs by PELUM DRC member organizations had positive impacts on farmers' livelihoods, the sustainability of agricultural systems, and community resilience to environmental challenges (see the 2023-2024 annual report on PELUM DRC's achievements).

By promoting sustainable land management and agro ecological farming practices in the pilot area (7 eastern provinces of the DRC's 4th Agro ecological Zone, encompassing 40 rural intervention territories), PELUM DRC member organizations contributed to food security, environmental protection, and the socio-economic development of rural farming communities in the pilot provinces of the DRC.

AREA NO. II. SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF FARMERS' SEEDS, AGROECOLOGY, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Sustainable Management of Farmers' Seeds, Agroecology, and Climate Change aims to promote sustainable agriculture, focusing on the management and multiplication of farmers' seeds, the promotion of traditional seeds, and the adoption of agro ecological practices. PELUM DRC, through its member organizations, will establish and promote the strengthening of farmers' autonomy, improve resilience to climate change, and preserve agricultural biodiversity.

Key points of the program:

• Farmers' Seeds:

The program encourages the production and conservation of traditional seeds, and the exchange of farmers' seeds, which are varieties adapted to local conditions and managed by the farmers themselves. • Agroecology:

It promotes agro ecological practices, which are holistic agricultural approaches integrating the 13 ecological principles and traditional knowledge to optimize the interactions between plants, animals, humans, and the environment.

• Farmer autonomy:

The goal is to empower farmers to control their seeds and agricultural practices, thereby reducing their dependence on external inputs and commercial seeds.

• Resilience:

The program aims to improve the resilience of agricultural systems to climate change, particularly through the genetic diversity of farmers' seeds and agro ecological practices.

• Sustainability:

It contributes to more environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable agriculture by promoting the conservation of natural resources, food security, and the diversification of agricultural incomes.

Examples of actions:

- **Training and support:**

The program includes training for farmers on the management of farmers' seeds, agroecology, and seed conservation techniques.

- **Creation of seed banks:**

Farmer seed banks are established to ensure the availability and diversity of seeds.

- **Marketing support:**

The program supports the marketing of products from agro ecological agriculture and farmers' seeds.

- **Advocacy and awareness-raising:**

It contributes to raising awareness among the public and policymakers about the benefits of agroecology and the sustainable management of farmers' seeds.

In summary, the Sustainable Management of Farmers' Seeds and Agroecology Program is a holistic effort to transform agricultural systems, building on local knowledge, traditional seeds, seed diversity, and sustainable practices.

In some provinces of the DRC, the need for farmers' seeds is growing due to rapid population growth, resulting in increasing pressure on natural resources, particularly land and water. It is urgent to find a new system for seed multiplication, land management, and governance in order to preserve biodiversity and ecosystems.

Sustainable land management (SLM) is a comprehensive approach with the potential for sustainable transformation in both the short and long term.

The book "Sustainable Resource Management Practices: Guidelines and Good Practices for Sub-Saharan Africa" offers recommendations for developing more sustainable technologies and approaches to land management in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) within the framework of the TerrAfrica program (2009-2010). The objective of these recommendations and case studies is to contribute to creating a suitable framework for

making investments related to sustainable land management. This provides robust support to countries, regional institutions and programs, development partners, and farmers' organizations seeking to modify current investments and redirect them towards greater sustainability.

The book also addresses the most pressing environmental issues for SSA: it covers not only combating soil degradation, but also preserving ecosystem functions, ensuring food security, protecting water resources on land, and addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation.

AREA III: AGROFORESTRY, AGROECOLOGY, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The area of agroforestry, agroecology, and climate change aims to integrate sustainable agricultural practices to mitigate the effects of climate change. This includes the combined use of trees, crops, and livestock, the promotion of biodiversity, carbon sequestration in soils, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Agroforestry and Agroecology

The integration of agroforestry, or the incorporation of trees into agricultural systems, offers several advantages:

- **Climate Change Mitigation:**

Trees absorb carbon dioxide and a major greenhouse gas.

- **Climate Change Adaptation:**

Agroforestry improves the resilience of agricultural systems to climate variations, such as droughts or floods, by reducing risks and improving water and soil conservation.

- **Protection of biodiversity:**

Trees create habitats for a variety of plant and animal species, promoting agricultural biodiversity.

- **Improved soil quality:**

Trees provide nutrients and improve soil structure, reduce erosion, and increase soil fertility.

Agroecology, a holistic approach, aims to design sustainable agricultural systems in harmony with the environment. It is based on principles such as crop diversification, crop rotation, the use of soil conservation practices, land regeneration, and the reduction or complete elimination of chemical inputs in favor of using organic matter for sound land management.

The role of the program

The agroforestry, agroecology, and climate change program plays a vital role in:

- **The transition to sustainable agricultural systems:**

By promoting environmentally friendly agricultural practices, the program contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change.

- **Strengthening the resilience of farming communities:**

By improving land productivity and diversifying incomes, the program contributes to food security, food self-sufficiency, and poverty reduction.

- **Awareness-raising and capacity building:**

The program supports farmer training, research, and the dissemination of knowledge on agro ecological and agroforestry practices.

Agroecology in the face of climate change:

- **Adaptation:**

Agroecology helps strengthen the resilience of agricultural systems to climate hazards. By mobilizing and supporting small-scale farmers and livestock breeders in good practices such as crop diversification, water management, and soil conservation, the member organizations of PELUM DRC help farmers adapt to temperature variations, droughts, floods, and the effects of climate change, while also adapting seeds and crops accordingly.

- **Mitigation:**

Agroecology contributes to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. By promoting practices such as restoring degraded land, sequestering carbon in soils, and completely abandoning the use of chemical inputs in favor of bio fertilizers, it allows for carbon storage in the soil and reduces emissions related to agricultural production.

Agroecology and climate change are essential tools for building sustainable and resilient agricultural systems, capable of meeting the challenges of climate change and contributing to a more sustainable future in a healthy environment.

Examples of agroecological practices:

- **Crop and livestock diversification:**

Crop rotation, intercropping, agroforestry, and integrated livestock farming help create more stable ecosystems that are more resilient to climate change.

- **Sustainable soil management:**

Composting, mulching, reduced tillage, and the use of organic fertilizers improve soil health, water retention capacity, and carbon sequestration.

- **Water conservation:**

Water management techniques, such as rainwater harvesting and drip irrigation, help limit waste and optimize the use of this resource.

- **Use of local seeds:**

Local seeds are often better adapted to local climatic conditions, more resistant to diseases and pests, and contain many nutrients.

In summary, agroecology offers concrete solutions to address the challenges posed by climate change by improving the resilience of agricultural systems and reducing their environmental impact.

While the integration of agroforestry

AREA IV: AGROECOLOGICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND TERRITORIAL MARKET DEVELOPMENT

In this area, PELUM DRC and its partner organizations are developing a program for the development of agro ecological entrepreneurship and territorial markets. This program aims to support the emergence and growth of sustainable agri-food businesses, linked to local markets. The goal is to encourage the adoption of agro ecological practices, strengthen agricultural value chains, and promote dynamic territorial markets.

Key objectives of intervention in this area:

- **Promotion of agroecology:**

To encourage the adoption of environmentally friendly agricultural practices, such as crop diversification, crop rotation, the use of natural or organic fertilizers, and the elimination of pesticides and herbicides.

- **Strengthening agro ecological entrepreneurship:**

Supporting small-scale farmers and livestock breeders in the creation and development of small agricultural or agri-food businesses by offering training, creating credit lines or savings systems, providing advisory support, and access to promotional financing.

- **Development of local markets:**

Facilitate the marketing of local agricultural products by supporting the rehabilitation of rural access roads, organizing agricultural product distribution cooperatives, local markets, short supply chains, and strengthening links between producers and consumers.

KEY ACTIONS OF THE PROGRAM PROPOSED BY PELUM DRC:

- **Training and support:**

Provide technical training, business management training, training in small-scale processing units, and marketing training to farmers and entrepreneurs, as well as personalized support to help them develop their value-added activities.

- **Access to financing:**

Facilitate access to financing for agri food processing units initiated by farmers, agro ecological and/or agri-food businesses, whether through loans, grants, revolving credit facilities, or guarantee mechanisms.

- **Capacity building:**

Supporting the development of skills of small-scale agro pastoral farmers or local actors, such as emerging small-scale farmer leaders, young volunteer agricultural and livestock extension workers, advisors, and producer organizations.

- **Infrastructure Improvement:**

Mobilizing organizations to encourage beneficiaries of their actions to invest in improving infrastructure for agroecological production, processing, and marketing of agricultural products, including local markets, agri-food processing centers, and transportation and marketing networks for agroecological products.

- **Promotion of Agroecological Products:**

Raising consumer awareness of the benefits of agroecological products and supporting marketing initiatives that highlight these products.

Expected Benefits of Implementation:

- Increased income for small-scale agro pastoral farmers, poverty eradication, and increased household income:

Thanks to improved productivity, the quality of agro ecological products, and access to markets, the incomes of small-scale farmers' households can increase.

Job creation:

By developing small-scale agri-food processing units, economic activity will emerge and increase in rural areas. Women and young people will benefit from the jobs created.

- **Strengthening food security:**

By increasing local production, small farmers become self-sufficient, eating two to three meals a day on time. By improving access to healthy, varied, and diversified food, this combats malnutrition and undernourishment among children.

- **Environmental preservation:** By promoting good practices in sustainable, agro ecological, organic, and ecosystem-friendly agriculture, the environment has been protected.

- **Local development:** By stimulating the local economy and strengthening the links between producers and consumers.

In summary, the program aims to create a virtuous circle where agroecology, entrepreneurship, and local markets reinforce each other for sustainable and inclusive rural development.

Agroecology is an approach to agriculture that considers the interactions between plants, animals, humans, and the environment, while integrating social aspects for a sustainable and equitable food system. It is increasingly seen as a solution for combating climate change, both in terms of adaptation and mitigation.

AREA V: INCLUSION OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE AND AGROECOLOGY

In the Program for the Inclusion of Women and Youth in Agroecology, PELUM DRC and its partner organizations aim to strengthen and mobilize the participation of women and youth in sustainable agriculture, with a focus on capacity building, the adoption of good agro ecological practices, and the economic and social empowerment of women and youth. They aim to promote gender equality and social inclusion in agro ecological agriculture by addressing the specific challenges faced by women and youth regarding access to resources, unemployment, and the creation of jobs and services.

Objectives:

- **Strengthen skills:**

The program aims to improve the agricultural entrepreneurial skills of women and youth by training them in agro ecological practices, farm management, marketing, and market access.

- **Promote gender equality:**

This involves eliminating the barriers that limit the participation of women and youth in sustainable agriculture and livestock farming by giving them access to resources, land, financing, and training.

- **Foster social inclusion:**

The program seeks to integrate women and youth into agricultural value chains by helping them access markets and create sustainable agricultural businesses to generate employment and combat unemployment.

- **Improving Sustainability:**

Agroecology, as a sustainable agricultural production system, helps to preserve the environment, strengthen the resilience of agricultural systems to climate change, and ensure access to healthy, high-quality food.

- **Economic Empowerment:**

The program aims to improve the incomes and livelihoods of women and youth in agriculture by promoting their participation in decision-making and empowering them to become agents of change.

Implementation:

- **Training and Capacity Building:**

The program provides practical and theoretical training on agroecology, farm management, entrepreneurship, and market access.

- **Access to Resources:**

It aims to facilitate women's and youth's access to land, water, seeds, equipment, and the financing necessary to develop their agricultural activities.

- **Entrepreneurship Support:**

The program supports the creation and development of women- and youth-led agricultural businesses by providing them with technical, financial, and business support. • Advocacy for inclusive policies:

This involves promoting public policies that support sustainable agriculture and the inclusion of women and youth in the agricultural sector.

Expected impact:

• **Increased agricultural production:**

Agroecology, practiced by trained women and youth, can lead to increased agricultural production and improved food security.

• **Improved incomes:**

Women and youth trained and empowered in agriculture can improve their incomes and livelihoods.

• **Increased resilience:**

Sustainable agricultural systems based on agroecology are more resilient to climate change.

• **Inclusive rural development:**

The program contributes to more inclusive rural development, where women and youth play an active role in the economy and society.

In summary, the Women and Youth Inclusion in Agroecology Program is an important tool for promoting gender equality, social inclusion, and sustainable development in the agricultural sector.

AREA NO. VI: NETWORK AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PRDI).

The Networking and Institutional Development Program (PRDI) encompasses several types of programs. For PELUM DRC, this refers to a set of initiatives aimed at strengthening the organizational, human, and material capacities of Congolese civil society member organizations within the Green Africa network (PELUM Association). It also aims to strengthen their capacity as members of a continental African network of organizations and institutions advocating for their contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 or 2063.

Networking consists of a set of programs that will focus on various aspects such as governance, management, capacity building, knowledge and experience sharing, and collaboration. Without being exhaustive, here is an explanation, according to PELUM DRC's understanding, of what this will encompass. PRDI:

1. Network Development:

• Strengthening Relationships:

In this PRDI, PELUM DRC seeks to strengthen and improve cooperative ties between its various member organizations, the member organizations of PELUM in neighboring countries that are already very experienced in the field of agroecology, and other national, regional, and international networks working in agroecology, in order to draw inspiration from their experiences.

PELUM DRC may request development cooperation services from countries friendly to the Democratic Republic of Congo to support this emerging initiative in the DRC.

• Sharing knowledge and resources:

PELUM DRC promotes the sharing of information, best practices, and the exchange of experiences and resources among member organizations of the network.

COORDINATION AND SYNERGY:

The PRDI, PELUM DRC, and its implementing organizations (OMs) program aims to optimize the efforts of each member organization within the

network, working in synergy to better achieve the objectives of the PELUM Association network, which is the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of small-scale agro pastoral farmers while preserving the environment to combat climate change.

2. Institutional Development:

• Capacity Building:

This involves strengthening the skills and knowledge of staff from member organizations and partner institutions within the network at the provincial, national, and international levels to make them more effective and efficient.

• Improved Governance:

PELUM DRC, through PRDI, will be able to include in its interventions enhanced management of NGOs to improve transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the management of its projects and programs.

• Systems Development:

Implement management, monitoring, and evaluation systems to improve the network's functioning and foster a win-win exchange and complementarity among NGOs to achieve the SDGs.

3. Examples of Initiatives in the PRDI Program:

- Training Programs: To strengthen the skills of NGOs and network beneficiaries.
- Management Capacity Building: To improve financial management, human resources management, and project monitoring and evaluation.
- Strategy and Policy Development: To guide the actions of the network and its members.
- Implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems: To measure the program's progress and results.
- Promoting collaboration and partnership: To strengthen links between OMs or network actors and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences in AEOB.

4. Implementation Context:

• Economic and Social Development:

To promote an agro ecological transition and support the development of sustainable agriculture, both economically and socially, in 26 provinces of the DRC, PELUM RDC aims to mobilize organizations working in the field of sustainable agriculture to combine their efforts and resources to integrate agroecology into their programs.

- **State Reform:**

Alongside other stakeholders, PELUM RDC will advocate for support of the Congolese state or government's efforts to reform agricultural policy by revising and developing agricultural policies and establishing a roadmap, particularly in the areas of public management, decentralization, good governance, and sustainable agriculture.

- **International Cooperation:** A PRDI (Regional Program for the Development of Agricultural and Rural Development) of PELUM DRC will initiate steps within the framework of international cooperation programs with international organizations that support PELUM countries in the international network working in the fields of agricultural development, land and natural resource conservation, and will seek the support of organizations such as UNDP, WFP, FAO, UNFPA, GIZ, DFID, Cooperation Switzerland, etc., in programs and projects for the intensification of agroecology and the conservation of ecosystems.

In summary, PRDI is a comprehensive program of PELUM DRC that aims to strengthen capacities to increase the technical skills of facilitators of the network of organizations and institutions to achieve sustainable development goals, by acting both on the development of the network itself and on the institutional development of its member organizations by promoting national, sub-regional and international cooperation of organizations and networks that advocate for common causes: promoting small agropastoral farmers, increasing productivity, eradicating hunger, fighting poverty, the challenges of climate change through sustainable land management and environmental protection for the well-being of creation.