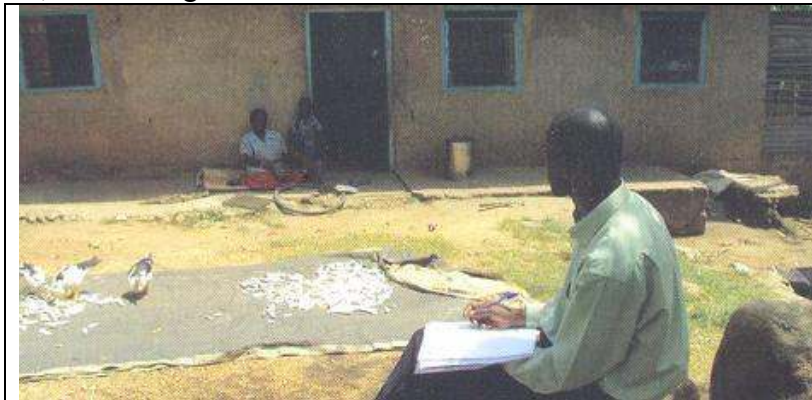


HAVING DIRECT BENEFICIARIES AT THE CENTRE OF A BASELINE BY Nankya Joanitah

At the inception of every developmental project, a baseline survey is carried out. It is designed to establish initial conditions against which the effects of the finished project can be compared.

International Solidarity Foundation (ISF) and IRDI's project on household poverty reduction through enhanced production and access to markets among the rural poor, in the sub-counties of Namayumba and Masuliita in Wakiso district began the same way. The base line survey was aimed at establishing the benchmarks on agricultural productivity and production, production costs, access to agricultural markets and equity in resource allocation and utilization of benefits on the target beneficiaries. This was done to understand the level of development and using those benchmarks for project implementation, monitoring and evaluation.



An IRDI Staff interviewing a woman in one of the beneficiary households in Masuliita sub county during the baseline survey

The uniqueness of this baseline study as compared to other baselines the organisation has carried out is the fact that it targeted the project beneficiaries. A total of 146 households were selected for the project, 40.4% from Namayumba and 56.6 from Masuliita sub-counties.

During the baseline, the IRDI research team visited all the 146 beneficiary households and got an opportunity to interact with them on a personal level. Using a questionnaire that had been translated into the local language (Luganda), it was easier for the team to build rapport with the beneficiaries and get all the information on agricultural productivity and production, production costs, access to agricultural markets and equity in resource allocation and utilization of benefits relating with each individual beneficiary household.

This kind of baseline that targets beneficiaries helps the research team to identify households that need special attention in specific areas. This information is useful to the project team during project implementation.

This kind of survey further illuminates the impact of the project in relation with the direct beneficiaries. In addition, it provides a unique opportunity to compare the situation of each individual beneficiary household before, during and after the project.

Relating with the target beneficiaries during the baseline creates a feeling of ownership for the project with in the beneficiaries. Having been selected as beneficiaries at the very beginning of the project makes them feel that the project is theirs. This ownership leads to the project's sustainability.

Overall, it was a wonderful experience for the IRDI research team. They got an opportunity to relate with the project beneficiaries, see their homes and meet the household members.