THEATRE ARTS FOR DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ON WEALTH IN AFRICAN INDIGENOUS VEGETABLES

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The purpose of this paper is to show case how theatre in research and development (Th.I.R.D) can be used to disseminate the wealth identified in various natural and other resources during a research endeavour. Th.I.R.D is a communication tool that is rich for conscientization, mobilization and iconoclasm. This is a conclusion reached at after a research and performance on African Indigenous Vegetables (AIVs) in the Lake Victoria region.

This paper largely draws from a multi-disciplinary research carried out in the three East African countries that share the major landscape of the Lake Victoria. A team of five scientists from renowned research institutions in the region carried out the research. However this paper will only refer to the experiences from the Kenyan landscape.

The study made the assumption that promotion of AIVs will empower communities in general and marginalized groups to produce their own food and thus remain ensured of food security. The project assumed that AIVs have both subsistence and commercial value for the poor. Another assumption was that women play an important role in both production and marketing of AIVs and was thus a major target group.

To economically empower a given people means to ensure that they are able to own and be in control of the information given and can also make decisions on how to utilize it. Community ownership in this area has been lacking and the scientists saw the need to incorporate people not only during information gathering but also in re-educating them, thus in disseminating the generated information. The dissemination was done through Th.I.R.D a tool that they are already familiar with and identify as their own, the process of empowerment is easily achieved.