



Knowledge sharing for
sustainable agricultural
development

Annual Report 2013



AGROMISA FOUNDATION

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Institutional information

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In 2013, Agromisa moved to another location.
Above, the contact information is presented as of September 2013.

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Who we are

Mission and ambitions

Agromisa is a non-profit organisation that supports small-scale farmers, agricultural service providers and development workers by providing them with practical information on sustainable agriculture. Founded in 1934, Agromisa works closely with a wide network of partner organisations to develop and share knowledge and information relevant to improving productivity, income and welfare in the small-scale agricultural sector worldwide.

Agromisa's approach is context specific with a strong emphasis on securing the productivity and sustainability of local resources while taking the gender implications of introducing new technologies into account.

Agromisa finances its work through donations and through its own services.



Our perspective on development cooperation

Agromisa believes that structural improvement of living conditions in the South can only take place through the initiatives and ideas of the local population. Agromisa wants to contribute to indigenous development by making agricultural knowledge readily available. We understand that, to be effective, technological advice must be appropriate to the local context and must not lead to the depletion of locally available natural resources. It must also take gender aspects into account by considering the potentially different effects that the introduction of new technologies may have on men and women.

Knowledge sharing

As part of a large network of partners in the North and South, Agromisa is ideally placed to stimulate an active exchange of agricultural knowledge. We regularly extend our own ongoing series of publications, but also receive frequent requests from partners for support in local publications, many of which lead to formal co-publishing agreements. Our work includes the development of new publications, adaptation of information for specific target groups and support for translations in local languages. We are developing the use of other information carriers like DVDs, a quarterly digital bulletin, online videos, posters and more integrated multimedia kits, which facilitate an increasingly interactive and dynamic exchange of information within our network.

Objectives

By providing access to practical, sustainable agricultural knowledge, Agromisa aims to contribute to improving the livelihoods of those who depend on small-scale agriculture in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Agromisa contributes to knowledge development, knowledge production and knowledge sharing for counterparts in small scale and sustainable agriculture, poverty alleviation and small scale entrepreneurial activities in developing countries.

It does this through:

- The development, publication and distribution of practical manuals in the Agrodok series and the more theoretical AgroSpecials and AgroSources.
- Contributing to the development of agricultural courses suitable for schools and agricultural colleges as well as educational and training materials.
- Developing new ways of disseminating agricultural knowledge and information.
- Strengthen the organisational capacity through stronger ties with our national and international network and deploying more employees in the core activities (volunteers and part timers).

Agromisa on the move: Retrospect 2013

2013 has been no regular year for Agromisa. As already mentioned in the annual report 2012, Agromisa has started to redefine its role, products and services to better suit the future demands of knowledge development and knowledge sharing in small scale agriculture. This journey is no easy road to take: thorough discussions were (and still are) held during the whole year to explore the possibilities and to decide on the approaches that best suit our character, goals and mission. This resulted in reformulating our organisational goals, which will be the focus for our activities in the coming years.

In the first months in 2013, Agromisa was confronted with the need to move to another location. The building at the Costerweg, owned by Wageningen University (WUR), got another destination and had to be cleared. After thorough and open discussions, the WUR decided to continue its support to Agromisa and to facilitate relocation to another WUR-building at the Generaal Foulkesweg, that already housed critical student groups tied to the

university community. During the summer months, the original library, stock and office equipment was cleared in a major joint effort of staff and volunteers. It took some time to habituate to the new situation and find the right 'fit' in the new building. However, Agromisa has come out stronger and is grateful for the support of the WUR in making this possible. The relocation helps to support our aims: it enables stronger ties with the Wageningen student community, the contacts with the WUR have improved (whilst looking for mutual beneficial relations f.e. through student thesis research and collaboration with the WUR Centre for Development Innovation), and Agromisa now makes use of some of the university facilities. The interest and involvement of students from the WUR and Van Hall Larenstein in Agromisa is growing, reflected in the interest during the AID (general introduction for students in Wageningen) and the involvement of student in developing education modules for the Afghanistan project Agromisa is involved in.

Another positive development has been the continuation of the cooperation with the Centre for Development Innovation. The links with the commissioners and end-users of the education modules in Afghanistan have been strengthened through mutual visits. This enabled better understanding of the situation and actual demand for information in Afghanistan. Agromisa was also involved in a visiting mission of the Afghan Ministry of Education to the WUR, which supported better cooperation and understanding of the project partners.

In 2013 the first digital Agromisa Bulletin was released. This is issued 3 monthly and supports transfer of knowledge through internal and external communication. Concerning this communication we were also taking steps to improve our website.

The board saw some changes: Guus Roozendaal and Janwillem Liebrand were welcomed as reinforcements to the board. After an initial trial period, Guus regrettably decided to step back.

Financially, 2013 saw a considerable decrease in income, leading to a negative financial result. This is caused by the relative high investment of capacity and time on subjects that were not directly linked to the regular services and publications. The relocation and all related issues demanded a lot of time. Secondly, a great deal of time was spent on redefining the organisation's goals and looking for new ways of acquisition, financing constructions with other partners, and tendering, that have not paid off in the same calendar year. Furthermore, a serious amount of time was spent on the starting up of new publications and a substantial project on controlling and alternative use of *Thypha* (a kind of reed) in Senegal, that eventually did not materialise for different reasons. All in all, most time and effort was put into investing in a new physical location and new or alternative ways and means of cooperating with new partners and looking for feasible financing constructions. For the coming year Agromisa faces the challenge to exploit some of these investments in new activities.

Agromisa publishing

Agrodok series

Agrodoks are practical, easy-to-read publications and deal with issues affecting the small-scale agricultural sector. The manuals provide relevant theoretical background on a particular topic together with a careful explanation of the practical steps that need to be taken. Most manuals deal with plant and animal production but there are also Agrodoks that deal with closely related subjects such as soil and water conservation, food storage, processing, marketing and other socio-economic subjects critical for the development of the small-scale farming sector. All Agrodoks are published in English and French; most Agrodoks are available in Portuguese; and some are also translated into Spanish or other languages (Kiswahili, Hindi).

Agromisa co-publishes the Agrodok series with The Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA).

Agrodoks can be ordered from Agromisa and CTA. A sample of each Agrodok showing cover, table of content and introduction can be downloaded in PDF format from the Agromisa website, the full PDF can also be ordered online.

As from Agrodok 51 onward, Agrodoks now have a full colour cover and a modern and reader friendly layout. The new format has been developed by GAW Ontwerp en Communicatie, Wageningen.

New and revised Agrodok publications in 2013: Work in progress

The following titles have been worked on in 2013:

Agrodok 51 – Lowland rice cultivation

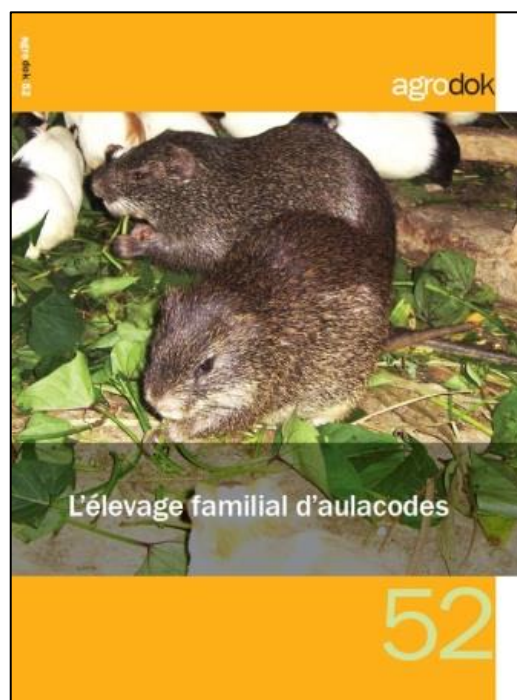
Lowland rice cultivation is practised in all countries in tropical Africa and on about half of the total rice area. Although rice is both the main crop and staple food of many farmers in Africa, most sources of information on small-scale rice production are focused on Asia. The aim of this Agrodok is therefore to provide extension workers and smallholder rice farmers in tropical Africa with practical and current information about efficient, profitable and sustainable lowland rice farming and rice processing that is applicable to their local circumstances. Every step in rice production is discussed, showing the importance of each management operation. Sourcing from a large body of scientific knowledge, this Agrodok focusses on the main rice management practices which farmers can adapt to their needs – paying particular attention to water management practices. By applying the clear and concise information provided in this booklet, farmers can improve the quantity and quality of their rice yield.

The Agrodok will be available from mid-2014 and will be published in English and French.

Agrodok 52 – Backyard grasscutter keeping

In 2013 Agromisa worked on the further development of the new Agrodok title: ***Backyard grasscutter keeping***, started in 2012. This Agrodok is the outcome of cooperation with authors of earlier grasscutter publications in various African countries. Agromisa believes in the potential of backyard grasscutter rearing. Producing high-quality grasscutter meat for household use and/or for the market is easily integrated into low-input ecological agriculture. Moreover, keeping grasscutters can be profitable: after the initial investments in stable(s) and stock, care and maintenance are relatively easy and feed can be cheap; and grasscutter meat sells at good prices. This Agrodok explains the details and hazards of grasscutter farming. Within Agromisa's overall aim of improving small-scale farming, this booklet offers an approach to make grasscutter farming a successful and rewarding enterprise.

The Agrodok will be available from mid-2014 and will be published in English and French.



Agrodok 53 – Edible insects in Africa

The Agrodok publication ***Edible insects in the Africa: where to find them and how to use them*** has been compiled by Josianne Cloutier. It draws on information collected from the field and further developed by local researchers working on insects as part of the human diet. The Agrodok shows how smallholders and those involved in food security projects can identify, collect and process insects and insect larvae. It deals with the main insects groups found in Africa: caterpillars, beetle (larvae), termites, grasshoppers and crickets. Insect characteristics, the way they develop, where they can be found and the times when they can best be collected are all clearly described and well-illustrated. Instructions for preparing meals using these insects have also been included. The Agrodok will be available by the end of 2014 and will be published in English and French.

Agrodok 54 – Crop residues for animal feed

Around the world straw has been used for feed and other purposes for as long as humans have kept animals and grown crops. Straw is still important for many farmers, especially the ones poor in resources. At the same time the growing urban demand for raw materials and fuel is putting pressure on the demand for straw and the various ways it is used in rural areas. The Agrodok ***Crop residues for animal feed*** is intended for extension workers, advisors and farmers who want to know more about the different ways in which straw can be used for sustainable farming and rural development, especially as feed for ruminants. It reviews experiences from around the world and it discusses in depth the way straws can continue to play an important role in livestock feeding and sustainable farming. ***Crop residues for animal feed*** is meant for farmers working with ruminants and/or cropping systems where straw is important. No specific knowledge of animal nutrition is assumed. Scientific terminology on nutritive value is condensed into farmers' notions of 'sweetness' and 'greenness'.

The Agrodok will be available by the end of 2014 and will be published in English and French.

Agrodok 7 – Goat keeping in the tropics (revision)

Three animal husbandry experts from the Agromisa network that have worked on an Agrodok before, have taken up the challenge to revise the 2000 edition of the Agrodok on Goat keeping. In the opinion of the authors the emphasis of the revision should go more to the keeping of dairy goats and goats for dual purpose: milk and meat. Going for a practical approach to feeding, housing and management justifies an overhaul of the present Agrodok. Attention will be paid to the systems within which goats are kept, the variety of goat products and the sustainability of such systems. Practical aspects of nutrition will emphasize on feed requirements, feeding and feeding systems, feed and fodder production, forage trees and their management.

The Agrodok will be available by the end of 2014 and will be published in English and French.

Distribution of Agrodoks

In 2013, the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) distributed some 10,300 Agrodoks in various languages. Agromisa distributed some 2,000 hard copies and 100 PDF's of the Agrodok series.

Because of the growing importance of this distribution channel, at present we are investigating how to keep track of the organisations and individual people who download Agrodok contents and investigate the possibilities to include this growing interest in knowledge building and sharing with new target groups.

There was also a demand for Agrodoks from local NGOs, CSOs and training institutes who used them as a basis for developing training material.

Agricultural education

Curriculum development Afghanistan

As from 2012, Agromisa played a central role in the Dutch-Afghan Agricultural Technical and Vocational Educational Training (ATVET) project. This project aims to improve agricultural production in Afghanistan by improving education in the field of agriculture. This is done by establishing a training college for agricultural teachers (the National Agricultural Education Centre), increasing the number of Agricultural High Schools in the country (from 30 to nearly 100) and developing curricula for these AHSs. The project is managed by Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation (CDI), and is implemented in collaboration with the Afghan Deputy Ministry of Technical Vocational and Educational Training (DMTVET) and NAEC, as well as Agromisa. Being part of a Dutch-Afghan team of Curriculum Developers, Agromisa took the lead in producing new lesson modules for the AHS courses on Farmer Organizations and Seed Technology.

Marg Leijdens joined a CDI mission to Afghanistan in April 2013 to meet with the Afghan counterparts to discuss the process of curriculum development and the piloting of the lesson modules.

Reflection on Afghanistan visit April 2013

When the plane started it's landing in Kabul, all the women in the plane pulled their scarf to cover their hair, and so did we. In April 2013 the Curriculum Development team from the Netherlands visited the ATVET Project in Kabul, Marg Leijdens joined the mission, representing Agromisa. The visit had the objective to strengthen the collaboration in Curriculum development between the Dutch team and the Kabul team. The visit would give the Dutch team the opportunity to familiarize with the project context in Afghanistan and meet Kabul colleagues and project partners. The work done could be evaluated and the way forward discussed.

In the 10-day visit we spent a couple of days with Kabul colleagues in the NAEC institute on the edge of Kabul, 1 hour drive through the busy city, with armed guards on the roundabouts. It was good meeting the Afghan van Hall Students (who we knew from Wageningen), being teachers in NAEC. We greeted a class of girl students, NAEC is proud of this group of girls, but realizes there is a small risk having this class, as some people in Afghanistan don't like girls to go to school. We had meetings with the NAEC Curriculum Development colleagues, it was very positive to work together. We focused on the integration of the AHS curriculum and the NAEC curriculum, as students at NAEC will be teachers teaching in the AHSs.



Visiting Agricultural high schools in Afghanistan

We also visited the office of PIN (People In Need), where we found a couple of lesson modules translated into Pashto and piled on shelves ready for testing in the pilot schools. With PIN co-workers we visited a few schools, both around Kabul and around Mazar-i-Sharif in the North of Afghanistan. We saw schools in the rural areas and in the city. We observed teaching of the materials we developed, especially the module on fish farming developed by Cris de Klein of Agromisa. We could speak also with teachers and school directors, who told us that they appreciated the teaching materials, especially the visuals and interactive teaching methods. We were impressed to see the enthusiasm and commitment of the teachers.

Following the production of the lesson module on Farmer Organizations, Agromisa published an article entitled 'MATCOM materials used for cooperative training in Afghanistan' in COOP News No 2, 2013 of the International Labour Organization. Agromisa wrote the 'Manual for interactive teaching' for Agricultural High School teachers', which NAEC uses when training teachers in interactive teaching methods and which can be used by teachers as a reference guide while planning and implementing their lessons.

Permaculture school farm in Uganda

Agromisa was invited by the Agricultural Training Centre (AOC) Oost Twello to play an advisory role in the field of tropical agriculture for a project in Bukomansimbi district in southern Uganda, in which AOC Oost is involved. The platform Connect2Uganda, in which also other parties like the municipality of Deventer, two NGOs and Windesheim Honours College in Zwolle are involved, aims to improve food security in the district through 1) agricultural and economic development (schools farms and micro agribusiness projects; 2) improve Agriculture & Vocational Education; 3) health promotion (e.g. nutrition and sports; and 4) support the district administration. The schools with which both Deventer-based NGOs have ties, provide a ground for Dutch students to do internships.

More specifically, Agromisa has been asked to:

- Contribute to the development of a sustainable school farm at one of the schools in the areas. This school farm would not only have to provide nutritious food for the students, but also be the place where secondary school leavers could take vocational training in the field of agriculture.
- Set objective criteria on the basis of which Connect2Uganda could select a suitable school for the 'permaculture school farm'.
- Develop lessons and teaching materials for teaching school children, parents and youth in sustainable agriculture and, more specifically, vocational training for youth on specific subjects such as beekeeping, poultry keeping, livestock rearing and vegetable gardening.

Before the end of the year a request by Agromisa to Wageningen University and Research (WUR) for an Academic Consultancy Training (ACT) group was approved. A group of 7 students from 5 different study background and 5 different nationalities got organised to spend nearly 3 months in early 2014 to make a design for a 'permaculture' school farm in Uganda for learning and income-generation purposes at Hoys College secondary school in Bukomansimbi district.



Picture: Many schools in Africa have a school garden
(source: Pieter Temminck)

Question & Answer Service

The Question & Answer (Q&A) Service provides information and advice on topics related to small- scale sustainable agriculture.

A network of experienced volunteers who are experts on tropical agriculture, animal husbandry and other related topics help answer the questions Agromisa receives. The coordinator of the Q&A service also draws on relevant and up-to-date information from the internet, libraries and other databases as well as from Agromisa itself, Wageningen University and Research Centre and other institutes and organisations worldwide.

The Q&A service is primarily aimed at small-scale farmers and their intermediaries. NGOs, development workers and extension officers also use this service.

The number of questions that are answered by the Service has decreased compared to previous years. This is probably due to the increasing knowledge sharing through Internet.

In 2013, the Q&A service received by mail or website about 30 questions. Mostly from West and East Africa with the remainder coming from South America and Asia. The most popular queries were in the fields of animal husbandry, snail farming, mushroom production, fish farming and horticulture. There was also a substantial demand for information about Agromisa's publications.

Internal organisation

The Agromisa team and board

Agromisa's work is coordinated by two staff members and is carried out with the assistance of many volunteers and free-lancers coming from many different backgrounds.

It is not possible to mention everyone here by name, as at least 30 people have contributed to the work of Agromisa in 2013. Authors, editors, illustrators and peer-reviewers have done a great job on the development of new Agrodok titles. Several experts and university students have contributed to curriculum development for international cooperation. For the supervision of ACT students from Wageningen University, the Library, Q&A, administration, maintenance, the relocation to Agromisa's new office and Board, Agromisa relied on a steady group of volunteers. We thank all these people for their commitment to Agromisa in 2013!

Active team members (December 2013):

Eva Kok | Team Coordinator & Publisher
Lineke van Dongen | PR, Office Management
Liesbeth Dirks | PR, Editing
Marilyn Minderhoud | PR, Editing
Cris de Klein | Projects, Editing
Marg Leijdens | Projects, Editing
Domien Bruinsma | knowledge sharing platform
Mark Rietveld | knowledge sharing platform

Board members (December 2013):

Ton van Schie | Chairman
Peter Holen | Secretary
Ruud Ludemann | Treasurer
Janwillem Liebrand | Board member (focus student affairs)
Guus Roozendaal | Board member (focus fundraising and new media)
Eva Kok | Board member (representative staff and volunteers)

Remuneration policy

The two (part time) staff members account for the salaries in the financial report.
The board members received no payment (as stipulated for a foundation as legal entity).



Financial Report 2013

Balance sheet (in euros)	31 dec. 2012	31 dec. 2013
Assets		
Inventory	1,650	0
Stock	36,808	34,368
Claims	17,987	2,574
Liquid Assets	49,784	11,552
Total Assets	106,229	48,495
Liabilities		
Capital	36,628	5,344
Reservations	24,019	30,400
Debts (short time)	45,580	12,751
Total Liabilities	106,227	48,495
Profit and Loss statement (in euros)		
Turnover	124,563	86,022
Boarded out work	50,682	32,231
Direct costs	2,788	4,816
Net turnover	71,093	48,975
Housing costs	2,662	4,573
Salaries	59,567	59,218
Running costs	0	0
General costs	15,416	14,924
Sales costs	964	714
Depreciations	1,044	804
Result	- 8,560	- 31,284