

Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Swaziland

HISTORIC INFORMATION

Welcome to PELUM Swaziland!

1.0. Introduction

After years of trials, wishes and expectations, it is a great moment for us to witness the birth of PELUM Swaziland. Since the beginning of 2000, citizens of the Kingdom of Swaziland, passionate about agro-ecology and biodiversity conservation, alive to the inevitable responsibility of the present generation to deliver a productive and healthy nation to the future generations, concerned about attempts by multi-national corporations to monopolize productive means of small-scale producers have desired for this moment.

After endless efforts to get PELUM Swaziland established in the Kingdom of Swaziland, the news of the official endorsement of PELUM Swaziland by the Regional PELUM Board in February 2014 in Lusaka, Zambia settled the hearts of the pioneers of the Swaziland chapter of this dynamic regional grouping. Indeed our nation deserves to be part of these revolutionary times.

We are indebted to founding member organizations of PELUM Swaziland for their determination, steadfastness and commitment to breaking new grounds and be counted amongst those first organisations to start the PELUM network in Swaziland. We shall be forever grateful to the support and guidance given to us by the PELUM Regional Secretariat, especially the General Secretary, Mr Faustin Vuningoma.

We are so grateful to be part of such a big family which has already demonstrated its love and excitement of the new baby, PELUM Swaziland. We promise to be remaining true, honest and committed into the ethos and principles of PELUM for the benefit of the people of Swaziland and the World over.

2.0 Background information to PELUM Swaziland

2.1 Historic background

PELUM Swaziland was established by twelve Member organizations after individual organisation contacts initiated by ACAT Swaziland in the early 2012 followed by several meetings for all the keen organisations and individuals where the establishment of PELUM Swaziland. They all agreed to apply for membership at the PELUM Association Regional Secretariat as stipulated in PELUM Association's constitution.

The Regional secretariat sent one Board member to Swaziland to come and visit the applicant and ascertain if they are well in line with PELUM Association's core business, its vision and mission and if they are willing to subscribe to the principles and values of PELUM Association. He visited some randomly selected member organisations and later had a meeting with all members that had expressed interest to become PELUM Swaziland members.

A report was filed with the regional secretariat that latter presented it to the Regional Board in February 2014 which analysed the report and approved the membership of PELUM Swaziland. This approval was communicated to the PELUM Swaziland members who started the process of formalizing organizational establishment through preparing all necessary documents to legalize it.

A constitution was formulated and agreed on by all members and a process of deciding on what should be done started. Planning was regarded paramount and a participatory strategic planning process began with consultations from various stakeholders. Funds to organize a strategic planning workshop and hiring competent consultants, to guide participants through the process and fine-tune the strategy document, were sought and received from our German and Swiss friends, Bread for The World and Ecosolidar respectively.

2.2. PELUM Swaziland Vision: Small scale farming communities are self-organized and able to make choices towards an improved life that is socially, economically and ecologically sustainable.

2.3. PELUM Swaziland Mission: To improve the livelihoods of small scale farmers and the sustainability of farming communities by fostering ecological land use management.

3.0. PELUM Swaziland Member Organisation Profiles

3.1 Africa Cooperative Action Trust (ACAT) - Lilima Swaziland: is an organisation which works to transform the lives of the rural vulnerable communities. ACAT uses participatory methods in her community development interventions. This is done in an effort to promote strong ownership by community beneficiaries for any intervention aimed at poverty reduction and increased impact of her work. With the growing HIV/AIDs incidence and high mortality rate in Swaziland, most traditional social safeguards are eroding; hence, mainstreaming of Gender balancing and HIV/AIDS awareness trainings becomes critical to ensure people are empowered with relevant knowledge in their development efforts.

3.2 Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society (RSRCS): Is a local chapter of the International Federation of Red Cross. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian organization, providing assistance without discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. Their main aim is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world. Swaziland Red cross society is an organisation that has been recognized of doing good work in relief, nature conservation and food security efforts among others. Their name "Baphalali" means those who bring emergency help.

3.3 Swaziland Adventist Relief Agency (ADRA): This is a local wing of the international organisation of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. In Swaziland ADRA is registered as a Non-Government Organisation. ADRA works to develop communities through Food and clothing distribution, Building and renovating homes for the aged, helping needy people with school tuition, Christmas food hampers for vulnerable adults and children, School holiday camps for underprivileged children and free clinics for rural communities. The organisation works well with other community based organisations to bring holistic development to rural communities. It recognizes that 70% of rural Swazi are small scale farmers.

3.4 CARITAS Swaziland: was founded to empower communities and reduce the chronic poverty in response to a bigger population living in poverty because of drought and disease. Since its inception, the agency has helped half a million people in a country with high unemployment and the highest HIV and AIDS rate in the world. CARITAS main areas of focus are conflict and disaster, Food Security, Development, Health and HIV and migration. Their programmes have reached many communities in Swaziland including small scale farmers.

3.5 Conserve Swaziland: is a small NGO working in Land conservation, spring protection and water harvesting. Their work entails water fittings, donga (gully) rehabilitation, tree planting and many environmental conservation practices. Since its inception in Swaziland recently, Conserve is promising to be a big contributor to nature conservations. It also empowers households with information and skills pertaining to HIV transmission, living with HIV and AIDS, nutrition, treatment and utmost positive living. Additionally these families gain competency to provide psychosocial support services in their communities using the indigenous methods such as storytelling and games amongst others. Restoring the dignity of community members to empower themselves to address the psychological, emotional and social needs of families including children and their guardians by providing training in psychosocial support for the attainment of emotional wellbeing and social inclusion. Gender education is mainstreamed into all the topics that the organisation covers. The organisation is also involved in a five themed programme where children learn social and financial concepts through a participatory approach. Children are educated on how to save resources and the re-greening of their schools through planting of trees and backyard gardens.

3.6 Swaziland Conference of Churches (SCC): The Swaziland Conference of Churches is the national umbrella organization for evangelicals in Swaziland. Its main objective is to continuously empower Member Church Organizations for effective witness for Christ. In the past few years the conference has stretched her wings to development and response to community needs. Their programme includes but not limited to community water installation and other community development initiatives in Swaziland.

3.7 Swaziland Farmers' Cooperative Union (SWAFCU): This organisation was founded to bring together farmers and present a united front when it comes to issues affecting farmer. Their work includes; negotiating farm input prices, creating and find markets for their produce, as well as helping indigenous farmers to engage in profitable farming.

3.8 Green Living Movement (GLM): GLM Swaziland promotes sustainable community development to reduce poverty and to protect the environment. GLM Swaziland utilises the participatory working methods developed by the sister organisation GLM Zambia. GLM supports the environmental and social development of rural communities. The primary aim is to improve community livelihoods in an environmentally sustainable manner. Further, the organisation also uses a holistic approach, since a combination of interventions is often needed to respond to the immense development needs in the rural areas. GLM has always used participatory and people-centred working methods. The aim is to provide the local people with skills and knowledge which enable them to influence the development of their own livelihoods and the broader community.

3.9 Swaziland National Agricultural Union (SNAU): is an apex body for farmers' organisations in Swaziland. Their main aim is to be a voice for the farmers to ensure better services for the farming community. They help their affiliate farmers participate in bulk marketing, bulk production, and bulk purchasing. SNAU also ensures proper and timely information dissemination to their members. They also advocate for friendly policies that work for the betterment of the farmer.

3.10 Cornerstone Education Centre: this is a small organisation which focuses on creating opportunities and empowering young people. The organisation advocates for young people to be given a chance to participate in their own development and enhances their skills to actively participate in matters affecting their development.

3.11 Litseмба Lemliba Support Centre: is a fairly new organisation and its mandate is to focus on the welfare of children and families affected by Autism and other related conditions. This is done through facilitating interventions like psychosocial support, rehabilitation, advocacy, awareness and protection of survivors and their families. The program seeks to therefore bring hope, peace, complete and joyful life to the children and their families in Swaziland.

3.12 Lutheran Development Services (LDS): Lutheran Development Service is a Project of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Swaziland. In Swaziland LDS is a registered NGO and they are working in many areas of development, education, health and agriculture. They also participate in advocacy for human rights related issues.
