



CDCC, Democratic Republic of Congo

Eco-Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Training

Background

Lotumbe is a remote community in Equateur Province, Democratic Republic of Congo, where families depend on small farms and malnutrition is an ongoing challenge. The Disciples of Christ Community in Congo (CDCC), working with Australian partner HandUp Congo, wanted to bring proven eco-agriculture and animal husbandry skills home to Lotumbe by training local leaders who could then teach others.

Solutions

A Global Landcare Small Grant of AUD \$1,000 funded a two-day training of trainers at the Bolenge Agro-Ecological Center near Mbandaka in August 2025, led by CDCC trainer Laurent Kabuyaya. Ten delegates, eight men and two women, travelled 300 km by canoe to take part. The group had hoped to send 20, but new water safety rules require life jackets and the budget could only stretch to ten. The delegation toured the Center, the Epervier site and the Nouvelle Cité parish farming plots.

Ecological Agriculture

Trainees learned the four principles of ecological agriculture: sow on time, sow in rows, never burn or throw away weeds, and create joy in the field. They practised laying out 16 m x 39 m plots and growing cowpeas, including a Zimbabwean variety that matures in 65 days rather than 80.



Compost and Agroforestry

A park of 15 fertilising plant varieties supplies leaves for compost, mixed with cow manure and corn scraps. The group also toured pineapple plots, evaluated cassava varieties together and planted ten trees, using repurposed plastic to hold seedlings.



Food and Livelihoods

Trainees learned to make MASOSO, a flour blend of corn, sorghum and soy (3:2:1) that helps fight malnutrition. They visited a Village Savings and Loan Association with 51 members and savings of 3.9 million Congolese francs, as well as a chicken coop, a banana plantation and a stabled goat barn.



Moving Forward

Since returning home, the Lotumbe delegation has already started a new microfinance group for women, based on the savings model they saw in Mbandaka. Each trainee has promised to put what they learned into practice in their own community, and co-trainer Mandela Ekonyo bought cowpeas from a student to take home and plant. CDCC and HandUp Congo hope this is the first of many Global Landcare projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



10 Trainees



300 km by Canoe



1 Women's Group