

Tuinuane

Internal Evaluation

Roy Mersland & Tuinuane team

Final report

December 2011

Table of contents:

1. Introduction and background.....3

2. Follow-up of the Allen evaluation4

3. Tuinuane in numbers.....5

4. Progress in Tuinuane compared to objectives mentioned in the project document9

5. Comparing results in old and new groups11

6. Testimonies from group members11

7. Tuinuane – first and foremost to boost savings.....12

8. The accounting system13

9. The start-up kit14

10. Field Agents15

11. MIS.....18

12. Old and new regions.....19

13. Annual General Meeting (AGM).....19

14. Planning of operational activities20

15. PYM.....21

16. Tuinuane and the FPFK church22

17. Growth System23

18. References.....24

1. Introduction and background

Tuinuane, is a Kiswahili word meaning “uplifting each other”. The project was started in 2005. In Tuinuane women (and a few men) are grouped into savings and credit groups (SCGs) with around 15-30 members in each. Tuinuane builds on informal financial traditions like the Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs) referred to in Kenya as “Merry go round”. In the groups the members intermediate their money through pooling savings and distributing loans among each other. No external financial resources are provided. Once a year, normally before Christmas, the savings, together with dividends stemming from interests on the loans, are returned to the members. Hence, once a year members are able to invest in assets exceeding their normal investment capacity. After sharing out the savings and resting for some weeks, nearly all groups reinstate a new cycle of savings. Tuinuane is implemented by the Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya (FPFK) and financed by the Norwegian Pentecostal Mission (PYM). The primary target population for Tuinuane is female community members living in and around one of the 1200 communities across Kenya where there are FPFK congregations.

Projects like Tuinuane have become increasingly popular during the last decade as such projects facilitate access to savings and credit services for poor group members, intermediate local financial resources (“get money out of the mattresses”), and facilitate the building of social capital among the members. For example, together with partners CARE International is currently aiming on mobilizing 30 million poor people into savings and credit groups.

While most SCG projects target specific geographical areas, have quite many staff involved and are implemented by NGOs, Tuinuane is different as it targets the whole country where FPFK is present, it has only five staff and a national church is implementing the project. An external evaluation carried out in 2008, by a World’s expert in SCG projects Mr. Hugh Allen, concluded: *“Overall Tuinuane has been successful and has achieved most of what it set out to do. It has proven that the model is appropriate to the needs of a traditionally hard-to-serve target group and the groups are sustainable”* (Allen and Nairesiae, 2008, p. 4). The evaluation also pointed to areas for improvement particularly in terms of increasing the cost-efficiency of the project. Based on the evaluation Tuinuane was redesigned and a new project document was worked out. As indicated in this project document Tuinuane is to carry out internal evaluations during the project period (2010 – 2014) in order to fine-tune the project’s design to

assure best possible project results. Roy Mersland has been involved in Tuinuane since its beginning and he has also facilitated this internal evaluation and written this report.

The internal evaluation consisted of reading available reports and studying recent literature on SCGs (e.g. Helmore, 2009, Allen and Panetta, 2010 and www.savingsgroups.com). During a 10 days study visit to Kenya around 30 groups were visited (not all individually as some joined in centres) and three focus groups with field agents were organized. I also had long interviews with the project's steering committee and with the executive board of the FPFK. Most important were long hours with the project's staff and especially with the project's leaders Grace Auma and Rodah Mutave. Generally the evaluation consisted of me asking questions and the staff (and the field agents and group members) providing answers. More or less all recommendations provided in this report are thus coming from the staff themselves. They are the ones knowing the project in depth. I have only served as a facilitator to get out their good ideas.

Personally I enjoyed once more visiting Tuinuane. I admire the eager and warmhearted staff and their efforts to improve the quality of life of Kenyan women. At the same time I have deep respect for the leadership of FPFK who have respected the autonomy of the groups while at the same time considering Tuinuane a ministry of the church. I appreciate very much to be associated with Tuinuane and strongly believe that the project makes a positive difference to the members as well as to the churches hosting the groups.

2. Follow-up of the Allen evaluation

The following table lists the main challenges mentioned in the Allen evaluation report, the main strategies for improvement mentioned in the project document, and the implementation observed and assessed during the visit now.

Challenges mentioned in the Allen evaluation	Main responses in Tuinuane phase 2 according to project document	Implementations observed and assessed during visit Oct 2011
Training of group leaders and only 2-3 visits by Tuinuane staff is not enough to assure group quality	Tuinuane will introduce local field agents. They will be incentivized locally by group contributions. Their role will be to mobilize and train new groups and to monitor existing groups over time.	The system with field agents works, but too few field agents have been mobilized. Also, the incentives for field agents need to be improved
The record keeping system is too	The record keeping system will be redesigned and simplified. Several ledgers	The new record keeping system works nicely. The scraped ledgers

complex	will be scrapped as recommended in the evaluation report.	are not missed. Some additional minor simplifications can be made.
There is an unacceptable lack of cash security	Increased emphasis on loans should improve demand for cash and thereby lower cash on hands (in box). Together with continued focus on opening bank accounts and keeping cash in the box, this should improve cash security	Cash security is still an issue though few incidences of theft are reported. Groups are increasingly opening up bank accounts. Members are recommended to open up individual accounts after share-out (end of year). Demand for loans has not increased but should neither be pushed in this methodology.
Return on savings is lower than typical elsewhere	More focus on business and IGA-training should increase demand for loans and consequently return on savings. Increased focus on and redesign of loan terms, simplified record keeping and continued focus on cash security should also increase the return on savings.	Return on savings is still under average for similar programs, but still on positive and satisfactory levels. The up-front 1% interest per week is an innovation in Tuinuane. It works for the groups and should be kept.
Cost-efficiency levels are in the upper end of industry norms	Redesign of the implementation method where the inclusion of local field agents will enable a steep increase in number of groups served without having to add much cost. Cost-efficiency levels in Tuinuane is now planned to be at the bottom end of industry norms	The redesign of Tuinuane and the introduction of field agents are now improving the cost-efficiency levels. If more field agents can be brought in Tuinuane may become among the most cost-efficient programs of this type.
The financial part of the monitoring system (MIS) needs to be reformed	Tuinuane will start using the VSLA MIS system (downloadable from www.vsla.net). Regular information will be gathered from the field agents.	The VSLA MIS has helped improve monitoring but there is still a long way to go. A new MIS based on the VSLA system will now be introduced.
Baseline studies are needed to measure impact	With the help of external local experts baseline and impact studies will be carried out based on sampling methodologies	The baseline study has been carried out as planned.

As can be observed in the table the strategy to involve field agents needs further improvements, the MIS is still a challenge and cost-efficiency levels are still not on satisfactory levels. During my visit to Kenya we therefore focused on these issues as will be explained in what follows in this report.

3. Tuinuane in numbers

Calculating the number of groups and members active in a SCG project is a challenging task and some argue that keeping track of groups should not be prioritized. They argue that what's most important is that people are equipped with the knowledge on how to initiate groups when they so wish and when

they so need. Thus, many places it has been observed that groups have re-emerged after several months or years of rest. Personally I think that if possible and if not very costly projects like Tuinuane should try to keep track of their groups as such follow-up gives the groups an incentive to keep up their work and to maintain transparency and high quality. Even more so I think this is important in Tuinuane since it's a church that hosts the project. Probably local Tuinuane groups and local FPFK congregations are reinforcing each other but they also risk being harmful to each others' development if not properly monitored.

Since Tuinuane don't have local staff, as other projects generally have, monitoring of the groups has, ever since start-up, been a challenge to the project. Different Monitoring Information Systems (MIS) have been designed, improved and tried out. After the Allen evaluation it was decided to install his MIS but this too has turned out difficult to practice and to adapt to Tuinuane's reality. I'll get back to the MIS later in the report. Nevertheless, with the Allen MIS it is now easier to do some initial assessments of the outreach and outcome of Tuinuane.

The Tuinuane staff knows that more than 550 groups are active. This is probably a conservative estimate. Only during my visit to Kenya around 20 new groups surfaced and several groups reported that they knew of other groups that had copied their system without registering as Tuinuane groups. Tuinuane also knows that between 10 and 11 thousand savings passbooks have been ordered in 2011. Since some groups don't use the official savings passbooks I estimate that all together Tuinuane has around 12000 members divided in around 600 groups. Of these groups Tuinuane has been able to gather information in the new MIS from 385 groups. Considering the design of Tuinuane (national coverage with no local staff) it is quite impressive to be able to gather information from 2/3 of the groups. Nevertheless, further improvements will probably be made with the proposed new MIS system explained later in the report.

Since this is an internal evaluation the focus is not on documenting results but on identifying areas for improvement. Nevertheless, getting a glance of Tuinuane by reporting some numbers is useful. Based on information in the MIS and in information provided by the staff I have estimated the main indicators in Tuinuane in the following table.

Indicator	Results
Number of groups	600
Number of members	12000
Percentage female	92%
Total savings	US\$ 720.000
Average savings per member	US\$ 60

Value of loans outstanding	US\$ 381.600
Percentage of savings loaned out	53%
Percentage of members continuing the next cycle	96%
Percentage of members attending the last meeting	93%

Note: All numbers in the report are calculated using an exchange rate Ksh/US\$ of 100.

Several lessons can be learned from the numbers reported in the table.

1. 8% of members in the groups are men. This is more than expected and more than the 5% planned in the project document. However, instead of reducing the number of men this should be further increased. As new knowledge is becoming available we now know that from a gender perspective women will not necessarily benefit from belonging to exclusive groups. We now also know that men are interested in participating in SCGs and can benefit from membership. In CARE groups for example only 77% of members are women (www.savingsgroups.com). However, I still recommend that the leadership of the groups should normally be kept by women. Such exclusiveness is needed to uplift the status of women and is similar to female quota systems which we for instance practice in Norway.
2. The volume of savings indicates that members put a lot of trust into the groups. The numbers reported are after only 6-8 months of savings. Annually members will thus deposit an average of around US\$ 100 in the groups. However, be aware that the average number is skewed since some members save more and draw up the average. I for example found that members' weekly savings varied from 20 to 2000 and their accumulated savings varied from around 8 US\$ to 1440 US\$ in the groups I visited. The median number is not available but my estimations indicate that this is probably around 1/3 to half of the average (between 30 and 50 dollars). In any case this is also high since an annual average of say 40 US\$ would indicate that a member puts into the group probably more than 10% of her yearly income (in cash). This shows how much trust the members put in Tuinuane.
3. A total volume of savings of 720 thousand US\$ after only 6-8 months indicate that the resources being mobilized in Tuinuane are considerable. However, at no moment should this lead anyone to think that Tuinuane should be more formalized and gradually be transformed into a financial institution (as some mentioned to me while in Kenya). This would totally harm the groups. It is of utmost importance that the groups maintain their autonomy. Any initiative to impose external structures on the groups should be stopped. However, members could be motivated to open up INDIVIDUAL savings account with local banks.

4. The focus on opening up individual savings accounts should become increasingly important in Tuinuane since the project practices a “time bound system” meaning that the savings are paid out to the members once a year. The share out of savings is important in a transparency and motivation perspective and should be continued! However, with money in their hands members might end up using it on less useful items. It is therefore important to continue the focus on saving with a PURPOSE. Members should be taught to set objectives and invest wisely their savings. Those without a clear purpose (or a purpose to build up some reserves) should be urged to open up their banking accounts and keep their savings there. However, we should always keep in mind that each member has the right to decide how she wants to use her own savings. Installing systems where savings are not shared out annually and where savings can be deposited and withdrawn from the groups on a continuing basis is not impossible in SCG projects. However, it is very difficult and in a project with national coverage without local staff the Tuinuane time-bound and savings design should be kept as is.
5. Those not familiar with SCGs will think that what members most want is access to loans. This is totally wrong. A savings utilization rate of 53% is typical for SCG projects (around the same in CARE projects, see www.savingsgroups.com). This means that only around half of the money is loaned out to the members. A higher utilization rate could maybe be beneficial for the members and the local economy, however at no moment should members be enticed to take loans. Borrowing from a local group, in this case a group attached to the church, without being able to repay can put a member in an impossible situation and can also have negative influence on the church. It is therefore important that Tuinuane continues to train the groups to foremost be savings groups and to only give loans to those members who can repay their loans. According to the staff they know of less than a handful of members who haven’t repaid their loans. Some may pay late, but the groups find solutions to assure that all loans are repaid. This is assuring and indicates that Tuinuane doesn’t indebt members.
6. With around half of the cash not loaned out the groups face a security challenge. The staff reports that the cash was stolen from one group. Though few incidences of theft it is still important that the project keeps motivating the groups to open up their savings account in a local bank and that excess cash is kept in the bank. Some groups have already opened up their accounts, and hopefully, as financial services in Kenya become every day more accessible also in rural areas, more and more groups will open up their savings accounts.
7. A retention rate (percentage of members continuing being members in the next cycle after the share out) of 96% and a meeting attendance rate of 93% (around 80-85% in Care projects) are clear signs

of how important Tuinuane is to its members. The ratios are somewhat higher than in other SCG projects (see the Care report “Bringing Financial services to Africa’s poor”) and I consider the ratios to be indications of the potentially high sustainability of the Tuinuane groups.

The next table reports the total and the average of basic indicators in the 18 groups I visited and gathered information from

Indicator	Total	Average
# members	442	25
Savings US\$	56631	3146
Loans US\$	21788	1210
Interests US\$	8416	467
Fines US\$	1203	66

The numbers found in the visited groups confirm the findings from the MIS reported in the previous table and present an even more optimistic view of Tuinuane. Average number of members per group is 25 and the average savings per member is US\$ 128. If the groups I visited are representative Tuinuane would have around 15.000 members and would all together have mobilized more than 1,5 million dollars. The loan fund utilization rate is a bit lower than in Table 1 while the profits (interests) are about the same level (percentagewise). Since this is not an evaluation of impact I don’t find it important at the moment to assess more in detail the numbers. What’s important is to notice that what I observed in the visited groups confirms the so far optimistic view of Tuinuane’s impact.

4. Progress in Tuinuane compared to objectives mentioned in the project document

The next table presents the objectives of Tuinuane as in the project document and the progress+ so far.

Objectives	Progress
To mobilize 640 field agents	100 are mobilized and trained. 16 have dropped out. Only around half of the agents have mobilized groups.
To mobilize 3350 new Tuinuane groups	Only around 300 groups have been mobilized since the Allen evaluation 3 years ago whereof only around 100-150 groups are mobilized by field agents
To mobilize 67000 Tuinuane members	Only around 5000 new members have been mobilized since the Allen report
95% of members should be women	92% are women
To increase members’ savings with at least 50% after two years of	The available MIS does not give exact information on this, but information studied in the ledgers of several groups indicates

membership	that members increase their savings with at least 100%. The comparison of old and new groups also indicate an important increase in members' savings (see information in next table)
To assure a net positive interest on members' savings	Available numbers from the MIS indicate a positive annual return of more than 15%. Groups are paying out dividends to their members.
To facilitate loans to at least one third of Tuinuane group members	The old MIS does not give accurate number on this. But the new MIS indicates that more than half of the members do receive loans. Likewise, looking into several ledgers while in Kenya it is confirmed that around half of the members do indeed take loans
To ensure the sustainability of the groups (less than 15% of groups drop-out two years after start-up.	So far 96% of groups seem to re-initiate a new cycle. This number might decrease somewhat but the objective of 15% should be within reach.
To minimize member drop-out from groups (less than 20% per year)	Available MIS doesn't give this number, but indications in the new MIS indicate that only around 5% of members drop out during a business cycle

As is clear from the table Tuinuane's system works and members enjoy participating. They attend meetings, they don't drop out from groups, they re-initiate the groups after share-out, they receive loans and they save. The most important indicator is that the members increase their savings over time indicating that they trust the system installed. As I see it Tuinuane has now proved the quality of its model and design. However, the project is facing one major challenge and that is growth. Until Tuinuane expands its outreach and thereby increases its cost-efficiency the project can't be considered a success nor can it be a recommended model for others to follow. The main focus now should therefore be on growth and all stakeholders, especially PYM, FPFK and the project's staff, should fully focus on assuring rapid and strong growth. It should though be mentioned that there are justifiable reasons why Tuinuane is behind schedule in terms of growth. First, the new design of Tuinuane with the inclusion of Field Agents was not put into practice until after several months into 2010. Second, progress was slow in 2010 because of challenges related to contracting of staff. Third, money from PYM comes late every year making it nearly impossible to carry out major activities during the first two months of the year which reduces annual production time with more than 15% (I'll get back to this later in the report).

5. Comparing results in old and new groups

While in Kenya I help design a new MIS and after returning to Norway the staff have already send me the first results. With this new MIS we are able to compare results in old (2nd cycle and beyond) and new groups. The next table presents some initial findings:

Indicator	New groups	Old groups	% change
Average number of members	19,5	21,5	10 %
Average value of <u>minimum</u> savings pr week pr member	63,2	64,4	2 %
Average savings pr group	71841	133068	85 %
Average number of outstanding loans pr group	6,7	12,8	91 %
Average value of interest made pr group	11125	14853	34 %
Average value of emergency fund pr group	2195	4606	110 %
Average percentage of members participating in meeting	98,8%	95,1%	-3,7%points

Though statistically it is wrong to compare data from different groups (should have been from the same groups) and keeping in mind that the numbers reported in the table are preliminary, the overall picture is again optimistic. On all variables indicators are going up (except attendance rate at meeting, but this is anyway very high) which is again an indication that Tuinuane is indeed having results in line with those presented in the project document. It is interesting to notice that the minimum savings requirement in new and old groups is the same. My understanding of this is that the groups, as they progress, do not leave out the poorest and allow these to participate. This is not obvious since it is often observed that savings and credit group can exclude the poorest. Again, this seems to be a strength in Tuinuane.

6. Testimonies from group members

While in Kenya I collected some testimonies from Tuinuane members. Many of them were related to items and assets they had purchased, how much they had saved, what business activity they had initiated etc. But many were also related to their overall “self-esteem”. Here are some of them:

- A widow: “Tuinuane is now my husband”
- My family now respects me
- Let them be blessed those who brought us Tuinuane
- Now I can even wear a purse
- Tuinuane has taken away our shame

- Tuinuane builds me
- Before we were small not we are proud for ourselves
- The group has covered my shame
- Now I can stand up before other people
- Tuinuane has build me to see me as a great person
- Tuinuane has given me leadership experience
- I thought I was too old but I was accepted
- Tuinuane makes us self-reliant
- Tuinuane is better than other groups because we share the word of God and sing

As illustrated with the testimonies it is important to keep in mind that Tuinuane is much more than money. In the academic literature we call this “social capital”. What seems to be clear is that Tuinuane helps building social capital and this dimension should be kept in mind when further developing the project.

7. Tuinuane – first and foremost to boost savings

Everyone involved in Tuinuane should keep in mind that Tuinuane is first and foremost a system to help boost savings (and build social capital). Access to credit and becoming involved in income generating activities are second. Fluctuation in income is a (the) major problem for poor people. Building a system where members can deposit and withdraw money whenever needed would therefore theoretically be the best, but in practice this is difficult though some groups allow members to deposit and withdraw money on demand. However, what members often do is that they take small loans from the groups to cover urgent needs. This is positive and should be motivated.

Another weakness in the Tuinuane design is that all savings are paid out at once at a time of the year where some of the members might not need the money. This is the downside of the “time-bound” system, but it should under no circumstances motive anyone to argue against being time-bound. It is the share-out at the end of the year that assures transparency and continued motivation. There are two ways to reduce the problems of being time-bound. The first is to stress in all groups that the members should save with a purpose. Tuinuane is already focusing on this and such focused should be further increased. The other measurement to reduce the negative effect is to motivate members to open up individual savings accounts in banks. Increasingly, especially with the help of M-KESHO and Equity Bank, it is now possible to open up savings accounts across the country. Tuinuane should motivate this. With a savings account where money can be withdrawn whenever needed the members will be better able to smooth consumption (which in practice means that they won’t have to starve some days when no money is available). Thus, Tuinuane is not an alternative to banks but a supplement to banks.

8. The accounting system

Since inception Tuinuane has had a simple accounting system for the groups. It started out as a simplified version of PACT's system and over time it has been made more and more simple, but still comprehensive. Some argue that accounting systems for SCGs are not needed (see overview in Allen and Panetta, 2010). I agree that accounting systems are not always needed, but in Tuinuane I think they play a very important role. Members often state that they trust Tuinuane more than other groups because of the accounting system. Since the groups are linked to the church I also consider it important that they can present their numbers to external stakeholders.

The accounting system now in place is very easy but still comprehensive:

- A savings ledger where each member's savings is being tracked
- Individual savings passbook where each member can control the numbers registered in the ledger
- A loan ledger where members' loans are tracked
- A balance table to balance the accounts after each meeting

While in Kenya we found ways to further simplify the accounting system. The loan ledger will now allow for more installments and it will also indicate the purpose of the loan. The signatures will be taken out from the savings ledger and the design will be changed in order to fit 60-70 weeks of savings into one instead of two sheets of paper. By doing so, the groups that start late one year can continue saving until the end of the following year (e.g. save for 15 months before share-out). This way the field agents can mobilize groups throughout the year and not only in the beginning of the year as most of them do now.

I further recommend that the ledgers include enough sheets to allow for 3 or 4 years of operations. For logistical purposes it's important to reduce the number of times the ledgers need to be changed. The savings passbook should however be for one year only as this serves as a way to incentivize the field agents and to keep at least annual contact with the groups.

9. The start-up kit

Groups are provided with a start-up kit which is quite costly. While in Kenya we therefore assessed the content of the kit and agreed on three important changes:

- Groups will receive fewer manuals since many cannot read and in practice only a few members read aloud for the members. And often many members don't understand Kiswahili. But a minimum of four manuals are still needed. Reducing from seven to four reduces the cost with around 21 US\$.
- It was agreed to take out the savings passbooks from the kit and make it mandatory to buy this separately. The reason for this is twofold; first it teaches the members that this has to be bought separately every year, and secondly it allows facilitating the field agents with better incentives (more on this below).
- Before groups paid Ksh. 200 per member in registration fee. This was a disincentive for the groups to register many members from day 1. In addition it made it very troublesome for the staff to keep track of paid-in registration fees. It was therefore decided that registration fee will from now on be Ksh. 5000 fixed per group.

With the proposed changes the subsidy per start-up kit will be reduced from around US\$ 40 to around US\$ 18.

The following table explains the details of the start-up kit and presents the proposed changes.

The content and the costs of the start-up kit Costs are in Kenyan Shillings	Old # items	Old costs	New # items	New Costs
Cash box	1	730	1	730
Tuinue manual.	7	4900	4	2800
Calculator, 1 per group	1	400	1	400
Locks, 3 per group, 100 per lock	3	450	3	450
Hard cover note book, 1 per group	1	270	1	270
Savings passbook, average 20 members,	20	720	0	0
Savings and loan records, 1 per group	1	300	1	300
Cash book printed, 1 per group	1	330	1	330
Total costs		8100		5280

Below, under the section about FPFK, I suggest to establish a separate bank account to handle all payments for materials in order to facilitate the longer term sustainability of Tuinue.

10. Field agents

The field agents are cornerstones in the new Tuinuane design. As the project reaches the whole FPFK landscape the project's staff should totally shift its focus from training and monitoring groups to training and monitoring field agents. The sooner this change can take place the better and already from 2012 the staff should dedicate most of their resources to support field agents. When working with field agents four areas are fundamental: recruiting and initial training, follow-up training, monitoring and incentives.

10.1. Recruiting and training of new field agents

Recruiting of new and more field agents should now have full priority in Tuinuane. One cannot expect that all field agents will turn out to be very good. It is therefore important to recruit many agents. Existing group leaders are the typical potential field agent, but equally important is to use existing field agents to mobilize new field agents. Being field agents should not be restricted to FPFK members but should be open for all active church members (FPFK and other churches). Also non-church members can be allowed to be field agents as long as they stay true to the Tuinuane system. At least twice a year Tuinuane should have intake of new field agents and training of these. At least one of the trainings of new field agents should take place as early as possible during the year. January would be the best so that the new agents can immediately start mobilizing new groups after having been trained.

What's most important is that the field agents are top experts in the Tuinuane system, especially the accounting and the rule-setting systems. The initial training should therefore first and foremost assure that each field agent masters the system. In addition the initial training should at least cover the following topics:

- The objectives of Tuinuane and how Tuinuane can help improve the situation for women
- Ideas on how to mobilize new groups
- How to relate with the FPFK church and pastors/leaders
- Setting objectives – how many groups to mobilize
- Problem solving in the groups
- Data collection in Tuinuane (how to fill in the forms and when and how to hand in these)
- Incentive system for field agents
- Contact person in Tuinuane main office and how to keep in touch with the staff
- Most important: the field agents should leave the training very motivated!

Tuinuane should prepare a systematic syllabus explaining the content of the initial training. The syllabus should include: topics, time planned for each topic, and methodology to use when giving the training. The initial training should not exceed 3 days.

10.2. Follow-up training

Annually Tuinuane should offer a follow-up seminar for field agents. Only active field agents, those that have mobilized at least 1 or 2 groups during the last year should be invited to this training. The main purpose of the follow-up training is to CELEBRATE results and to MOTIVATE for new efforts.

The follow-up training will typically be held in October/November as this is also the place where field agents can hand in the monitoring forms from all groups. The content of this follow-up training should at least include the following topics:

- Testimonies and experiences by each field agent
- Celebrate by giving prizes, gifts and awards
- Reception and review of monitoring forms
- Review the Tuinuane system to get ideas for improvement and assure that the system works and is well understood by everyone
- Introduce the Income Generating Activity (IGA) manual and how to use this in the groups
- Define ideas and plans for new outreach efforts
- Set goals for the next year
- Special topics (only one each year), e.g. dedicate one day to learn about e.g.
 - IGA training
 - Leadership
 - HIV/Aids
 - Literacy
 - Etc.

Here too, Tuinuane should prepare a systematic syllabus explaining the content of follow-up training. The syllabus should include: topics, time planned for each topic, and methodology to use when giving the training. The follow-up training should not exceed 2 or maximum 3 days.

10.3. Monitoring

Every field agent will have a designated staff with whom to get in touch with whenever needed. At the same time it is the responsibility of this staff to monitor his/her field agents. A special MIS for monitoring field agents was put together while in Kenya. In this MIS some basic data about the field agent will be registered. In addition the MIS indicates the minimum type of contact that should take place between the staff and the field agent during the year. The minimum follow-up activities will be:

- Annual training seminar (start-up seminar for new field agents)
- Annual visit from the staff to the field agent
- Minimum one phone call + additional SMS contact
- Reception of annual group performance forms

The MIS will also register the number of groups belonging to each field agent as well as objectives on how many new groups to mobilize during the year.

The annual form to be filled out by the field agents is attached in annex # 1.

10.4. Incentives

In the new model of Tuinuane field agents are core. Without active field agents that mobilize and monitor many groups Tuinuane won't be reaching its objectives. It is therefore of vital importance that the field agents are motivated to do their job. To assure motivation monetary incentives are needed. At the same time it is important to install an incentive scheme that allows long term operations without depending on economic support from the project. Incentives for field agents should therefore come from the groups and the members themselves.

So far the field agents have received 20% of the registration fees and the savings passbooks sold to old groups. This is clearly not enough and while in Kenya several meetings and discussions were held with the staff and with field agents in order to identify proper incentives. Our joint conclusions are as follows:

- Field agents will receive 40% of registration fees and passbooks
- Registration fee for new groups will be fixed at Ksh. 5000 pr group
- Like the members of old groups also the members of new groups will buy the passbooks at a fixed cost of Ksh. 100,-

- In addition the field agents can, and should, receive Ksh. 20 from each member every time she visits a group. This goes especially for groups distant from where the field agent lives.
- Finally, the business manual will from now on be sold for Kshs. 1000 whereof the field agent will receive 40%. In addition the agents will receive a copy of the manual for free

In a system like this a field agent following up 6 old groups with 150 members and mobilizing 3 new groups will each year get an income as follows:

	Ksh.
Income from passbooks to 150 members in 6 old groups	6000
Income from registration fee from 3 new groups	6000
Income from passbooks to 75 members in the 3 new groups	3000
Total	15000

In addition the field agent will sell business manuals and receive Ksh. 20 per member when visiting groups (especially distant groups costly to visit). All together this level of incentives should make it motivating to actively mobilize new groups and follow-up old groups.

To avoid mismanagement and corruption the following criteria should be followed:

- All payments from groups should be paid IN FULL to the Tuinuane head office account
- Incentives should be paid out only once a year, at the end
- All monitoring forms should be handed in before the pay-out of incentives

11. MIS

Monitoring progress is important. Not only to enable tracking the results in the project but to facilitate improvements. Particularly since Tuinuane has several innovative features it is important to monitor in order for us to learn. After the Allen evaluation Tuinuane started to use his VLSA MIS. This is a good tool, but it offers very little flexibility and its design makes it difficult to understand for persons not very familiar with standardized programmed Excel systems. A particular challenge is to monitor groups over time since the traditional VSLA system is only concerned with tracking the groups for one year and not for longer periods. Another challenge is that the system does not allow for tracking several project specific indicators like for instance number of group members that are FPFK members. Therefore, while

in Kenya I help design a new MIS together with a new form to be used by the field agents when they are to collect data from the groups. This is by no means a perfect MIS but I think we have found a format that will be easier for the staff to practice. However, as always when new MISs are to be introduced, the only way to assure use, and correct use, is for someone to monitor that the Tuinuane staff practice the system in a timely and correct manner. This is also needed in order to improve the MIS when needed. The form to be used for collection of information is found in attachment # 2.

12. Old and new regions¹

While in Kenya I discovered that a major challenge for the Tuinuane staff is to balance their efforts between reaching out to new regions which they do themselves, and mobilizing and following up field agents in the old regions where Tuinuane groups are already in place. With only 5 staff and one car It is a logistical challenge to coordinate across Kenya: visits to new regions and churches, training of new groups leaders, visits to new groups, visits to field agents, training of new field agents, follow-up training of field agents etc. etc. I therefore consider it very important that Tuinuane the sooner the better finish reaching out to new regions so that the staff thereafter can fully concentrate on mobilizing and following up field agents. It is only with the help of field agents that Tuinuane can reach its potential. During my visit in Kenya we therefore decided that ALL new regions should be covered by the end of 2012 so that from 2013 onwards Tuinuane will be fully based on field agents for further outreach and growth. To make this possible Tuinuane will make a careful selection of the churches in the new regions and assure that at least the most potential churches are reached. Later field agents can help reach out to branch churches and other areas not reached by the Tuinuane staff.

13. Annual General Meetings (AGM)

AGMs, where all groups in a district come together to celebrate their results, have showed to be important for the groups and for the related churches. Nevertheless, participation in AGMs drains resources from the staff. It was therefore decided to leave the organization and finance of AGMs in old regions fully to the groups and local field agents themselves. The staff will not have time to continue participate in the AGMs, even more so as there will be more and more AGMs as the number of groups

¹ Old region means a FPFK region where Tuinuane groups already exist. New region is a FPFK region where no Tuinuane group has yet been mobilized.

increases (geographical districts for each AGM will be reduced). In the new regions the staff needs to participate in organizing the first AGM but thereafter the organization should be left with the local groups and field agents.

14. Planning of operational activities

As mentioned, it is a challenge for Tuinuane to coordinate the many activities. The following table might be of help to plan the field activities:

Months	Activities	Comments
January – February	Reporting to PYM Seminar for new field agents AGMs in new regions	New groups will normally start activities early in year
March – April	Train all new regions (only 2012) Phone call to new field agents (to follow up after training in January) Train new group of field agents	All new regions must be reached To get more field agents I suggest a second training
May – June	Visit field agents in old regions and provide them with monitoring forms Phone call to new field agents (to follow up after training in April)	Important that the field agents get instructions on the need to hand in the monitoring forms
July – August	First visit to groups in new regions (only 2012)	
September – October	Follow-up seminar for all field agents and receive monitoring forms	I think also the new field agents trained earlier this year should be invited here
November - December	Second visit to groups in new regions (only 2012)	

To carry out all these activities all staff in Tuinuane needs to be active in the field. No staff can be left with office work only. Likewise, the staff must coordinate in detail so that the only car available can be used at its utmost. It is particularly important to plan so that never more than 2 staff are involved in carrying out the same activity. All seminars need many participants so that parallel groups of at least 40 members can be arranged. Likewise, visitations must be planned so that each staff can visit his/her groups alone with the use of taxis or by inviting groups/leaders/field agents to come to pre-agreed places. In general, Tuinuane’s leaders must dedicate resources in planning the field work.

15. PYM

PYM has been an excellent partner for Tuinuane. Dedicated staff have given Tuinuane close follow-up and PYM has been a reliable funding partner. In addition, PYM has been willing to involve external expertise. There are however some areas for possible improvements:

- Only small money is received during the first two months of the year. This makes impossible to carry out major operations during these two months which again reduced the “production capacity” of Tuinuane with more than 15%. If Tuinuane is to become a cost-efficient program this situation must be solved. This is particularly important since the most logical time for training of new field agents is in January and February so that new groups can start operations early in the year.
- Tuinuane is planning to become big. This can be challenging in a Digni/PYM setting where most projects are small. While “small is beautiful” can be said about many projects this is not the case for savings and credit group projects. They need to be big in order to become cost-efficient. Even more so for Tuinuane which can become a world example for church based savings and credit group projects. But this is only possible if the project becomes big. PYM should assure that they can handle this challenge within its organizational culture.
- PYM has not been able to use Tuinuane as an example and bring the concept to other countries as originally planned. And, only to a minor degree has Digni (Bistandsnemnda) been able to use Tuinuane to influence other mission organizations to install and improve projects applying savings and credit group methodology. Generally it seems that PYM and Digni have not sufficiently understood how big and how recognized the savings and credit groups methodology has become during the last years among both practitioners and academia.
- While in Kenya it was discussed whether Tuinuane could also get other sponsors than PYM. I would absolutely recommend so, but I still think that Tuinuane needs to be streamlined and strengthened before other external support can be expected. From what I observed during this visit my recommendation to PYM is already to plan for financing a third phase of Tuinuane, but details about this must come later since the project period doesn't end until 2014.
- According to the leaders of Tuinuane PYM has not been able to facilitate sufficient professional follow up during the last years. In many ways Tuinuane is still a pilot (innovative features like few staff, countrywide outreach and a church setting). It is therefore challenging to be leaders and managers of Tuinuane. The benefits of involving external expertise must however be balanced with the high costs involved.

- As a researcher I cannot avoid mentioning that it would also be very interesting to carry out more serious research on Tuinuane, especially on how the project and the church may be reinforcing each other.

16. Tuinuane and the FPFK church

FPFK has been supportive of Tuinuane. The fear that pastors would impede groups has turned out to be false. Generally pastors have been supportive and this is thanks to clear guidance from the Project Steering Committee, the FPFK board and the general secretary of FPFK. Increasingly Tuinuane is now considered a ministry of the church and not just a regular development project. I hope to see that this process continues. Tuinuane is really a Christian ministry.

I suggest that FPFK establishes a separate bank account for Tuinuane where payments from groups for materials can be handed. Such an account would receive all pay-ins from groups for materials. At the same time money in the account would be used to pay for all group materials (except the group manuals) + all incentives for field agents. The establishment of such an account would be an important step towards making Tuinuane sustainable in the long run. Considering that the cost of a start kit, except the manuals, is 2480 and the income from a new group is 3000 (5000 – 2000 for incentives) Tuinuane would then start building a sustainable “business model”. However, for such a bank account to be established it is of utmost importance that rules for its use are being put in place and that it undergo external audit. Likewise, PYM should be allowed full insights into the account and under no condition should resources from the account be allowed for non-Tuinuane purposes and co-signatures by the Tuinuane leaders should be required to withdraw money from the account. To assure liquidity in the account I suggest that some initial materials are bought with the help of PYM resources.

While in Kenya we discussed what could be the future of Tuinuane. I was very clear in recommending that never should anyone even think about making Tuinuane into a bank or a financial institution. Tuinuane is a movement consisting of independent autonomous groups. The future of Tuinuane should be to keep it as such and make it into a movement of thousands of groups. Don't impose external organizational structures on the groups. But what should be a priority of FPFK and PYM is to assure that Tuinuane can continue also when funding from outside (PYM and others) is reduced.

Tuinuane is now growing out of the FPFK churches and many groups meet in other churches or in the communities. This is positive. While in Kenya we discussed with the leaders of FPFK whether this can be a problem. The unison feedback was that this is only positive. Tuinuane should be shared with many

more. But, of course, Tuinuane origin is and will always be FPFK. Likewise, as mentioned above, field agents should generally be Christians and groups should be motivated to include “songs and praises” in their meetings. The staff of Tuinuane should also do their best to recruit as many field agents as possible from FPFK, but, of course, more important than church affiliation is the quality of the field agents.

My hypothesis is that the groups become extra strong and united because of the relationship with the church. Increased transparency, more motivation, improved outreach and a safe place to meet are all factors that I think the affiliation with FPFK is facilitation. At the same time, while in Kenya, I observed that not only is the church supportive for the groups, but the groups are also supportive for the church. During my visit I collected the following testimonies from church leaders:

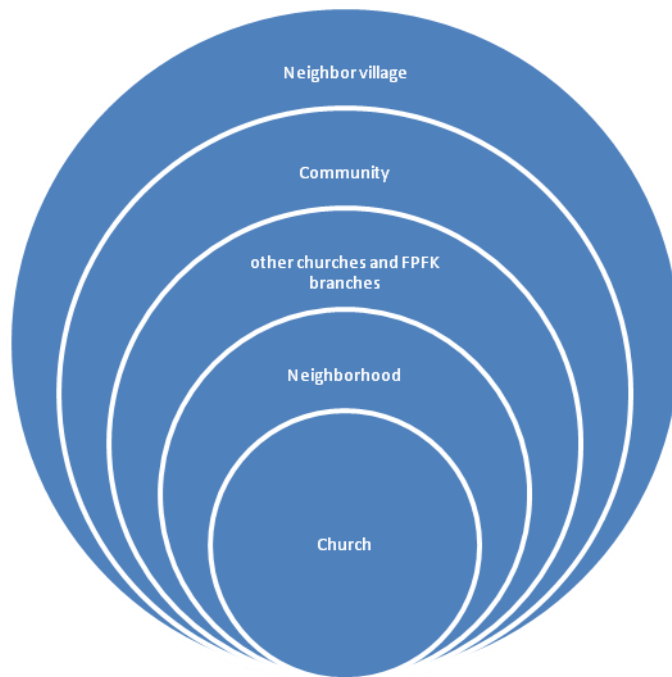
- Tuinuane boosts the church
- Tuinuane has changes some of our traditional Christian habits (long sleeves, long dresses etc.)
- Tuinuane has helped us to dig into the scripture. Before only Heaven, now also life on Earth
- Tuinuane provides the church with leaders
- Tuinuane helps to increase the income in the church (members increase their income)
- Tuinuane is a ministry
- Tuinuane makes the church more respected in the community
- 10 members have become Christians after joining Tuinuane
- Tuinuane gives the church members with more confidence
- Tuinuane makes the church more self-reliant and less dependent on foreign donations
- We cannot compare FPFK now and before Tuinuane. We have changed. We are no longer so conservative. Now we are more Christ like.

I don't know whether these statements are representative for all leaders in FPFK and I don't know whether the positive changes mentioned are so important in practice. Nevertheless, I find the statements very interesting and I suggest that PYM and FPFK continue dialoguing about how Tuinuane and FPFK might be reinforcing each other. Likewise, as mentioned above, these issues should be subjects for research as they are of interest also outside PYM and FPFK.

17. Growth system

While in Kenya I discovered that many groups were mobilized very distant from existing groups and from where the field agent lived. In order to understand better how Tuinuane should grow the following figure might be of help:

Figure 1: Expansion system for field agents



As illustrated in the figure field agents should first mobilize groups in the FPFK church and thereafter in the local neighbourhood. The focus should be on mobilizing groups close to where the field agent lives. Only when the local neighborhood has covered should the field agent move to other villages and priority should then be first on communities where FPFK has branches, but only if these communities are close to where the field agent lives.

18. References:

Allen H. and Panetta D., (2010), Savings groups: What are they? SEEP Network, New York

Helmore (2009), Bringing financial services to Africa's poor, CARE, Access Africa