

# Exchange Exchange Exchange

The Compas partners CECIK in Ghana and AZTREC in Zimbabwe have taken the initiative to Enhance Indigenous Agricultural Knowledge in Africa and created the ENIAKA project. ENIAKA has been welcomed with great enthusiasm and the participants feel that it is high time that developments are made form their own culture.

*ENIAKA workshop participants meet with spiritual leaders in Uganda*



Photo: Bertus Haverkort

In Eniaka, traditional African knowledge is not romanticized, rejected or considered to be beyond criticism. It is taken as the starting point for learning, testing, improving and teaching in a traditional context, and close co-operation is established between the project workers and traditional spiritual leaders. The approach is practical and pragmatic. From early 1999, Compas and CTA have been jointly sponsoring several activities.

One of the first steps was to search for information on indigenous knowledge in major databases in Ghana, Zimbabwe and Europe. A follow-up was made in the field to further document traditional farming practices. National workshops were held September 1999 in Ghana and Zimbabwe to assess the present situation and formulate action plans for the future. During the Pan African workshop in Zimbabwe in December 1999, these findings were discussed with a wider audience of African development organisations, and agreement was reached on future activities to promote indigenous knowledge in Africa.

These activities include the in-depth case studies on indigenous knowledge systems on a country basis, literature searches, establishing national networks, organizing regular regional meetings, establishing other exchange mechanisms such as newsletters, implementing projects for enhancing indigenous agricultural

knowledge, establish eco-cultural villages, and stimulating field staff training. A 'code of conduct to protect the intellectual property rights of traditional people' will also be elaborated. Fund raising will be carried out in each country and region.

Uganda organized its national workshop in June 2000. This workshop was preceded by case studies on indigenous knowledge and practices. On the basis of a checklist some 25 representatives of community based organisations, non-governmental organisations, and other agencies studied the knowledge system of rural populations in Uganda. They documented their world vision, the agricultural traditional practices, the role of traditional leaders, the rituals, and the interaction between traditional practices with the formal knowledge system. During the workshop these case studies were analysed and work plans discussed. Plans have been made for similar national workshops in Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Kenya.

Reports have been made of the country workshop in Ghana, of the regional Southern African workshop, and of the Pan African workshop. A limited number of these reports can be obtained through the regional co-ordinators. The Eniaka literature survey, which includes a summary of the regional workshops can be obtained

from the Compas office in the Netherlands.

## Whom to contact?

Persons or institutions from countries in East and West Africa, who are interested in this initiative are requested to contact the following persons:

**National co-ordinators:** **Botswana:** Joshua Jojigam Moloi of the Forestry Association of Botswana in Gabarone; **Tanzania:** Mr O. T. Kibwana - Cooperative College in Moshi; **Kenya:** Mr Edward Chege of TRACE in Embu; **Swaziland:** Mr Wilson Mamba of Yonge Nawe Environment Action Group in Mbabane; **Zambia:** Mr Mulanda Kalunga of ABTREC in Kanyongo, Mongu; **South Africa:** Mr. Ntlangaliso Mtwa of the Africa Cooperative Action Trust, Eastern Cape; **Malawi:** Mr Martin Banda of the Christian Service Committee in Lilongwe; **Uganda:** Mr David Nkanda of PFARD in Iganga; **Cameroon:** Mr Ngwasiri of CIKO in Yaoundé; **Zimbabwe:** Mr Gonese of AZTREC; **Ghana:** Mr David Millar of CECIK in Bolgatanga. **Regional coordinators** for follow-up activities: **West Africa** Cecik, Mr David Millar; **Southern Africa** AZTREC, Mr Cosmas Gonese (also co-ordinator for Africa); and **East Africa:** CIOF, Mr John Baptist Kisembo. (for details see page 47).

**ADICI**, the Association for the Integrated Community Development of Indigenous People, works in 25 communities with Q'eqchi' Maya people in the mountains of Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. The ADICI programme focuses on the technical aspects of sustainable traditional agriculture, traditional medicine, ecology and forestry, as well as on the institutional aspects of community development. The latter is based on the Q'eqchi' concepts, in which spirituality plays an important role. Nowadays the indigenous concepts have been partially replaced by Western concepts, focused on markets and competition. This

tendency threatens to destabilise the ecology as well as the ancient Mayan culture. Therefore ADICI is eager to cooperate with other Compas partners, to strengthen it's work on Q'eqchi' culture and cosmovision.

The ADICI field programme for the year 2000 includes courses, workshops, community exchanges, and working with the elders, their knowledge and traditional ceremonies. The technical focus will basically deal with agro-ecology and health. Exchange meetings are planned with other Mayan groups, like for example the people of Lacandonnes, who live in

Chiapas, Mexico. The experiences will be shared with other institutions in Guatemala, as well as the Compas partners, especially from Bolivia and Peru. In February 2000, ADICI organised a workshop 'Lands and Spirituality: access to lands, sustainable agricultural production and fair commercialisation'. Agruco represented Compas in this exchange meeting. Representatives from Guatemala have also been invited to the coming regional Compas meeting, September 2000 in Bolivia. This will be a major opportunity to share and compare experiences.