

Sector Programme Support Document

Natural Resources Conservation and Land Use Management Project
(HIMA-Ludewa)

Iringa Region
Tanzania

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HIMA-Ludewa Project Document

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| Country | : | Tanzania | Sector: | Agriculture |
| Title | : | Ludewa District Natural Resources Conservation and Land Use Management Project | | |
| Title of SPSD | : | Agricultural Sector Support to Tanzania | | |
| Cooperating Agency | : | Ludewa District Council (Prime Minister's Office) | | |
| Duration | : | Five years | | |
| Starting Date | : | 1.1.1998 | | |
| Overall Budget | : | 13,052,600 DKK (Danida contribution) | | |
| Description | : | | | |

Project support is intended to contribute to increased agricultural and natural resources production and to improve leadership skills from village to district level, thus enhancing socio-economic welfare. Major activities include trainings in leadership skills, improved agriculture and land use management techniques and gender sensitivity. Promotion of improved crop variety and husbandary practices and soil and water conservation techniques will be achieved by on-farm trials and demonstrations, following a (sub)catchment approach. Interventions to be promoted will be identified, implemented and monitored using participatory methods.

Initiatives at increasing land productivity will be based upon principles of organic farming, biodiversity and use of indigenous plant materials, where appropriate. The project will promote decentralization of natural resources management responsibilities from government to community level.

Women's welfare will be improved by application of a Women's Participation Fund concurrent with gender-sensitive interventions.

The Project will seek to create, at all levels, an atmosphere conducive to the respect of human rights and which encourages popular participation and good governance.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ludewa District is one of the 5 Districts comprising Iringa Region in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania. It borders Mbinga, Njombe, Makete and Lake Nyasa. Ludewa District has 3 Agro-ecological zones characterised by rainfall ranging from 800 to 1400 mm. Over the past 20 years, the need for more land due to increasing population and indiscriminate exploitation of natural forests and overgrazing have caused serious environmental degradation.

The average household production capacity is equivalent to 4000 Kg of maize per year. Ongoing environmental and agricultural projects in Ludewa District include CONCERN, IFAD and SHDDP. On the District level, government staffing is satisfactory, however, not all villages have extension staff. There are 32 Agricultural extension staff in the district while Forestry, Community Development, and Cooperatives are represented by 5, 6, and 2 extension workers respectively. The District revenue base includes development levy, business licences, taxes, livestock levy, produce cess and forest royalty arrangements. Ludewa district has unexploited coal and Iron reserves.

Villages in the district are linked by a road network which functions during the dry season. There is 90 km of all weather road from Njombe to Mlangali, Other feeder roads are maintained by villages and government.

The National Agricultural Policy emphasizes inter-disciplinary extension services where village extension workers cater for crops and livestock. It encourages a demand driven extension service and opens doors for private sectors' participation. It encourages participatory methods and strongly supports cooperatives action.

Since 1993 villagers in Ludewa district have demanded project support from HIMA. In August 1996 Ludewa district sent representatives on 3 levels, district officials, divisional heads and farmers to an LFA Workshop in Iringa to formulate development scenarios.

In Ludewa district small scale farmer crop and livestock production is low. Farmers are not using organic sources to improve the soil fertility of their farms. Farmers are not practising soil conservation measures adequately. Available soil moisture is also a limiting factor to increasing farm production. Moreover, over 90% of farmers do not use improved crop seeds or animal breeds which have a higher yield potential.

In the district most farmers depend heavily on maize for food and cash. Small scale irrigation is not practised and the average productivity per person in most households is low. In general, farmers do not make choices on farming practices based on the suitability of soils, weather or topographical features of the area. Moreover poor rural roads have made it unattractive for entrepreneurs to purchase crops in the District.

Frequent wild forest fires in the district are depleting the National Forests. Farmers are faced with severe shortages of construction materials. Women are forced to walk long distances to gather firewood and hence have less time for agricultural and other income generation activities.

There is a need to have collaborative research aimed at solving specific problems of Ludewa district in relation to soil fertility and improved farming practices. Seed and farming practices/technologies recommended by research stations are not always performing well under field conditions. There is an urgent need to update extension staff on organic farming and pesticide methods for delivery to farmers. At the same time it is also necessary to train staff on communication and participation skills to enhance preparation of appropriate extension messages to farmers.

Farmers' training on organic farming techniques to reduce the use of expensive industrial fertilizers is vital for the improvement of agricultural production in the district. Moreover, complementary leadership training to enhance small scale cooperative formation at the village level is essential. Finally farmers training on animal traction for ploughing, weeding and transport is vital for increased farm production.

In the district, women do not have access to income generating sources. There is a need to reduce women's workload and to get as many women as possible involved in the implementation of project activities.

Project duration will be around 15 years divided into 3 phases. Phase I will commence by January 1998 until December 2002.