

**EMPOWERING WOMEN FARMERS TO ADVOCATE FOR POLICY CHANGE
20 -23 September 2010, Lilongwe Malawi**

FANRPAN, as part of the Women Accessing Realigned Markets (WARM), in collaboration with the National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM) and CropLife Africa Middle East conducted a three day policy advocacy training workshop 20 -23 September, 2010 in Nathenje, Lilongwe South about 25kms from Lilongwe city.

The purpose of the advocacy training workshop was to equip women farmers with skills they can use to participating in agriculture decision-making processes. The policy advocacy sessions of the training workshop were facilitated by Beatrice Makwenda, NASFAM Policy Coordinator and the WARM Project Coordinator for Malawi.

I facilitated the sessions on Responsible Use of 23rd September, 2010 under the invitation from Croplife Africa Middle East.

The training was attended by 14 farmers (nine women farmers and five men farmers) from Kasungu and Lilongwe districts of Malawi including the Chair Lady and the Vice Chairman of the NASFAM board. Participants were selected because they were already leaders in their own right and had the potential to mobilize their fellow farmers and be champions of the WARM project. The group was also joined by NASFAM field officer from the Lilongwe South office who did the translations during some of my sessions and Faith Phiri from Story Workshop.



The training workshop was solely dedicated to orienting farmers on how to use pesticides safely. Topics presented were as outlined below:

1. Introduction to Responsible Use Training
2. Types of pests
3. IPM and scouting
4. classification of pesticides
5. pesticide label

6. Responsible use of pesticides from “shop to field I”
7. responsible use of pesticides from “shop to field II”
8. conclusion, presentation of certificates



Participants had not received any training on pesticides and this was the first time. It was therefore noted that more time needed to be allocated for such a session. The issue of the language of communication was not very key as most participants had a fair grasp of the English language but the translator was at hand to help. It was also noted that in future we could send the presentations to the translator's in advance so that they can prepare for the sessions adequately. On the issues of demonstration materials, none had been prepared. A request had been done through the CropLife Malawi office but due to communication breakdown this was not done. We however sourced locally and managed to get a few of the materials, improvised on some. Also during the presentations I managed to discuss issues of women and their involvement in responsible use and how they can incorporate the training in their policy issues.

Malawi has a huge gap on responsible use training. NASFAM also requested for a session in future to have their trainers trained as most did not have the right knowledge on pesticides. The farmers also noted that through the collaboration of FANRPAN and CropLife we could organize such trainings in future as they noted that they seriously needed the training. The training was a huge success and both FANRPAN and NASFAM were really happy with the interest if created among its farmers. The two organizations should therefore look at incorporating Responsible Use as part of their policy issues.

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