

# Field report G50 group interviews March 2021

3-5 of March Kayanza and 16 - 19<sup>th</sup> of March Karusi and Gitega



© AUXFIN International, May 2021

This document presents the written interviews and photos from a field mission to evaluate the G50 groups of AUXFIN Burundi. In March 2021 a total of 12 G50 groups were interviewed on their use, appreciation and impact of the AUXFIN services and functioning of G50. The insights serve as internal learning and input for several reports.

**Method:** In the province of Kayanza, group selection for interviews was done by the field coordinator. In Karusi and Gitega, the groups were selected randomly using an online random picker (out of a total of 425 G50 groups). Two types of groups were visited: groups of the AgriCoach case-study of season A21 and groups that are G50 since 2017 and were introduced to the AgriCoach and HealthCoach in September 2021. Interviews were done by the M&E manager (Jori Langwerden) and communication officer (Inès Irakoze). The group leader and several group members in varying amounts were present. Interviews took place at the group location and had a length of 2 to 3 hours. The interviews are written out, compromised in Q&A format and organised per subject.

**Goal:** Evaluation of use and appreciation of G50 and AUXFIN services: UMVA, AgriCoach, HealthCoach, PNSEB and Seed Marketplace. Evaluation of AgriCoach C-user case study groups (C-users: Seasonal Outlook, Crop Selector and new crops of soya, wheat and tomato) Outputs are: evaluation reports (G50 evaluation; AgriCoach case-study C-version; AgriCoach scaling report), Project factsheets/brochures

## Content

16th of March at Karusi	2
Masake-gr1 (case-study group)	2
Kanyereza-Gr1 (case-study group)	9
Rutoke-gr1 (case-study group)	13
17th of March at Karusi	18
Kindahwe-gr2 (randomly selected)	18
Rwimbogo-gr1 (G50 randomly selected)	24
Nzobe-gr1 (randomly selected)	29
18th of March at Gitega	31
Nyabwigungo-gr2 (randomly selected)	31
Mugoboka-gr1 (randomly selected)	37
19th of March Gitega	41
Kiribati-gr1 (randomly selected)	41
3rd of march Kayanza	49
Nyabikenke-gr1 and Nyabikenke-gr2 (case-study groups)	49
Thursday 4th at Kayanza	53
Muyange-GR1 (and Kigabo-GR3)	53
Friday 5th March.	59
Nyabikenke-gr1 (case-study group)	59

## 16<sup>th</sup> of March Karusi

Meeting with three evaluation groups that are part of the case-study for the AgriCoach. masake-gr1, kanyereza-gr1 and rutoke-gr1. Most of these groups started using AgriCoach in A20 and now have some seasons of experience. In season A21 they were part of the case study evaluation AgriCoach version C. Interviews focus on their G50 groups and using AgriCoach, CropSelector, Seasonal Outlook and the growing of new crops.

### Masake-gr1 (case-study group)

Name	G50 and role	Age	Gender	Crops grown with AgriCoach
Anicet Nimpagaritse	Masake-Gr1, group-leader	52	Male	Wheat, soja, beans
Annociatte Nshimirimana	Masake-Gr1, member	52	Female	Potato, beans and peanuts
Abdoul Ntahorutaba	Masake-Gr1, member	49	Male	Beans (B21)



### AgriCoach general

#### How have you used AgriCoach and what have been changes you have seen in the group.

Anicet: It has changed a lot of things in the group. We can see the difference before and after using AgriCoach. Now we know how to use the good practices, we cultivate in lines and use less seeds than before. Even if I, the group-leader, am not around, the members know how to use spacing in their fields according to the movies they have seen. We know how much fertiliser is needed in one pocket. And after doing all of that we see that the yield we have is much better than what we used to have before.

We also learned how to read about the weather and cultivate it according to the weather changes. According to the calendar we know what to plant and how. If we see it will be a dry period we can tell the members to hold on and wait for rainy days. Now we are no longer wasting our seeds. Before we used to plant anyhow, without knowing if the weather would be good, seeds would get wasted without too much sun or for flooding. Now we don't waste seeds anymore.

**What part of the information is difficult?**

Anicet: The part that is difficult is the part that describes the kind of plot. We get confused to identify the right kind of plot, because for us it is just the land we have. Even between valleys we can see differences in soil types. And AgriCoach is not very detailed on that.

We look at the type of land and suitability in the AgriCoach, but often we don't get to choose the right type because we only have land on hills. So we tried to plant peanuts but because of the slope it is washed away.

**What has been your experience with growing peanuts?**

We used to grow peanuts before but did not really know how to grow it. In general we had a good experience, but the slope was a problem and also pests and diseases.

**AgriCoach – new crops****What new crops did you grow? What has been your experience?**

Anicet: Wheat was new to us, we were not used to it. Using AgriCoach the wheat yield really came out good. We also tried soya and it came out really good. Apart from issues that are inevitable in the land. We had rats that have been really bad eating our crops. They ate the wheat, but still I am confident for a good yield.

Annociatte: I used AgriCoach for potatoes, beans and peanuts. I did not try it on a crop that was new to me. I planted one basket of potato and as a result I got a ton. I realise now I use a small amount of seeds and get a good result with it. I use less seeds and plant in lines. The quality was nice and the potatoes were big, I could cut them into 4 pieces. Also for beans I only used 3 kg of beans and got 55 kg as a result, I was amazed with the result. And now I am working on peanuts, I have not yet harvested but I expect it to be good. I wish to be part of the farmers who can try a new crop.



*Photos Annociatte on her peanut field made in Februari by the media team.*

Abdul: I am new to the group, I have not tried much because I am still new. I learned a lot but have not yet come to harvest.

**What was for you the motivation to grow the new crop and what will you do with the harvest?**

Anicet: I was curious to know if wheat can grow here. He had heard from somebody else it can grow. Now he wanted to try it out ourselves.

I stored everything. It was 20kg. I want to use the seeds and save it again. I don't even know the taste, I am afraid of it. *(laughter)* After the next harvest I will take some to consume in the household and the rest sell at the market.

Annociatte: It is not the first time to grow peanuts. I store the seeds for next season and use the rest for family consumption.

**What about other crops that the group is growing?**

Anicet: For season B we grow beans. We are expecting to get good results.

We got tomato seeds and we tried it, but in the last months we got heavy rain and it made the tomatoes have some diseases. If we don't have the stuff to fumigate it we lost it due.

**Is the group motivated to try new crops after the experience of last year, or do they want to focus on beans because they know that works well?**

Anicet: We want to get new crops to test. We don't want to remain with the crops we already know

**To clarify: will not distribute seeds again, we did it because we wanted farmers to test if they can grow new crops. We want groups to become independent, the groups to become strong and over time have access to credit.**

Anociatte: We can't wait to get the credit then we know how to take charge of our lives.

## **AgriCoach – applicability to whole group**

**How many farmers use AgriCoach on their plot? Can those that apply it follow all the recommended practices?**

Anicet: Among the 50 members of the group 10 farmers use AgriCoach on their plot. Even for those 10, there is not enough compost. We can try to buy fertiliser but when it comes to compost we cannot really get it, because we don't have domestic animals. Some cannot even afford enough fertilizer for the whole plot. We can only use what we get, which is not always enough.

**For the 10 farmers that are using AgriCoach, have they seen an improvement in means over the last years, as a result of good yield. Can they almost buy enough fertiliser or will it take a longer time to reach that stage?**

Anicet: It is different for different persons. Since not all members have the same means we do not progress in the same way, there is always that gap. If we can get help for compost, then we improve ourselves.

**If you consider the whole group, can you indicate what part is in the situation that they will not have enough means to help them progress.**

Anicet: Among the 50, 40 cannot even try AgriCoach. They are so limited in means. The 10 are the ones that can get some fertilisers and progress, the others not. We all save to buy fertilisers, but because of the limited amount of money some of the members can only buy 5 kg for the whole plot, so they only use a small amount and the crop will not respond.



Anicet

**Those 40, do they want to try AgriCoach even though they have enough means?**

Anicet: They are discouraged, because they don't have compost they don't even want to try. Now I try to motivate them to make compost at home so then at least they can try something. Everybody here even the poorest has food waste, of whatever we are cooking at home. They are put together in a hole to make compost. And also go into the field and cut branches from banana trees and put it in those holes. Water it when it is summer and add chemicals and it will produce compost over time. It is not easy to reach the whole group, I put all my energy in it so I will get results over time.

**Does saving help the group that is struggling in some way?**

Anicet: By saving little by little we have seen a change and impact. We are not wasting the limited resources of the family. We are no longer struggling to get fertilisers.

## **AgriCoach - CropSelector**

**What part of the CropSelector is most useful to the group. Why is it important?**

Anicet: We talk mostly about the information on diseases. It is information we normally don't have. We discuss what we can do in the first phases and if we need something for it, how can we go about it. It has created more awareness, because when we notice changes in the crop in terms of diseases. We call the extensions workers in the area in order to get help and phyto products.

**Can you explain the meaning of the suitability symbols?**

Anicet: The smiley faces where the crop can grow and where the crop cannot grow in terms of soil, that means the position on the slope.

**Has this information been useful to you and how has it been used?**

Anicet: We have used it especially for rice because we have seen it needs to grow with water.

**Is there a crop we want to grow, now you have seen it can grow? Why these crops.**

Inyame  
Colcesi

We need these crops in the household because it is good for nutrition. We already know it gives a lot of energy, we need it for kids and households in general. We did not learn from AgriCoach, we know that already

**AgriCoach - Seasonal Outlook**

*Note Jori: the questions were aimed at seasonal outlook but answers were about short term weather forecasts. Based on earlier discussions, the 9-day forecast is just much more concrete directly applicable, therefore is it favour and also easier to talk about.*

**How often was information in the Seasonal Outlook discussed in the group?**

Anicet: We look at the weather every week. We check both but especially the 9-day forecast so we have the closest updates. From the 9-days forecast we will know if it will be really rainy or not and wait or hurry up for planting.

**Is the information in the seasonal outlook also useful to you? Or not really?**

Anicet: It helps us to get the overview of the season ahead of time. We check it as well because it is important. If the next two weeks are going to be season or rainy. On the general overview.

**If you knew the season would be more dry or wet than usual. Would you be able to use that information?**

Anicet: It helps us because if we know it ahead of time, for example if it comes to removing some grass, we cannot do it when we know it is going to be dry. Then the crops will be dry as well.

**But if you had this information for the whole season?**

Anicet: It is important as well. We do check it as well. It gives us the general overview. Then we can ahead of time know the activities we need to do. If we need to hire workers, when or not to bring them. We can prepare our own calendars.

**AgriCoach – impact long term evaluation farmers**

**How much do you think your yield and income has changed over the last few years?**

Anicet: Compared to the last few years now I have means to send my kids to school, buy school materials and have enough supply at home. Even after that I remain with a small amount of money, so I have enough to spend 2000 BIF to have a drink with friends to celebrate. My life improved.

Before, I could pay school fees but it was a struggle for the kids to get school materials. I would work hard and I was hoping I would get enough to buy these things, but the yield would be bad. Now with AgriCoach I see the difference.

Annociatte: Before I had AgriCoach I used to hire two plots of land. Now since having the good yield I was able to buy two plots of land of my own, both for 1.500 million BIF.

**How much do you think the use of pesticides changed? Did it increase or decrease?**

Anicet: It has increased because now I have more crops and more land and as it grows I can buy more pesticides for the fields.

**How much do you think the use of chemical fertilisers changed? Did it increase or decrease?**

Anicet: It increased. Before I was putting money together with another member to buy a 25 sack. Now I am able to buy this by myself, and buy a whole truck full of compost.

**Can you indicate how much less seeds you use now?**

Annociatte: For potatoes, before I used 3-4 baskets of potatoes to get a yield of 200 kg. I was wasting a lot. Now I use one basket and get 1 tonne of yield.

For beans, before I used to use 180 kg of seeds to get 300 kg of yield. I was losing a lot. Last season I used 3 kg of seeds and got 45 kg as a yield. Now I planted 15 kg and am waiting to see the yield.

Anicet: Before I used 100kg of seeds and got 250 kg of yield. Now I used 6 kg, but I have not seen the yield. On the same piece of land I use to halve the seeds.

**Do you get questions from other farmers how you attain the results?**

Anicet: People in the neighbourhood when they see us applying the practices of AgriCoach. They ask, what are you guys doing. They envy us and ask us to teach them on it as well.



*Annociatte & Abdoul*

## **AgriCoach – new members**

**Abdoul, what was for you the motivation to join, since you are new to the group?**

Abdoul: I wanted to join because I saw the impact and the lives changing of members of the G50. When the G50 originally started I was watching, I am the neighbour of Anicet, but I was resisting the change at first. Then I saw I had to join.

**What has been your experience?**

Abdoul: Ever since I joined they told me how to plant according to the new method. My plantation of beans is looking different than before. If all goes well with weather I am expecting a good yield.

### **What is the most surprising thing you learned in the group?**

Abdoul: The potato fields of Anicet were serving as an example field for the group. What amazed me was how I saw the small amount of seeds he used and the good quality potato he got from it.

### **How many weeks or months did it take you until you felt comfortable with the new information**

Abdoul: I did not take much time for me. I already spent a whole year in another association where I was also taught on the new methods on how to plant and how to mix fertiliser and compost and plant in lines. When I joined the group and watched the video, it was boosting the knowledge. I was practicing what I learned from that association also in my field. The issue I see is the availability of the tablet who has it for all the members to be able to learn efficiently is difficult. Sometimes you need it. The person who has it is not available.

### **Was there a difference between AgriCoach and the association?**

Abdoul: AgriCoach is way better in my opinion. Because in AgriCoach we get to see practically in the videos step by step how to do it. It is not just words it is visuals and it sticks harder. So that is why I prefer AgriCoach.

## **Recommendations**

### **What recommendations and questions do you have**

Anicet: We want you to increase the number of tablets, but we understand it is not cheap.

Anicet: We would like more videos to make it more accessible to the illiterate. And it confuses us when there are a lot of languages. We don't need it in French or English. The Kirundi text is not difficult though, but we have to try hard.

Annociatte: We want to be given crops and animals. And we want to be connected to markets. So that when the yield is there, we have a place to sell. We also want to be getting seeds easily so as to be connected to seed markets and get them on time.

We want to have training in Bujumbura and Gitega, because we are proceeding as business people but have never been there.

On labour day, 1<sup>st</sup> of May, we should get head wraps or something to show we are part of the organisation. To have t-shirts.

Charles SA: In AgriCoach can you add how to take good care of animals, to get compost. How to get them, how to feed them and all.

Anicet: We are very happy to hear about the credit project coming up. We are happy you told us you are not here to give us things, and that you told us we have to work ourselves for our own development. Now we are happy we learned we will be able to get credit and start to buy animals and create business. Now I struggle because I have a kid in university. Sometimes I am forced to sell land to pay school fees. With credit I can improve what I am doing and also pay for school fees.

We are happy that now the process to get fertiliser is easier. They pay here and we get the fertilizers here. Now we wish to have a store room here to store the fertilisers locally. We are using somebody else's.

### **Kanyereza-Gr1 (case-study group)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>G50 and role</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Crops grown with AgriCoach</b>
-------------	---------------------	------------	---------------	-----------------------------------



Chadrack Niyonkuru	Kanyereza-gr1, group-leader	24	Male	Beans
--------------------	--------------------------------	----	------	-------

*C-evaluation group, started as a control group in 2020A and became AgriCoach users 2020B. Adrien has also made movies with him as his group stands out.*



**Can you explain how your G50 group operates?**

We meet on Tuesday in our common field and we practice AgriCoach. On Wednesday we meet at the weekly group meeting. We start with savings, and go around to whoever has money to collect on that day. Then we move on to weather, and then AgriCoach. Also in the meeting we discuss the activities that we have. We work collectively for any services that are needed in the group. They divide the work between members and work for one another. They pay 300 BIF per person per day. It is cheaper than hiring labour, that is 1500 BIF per person per day. We saved money because we did not hire labour. From that, together we bought the common piece of land. We have used AgriCoach for 2 years.

When it is time to plant, we start at the common field. Everybody learns from there. After that everybody goes home to apply it in their own fields. He does not even have to follow up, because everybody has seen it in the common field.

**What crops do you practice on the common field?**

We change the crop every season. We have done soya, wheat, maize, and this season we are planting beans there.

**How many farmers in the group are using AgriCoach?**

25 people in the group use AgriCoach, these are the people that have put in money to buy the common plot. With them we watch the movies on the plot, but we also watch them in the group meetings. Most members apply AgriCoach on one plot that they prioritise, so they have enough means to apply all the practices.

**Of those 25 farmers, have they seen an increase in yield or income?**

The yields have increased. A plot where I used to get 70 kg of maize before, I now got 300 kg. For the other members it is different because the means are different. There are people that don't have animal waste and do not have the same results. Some members can be using 1 kg, another 5 kg of fertilisers. Some are really doing good others are in a process, it is slow but they are still using it.

**What about the other members of the group, that are not part of the 25 of the common plot?**

I have been trying to encourage them. They are discouraged because of the lack of means. I made a subgroup out of those that are remaining, they are not part of the investment in the

land. I am pushing them to save money so they can also hire land and start applying to AgriCoach. So that everybody can get their part and get motivated.

**Is it only the lack of means, or are some people just not interested in change?**

The problem is the lack of money. Now he is pushing them to invest and I hope it will be fruitful. If he pushes they will be willing to try it out.

**Even old members?**

Yes, even the old ones, even my grandmother is a committed member of the group.

**As group leader, what is the thing you like most and what is most difficult for you?**

What I like most is AgriCoach.

The problem I have is the distance he has to walk from home and the people I have to check up on. Sometimes I have to come from very far and transportation is an issue.

The other problems are compost and access and market. We invest a lot in buying fertilisers. Sometimes we get a good yield, but we have to go to a small market where we lose because we cannot really get everything sold out. But the market is the problem of all crops. At the market the prices are very low compared to the investments.

For example maize at the market 1kg is 680 BIF, but as sold as seeds 1400 BIF. We had discussed with Jaffar that AUXFIN would give a cow on credit to the group to share the compost. *(we explained we do not do that and is probably misunderstanding)*

We have the same issue with the certification of seeds. Some people were supposed to come and measure the land and they would be able to sell their products as seeds, as an alternative to the market issue. But they lied and nobody came. Even the association failed. The one we were supposed to get a certificate did not get it. We don't know what to do with the yield. Is a problem of the government.

**AgriCoach – new crops**

**What was the experience of the farmers that cultivated soya, wheat or tomato**

It was not bad. For wheat the yield was 25 kg. For soya we have not yet removed the husk and measured. For tomatoes we did not plant all, but those fields we did plant got flooded. It was easy because everything was in the tablet that we needed to know.

**Why is AgriCoach important to you?**

Because has really been a good coach in agriculture. It has been my dream ever since I was young to become a successful farmer. That is why I request to also include videos on domestic animals. And also I want to learn more about nutrition and how to cook food. You can have good yield but cannot know how to prepare it. Soya I don't know how to prepare it. Wheat we will use as seeds. We will distribute in the group among the 25 so everybody can plant it. After that we will try to eat it.

**AgriCoach – Crop Selector**

**Does your group discuss the suitability advice and use it?**

I explain everything to them and we understand. We use it when we are practicing on their field. We discuss all the tabs. With the crop selector we know where to plant and when to plant.

**How accurate is the suitability advice, compared to your own experience and observations?**

The CropSelector works well, the AgriCoach has never lied to us. For tomatoes, we did not plant much this season, we prefer to plant it in season C when there is less rain to maximise the use of seeds.

## AgriCoach – Seasonal Outlook

### **How have you used the Seasonal Outlook.**

The Seasonal Outlook is important, to know ahead of time when it is going to rain. For tomatoes, we have the seasonal Outlook and that is how we knew it was going to be rainy. So we decided we were not going to plant tomatoes and waste the seeds on it. For those that planted in the rainy season it was a failure.

### **Did the seasonal outlook have any impact on your choices?**

It has helped us in crop choices, like we did for tomatoes. It helps because he knows when to plant and what kind of crops to avoid and what crops will grow well.

The weather forecast has told us for example in the household, when we want to dry out seeds we check in the tablet we see today is not a good day to dry out maize. Also when we hire daily labour, we are not going to pay them if we see it will rain.

## AUXFIN general

### **Can you rank the services of AUXFIN from most important to least important.**

For me it is: AgriCoach, PNSEB, nicash and health.

AgriCoach because it is our lifestyle, PNSEB because AgriCoach won't be possible without fertilisers, saving because without saving we cannot buy fertilisers.

## HealthCoach

### **How does the group use the HealthCoach?**

As for now it contains information for corona, it has been helpful. We discuss it every week. They sometimes ask questions about it.

### **Did group members install washing stations?**

Yes we have it in our homes. Even the government insisted we have those washing stations.

## Recommendations

On the seeds there still are issues, we got connected to become seed producers, but we got the request to show the seed certificate. We produced seeds and we went to get registered but they did not have certifications.

Now that we have good yield we have issues with how to prepare the food that we are harvesting. How to prepare them nicely.

We want to thank the person who came up with AgriCoach, he is a genius. If ever we get approved as seed providers they want you to tell the person that came up with AgriCoach to come to the group because that person will get a reward. That person will be invited for a party at our group. We were empowered by AgriCoach. It has become our friend and our daily prayer.

We want to have our own store room for fertilisers and an office to get tickets for fertilisers. And also a means of transportation to go from field to field. And also more tablets, to get more than one and also help with access to market.

## Rutoke-gr1 (case-study group)

Name	G50 and role	Age	Gender	Crops grown with AgriCoach
Marguerite Ningabiye	Rutoke-Gr1, group-leader	42	Female	Banana
Julien Sindahabye	Rutoke-gr1, member	28	Male	Soya, beans
Claver Nsengiyumva	""	32	Male	Beans
Melanie Ndikemunda	""	56	Female	Potato
Entienne Bisharizimana	""	22	Male	Potato

Marguerite is a PIP farmer, did not ask others. The energy was quite low. Besides Marguerite and Julien the others did not contribute that much. partly because most of the interview focussed on AgriCoach. They came across a bit shy, tired or sad (to me at least), a different energy than other interviews.



## G50 - general

### **Can you describe your group and how you operate?**

Marguerite: We meet on Wednesday at 4PM for the meeting. On the same day in the morning we do our social work where we work for one another. They pay another 500 BIF, instead of hiring labour where you will pay 1500 BIF. During the meeting we will start with saving money. After that we go through AgriCoach together. Then we end with HealthCoach. The meeting ends at 5 PM and everybody goes home to cook.

### **What are the main changes before and after the G50 group was formed.**

Marguerite: We gained a lot in terms of information. With AgriCoach now we know how to cultivate the good practices. Also before we did not know about savings. Now we can buy fertiliser and have easy access to fertiliser. Also I am more aware of the coronavirus.

Julian: Especially the saving has helped. When a group member is in need, they can lend some money from the group contributions. Later this person can pay back without interest. Also AgriCoach has helped to get a better yield. Not any money request gets approved. We filter the request, we check if the member is a regular member and if the member will be able to repay, based on how much the member has been able to contribute. It can be issues like falling sick. If it is very bad, members can also contribute themselves out of their own pocket.

Clavier: I am thankful to be in the group. I have been able to get low interest money. I can borrow and they pay back on the interest. Before I had to request it from a businessman.

## AgriCoach – applicability for whole group

### **How many members in the group use AgriCoach on their field and what is their experience**

Marguerite: 7 out of the 50 apply it on their field. We have seen an improvement in beans and bananas. In beans we have seen that we use less seeds.

### **Can these 7 members apply all the AgriCoach information?**

Marguerite: We manage to get fertilisers but not enough compost. Out of the 7 it is only one person who can get enough of that.

### **Out of the 50 how many can buy enough fertilisers.**

Marguerite: All can buy the fertiliser but the quantity will be different. They share between 2 or 4 people because they don't have enough money.

### **What about the others are they not interested in AgriCoach?**

The rest does not use AgriCoach because they don't have compost. You could advocate for them how to breed animals. AgriCoach means you combine compost and fertilisers. Those without compost are discouraged to try it.

### **Could those members not try AgriCoach, but without the compost?**

We are convinced AgriCoach is used for when compost and fertilisers are combined.

### **Do you make compost at home?**

We try but we do not have that much waste. For it to accumulate to be enough for one plot of land takes a long time. Some people do try it.

### **For those that have used AgriCoach, what has been your experience?**

Julian: In general it is good but still there is the issue with compost, it makes me limited in the use of AgriCoach. Also the diseases of the plants are difficult. I don't use it on all my plots. On the one I used 3kg of beans, and got 25 kg of yield. On the other plots I don't know.

**For those other members that cannot apply it in their field, do you still acquire information that is useful to you?**

Etienne : We listen while everybody else is going through it. The information on when to plant a crop is still relevant to us.

**Are there older members in the group that are not open to new information and ways of cultivating?**

Etienne : We have old members, they are committed and nobody is left behind. We are all at the same level.

## Financial inclusion

**Do you think saving helps to improve the problem of the members that cannot afford fertilisers?**

Marguerite: Savings has been helpful because now we save little by little and when it is time to pay for fertilisers they can go order. Before we would use the money daily. We would have to get a loan, and then to pay back the loan for a very high price.

**How many people are at the group meeting?**

Marguerite: Only people who are sick can miss a meeting or mothers with kids. It can be a maximum of 10 people missing, so usually there are 40-45 people there.

**How many of them save?**

Marguerite: Almost everybody. Even those who cannot make it to the meeting will sometimes send money to save.

**What are the main things people do with savings, outside buying fertilisers?**

Marguerite: Any needs in the household. You can go and request money to buy something for the house. But it is used especially when somebody gets sick, to buy medicals. We set a date where everybody must have paid their loan by that time. After everybody has cleared their loans we divide the money.

## Social inclusion

**Have you seen a change in social interaction in the group, compared to before the G50 was formed?**

Marguerite: It has helped to unite the community. There are less divisions and there is more unity. If there is an issue among members it is easy to know. If somebody lacks something in the house they can help each other.

**What kind of conflicts used to happen before and there can be less of now?**

Marguerite: It is not like there were conflicts before, but everybody was on their own. Now they are more involved in others' lives. They stand for one another. Pay for medicals, lend money for fertilisers.

## AUXFIN general

**What is the main reason for people to join the meeting?**

Melanie: For me it is the saving part. I am a widow and sometimes it gets very tough. I cannot get money for fertiliser anywhere. I know I can count on the group to get fertilisers. Instead of going to a business man or to get shamed by other people when you ask for a loan. Now I get to pay back slowly the loan, avoiding the shame.

Etienne: it is easy access to fertilizers for me. In PNSEB where we get to order and get the delivery nearby. That is for me the main reason to be in the group.

### AgriCoach – new crop

#### **Were there farmers in the group that planted soybean, tomato or wheat? What was the experience?**

Marguerite: Yes we were given soya and wheat. We tried wheat mostly, and it was growing well, but we faced rats. It was a good experience because before we did not grow that here. Tomato was given but they never tried because of the lack of pesticides, as it requires a lot of it. Also according to the season they did not plant it.

Julian: I grew soya. I learned from AgriCoach my type of land was adjusted to soy more than tomato, other crops were risk full to grow. It was easy because it was detailed and together with the text it was easy to learn.

#### **What will you do with the yield? Do you know how to prepare it at home?**

Julian: From the yield, one part I will use has seeds and another part to consume in the household. I don't really know how to prepare it. It is a woman's role so he does not know how to cook it. But he knows some people get flour out of it and sell it, or use it as porridge for children.

### AgriCoach – new crop

#### **How is the information in the CropSelector used in the group?**

Marguerite: It is helpful to know what crops grow well. We know in the community what types of land there are. All the tabs are useful to us.

#### **Can you explain what the suitability symbols mean?**

Marguerite: It shows where the crop can grow and when.

#### **Did you see crops in there, that you did not know can grow on your land?**

*Note Jori: this answer was not clear. She responded with bananas and eggplant, but we were sitting in between bananas. They explained they use AgriCoach for maize and beans. She asked for more new seeds but we responded with the usual.*

#### **How accurate is the suitability advice compared to your experience on how plants grow?**

Marguerite: It is accurate. We choose the type of land according to the information we get and the information is current. We have seen that on high slopes we cannot really plant anything, so we just put trees there.

#### **Seasonal Outlook: has that been used?**

*Note Jori: Marguerite was not able to respond to the question, it was Inès impression she did not know about it, but the other group member, Julian did have some idea.*

Julian: It helps to see when to plant and what kind of crop is going to grow in that season. For example beans.

### AgriCoach: Long term evaluation farmers

#### **How much do you think your income changed over last last years**

Julien: I started using it last year and started with soybean, but have not sold anything yet.

Marguerite: before I used AgriCoach for beans I used to plant 100 kg and not even get back those 100 kg, I would only have 70 kg of harvest. Now I use 40 kg of seeds for beans and I can get 300 kg of more of the same field. I cannot complain. Of the harvest some part goes to the

family, the other part I store to be used as seeds. The rest I sell for money to save for fertilisers. Before, when I did not have good yield, I could not get anything to sell, because I had invested so much and got no enough yield.

## AUXFIN general

### **For you as group leader, what do you like most, and what is most difficult?**

Marguerite: The challenging part is when it is time for people to make orders, to get to those that are difficult to reach. Sometimes I invest my own means to reach them.

I like the social side of it, where we get to help one another, there is less loneliness and we don't have to struggle on our own. That is what I appreciate as group leader and also as being part of the G50. And I learned a lot of the information that I have gotten in G50.

### **Can you rank the most important to least important part of the G50?**

Marguerite: Most important part for me is social inclusion, then after that comes AgriCoach and HealthCoach.

Julian: For me it is savings, then AgriCoach, and then HealthCoach, the social inclusion and PNSEB.

Clavier: savings is most important, in AgriCoach the weather part is most important and the crop selection. Now I can say that I have knowledge about those things.

Etienne: social inclusion is the most important part to me. Then AgriCoach, we use less seeds for more yield. Then PNSEB, I used to spend a lot of time lining up at the post office, we could be gone for days going back and forth. HealthCoach comes after, how to prevent for covid.

## HealthCoach

### **What did you learn from the HealthCoach?**

Etienne: for the HealthCoach we learn how to fight against covid. To wash hands many times per day. Avoid shaking hands. And to respect social distancing. And to clean as many times as possible surfaces. Make sure you clean phones.

### **Have there been any cases of the coronavirus? Is it important to you?**

No cases of COVID. Yes we are afraid of it.

### **Do you have washing stations, we don't see them here?**

We have one washing station. We could also build one with the tip-tap.

## Suggestions

### **Any suggestions for us?**

Etienne: We want to try new crops like onions and carrots in AgriCoach and for us to provide seeds. And also about green pepper. We also want to learn about entrepreneurship.

### **For entrepreneurship, what are the kind of things you would want to learn?**

We don't really know how to orient this. We cannot really answer that question.

### **Do you have problems with access to markets?**

No because we don't sell that much, we don't have selected seeds.



## 17<sup>th</sup> of March Karusi

These groups in Karusi started with AgriCoach in 2021A for beans and maize.

### Kindahwe-gr2 (randomly selected)

B-evaluation group, also part of ACORN project

Name	G50 and role	Age	Gender	Crops grown with AgriCoach
Trésor Manariyo	Kindahwe-gr2, group-leader	23	Male	Maize
Samuel Ndauwarugira	Kindahwe-gr2	43	Male	"
Thriphonie Barengayabo	"	50	Female	"
Frolide Nigariga	"	34	Female	"
Jophet Havyarimana	"	37	Male	"
Euphasie Ntabangana	"	45	Female	"
Capitonline Nizigiyimana	"	50	Female	"
Gomett Nzohabonimana	"	40	Female	"
Antoine Nahagzre	"	66	Male	"
Jacqueline Ndiokubwayo	"	42	Female	"
Sabine Bandushubwenge	"	50	Female	"
Agrippine Nkundwana	"	45	Female	"
Jacqueline Kanyana	"	51	Female	"
Bélyse Bitangimana	"	28	Female	"
Joséline Manirakiza	"	26	Female	"
Gometh Ntahokagiye	"	50	Female	"

List not complete





## General

### How does the group function

We meet on Tuesday at 2PM. We start with HealthCoach to learn about coronavirus. Then we go to savings, then AgriCoach, focussing on the crop that is selected for the season. It takes about one hour. The group has been active for almost a year, before there was G50 already but they started working again one year ago.

### What has been the most significant change in the group since G50 has been installed?

Trésor The first thing is the savings, less traveling to get fertilisers. And as a group leader I have a right to go directly to the COPEG to deposit the savings. And in the group they give loans to one another. And also we get to learn a lot of things.

Gerard: for me the benefit as being part of the G50 we learn how to cultivate according to good practices maize and beans. The results are different from what we have seen before.

Trifonie: the fact that we are not going back and forth to pay and get fertilisers. We can now pay the money in the group to one person and the delivery comes nearby. Also when we need money, we don't have to go get loans, and pay a lot of interest, we can get the loan from the group.

## Social and financial inclusion

### How have the social relations and interactions changed in the group?

Ferdinant: we can come together and share problems with another. We can be facing problems in the household that require money, or an emergency. Others can help to pay for it.

### What kind of things do you ask and give loans for within the group?

Capitoline: When I need school fees or to buy school materials for kids. But also when I need soaps I can go and get money from the group. Also personally I can get a small loan to start a business to sell stuff quickly. If she can not pay back in time she can pay back slowly.

Jacoline: I will get a loan to go to the hospital when you are sick. You pay 10.000 BIF and pay back 11.000 BIF. You can never be forced to stay sick at home. That interest is not much. Also when you lose a family member they come around and support you.

**How is this different than before? Can you give some concrete examples?**

Jacoline: before there was no helping one another. If a person had a problem we were faced to go to a businessman. There you pay 100% interest and now it is 10 percent interest. At some point we had to sell our plots of land to pay back the interest and give everything we have not to go to jail.

**Can it still happen that somebody has to go to a business man if there is not enough money from saving in the group?**

We make sure we don't request at the same time. They spread it over weeks so they don't use all the means of the group. That we know we can always have a small loan. After 4 weeks the first person is already paying back. We prioritise those that have an emergency, for those that are sick. We discuss it within all of them in the group.

Gerard: We cannot say everything is perfect in giving one another loans. Sometimes we save from 1000 all the way to 5000, sometimes it can be 4 persons who request a loan. Then if there is somebody who has an emergency will get prioritised and others have to wait. Sometimes as you wait things can be falling apart in the business. We can not say we have enough means all the time.

**What have been difficulties in the group?**

Sabine: we don't have the same means, some have money to save and others struggle. For those that don't have money to save can not even apply for a loan. There are iniquities in the group.

**You explained not all members in the group have the same means, how does the group work around these differences?**

Jacoline: it does not really affect the group cohesion, they are all involved but not all can save as much.

**How many members in the group save on a weekly basis? Can you indicate what part of the group can save on a weekly basis and those that will not be able to do that?**

GL: 25 people save regularly, among them 23 are regular and the rest are on and off. For the rest of the group members it is a struggle to save enough. When it is harvest time almost everybody has money to save, but outside that it is on and off.

**How many members are usually at the group meeting?**

GL: Around 25 to 30 come to the meeting regularly. Those are the ones that save, they come to the meeting for saving and stay afterwards. It is not the same people who come every week and depend on the time they have.

**Can some group members indicate what is for them the main reason to come to the meeting?**

Jaffet: For us it is the agricultural practices to learn how to cultivate bananas according to AgriCoach. For me it is very much the agriculture part of the meeting.

Samuel: for me it is the social part, it is a good occasion to come together with others to talk about projects and share thoughts and empower one another. Another reason is AgriCoach and savings, but the fact that we do it all together is what makes it strong. If I was to do it

alone I would not be able. I thank Aimable for doing a good job in putting us together and ask you to continue to give us knowledge. We get money from the yield and send our kids to school no longer with an empty stomach. AgriCoach is the basis, because it is what we eat. Our capital is our hands, if you equip us we will grow further.

## **Financial inclusion**

### **Why are savings important, what is the change that it has made?**

Trésor: We see the benefits that for example now in the season of planting beans, if somebody has a lack of money to get seeds they can get a loan from the group to buy the seeds.

Agrippine: when I save my money it is important that it is in a safe place. And when I get money from yield, I can go back to the group and buy a goat. When I have a goat, I get benefits from that like compost.

Gorette: for me the advantage is that after saving I can buy a goat

Ephragie: when I come to get my money I can buy clothes for family and use it for things that are needed in the family

### **How is this different from the situation before?**

Floride: before I was part of G50 and started saving, when I would get money I would waste it on unnecessary things like spending it in the bar and using it unwisely. Now when I get 1000 over time it becomes a lot. As before we would eat the money directly we would never see the impact. Now we are setting it apart. That is beneficial. We are learning to save for things that we need.

### **Before would you save at home, by putting it in a mattress?**

Capitoline: before we were storing it in small pots or wrap it in the clothes we wear. The difference within G50 is that you get a small interest. You can save 10.000 and get more. Then when you would store in the house it would remain the same and you would also be tempted to use it.

### **Do you have one specific object in mind that you are saving for, or is it general things that are needed in the household?**

Capitoline: We have a main project we are planning for. When I am saving little by little I will hire a small plot of land to put beans there in the next season. Then when we divide the interest I will first go hire the land. The extra money I will use for school materials, I will get that from the extra.

I don't have a specific project in mind. It depends. I will see at the time I get the money what I need.

### **Can you raise hands for what you are saving for?**

To hire land: 7 (all woman)

Animals: 8 (6 man, 2 woman)

Seeds: everybody

Fertiliser: everybody

School materials: everybody

Household material: everybody

Medical cover: everybody

### **How is a G50 different from a VSLA?**

We are all part of VSLA. We put money in both groups. The interest is the same.

The difference is that you get fertiliser and learn about AgriCoach.

Gerard: It is not much we get from VSLA. Except for saving. We prefer G50 because there we get knowledge about agriculture. We would also like to learn about breeding animals.

## **PNSEB**

### **Can you explain how PNSEB has made a difference for you/the group?**

GL: we have realised that in this community we can not plant on empty soil. If you use fertilisers the plants will grow better, you can not grow without it.

### **Can you give some concrete examples of these benefits?**

#### **Can you indicate how much time is saved per person?**

GL: before it would take 6 to 7 days per person for depositing the money and getting fertiliser. Now when we have collected the money we don't even have to go there. The group leader gets to deposit the money and we can collect the fertilisers nearby. Now it only takes one day, the day to collect fertilisers.

#### **Can you indicate how much more or less fertilizer is bought?**

We buy a lot more fertilizers. Trésor: before I was just buying only one type. Now I have learned with AgriCoach that I need different types of fertilisers so I buy more.

#### **Is there a difference in price?**

The price has decreased, before we would pay 34.000 and how it can be sold at 29.000. We don't know why it is different.

#### **Do beans and fertilisers come on time?**

Yes, most of the time.

#### **What was your experience with SeedMarketPlace?**

Yes we have gotten it through AUXFIN. If I was not part of the G50 I would not have been able to get good seeds..

## **AgriCoach**

### **How many members in the group are using AgriCoach on their plots?**

All of us have tried it. We used it in season A for maize.

#### **What is your experience?**

Ferdinant: before AgriCoach I would plant 2 kg of maize and get a yield of 50. Now I had 6 kg of maize seeds, but I have not yet measured the harvest. I see it is going to be around 800 kg of harvest. Before we used to use unselected seeds, but now I have used selected seeds.

We also planted bananas according to AgriCoach. We were shown how to do it in our field by AUXFIN agents and also we were shown movies. it explained exactly what to do. It was Aimable to help us with that.

Gerard: I used to plant 7kg to get 200 kg before, now I planted 4 kg and I got 400 kg as a yield. That was last season. This season I planted 6 kg and is expecting to get 900 kg but that is his expectation.

Trésor: before when I used to use around 3 kg of maize I would get a harvest of 30-40 kg of maize. Now I used 2,5 kg and got two sacks of maize, that is 200 kg.

Most of us are doing bananas, but it is still sprouting so we have not yet seen impact. We focus on bananas because it is our main food crop here and it grows well in our soil. We wanted to be the first one to plant in the new ways. We know it grows in our soil.  
*Note Jori: they also were given seedlings because of ACORN.*



*Gerards banana field with ACORN seedlings*

**How many members in the group are applying the information?**

All members are applying.

**Are there members that would want to apply it, but do not have enough fertiliser, manure or seeds?**

There is a problem with compost. Sometimes we prioritise the needs. For example if you have 6 kids and the season of paying school fees comes and you have to buy school materials, we have to . When it comes to AgriCoach I will put it in a small portion of the land. If you don't have enough you can buy a part and use it on a small land.

**Do you all have a little bit of compost, or some not at all?**

We all have vegetable compost, but it is not enough. Also we can not buy the different types of fertilizers, only one.

**Can you indicate out of the 50 members of the group, what part has enough compost and fertilisers, what part has some, and what really does not have enough?**

Around 10 have enough fertilizer and compost. For the rest it is a struggle.

**What part of AgriCoach is most interesting to you?**

Samuel: for me it is the crop suitability information, where we learn in which season it is better for which crop. We also learn which type of land goes well with which crop. It helps us not to waste

## **HealthCoach**

**Have you seen the movies and what did you think of it?**

It is helpful. Both the old and the new onese. It helps to know the measures to hygiene in good conditions, especially the washing hands part.

**Do you have washing stations?**

Yes we have those, we try to wash hands.

**Did you already have those a year ago?**

Yes we had that, we were sensitized way before corona started. The goverments makes sure we build a washing station in each station.

**Do you now wash your hands more often than before?**

Yes it has increased because.

**Is information on corona important to you? Why?**

Copa: it is important because it has helped us to stay safe and avoid getting infected. We have zero cases in our community. We avoid to shake hands and try to wash hands.

**What other diseases are important to you?**

Malaria and eye issues.

Young and old people all are suffering from eye issues. We don't know where it comes from.

**Do you have issues with family planning?**

Yes we are aware of it, we are following the measures. But we still need you to help to sensitize and provide more information.

**Recommendations**

**Do you have any questions and recommendations for us?**

Gerard: For me the issue is to get seeds. Normally we get seeds from PRODEFI. They had selected a few members to give seeds. They had orders but it came late and also it was not enough for everybody. What we order we share between each other. We ask you to help with a way to get seeds directly. To get seeds directly delivered. Among those that are struggling to get AgriCoach is also because they did not have good seeds.

To PRODEFI we contributed a little, it was almost free, this year it was given freely, but it is not for everybody. We are thankful for a solution because we really don't know where to get seeds.

Trésor: we are asking for vulnerable people in the G50, to give seeds on credit, so they can pay back after harvest.

Trésor: for the ACORN project, when are we going to be paid.

Aimable: next time they will measure and look how far the plants are along and if they are healthy. .

Ferdinant: People stole some of the plants from the ACORN project.

I don't like that not all was given the seedlings.

We would also like access to credit.



We visited the rain meter of Trésor, it was in between banana trees.

---

**Rwimbogo-gr1 (G50 randomly selected)**

Name	G50 and role	Age	Gender	Crops grown with AgriCoach
------	--------------	-----	--------	----------------------------

Nestor Nsanzurwimo	Rwimbogo-gr1, group-leader	32	Male	
Gordien Kwizerminana	group member	37	Male	
Jurenal Ndayikeza	""	26	Male	
Isaac Tnabugabo	""	34	Male	
Protais Izerimana	""	30	Male	
Evariste Nimbona	""	29	Male	

*More were present but these were the only talking much.*

*Men, mostly young, were all in front and talking. Women were sitting to the side and it was not possible to get anything out of them even when directly asking them. It was an uncommon situation, never had that before.*





## **G50 general**

### **How does your G50 operate?**

Nestor: On Monday 3PM we meet. We start with AgriCoach and then move to HealthCoach. And then we move to savings. For the social part we discuss different topics. I have been encouraging them to save money together and invest in projects together. For example in farming. We still need credit from AUXFIN. But are planning to hire land to be planting maize and beans and also start having domestic animals.

### **What has been the most important benefit for you of G50?**

Prote: (Note Jori: he mentions that is not the name I use in the group because his father is actually registered in the group and he uses his name.) For me the access to small loans is the most important fact and also the fact that we come together and discuss topics together in the community.

Everiste: for me it is the easy access to fertilisers, we are no longer struggling to get it. This year we got the vouchers in the group, that is a big benefit for group members.

I am happy with access to fertilisers but he would like AUXFIN to give animals so we can also get animals.

### **How have the social relations and interactions changed in the group?**

Gervé: we work for each other in the field. When one of us is sick or has somebody in the family that is sick that person can no longer cultivate their field. The rest of the groups get together and decide to help him advance in the field. If we would not do that and leave him like that, he would not have anything to eat after he would have gotten better. Ever since we started the group this has happened four times. We do it for free.

Evariste: for me the highlight is that we can help each other to pay fertilisers. Several people put money together to buy fertilisers.. It is better than going to the market to retailers that make money out of us.

Everiste: also the fact that we can now trust each other. In the group we are close to one another and that has helped us to trust each other in the savings. If there are problems you know you can always depend on group members.

Damiel: When you get sick randomly or your kids get sick you can always go get a loan from the group. Or withdraw your money.

### **How is this different than before? Can you give some concrete examples?**

Damien: Before we were getting money from a businessman and paying back the interest to them. You would give 10.000 and pay 15.000. Now it is 10% interest.

## **Financial inclusion**

### **Can you explain how saving has made a difference for you/the group?**

Clodien: we are no longer wasting money on unnecessary things, now we can spend responsibly. Whenever we get 500 BIF we can directly take it to the group. Over time that will have accumulated so we start a project we want to do.

### **How many members are in the weekly meeting?**

Almost everybody only those that are sick are not there.

**How many members in the group save on a weekly basis?**

About 30.

**Has the group been able to do something due to savings that you were not able to do before?**

Isaac: we started savings two months ago and we have not really done much.

**Are you also in another saving group? Do you see a difference between G50 and the other saving groups?**

Evariste: yes many members are in other groups. We don't know the exact number.

For me the difference is that in the VSLA you only get your money at the end of one year of savings. But in G50 we have access to our money any time whenever it is needed. Then we can withdraw. In the VSLA if you want your money you have to take it as a loan.

## PNSEB

**Can you explain how PNSEB has made a difference for you/the group?**

Clodien: we are happy we no longer have to go to the post office to line up for days. We gather the money and can do other activities in between.

**Can you indicate how much time is saved per person?**

Damiel: before I used to wake up at 4 PM to line up. And we would be in the line the whole day, and could go home without getting fertilisers. It could take me about 3 days to get it. Experience for others is the same.

**Can you indicate how much more or less fertilizer is bought?**

Damiel: Now we buy more because we take time to save for it.

Evarits: before we would even be discouraged to go there for days and just prefer to give up. (Note Jori: contradiction with the note before that they started saving 2 months ago)

**Is there a difference in price?**

Evariste: before we would buy from retailers from the market, they don't sell per sack but per kg. One kilo can be sold at 2000 bif. Now the prices are the same for the whole country, they are fixed by the government. We all pay 29.000 BIF for one sack.

**What was your experience with SeedMarketPlace?**

Yes we bought them, for maize and beans. We are happy because the seeds we got were of good quality. We see the differences in the quality of the maize. They came on time.

**Would you be able to get quality seeds in another way?**

Evarist: no, before we were using the same seeds from each harvest. We would cultivate in the valley and use those seeds for the mountains. It is possible to get good seeds but very far away, in Karusi. But now it is close and they are ordered easily.

## AgriCoach

**Can you explain how AgriCoach has made a difference for you/the group?**

Thierre: I used to plant 5kg of maize to harvest 10 to 15 kg. Now I used 2 kg and I am reaching 60 kilograms but I am still counting. It is because of the methods we were told, the distancing of the crops.

Isaac: Used to plant 10kg and get 50 kg. Now I have used 2 kg and still get 50kg.

The yield still increased for me, as I had to use less needs.

We use traditional scales to measure.

Evariste: before we used to mix all kinds of crops in the same field without any distance. We would give it fertilisers anyhow. Now we plant with the measurement and all the things we see in AgriCoach. I think it gives the crop more space to grow and it can absorb fertilisers.

### **Why is AgriCoach important to you?**

Evariste: AgriCoach has been helpful because yesterday we saw that it was going to rain today. So if we need to prepare something we can know if it is going to rain.

The fields that have been planted with AgriCoach look different, the neighbours are asking us what we are doing. Many people are coming together to form the new G50.

Gervé: the way we used to use compost before, we would just spread it anyhow in the field. Now we used exactly how to use the compost and fertiliser together, so we maximise it. We also learn a lot about weather provision, our group-leader tells us about the 9-day forecast.

### **How is the information used in the group?**

GL: it depends on the season and what crops are there in the season. For now it is beans. When we meet we focus on one crop we are all growing in the season. The kind of seeds, the kind of plots and the weather. We have discussed maize before and now beans.

The whole meeting takes 2 hours and we take 1 hour for AgriCoach.

### **How many members in the group are using AgriCoach on their fields**

20 out of the 50.

### **For the others, what is the reason they are not applying?**

The others are not interested. They don't want to remove sweet potatoes and manioc and replace it with beans. They think the method is too demanding.

### **Can some of the women here share their experience with AgriCoach?**

None of them used it.

### **Why not?**

*(pauze and shy glances)*

One of the men: They are resisting the change, because they want to maximise their land. They don't want to try the method of leaving space between crops.

### **It is coincident that now it is only men here that are answering?.**

Yes that is a coincidence there are other women that do use it. Even the men are not doing it alone, they have the support of their wife.

### **To the women: there is also information about sweet potato and manioc if you are interested.**

We are waiting for next year. We will ask the group leader to show those crops to us.

## **HealthCoach**

### **Can you explain how HealthCoach has made a difference for you/the group?**

We have learned about coronavirus. We have watched videos. Wash hands, sneezing in the elbow and avoid touching surfaces.

### **Have the corona movies made you do things differently at home?**

Evariste: Where we meet in the bars, there are always washing stations.

We have them also at home. The government had sensitized us about its last virus when the coronavirus.

*(Note Jori: I was not convinced of that answer, but we did not see their village)*

**Even after all you have already heard about coronavirus from the government. Was healthcoach still important to you?**

Prote: the previous images told us how to build their own homemade washing stations, but in the new ones it is not there. It is useful because it tells exactly what to do in detail.

**Did you know how to build tip-tap washing stations before?**

We had heard about it on the radio, but we did not know how to build one. We all have a tip-tap.

**Did they have members that have high temperature and what was management?**

There was nobody.

We had strict measures even from the local administrations. Even people from other areas could not come. We are confident nobody had the coronavirus.

**What other diseases are important to them?**

We want you to add information on malaria.

And diabetiese.

Sexual reproduction we follow already but we would like to be emphasized. We receive injections, that is the method we prefer.

**Any recommendations for us:**

Evariste: We like to have more than one tablet, because it is hard for everybody to get the information on time.

Nestor: I want this group leader to receive something from AUXFIN as encouragement.

We have problems with the network. In the location that we are the network is really bad, to get at least something that can work.

We also have a problem with the powerbank, it does not last long.

Prote: we would learn about AgriCoach more, not just in the meeting.

*(Response that they can do that anytime. They can meet outside or give tablets home for a night so that person can look at it in their own time. Later I reminded myself that these groups share the tablet and only have them several days per week.)*

---

**Nzobe-gr1 (randomly selected)**

*Group-leader: Donatien Ndaruzaniye, male, 42 years old (in striped shirt)*

*No written names of the interview members We arrived very late and had only 30 min there, started raining very heavy right away. Great enthusiasm from the community on the visit.*



## G50 general

### **How does the G50 function?**

Donacien: We started in 2017. We meet on Wednesdays at 6PM. We introduce the meeting by discussing different projects that group members can have. We share experiences. After that we discuss the savings.

We discuss what we will do in that week. We go through the coaches, first AgriCoach and move to HealthCoach. We focus on AgriCoach because that is what we are used to, HealthCoach came later.

## **AgriCoach**

### **How many members in the group use AgriCoach?**

Last season 6 people. In this season we could not use it because the application was facing some issues. It is not yet fixed, we don't understand the issue. We click on it but it does not open. The issues had been reported to Ernest and the tablets have been taken to Bujumbura, it has returned but the issue remains. It is only the weather that works.

*(Note Jori: I had a look at their tablet. The calendar did not show anything, but that is the case with the current version. But at their tablet the calendar did also not open in the crop details. They did not want it to be returned again right now, because they needed it.)*

### **Who has been cultivating with AgriCoach. What is your experience?**

Odette: The 9-days forecast has helped me a lot. Also the outlook in general, to know when it is going to be rainy and when it is going to be dry. Before I was used to planting 5kg of beans, and I would get less than 10 kg of harvest. Now I use 1 kg and get 50 kg of beans.

Immaculate: which type of land can grow with what type of crop is important to me. And also the weather. Now I know that according to the slope of my land what kind of crop I can grow to maximise it. For rice I used to plant 3 kg and get less than 1 kg. *(JL: weird but due to lack of time not followed up)* Now with AgriCoach I plant 1 kg, and get 19 and 29 kg of harvest. Before I used to plant without the information. Now I know that a place where I could grow beans I can also use to grow wheat and soy.

### **Can somebody explain how AgriCoach is used at the weekly meeting?**

Donacien: how we use AgriCoach is I gather all members together. I show them the tablet step by step and show them what it is they want to learn. I am showing them tab by tab. The weather is not always correct, but in general it is.

### **What crops do you follow?**

Donacien: We have been focussing on maize. Before having AgriCoach we were doubting the sustainability of maize for this area. As soon as we have started using AgriCoach we have tried and have seen good results. It is a relief for us.

We want AUXFIN help with getting access to seeds.

Some of us have also tried beans, and the place where I had planted half a kilo of beans I was able to harvest 50 kg of beans.

### **For the rest of the group that was not following AgriCoach, what is the reason for that?**

Donacien The lack of compost, the problem is accessing the compost from animal waste. Others have their plot of land very far from here, they have issues to carry the compost. They just use fertilisers. Also old people have less energy to do all the practices.

### **What part of the group will struggle to implement AgriCoach on their field?**

30 among the 50 will have problems. 15 are old and the others have very limited means. Others are still considering because we just started recently.

## HealthCoach

### Have you used it and seen the movies?

We were glad to see the videos of covid, because now we can know what to do about covid.

### What other health issues are important to you?

Malaria.

Often we get to go to the hospital last minute when people are already very sick. In the community we have health monitors, who are helping us but they are not enough.

We have information about family planning but many people resist it because they are not aware of the consequences. Can you put information on the benefits of family planning and also the bad side of not doing it. So people will understand.

Diarrea is another thing and diseases related to dirt. Because that is something that is coming back over and over again, especially for kids.

## Recommendations

Can you give us animals? Another issue we are facing is the fact that we have one tablet that is not enough. We are requesting more tablets.

## 18th of March Gitega

*Interviews Gitega evaluation B-groups: started with beans and maize 2021A.*

*The 18th Inès was not well and stayed at the hotel, interviews were done with MA (Vianney) and SA's only, which was not easy, I missed some details.*

## Nyabwigungo-gr2 (randomly selected)

Name	G50 and role	Age	Gender	Crops grown with AgriCoach
Agnès Barengakabo	Nyabwigungo-gr2, group-leader	60	Female	Maize and beans
Henri Ndikumana	"	35	Male	Maize and beans
Claudia Nshimirimana	"	42	Female	Maize and beans
Aline Nyosaba	"	20	Female	Maize and beans
Joselyne Manariym	"	25	Female	Maize and beans
Thade Kakuro	"	42	Male	Maize and beans

*We started with the whole group, because as often they all come. After 20 min we asked for an interview in a small group. More or less the same people were talking in the first part, Agnès, Joselyne and Henri. Can have to do with social status, knowledge, self-confidence etc..*



### **Can you share with us your experience with G50**

Agnès: we would like to have access to credit to buy seeds.

Woman: We thank you for the visit, it is important to us. Now with Nicash we can easily buy fertilisers, before it was difficult. Also the maize was a good harvest. But we ask you to help us with giving tshirt. Also give us animals, to help us with getting enough manure.

Agnès: Before we had to go to COPEC the post office to pay advances to get fertilisers. That was difficult. We had to pay 20.000 for 2 sacks of fertilisers. We had to leave in the morning and could return at 8 in the evening. After that to collect the fertilisers, we would spend several days or even a week, before we could hand in the voucher and get the fertilisers. We appreciate what AUXFIN is doing. Now it is better, we can get the fertilisers easier, without waiting.. Now we just give the voucher in the colline that is good, but to collect the fertiliser we have to collect it in the zone. We ask if you can even give the fertilisers in the colline.

Agnès: We ask also if you can give agricultural credit, for example for buying seeds. Could you also give seeds also for other crops than maize. Also for beans, tomato and soya. That would be really good.

Agnès: Could you give more tablets, at least 3 tablettes per group. We want to thank you that in the tablets there are applications that help us, like AgriCoach, HealthCoach and nlcash. They help us a lot. To have weather and see how to cultivate, those are really good.

Agnès: We ask also because you are white to give Fanta or soda or something. And what can be improved is the use of the tablet to help with all the members of the group.

Joselyne: In the last years there was a woman who died because she was at the post office to get fertilisers. It was very crowded there as she died because of that. Now we don't have that problem anymore. We thank you when you give the applications like HealthCoach, there was information about the coronavirus.

Joselyne: We have bought improved seeds of maize, for next season we ask for seeds of beans. We have more harvest because of that, and therefore we ask to be connected to markets. The problem is that the prices are low at local markets. And also the distances are long. When we go to the market with a vehicle, it is two hours, the market of Gitega. But when you go there by foot, it will take you the whole day.

Henry: We are impressed with the applications of the AgriCoach and HealthCoach. Could you add other diseases. Like malaria, cholera, fever, eye problems.

The members of the G50 ask for motivation for the chef group.

Jean: We thank you for coming and visiting the group. Could you come again over some time to see how we have evaluated.

### Questions new B groups



### G50 general

#### How does the G50 function?

Agnès: every Monday at 3PM we have our meeting. First thing we do when we arrive is we discuss about covid in the HealthCoach. After we look at the weather and the rest of the AgriCoach. We discuss the activities. After that the savings and fertilisers. Every individual part takes about 30 minutes. In the group exchange all necessary information for the community.

#### How many group members join the meeting?

Agnès: In my group there are 50 members, but not all will be present, more or less 30 are at the weekly meeting. But others do ask me if they can join, and I told them to also form a G50.

#### Can some group members explain what has been your main motivation be part of G50?

Marie-Josie: The most important is the Nicash and the fertiliser payment. The second is AgriCoach. In the group there is much information that will help the community that is why I like to be part of G50.

Henry: we are motivated to have the information on the cultivation practices, and also to get the fertilisers and improved seeds.

Marie-Josie: it has been difficult to have money for fertilisers. To save slowly has helped, now I can buy the fertilisers.

Thade: We appreciate the information about health. Many members don't have a radio. Now in the tablet those members can also receive information on health.

Claudia: compared to before it was difficult to have enough money for fertilizers. Now it is easy to have them due to saving.





*Left to right: Aline, Claudia and Henri*

Agnes: I want to have compensation because I have the responsibility with the money.

### **G50 social inclusion**

#### **How have the social relations and interactions changed in the group?**

Henry: We have not really started to help each other.

#### **Does it happen that somebody gets ill and takes a loan for that in the group?**

Agnes: We mainly use the saving for buying fertilisers. But also for other things, like illness.

Henry: The main thing for saving is fertilizers, but there can also be other things, like buying goats or something or kids.



Henri

## Financial inclusion

### **How many members in the group save on a weekly basis?**

Agnes: There are 25 who never save. The others do it. There are some who have not even taken the money out from last season.

### **For those that don't save, what can be the reasons?**

Henry: Poverty is the first reason. But there are also those that are in another VSLA.

### **Are there people here who are also in another VSLA? What is the reason for doing more groups?**

Thade: Yes most of us are in several groups. TWUNGUNGANANIRE, ODAG, TUBURA, and others. The main reason to be in the other VSLA is that they give credits. When we get back the credit, we get 10% interest. We do not get that yet in G50.

But in those we cannot use credit to buy fertilisers. AgriCoach and fertilizers are the motivation to be in the G50. But G50 we hope to also get credit later.

### **If you fall sick today and need to take a loan, what do you do?**

Henry: if somebody gets sick there are services, they request some money from our accounts in the VSLA's or ask for help at the hospital.



Joselyne(left) and Agnès (right)

## AgriCoach

### Is AgriCoach only discussed in the group or also outside?

We do not only use it in the meeting, but also outside the meeting. I visit members three times per week.

### What crops has the group been learning about?

Agnes: Maize and beans, potato.

### How many members in the group are applying the information?

Almost everybody. Season A for maize, at season B for beans

### Do they use it on one plot, on or all their land?

We use it on the whole plot.

### Are there members that don't have enough compost of fertilisers?

Most people don't have enough compost. Also chemical fertilisers can be a problem. 25 can have enough fertilizers, 15 an average amount and 10 will have very little fertilisers.

### If you don't have enough, do they spread it out over the whole field or just put all in one corner?

If there are not enough fertilisers, we can still use AirCoach for the method that we use. Another part does not apply to AgriCoach when they don't have enough fertilisers.

If they don't have enough, the results are not good.

### What part of AgriCoach is most interesting to you? What is it talked about most/longest?

Agnes: most important the movies that show the activities. It is because the activities are visible there, it helps.

**Are you happy with the result? Are their group members that are not content?**

All are content. Even those that are not in G50 want to use it.

Claudia: compared to not using it improves the harvest.

Marie: the harvest has been more than doubling.

**Why is it important to you?**

Agnes: we are happy to use AgriCoach because all information that is needed is in the tablets. Also we use less grains, and the harvest is more.

**JEANNE**

**What do you think of filling in questions in JEANNE**

Yes we do it together with the KA.

**Is it easy or difficult?**

It is not that difficult, but it does help to do it with the KA.

It is nice to do it. It gives hope when the activities that we do are followed up.



tested the new JEANNE app

---

**Mugoboka-gr1 (randomly selected)**

Name	G50 and role	Age	Gender	Crops grown with AgriCoach
Marthin Bizindavyi	Mugoboka-gr1, group-leader	39	Male	Maize and beans
Jacqueline Nduwimana	Mugoboka-gr1	40	Female	Maize and beans
Athanasie Nbikemunda	Mugoboka-gr1	60	Female	Maize and beans
Thomas Ngenda	Mugoboka-gr1	56	Male	Maize and beans

All except Thomas were closed and afraid to talk, it did not really work, did not succeed to change from questioning into more of a conversation. They might have had the impression of

being checked up on, maybe we did not approach them in the right way. The group leader was either very uncertain or ill or something.



Left to right: Marthim, Jacqueline, Athanasie, Thomas, and Christian the SA

## G50 general

### How does the G50 function?

Atanasie: When we meet in the G50 we talk about savings. Later we discuss what the weather is going to be. There is a difference after it has been possible to buy fertilisers. That has made a great change.

### What has been the most significant change in the group since G50 has been installed?

Thomas: In the last years it has been difficult to buy fertilizers, now it is easy. But even today there are members who fear buying fertilisers with PNSEB, because they are afraid it will be stolen. Now, the weather forecast showed there will be no rain, and there is also no rain. It is good. It is an improvement because he sees the climate changes in the tablet.

Atanasie: before we had to go to the post office individually. Now it is organised for all members, for paying and receiving fertilisers.

**You are a rain master, how is that for you?**

Christian: every day at 6AM in the morning he puts the rain meter and sends it to KA or SA and puts it in the system. When he uses the tablet, he sees the weather forecast. Later I verify with the rain meter if it is really true what he has seen in the tablet.

**G50 social inclusion****When somebody has fallen ill, how do they help each other?**

Thomas: There are many VSLA in our group. We participate in several VSLA's. There they will ask for a small credit. That way we pay the hospital bill. We cannot do that with G50. We ask that AUXIN also puts credit for paying a little later.

**How is this different than before? Can you give some concrete examples?****Financial inclusion****How many members in the group save on a weekly basis?**

GL: those who are regular are 35. The others who are not regular are those that are afraid of the new system of niCash and afraid of the money being stolen. Those members do even visit the meeting, but do not pay. They have bought fertilisers with the old system.

**Those 15, what is their reason for going to the meeting if they don't do saving and buy fertilisers?**

When they participate in the meeting they also discuss the social situation. How somebody who has been ill can be helped. And they also receive the weather forecast.

**PNSEB****Can you indicate how much time is saved per person?**

Thomas: Before it was a problem for me to get fertilisers. It would take 3 days. I had to go to the centre of Gitega to pay and get the fertilisers. Now I can pay here and receive the voucher all in the colline, it only takes one day.

**What was your experience with SeedMarketPlace?**

Christian (SA): No, they were not part of that. There are other groups around here. the maize was late.

Thomas: Tubura, is another organisation that sells the maize at the post office. It will take two days. You have to first pay at the post office. After that go to DPAE to receive it.

**AgriCoach****How is the information used in the group? What is the order of the discussion? Only group meetings or also other meetings? How long does it take to discuss AgriCoach?**

Christian(SA): first we look at weather, after we use the crop selection, what are the good cultures, then we go to activities.

Marthin: The AgriCoach is like an agronome. In the tablets there is a lot of information about agriculture. It is like talking to an agronome from the area. I consider the tablet like an agronome, because it is the same information.

**Is the AgriCoach information difficult to understand, how long does it take?**

Thomas: One week is enough.

**How many times have you watched the movies?**

Thomas: I consult the tablets once per week. The KA gives us the information down there. We don't consult the videos many times.

**What cultures have been followed with AgriCoach**

Maize and beans. Pomme de terre and vegetables.

**How many members in the group are applying the information?**

35. all use chemical and compost. All plants in lines. It is very different than before. Because now we use less seeds.

**Do they use it on one plot, a part of the plot, on or all their land?**

We don't not have enough compost, because we don't have many animals.

We apply it on a small plot, because we don't have enough chemical fertilisers for all the land.

Some do apply it on a large land, and they put chemical and organic . Others put it both on a small plot of land where they prioritise the usage of fertilisers on that.

**What is the experience of those that have used the AgriCoach:**

GL: Now we buy fertilisers easily and with AgriCoach we see how to cultivate. It shows us how to cultivate maize and beans.

Thomas: We have seen many results.

When we use AgriCoach, 56 grams of grains, but we have harvested 30 kilos. Before I would have 56, but have 10 or 15 kg of grains.

**What part of AgriCoach is most interesting to you? What is it talked about most/longest?**

Thomas: when we select the right culture get a good harvest.

**Have there been any difficulties**

Jacqueline: I have lost my harvest because it has not been well conserved. Also we have problems with escargot.

We mainly talk about the crop selector, because now the videos don't work.

**What is most relevant to you of the pages in the cropselector?**

GL: the selection of culture is most important.now the vegetables are also in there, and we also really understand how to cultivate them well.

We will learn about potatoes.

## HealthCoach

**Can you explain how HealthCoach has made a difference for you/the group?**

Not yet. The tablet of the group is in Bujumbura.

There is a problem with the tablets, they have to share it with 5 groups. Because it was in Bujumbura 2 groups have not yet started.

*(Note Jori: turns out their tablet has been in Bujumbura for a few weeks. Also they share it with other groups)*

The SA and the KA, have trained them in the meeting how to do measures against the coronavirus. They have not seen the movies.

**Did they have members that have high temperature and what was management?**

Christian: There has been a case in the region, to test for covid. But not in this group.

**What other diseases are important to them?**

Malaria, diabet. Hypertension – heart problems.

**What other sources of information do you have for health?**

ODAC, mothers who work. They train about it.

**What other sources of agricultural information do you have?**

For agriculture we receive information also from agronomes. Thomas is a collinal agronome. They are also there in zones. And the radio.

**Thomas since you are an agronome, do you see differences in what you learned and AgriCoach?**

I see everything that I have learned, there is not a big difference. It is almost the same thing. The difference is the tablet as a tool, where we see the information in videos. But when you are an agronome you look for another person to show it.

**Marhtim: What do you like about your role and what is difficult?**

He is missing a good network, that is making it difficult for me. I like the part about agriculture and I like to help others, I want to give all I have.

**Recommendations**

Antoine: Why did you come here.

We want the group-leader to be paid as well. This is a problem.

Can you help to give little animals, to get compost.

We ask with the improved variety seeds, we come earlier. With the maize and haricot. It has already been ordered. It was three weeks ago he ordered.

Jacqueline: We ask for hats with caps and t-shirts for the group leader that has the words of NiCash on it. Because people will see who are the members of nicash.

Antoine: I have bought fertilisers from nicash and that has prevented me from going to the post office and such. But there are many members who have not paid with niscash, they have made a mistake. The next season, there will be more members who will use nicash.

We ask if AUXFIN will look for blocnotes for the members of the G50. Vianney is not here to give away things. We are an enterprise. We are here to help you save and use the services of AUXFIN.

---

**19th of March Gitega**

**Kiribati-gr1 (randomly selected)**

*Group located 1,5 driving from Gitega centre. Only middle-aged men present, except for SA female. Were just recently reactivated and are not saving much yet. They told us that the tablet stays with Elias, who is secretary and also agronome, not the group leader.*

Name	G50 and role	Age	Gender	Crops grown with AgriCoach
------	--------------	-----	--------	----------------------------



Celestin Hakizimana	Kiribata-gr1, group-leader	43	Male	Maize and beans
Elias Cengera	Kiribata-gr1	35	Male	Maize and beans
Jean Marie Ndikumana	Kiribata-gr1	44	Male	Maize and beans
Severin Hadominana	Kiribata-gr1	55	Male	Maize
Pascal Mbazumutima	Kiribata-gr1	47	Male	Maize
Joel Ndiokubwayo	Kiribata-gr1	38	Male	Maize
Christof Niyonkuru	Kiribata-gr1	40	Male	Maize
Elias Sibomana	Kiribata-gr1	46	Male	Maize



Celestin, KA Melchior, Elisas and Jean-Marie

**G50 general**

### **What has been the most significant change in the group since G50 has been installed?**

Jean-Marie: it was not easy for us to get fertilisers before we joined G50. We longer go to have long cues at the post office. Now we make the orders together, and it is delivered nearby. Now the new addition that we like most is that the voucher is delivered on the hill directly. We don't even have to go far to collect the vouchers. This year it was much easier because of those vouchers. Also the G50 helped us to learn the good G50, and we have received selected seeds. We also learned about climate change in the tablet, so we know when we can plant our crops. The different season when we should plant and when not to plant. We also learned about COVID. Now we know how we can get it and how we can prevent it. So we would like for the UMVA project to bring even more services. And you helped us to get beans and potatoes. And also if we could access credit and could pay slowly.

Pascal: in the G50 we started at some point to put money together, apart from saving only for buying fertilizers. We collect money for small projects. We did not manage it though, but the initial plan was to gather money to help somebody if a person falls sick. But it collapsed because the G50 was suspended and it is just coming back to life now. Now that we are building back the G50 we are grateful that you are sending more people to help them to go to the couches and encouraging them to be present at the meetings. What collapsed was the social part of the G50, as not many people were attending. The money collected was to hire common land to practice agriculture. It was also to get small loans, because initially people could not afford to get fertilisers.

Celestine: why the G50 collapsed is because when we started with fertiliser many members joined in G50. But in 2019 when we ordered and the group leader had collected money, the vouchers came very late. And then when we were collecting the fertiliser all the same time in the area and it came late for the season. Because we're withdrawing one by one and quitting the group, we could now longer sustain the group. So we had to back and sensitize people and explain the whole problem, where it came from. We saw the difference this year, and everybody got what we ordered. And now it is gaining back in trust. We want to sensitize people to start saving for fertilisers much earlier, because mostly they wait for the last moment and also send the order at the last time.

Elias: It is easier when we are together to get seeds but also fertilisers. And also the fact that we have bought selected and we see the difference between those seeds and the ones we used to plant before. It is also helpful that we are being taught on good agricultural practices and now we plant on time according to the seasons. Before we were cultivating anyhow. We would cultivate on big plots and get very small amounts of harvest. But now even though the plots are small the harvest is big.

*(Note Jori: found out at the end of the interview he is an colline agronome...)*



*Elias on his maize plot*

**Why is it important to be followed up by AUXFIN? Is it to feel supported, to help with technology and coaches, or to be encouraged to do things?**

Joel: it is not only the information about the coaches, but this year the agents did a good job to bring the vouchers on time. We were able to pay on time and the group leader was able to bring the money on time, and bring the fertiliser on time. And also we are grateful because they visit us often and show us how to use AgriCoach and show us how we should plant earlier. So we are very grateful especially this year, because they were very efficient.

**AgriCoach**

**How is the information used in the group? What is the order of the discussion? Only group meetings or also other meetings? How long does it take to discuss AgriCoach?**

Christof: we focus on the 9-day forecast. And also the type of land and which crops grow on the right type of land. We discuss it in the meeting, but also when somebody wants to see the videos after they agree on when to meet, and meet on the field to watch the videos.

**What did you learn about the season and the right crop?**

Jean-Marie: we learn about the climate and the weather. We learn when to plant which season and which crop. We prevent waste of money for daily workers and when not to.

**Did you see the information where it shows in the coming months whether it will be wet or dry?**

We focus on the 9-day forecast, but also on the month forecast for one month ahead. That helps us, not only in agriculture but also other activities. When to dry crops, or to somewhere or not.

**What crops has the group been learning about?**

Beans and maize.

**Are there members here that have been able to apply AgriCoach information on their field? Can you explain what you did and how that went?**

Jean-Marie: before I used to plant 5kg of maize seeds and I would get 100 kg as maximum. When I used AgriCoach I have not harvested but I can see it will be around 3 sacks, which is 300 kg. I mixed compost and fertilisers. Before I would use one type of fertilizer but now I use different types of fertilisers. And I removed grasses in between the crops two times, before I would only do it once. And also I used selected seeds this time. That is why I am very confident in the good yield.

**When you saw the movies, were you immediately convinced it was the right way to practice, or did you think let me just test it and then I will evaluate if it is a good method?**

Jean-Marie: we saw that is very good and possible but it is also a very demanding method. We all saw it was good.

Christof: I also did it for maize, if you follow the steps as shown in the movie it will give you good results.

**How many members in the group are applying the information?**

30 of the 50 were able to try it out. Before the meeting we share in the group what we are going to learn about. We meet on Tuesday and discuss what we are going to learn about. If somebody is not available we send a relative to see by themselves how it is done. It is easy to learn AgriCoach, so even a family member can still receive the information, so they don't have to stay behind. The attendance goes between 20 and 30 in the meetings. But when he has specified we are going to learn about specific crops, nobody can stay at home. It is one person who has the tablet, so it is not available the whole time, but if that is the case others will have memorized the information.

**For those that apply the information have the means to apply all the practices?**

Celestine. We don't have enough compost. We try to supply it with vegetable compost, but it is not enough for all the plots that we have. We select one plot where we maximize the yield. That is the same for everybody.

Jean-Marie: the means are different. Some have animals, but others depend on the vegetable compost. But we are trying to sensitize not to burn the dry grass from the field to use it to make compost.

The vegetable compost is not enough. Even if the climate goes well we cannot say we have enough, because we still have that issue with animals. We would like access to credit to get animals.

**If you will not burn the grass and also collect all the household material, can that make enough compost?**

No it will not be enough. Because we don't burn that much. It will be about half of what we need. If we have 5 plots, we have enough for two even if we don't burn the grass.

**What part of the group has enough compost and money for fertilisers for their lands?**

Celestine: Nobody has enough compost for all their plots. The soil here is very fertile, any crop we plant here can grow. When we have AgriCoach, the compost and fertilisers we spread it between different crops. it. For example, if we have 3 maize plots, we prioritize one maize plot for AgriCoach and use the compost on here, the rest we use on our other plots. We try hard, all of us try to have enough.

**What other crops is the group interested in?**

We want to try potatoes in the valley. After checkin in the tablet and seeing that AgriCoach has every crop that we have ever dreamed about. Therefore we would like for the tablet to be shared more.

Jean-Marie: can you provide us with selected seeds for potatoes and other new crops. We struggle to get selected seeds.

**What part of AgriCoach is most interesting to you? What is it talked about most/longest?**

Celestine: we check the crop according to the season, the crop selection part. But the videos are most relevant.

**What other sources of agricultural information here? Is there a difference between AgriCoach and those sources?**

We have other associations, like tubura. And sometimes extension workers pass by. There is not much difference because it all talks about good practices.

**JEANNE**

**What do you think of filling in questions in JEANNE**

SA: the group leader fills in the questions. I have the tablet, and I ask the group leader the questions.

**Is it easy or difficult?**

Celestine: it is easy and understandable. I understand the reason for the questions, they tell why they are asking the questions.

**HealthCoach**

**Have you seen the new movies? What did you learn? Was there one part difficult?**

Jean-Marie: it was helpful because we hear about coronavirus but do not know how to do the measures. We have health workers to visit us every once in a while.

**Are you afraid of it, have you heard of any cases around here?**

Yes we are afraid, but there are no cases.

We applied the measures like instructing a washing station.

**How to build the stations, did you learn that from health workers or tablet**

The health workers taught us how to build those.

**What other diseases are relevant?**

Jean-Marie: Malaria. Bronchitis also. And diseases related to dirt are also recurring.

Also they discuss a back issue, that we don't know the name of.

And also eye problems. Even kids are being born with eye issues.



**What do you like about being a group leader?**

Celsine: I like it because I am part of the group and can present agriculture to many farmers and I get to benefit from it too. When it is time to deposit the money, I am happy that I don't have to go to the Gitega post office to deposit the money, and it can be done around here. Even for selected seeds when we order from somebody we get it easily here. It is a powerful thing to be in a group because we get things done quickly and more easily than when you are just one person.

Celsine: We are now facing issues with the selected crops, because they were told we would get hybrid seeds, but it is not really hybrid. The seeds we got from AUXFIN, we don't know if it is the weather but they are not really growing well. It is the seed quality we think. Everybody who planted that has this issue. We followed the AgriCoach.

(Note Jori:)

SA: People are complaining everywhere they are distributed of the quality. They don't know if this is the quality or the climate change. We want a different variety.

*Note Jori: leads to some discussion, some say it is the same, others say it is better, others not. Later on his field of Celestine I asked more specifically why because his maize was high, he said there were not many cobs per plant*

### **What other possibilities do you have to buy improved variety seeds?**

Elias: I am an extension worker, they give me money to buy those seeds. There are known places where to get it, it is all the way in Gitega. I go by foot 3.5 hours. Back and forth is 6 hours.

### **Recommendations**

SA: We have a problem with power on the tablet. We have solar power banks but even when we charge it does not charge the tablet fully. Sometimes we have to go to places to pay for power to get it charged. It is not only my power bank. It is all the tablets in this area. Also sometimes in the rainy season Also the network is an issue. Some apps require a network. We don't have good internet access. We have to go to different places to have a good connection to update the weather. We don't do it often due to lack of power in the tablet.

SA: there should not be any more delays in the delivery of seeds because often we get it late and it frustrates the farmers. Wherever we get the seeds from we have to receive them on time.

Jean-Marie: Now we are approaching the time to plant potatoes in the valley we would have liked to have already gotten the seeds. 3 weeks before the season starts. We requested potatoes but were told it was not available for the season.

KA: For the KA that represents the zone to oversee all the way to town, was hectic to get vouches. We have to travel a lot.

Vianney: KAs are getting bikes

Even the fertilisers we get is not enough for the season of planting in the valleys. We want to order fertilisers more often, not just twice per year. Because there are crops in the valley we would like to have fertilisers for now. But also if I could get access to seed potatoes.

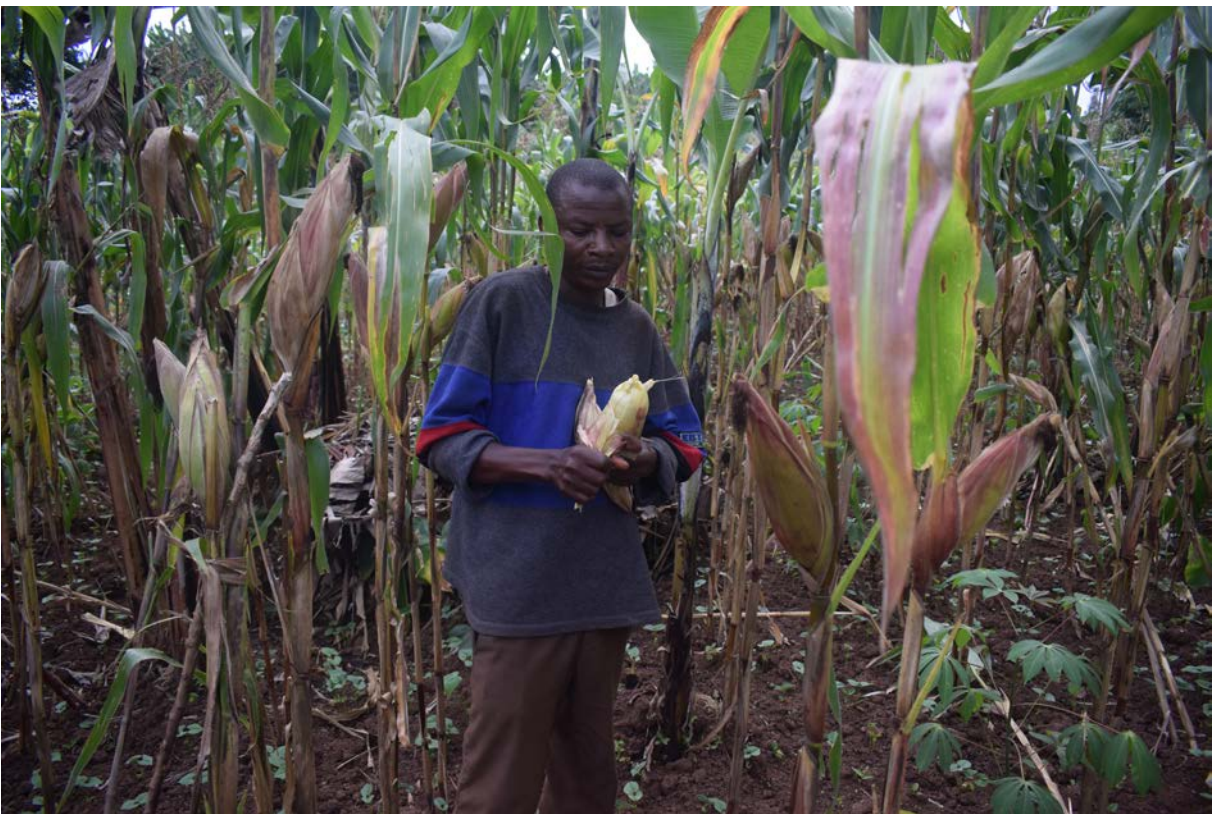
KA: we want to get short term contracts 3 or 6 months so we can apply for loans and develop ourselves.

SA: We are taught in the health coach about coronavirus. But when I arrive at groups the leaders can tell me that they don't want to buy the soap with their own money. So at least to be given the soap.

Vianney: AUXFIN does not just give away things as we are an enterprise and have many groups. it is in the interest of the group to organise these things like soap, all can put in a small amount of money.

We would also like new shirts. To be identified as part of auxfin. We will put those shirts on on labour day and walk around the commune. Since you have done that before you should carry on with that culture.

*After interview visited some maize and bean plots cultivated with AgriCoach*



*Beans and maize plot of Celestin*

---

### 3rd of march Kayanza: C-evaluation group

Meeting with groups that are C-evaluation groups . Interview with Nyabikenke-gr2 group leader and farmer.

### Nyabikenke-gr1 and Nyabikenke-gr2 (case-study groups)



Introduction by local administrator, SA senior Annatole, MA Immable, Jacques and Jori.

Group-members are asked to share their experience with G50:

- Female, around 40. Thank you for all the services. We have saved money to buy fertilisers. And showed us the right activities for cultivating. Now we get more yield. This continues to help us. We would like to ask to send the seeds on time because last time they were late. They came after planting.
- Female, around 30. We continue to be thankful to you. We have grown wheat and soya. There were issues with fertilisers as they were delayed. We hope to receive the fertilisers on time.
- Female, round 60. We have planted but erosion was a problem. Beans and maize are destroyed. Climate changed destroyed crops.
- Female 30. We planted soya. I realised it can grow in this area. I had problems with animals who ate half of the field. The yield was small but next season she will grow again. The problem we have is getting phytosanitary products, crops are being destroyed without it. Both tomato and wheat got diseases. We hope in another season it will grow better.
- Male, around 70. Thank you for all you are doing for us. And also for following up with us. I also had the problem of flooding, beans and manioc was destroyed due to the strong rainfall.
- Female 30. From the HealthCoach we have learned how to protect ourselves. We wash with soap and have built a washing station.

Cut by heavy rain. Moving to a nearby house to continue interviews inside.



## **Ceraphine Ndwimana - C-evaluation farmer of Nyabikenke-gr2**

### **G50**

*What is your experience with AUXFIN?*

I am happy receiving the fertilisers and Good Agricultural Practices. It helped me get a good yield. Also saving money has helped me get enough money for buying inputs.



### **AgriCoach**

*How are you applying the AgriCoach information?*

I am applying it on all my fields. The whole group does. I grew soya as a new crop with the help of AgriCoach. Other group members had started with AgriCoach before, but for me it was the first season to apply the information.

*What is your experience with growing a new crop?*

It has been a good experience, but I had problems with the weather. Half of my field was flooded, but I am still happy with doing it as I know it is the right way.

*Why did you choose this crop?*

I chose soya because I had always wanted to grow it. I had learned in school it is a nutritious crop. Now with AgriCoach I knew how to grow it. If not, I would not have known what to do and just use the same practices as for beans.

*How difficult was it to grow this new crop?*

I learned how to grow it in group meetings, where she watched movies and followed the calendar. The movies were easy, but I still watched all the movies many times.

*What do you expect to do with the harvest?*

One part I will keep for seeds and another part my household will consume.

### **HealthCoach**

*What information have you received in the G50 group about health?*

I have seen the movies about COVID-19, about washing hands.

*What did you learn about the Coronavirus?*

We learned about washing hands from the movies.

*How have you applied the information?*

We have built a handwashing station in the village. When going to churches or meetings we wash hands.

*How concerned are you and group members with the Coronavirus?*

We are concerned for it. Because we hear people are dying and getting hospitalized. If somebody has flu systems we will avoid them because we fear it.

### **General**

*Do you have any suggestions for AUXFIN or something to share?*

The group has a problem with getting animal manure, because cows are too expensive for them. It would help if AUXFIN could help with that. Even information in AgriCoach on how to mix chemical and animal manure. Also they were promised to get access to credit and I wonder if that will come to us. Access to credit would be a good solution for us, because then we can buy more land, get a higher production and become sustainable.

## **Dominique Niyonkuru – group leader Nyabikenke-gr2**



*Dominique left; photo from another day – field of a member of his group that used AgriCoach*

### **AgriCoach**

*How are you applying the AgriCoach information?*

Every time the group meets they discuss AgriCoach. Most of the time he will explain the information, but he also shows the movies. Last season I grew beans and maize according to AgriCoach. I am happy with the harvest. I am still eating from it.

*What has been your experience?*

We follow the calendar for beans this season. But there has been a problem with climate change, rains come when they are not supposed to. They follow the weather forecast, but decide what to do based on what they see happens.

*How many members in the group are applying the information? How many of the group would like to apply all measures but are struggling to apply because they have not enough inputs?*

All group members are receiving information. But poverty is a problem for a lot of them. About 20 people out of the 50 are struggling to apply the information due to poverty. They cannot afford to get fertilisers and seeds. They only get the knowledge.

*How has AgriCoach impacted your life?*

Before I used AgriCoach I did not get a good yield. I had to go to the market to get enough food to eat. Now my field produces enough for me to eat and I do not have to go to the market. I have not yet reached the stage where I can sell surplus from my land.

Another impact is that the problem of stealing has decreased. Before not many people grew maize and would steal from my field. Now more people in the area grow maize and get a good yield.

### **AgriCoach- CropSelector**

*Note from Jori: He did not know what the suitability symbols mean. He thinks it means how nutritious a crop is. He says he was not well explained on this page (but has good SA and KA). He says a video would help to understand. He knows the meaning of different grow areas.*

*How is the CropSelector discussed in the group?*

During the group meeting, we talk mostly about information from cropselector, more than the calendar. We look at crops that are relevant for the season.

*How useful is the CropSelector to you?*

It is useful. Out of the different information in the crop selector the Calendar is the most useful part. The varieties least useful, because we have no means to apply this information. We talk a lot about the P&D information, this is relevant. But the problem with the P&D information is we don't know how to apply the information, as we don't have access to phytosanitary products. And also due to poverty cannot afford to buy inputs.

## Seasonal Outlook

*How have you used the Seasonal Outlook?*

We try to follow the monthly outlook and look at the information.

*How accurate is the monthly outlook in your experience?*

It is accurate. We followed the information closely when we started to plant maize. Because of that they planted earlier and they got a good yield. Others that did not did not get a good yield.

*What is the advantage of the seasonal outlook?*

It helps in crop selection. If it will be a dry season we will select other crops.

## General

*Do you have any suggestions for AUXFIN or something to share?*

Poverty is a main challenge for our group. The way to go is long but we will get there.

## Maize field visit

Maize field from a group member of Nyabikenke-gr2.

Maize looks good. She was happy with the results.



On the way we also saw a bean field season B from a member of Nyabikenke-gr2, who has used AgriCoach. Well managed.



## Thursday 4th at Mutura UMVA Centre

### Muyange-GR1 (and Kigabo-GR3)

Interview with group-leaders and members of two new AgriCoach groups. In total 15 group members were present: 10 female, 5 male.

Group name	Name group leader	Age	Gender
Muyange-GR1	Pascal Ndinzemenshi	33	Male
Kigabo-GR3	Céléus Bakoma	59	Male



*Can some group members explain how G50 has changed their life?*

G50 helped us to get fertilisers and we don't waste time anymore. Before we used to waste a lot of time going back and forth to the office to pick of fertilisers, now we can spend that time doing our daily work. We give money to one person and this has helped us to save more time.

G50 has helped us to get good selected seeds that have increased our yield. They also learned how to read about climate changes. So according to the AgriCoach we can adjust the field and crop to the season. This has been improving the yield. Also we gain in getting assistance from AUXFIN field agents who help us in training for good practices. Right in the field they were following up with those activities.

Now the fertilisers are bought at good price, before to pay for fertiliser was more expensive as we had to be bought from a businessman. Now we can buy fertilisers at a cheaper price. For example we used to buy a bag at 2500 BIF from retailers, now we get it at 1000.

At the beginning after starting with AgriCoach we would go to the field of one person, to see the good practice in that field. Then we could do it on the field and go and implement it ourselves. We learn it all together in meetings.

During the meetings we start to talk about health hygiene mostly. We focus on how to have good hygiene in the household, like good toilets, places where we can put food waste, and how to build washing stations at home. So whenever we come home we wash their hands first.

After that we go to AgriCoach. They go through images, watch videos. Look at the 9 day forecast. We also look at the crop selector to see what crops are suitable for our land.

### HealthCoach



*Picture outside the UMVA Centre of washing station. Saw some people using it when arriving.*

*Where do you get information from about Health?*

We get the information from the group leader and also from the tablet. The initiative is from the group leader to talk about health. We start with HealthCoach and then continue with general hygiene. It started when malaria was striking in the area. It was a general rule in the community to talk about measures like cutting grass. Now we have added coronavirus information because they got that in the tablet. We have all seen the movies. If somebody could not read, we explain it to them.

*What have you learned?*

It has helped them a lot because we get to see distinctively what to do and they have applied it in their household. We also got some information from the radio on how to fight covid.

We also learned that whoever gets symptoms has to go to hospital and put into quarantine. Everybody should have a washing station at home. Yes, literally every household that is part of the group has this.

*Note Jori: observed in that town a lot of washing stations*



*Have you seen improvements?*

We have seen great improvements. Because now we can go a whole month without malaria. (note Jori: that is not due to HealthCoach application but is a result of G50 meetings). Also for COVID we protect ourselves better. There was one case of COVID who had symptoms and we took that person to the hospital. This person got tested positively, and the whole family was put in quarantine.

*What part of the HealthCoach was difficult or led to discussion in the group?*

Nothing was difficult. And the fact that everybody implemented the washing stations and washing hands quickly shows that.

*What are your HealthCoach recommendations?*

Besides COVID we wish to have material on how to fight HIV and malaria. Because those are a problem for us. Also information on birth control and family planning.

*What about nutrition?*

For nutrition we have people who have taught us to cultivate vegetables around the household. Nutrition is not a problem in this communication because mothers have been taught about nutrition. It is from the UNICEF Maman Lumiere project.

*Outside that, where do you get your information from regarding health?*

There are social workers on every hill that work with hospitals. They can give all the information they need. They have been given a thermometer to check the temperature. Also from AUXFIN agents and themselves hear about health from JEANNE. They get questions from Jeanne on health that they get to answer. Now increasingly the questions are about yield.

## **JEANNE**

*Do you like to answer in JEANNE?*

Yes. We find it helpful because in JEANNE they ask questions directly on what we do in daily life. It is not fictional, this is why it is interesting.

*We had fun explaining Jori was JEANNE.*

## **G50**

*Has G50 changed to social structure in the group, the way people interact with each other?*

Here when somebody has issues like they lose a family member the group will get together and contribute. Nobody can go hungry around here. If somebody needs something they can always ask in the group.

Before everybody was focusing on their own life. If there was a problem there was no help. Now we discuss it in the meeting. We discuss as a group the problem and how to solve it.

For the use of AgriCoach, even it is not the meeting they meet to get the weather data. Then they get to socialise like that. Another benefit is when they see it will rain, they can take that time for social meetings. They can have a meeting or pay a visit to somebody in the hospital.

## Seeds Marketplace.

*What is the experience with Seed Marketplace?*

Last season the AUXFIN seeds were very late. We wish to get the seeds on time. Those who waited were too late to plant and did not get a good yield.

## AgriCoach

*How many members have implemented AgriCoach on their fields?*

Everybody has implemented it in their field. It is true, not one person has not applied it.

We have seen a big improvement, because they use very few seeds but get better yield compared to before. All the members agree on the benefit.

*Are there group members that would have wanted to implement but could not get enough fertiliser and compost?*

The issue is that some can get compost but not afford fertilisers. Around here mostly we only can get compost, because that is all we can afford.

Sometimes we also share and save together and put together money. But that does not always work, when somebody has a big plot it will want the fertiliser and the one with the small plot is the loser.

*What part of the group will struggle to be able to get enough inputs, and what part will easily manage?*

In a group of 50 about 20 can follow whatever they have learned and get fertilizers. For the rest because of different resources it will be different. One can get compost, another not.

*How content are those who applied AgriCoach practices on their field?*

For the yield, recently they tried to measure the yield. They saw a big difference between those that planted without AgriCoach. Even on a small plot of land they can get 10 to 15 kg, before it was just some kilograms. The benefits are very impressive and we see it in the yield.

A suggestion is to help those who are struggling with no compost and few land. Can you help them to get access to credit? With credit we can buy land and fertilizers.

*Jacques responded: we are working on it and started with renewing the strength of the group. And in that they encourage money to start saving. And encourage them to be present in meetings and follow information on the tablet, AgriCoach or HealthCoach. There is an upcoming app on FinanceCoach, they will be shown when released. There is another app about leadership GovernanceCoach. All that is to get independent and get access to credit. For us we need to know you are committed members, you are in groups and attend all meetings. Once we know you are committed members, those who have saved, there is a fund in NiCash that is going to be given to champion groups, 2 billion BIF. Group members will get access to that credit. All the credit is dependent on how committed the groups are.*

*How many people are at the meeting? And can you explain how your group meetings usually go?*

Kigabiro I-GR3 - 2/3 come

We focus on social issues. We take most time to talk about any social issues and dig deep into that. And also we talk about hygiene issues. For AgriCoach as it is ongoing we mainly check activities.

Muyange-GR1 – all group members except those that are ill

We take one hour. We focus on AgriCoach. We get most questions about AgriCoach. Where to get seeds, how to grow etc.

*What crops are you following with AgriCoach? How did your groups decide on what crop to follow in AgriCoach*

Kigabiro I-GR3 Beans and wheat.

We consulted the calendar. We agreed on what is best for us, because right now it is the season for beans. Next time they are going to do wheat.

Muyange-GR1 Maize and beans

*Did you learn about new crops that are suitable for your land, that you didn't know before was possible?*

Kigabiro : We don't take risks and just plant what we are used to.

Muyange: I myself tried rice because I saw it in cropselector. It started growing well but at some point it stopped. I followed the steps from videos. It was looking good but there was no rice at harvest, no grains.

Both: We would be interested to try peanuts and soya as we have seen it in AgriCoach

*How does the group use the CropSelector?*

We go through all the tabs and read all the information. All the information is shared with the group.

*What is the most important type of information in the cropselector?*

The crop suitability, we take time for that. We go through the crops to see what fit the season and our types of lands. We discuss all together, what is most suitable for us. Now we decided on maize.

*Can you explain what the suitability symbols mean?*

It means when it is green, it is the right season. When it is yellow, it is risky.

*Suggestions for us?*

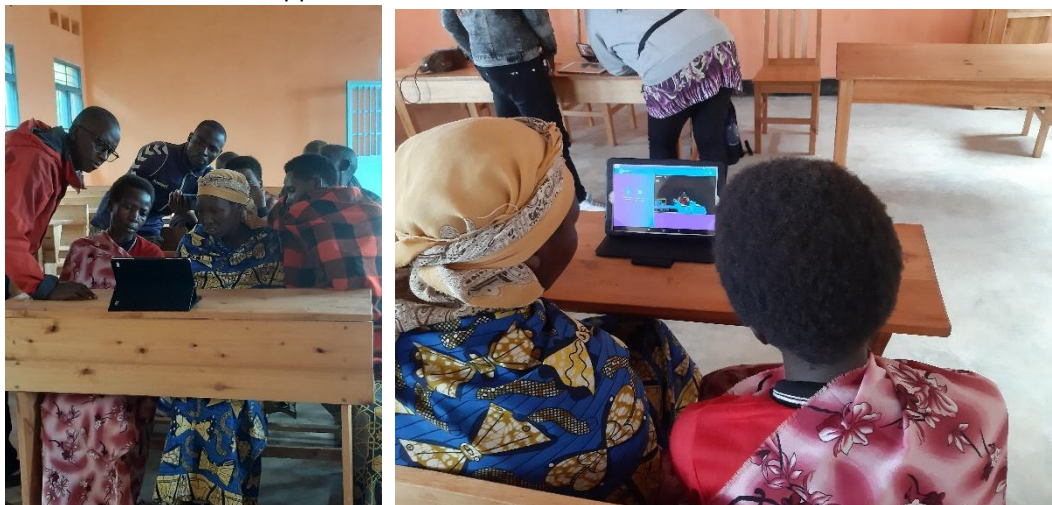
First of all we requested that in AgriCoach the weather is more accurate in preventing storms. We want to know accurately a few days before the storm.

We would also like to know what hour it will rain. Like we see on TV. Now it is just the day.

Also when we want to try to get new crops in the area. We want to get seeds to test. Only a small amount to test it on a small portion of land. We will take the group leader plot as an example a small plot of land.

If there is any workshop in AUXFIN it should not just be for KA and SA. Also involve some group members. Otherwise there is a great responsibility for this one person to transmit all the information. This will make it easier.

*After the interview the app for the woman conference 8<sup>th</sup> of March tested.*



### **Field visits of new AgriCoach farmers**

#### **Gertrude Nzeyimana**

Gertrude has been part of G50 for three years. Last year her group also received the AgriCoach with good practices. She has grown maize according to the recommendations of the AgriCoach. She used fertilisers and manure. Her field is ready to be harvested this week and she expects a good yield. She explains the plants are much higher than before and also the size of the maize cobs are larger.





**Nduwimana Jeanine**

Jeanine has planted beans for season B according to AgriCoach. She had problems with Pest and Diseases on her maize field. She found the information for P&D in AgriCoach but she still does not know how to solve it because she needs products. She still thinks AgriCoach is the right way to cultivate, despite this problem.



**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March.**

**Nyabikenke-gr1 (case-study group)**

Group-Leader Firmin and the evaluation farmers of this group (soya, wheat and tomato)



**G50**

*Can some group members explain how G50 has changed their life?*

Firmin: in the beginning it was difficult to motivate group members to join and be active. They did not understand the use. Now people see the benefit, and more people joined, because they saw the good harvest from others.

Also now we managed to buy fertiliser. Before it was expensive and not possible for us it was only 10 members who could buy chemical fertilizers. Now we started saving and all the G50 members can buy fertilisers. We have seen the benefit and it is suiting our needs. Even the poorest in the community can buy fertilisers, even though it will not be enough for all their land, they can apply it on a small amount

of their land. This season we bought a total of 164 sacks of fertilisers. Before this used to be about 20 or 30 bags of fertilizers. Now they are no longer cuing at the commune to get fertilisers. We send one person to get it. We don't have to go back and forth. Even though the fertiliser might come late, it is still better than before.

Although we easily get fertilisers we still have difficulty with getting compost. We wish to have animals and therefore we request to get access to credit.

Another thing we see is that saving money has become a culture. Every Thursday we meet and everybody puts in a small amount of money. We are not only saving for buying fertilisers. We also learn to save for other needs like to go to hospital. We have started to use saving for several purposes.

*How many people are at the meeting?*

38 or 40 people (Nyabikenke 1)

*Has G50 changed the social structure in the group?*

In the group we do not only do financial activities. We also gather to talk about social activities. We talk about health, among us we have social workers who work at the hospital. They talk to us about general hygiene. Also if somebody is sick we can discuss how to solve the problems.

Before it was difficult because everybody was busy with their own lives. If something would happen, we would not do anything. Now when we come together we can discuss and it is easier to look out for one another. For example, we have already contributed money to take somebody to the hospital. And if somebody is sick they gather and take care of that person's field, so that person does not get late in the season. We are also discussing education, how to raise our kids. If there is bad behaviour in the neighbourhood, we discuss.

We had very nice fields by the river, many people in the group had fields there. We had followed AgriCoach and then the field flooded. This happened twice last year. The last time before that was 10 years ago but now it has been worse as even the bridges were destroyed. That is where we were expecting our harvest from. We were not expecting those fields to be flooded. The water went miles away from the river banks and destroyed the whole fields. We wish to get seeds in the beginning of September, we cultivate maize and beans to get seeds on time. Also fertiliser we wish to get it on time, and it comes late all the time. FOMI came very late and all the people gave up on it.  
(we explain on why not giving seeds for groups to become independent)

### **HealthCoach**

*Where do you get information from about the coronavirus?*

When we received the HealthCoach we watched the movies and that was clear. We know what it is and how to prevent it.

*Did you get information on corona outside of healthcoach.*

The only source is HealthCoach .

*What have you learned?*

Washing hands with soap, many times a day. For greetings there must be no touching or hugging. And also we know that if somebody is coughing they have to take them to the hospital. There have been no cases in their area.

*How is the information applied in the households*

Everybody used to have a washing station at the house but they got stolen. But still some people have it. Even those one that have been stolen they tried to replace it. Also we do social distancing in churches. And they are no longer hugging or shaking hands. Even in churches it is forbidden to shake hands.

*What do you think of the HealthCoach?*

It came at the right time, as it was needed to fight against diseases. Not just corona but also other diseases.

*How many times a day do you wash hands?*

(Note Jori: leads to laughter and discussions)

Many times. We do it so often we can not even count it. In one hour they wash your hands twice.

*Did you not just put the station for social workers to see.*  
It is the truth we do it, it is important for us not to get sick.

*Do you have other HealthCoach recommendations?*  
Malaria, intestinal worms, Flu and coaching for kids, Information about health during pregnancy, like breastfeeding for women. Family planning

*What are the average kids per woman around here?*  
Three

*What about information on nutrition?*  
We have already started a program calling women out on how to cook and what type of food.  
It is the Maman Lumiere of the colline. The information is not well spread. Everybody has to go to the place to get information. It is good to centralise the information.

*This is upcoming in HealthCoach*  
(Note Jori: clapping)  
Very happy with that. We have many women, issues of nutrition come regularly so it will be good if all the information comes to the G50.

### **AgriCoach**

*How many members applied AgriCoach at their field?*  
About 25 apply it at their field. They are using AgriCoach because they have seen the changes from last season. Some part of the farmers applied AgriCoach for soya, tomato, and wheat.  
For the other 15, those are olders people of the group. They are resisting the changes. They are not interested.

*How many members are content with the result?*  
All the 25 are happy because even those who have a very small plot, when they apply it they see the quality of the maize is good. This season is very different from what they used to harvest.

*Are there group members that would have wanted to implement but could not get enough fertiliser and compost?*  
In fact everybody in this group is struggling to get compost and selected seeds. For compost we don't use vegetables. We must have domestic animals to get compost. The grass to make compost is limited.

### **CropSelector**

*How does the group use the CropSelector?*  
We look at the information in the crop details, but focus mostly on the videos. We let the tablet go around. We also focus on where it shows what crops are suitable. Sometimes we read all the information in the crops. But they want to rush the video. With video we understand it quickly in the images it is easier for us.

*Can you explain the meaning of the smiley?*  
It means it is suitable for a type of field.

*In the crop details, what crops have you discussed with the group?*  
We focus on what we are cultivating. We did not consult other crops.

*Can you tell something you learned from there?*  
Note Jori: Not much response,

*Did you notice any differences between the crop suitability between different grow areas?*  
Avocadoes cannot be planted in the valley, or pineapples. Or Fruit trees or bananas and wheat. (Note Jori: this is actually Dominique group-leader who responded, Firmin seemed not to use the CropSelector, got the impression his group mainly used crop details, as he also explains here above).

*How correct is the suitability information, if you compare your observations with the AgriCoach advice?*

Miriam: The information in AC is accurate. We tried tomatoes in the valley, and now they learned it was a failure. But we did that because we had no space, it was not recommended by AgriCoach. But we have to decide where to put the crops because we have no choice. But AgriCoach was correct.

*Did you learn about new crops that are suitable for your land, that you didn't know before was possible. What crops would you like to try?*

Dominique: peanuts, sunflower

Firmin: it is the same, we have never tried peanuts. Peanuts, people do not even know this crop.

There are crops in there that we don't even know

intengwa= pigeon peas

ibisunzu = yam?

Ibihoke = sunflower

vegetables

### **Seasonal Outlook**

*How has that been used?*

We focus on the weekly forecast. Most of it was accurate. We find it more useful than the seasonal outlook.

*If you know in the coming months it will be very wet or very dry, will that have added value for you?*

It is not accurate enough. It is kind of vague for us. If we could know it day by day it would be better.

### **General**

*Do you have any suggestions for us or something to share?*

We would like to be visited more often. For G50 the benefits are here so they can testify so everybody will see.

One tablet for 50 people takes time for everybody to assimilate. That will be much quicker if we have 3 tablets.

*A woman who was not in the meeting but sat on the side mentioned she was moved from one group to another. She is mad about that. They will look into her case.*

### **Field visits**

We could not visit wheat and tomato as we were told those fields are either destroyed by the valley or harvested.

### **Soyabean of Zabron Kana (not present).**

Firmin explained that it was the first time for Zabron to grow soya. Outside the group meetings they would watch movies with the farmers that were growing the new crops. There was no discussion about the practices in the group, the movies were very clear. But they wonder where to get soya seeds, now they know they can grow it.

The field did not look very good, the plot was crowded with many plants. The soya plants were not that large.



**Maize field of Benoit Ndereyimana – Nyabikenke-GR1**

AgriCoach user. The farmer was not there but the maize looked very good and well managed.



**Maize plot of Firmin Hakazimana – group leader of Nyabikenke-GR1**

Plot was very large and all looked well managed and healthy.



Hut of the guard who protects the plot.

