

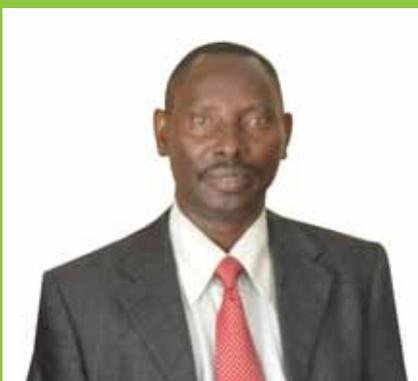


Networking for a Greener Africa

Issue # 01 May 2016

REGIONAL NEWSLETTER

Editorial Note



Faustin Vuningoma - Secretary General

Welcome to the first edition of our revived monthly newsletter. PELUM Association in the past had a newsletter and a magazine that were widely disseminated. Due to challenges with funding these publications could not be produced and disseminated. We are pleased to notify the public that from now on a PELUM newsletter will be published every month, and the Ground Up magazine will be published quarterly. The first edition will be out late June. The newsletter will inform the general public of what is going on in the PELUM family every month, covering news about PELUM Association and its engagement with different stakeholders. The Ground Up magazine will be sharing information of specific themes, and it will be developed in collaboration with the whole PELUM family. The magazine will help specifically to promote the ideals and niche of PELUM Association and will be a means of sharing best practices and initiatives among member countries. We encourage PELUM members, friends, partners and other stakeholders to enjoy the reading and provide feedback whenever necessary.

Registration of PELUM Ethiopia cheers the Region

On 27th April 2016, PELUM Ethiopia became officially registered with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Charities of Societies. This development has thrilled the Country Working Group in Ethiopia and the entire Pelumite Family.

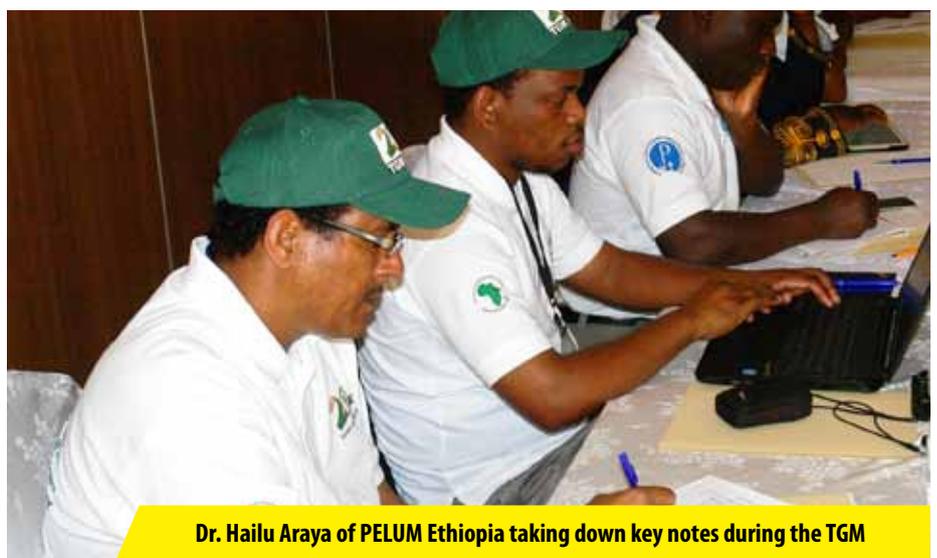
In his message of announcement, the Country Coordinator Dr. Hailu Araya confirmed that the PELUM Ethiopia is now duly registered.

He has since applauded

all the stakeholder that helped in entire registration process.

The Country Coordinator has also thanked the PELUM Working Group members in Ethiopia for being very patient, supportive and encouraging during the registration process.

Prior to its official registration Ethiopia was accepted into the PELUM family at the tri-annual general meeting (TGM) held in Lusaka, Zambia on 28th August, 2015 .



Dr. Hailu Araya of PELUM Ethiopia taking down key notes during the TGM

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Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Association

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Meet the new Regional Staff



Anniina Huttunen - Programmes Manager

“I’m from Finland, and I came to Zambia about a year ago to work with PELUM’s member organisation called Green Living Movement. While working with GLM we cooperated closely with the PELUM Regional Secretariat and I got familiar with PELUM’s operations and the interesting topics that it is working on. I was therefore very excited to shift to PELUM and I’m looking forward to contributing in building an even stronger network that serves the needs of small-scale farmers and strives for a greener Africa!”

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“My name is Kizito Mbepa, a Zambian. As a Journalist I have followed with keen interest the good works that PELUM has been doing to help the major producers food the small-scale farmers. I was particularly touched when I covered a story of a widow who said that her life has changed since PELUM introduced her to organic fertilisers which are affordable and environmentally friendly.

I look forward to a great journey with all the Pelumites.”

Finger millet farming restores food security in Zimbabwe

Following the devastating effects of climate change, associated with droughts, flooding and shifts in rainfall patterns, PELUM Zimbabwe has embarked on the promotion of finger millet, a crop that adapts well to variations in climate and rainfall patterns.

“Finger millet can thrive in poor soils with limited moisture and can yield more compared to other crops like maize under same harsh conditions, millet does not require a lot of inputs such as fertilisers and chemicals,” says Muchineripi, a Zimbabwean small-scale farmer.

Finger millet, like sorghum and other small grains, have been marginalized, when there have been a deliberate government policies of promoting maize as a food crop. It is however prerequisite that government policies also promote these other cereals in Zimbabwe and other countries in the region, so that people can be food secure.

PELUM Association will continue to push for research to generate tangible evidence to advocate for diversification of cereals other than promoting maize alone.



Kizito Mbepa - Communications and Information Officer

PELUM campaign against GMOs goes viral in Zambia

After PELUM’s Regional media briefing on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and other agriculture and food security concerns on the African continent, Zambian media houses took it upon themselves to blow out the boiling issue of GMOs raised by Regional Board of PELUM.

During the press briefing the Chairperson Mr. Joseph Ssuuna and other board members passionately appealed to African

Governments in general, and to the Zambia governments in particular, to disregard the request for trials of GM crops on the continent, and Bt Cotton in the case for Zambia.

In response to PELUM’S concerns the Minister of Agriculture Hon. Given Lubinda said that the Government of Zambia will not be compelled by any foreign company to hold trials of any GM crop.

Ssuuna: Accession to UPOV threatens Small-Scale Farmers in Kenya

The Chairperson of PELUM Association Joseph Ssuuna led a delegation of board members that paid courtesy call at Her Excellency the High Commissioner of Kenya to Zambia Sophy K. Kombe. Among other things, PELUM and the Kenyan High Commissioner discussed about Kenya's accession to the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) 1991.

UPOV was adopted in 1961,

seed companies and other big players in the seed industry over the small-scale farmers.

It criminalises the saving, sharing and recycling of traditional seeds which affects the rights of a small-scale farmer and compromises food sovereignty.

As a result therefore PELUM Association requests the Government of Kenya to develop by-laws that will protect the small-scale farmers and allow them to recycle their seeds without

sustainable agricultural systems.

She noted that if we spoke with one voice it would be easier to counteract the efforts of multinational companies to compromise Africa's food systems.

She recalled a time when Kenyans used to have their own fertiliser that was gotten from livestock and natural composite.

She also recognised Kenya's rich biodiversity and the need to protect it.

She however noted that the



PELUM delegation shares a light moment with the Kenyan High Commissioner

revised in 1972, 1978 and 1991. Since then only 5 African countries have accented to that convention.

PELUM Association thanks the African countries that have resisted the push to accent to this convention which distavantages the small-scale farmers that form the majority of the population.

UPOV 1991 aims at securing the plant breeders' rights and advantages the multinational

criminalising them - if they cant reverse the accession.

PELUM delegation also discussed the issue of GMOs, agricultural budget, and the benefits of agroecology.

In response the Kenyan High Commissioner to Zambia Her Excellency Sophy K. Kombe appreciated PELUM delegation's visit and the wonderful ideas of promoting an environmentally

multinational companies will keep pushing for their initiatives.

However, she mentioned that the President is in the forefront in the fight against GMOs.

She vowed to deliver the message to His Excellency the President of Kenya and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for appropriate action.

PELUM requests President Paul Kagame to promote Agroecology at the AU Summit

but the entire globe.

Significant among the reasons mentioned for regional recognition are the introduction of “one cow per family programme”, the introduction of “akarima kigikoni (kitchen gardens)”, the provision of decent shelter and inclusive health insurance, the promotion of alternative energy sources like solar and bio-gas and protection and increase of forest cover that helps in keeping Africa green.

PELUM has since humbly requested His Excellency to take the lead at the African Union and table the issues of food sovereignty and agroecology on the continent.

In response the Rwandan High Commissioner thanked PELUM delegation for the visit. He elaborated more on the programme that had been discussed and shed more light on what the government of Rwanda is doing in the Agriculture sector. He further promised to deliver the message to His Excellency for appropriate action.



Paul Kagame - President of Rwanda

The Regional Board of PELUM Association has paid outstanding tribute to His Excellency President Paul Kagame for the sound agriculture and environmental policies that promote the principle ideal of “Networking for a Greener Africa”, a cause which PELUM has been advocating for the past 20 years.

The President is also applauded for respecting the Maputo Declaration by the African Heads of State to increase agriculture budget allocation to at least 10% and grow the sector by 6%.

Expressing appreciation at Rwandan High Commission the Chairperson Mr. Joseph Ssuuna remarked that these achievements will not only benefit that country,



PELUM delegation sharing a moment with the Rwandese Consular

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