

Project Update March 2021

1. Introduction:

The project started in October 2020 in Gogonya Village of Kitenga Sub-county, Mubende District, Uganda, and it will end in November 2021. The goal of the project is to increase the awareness of farmers in Gogonya Village about the technique of farmer-managed natural regeneration and improve their skills in its application so as to improve their livelihood resilience to climate change while conserving the native biodiversity.

2. Activities Done:

In the reported period (October 2020 – March 2021) work was carried out in both activities 1 and 2 of the approved proposal as indicated below.

2.1 Activity (1) Sensitization of farmers from village

We organised two sensitisation workshops in Gogonya, and 63 farmers from the village attended. The first workshop was attended by 29 farmers while 34 farmers attended the second. Out of 63 farmers who took part in the sensitisation workshops, 37 were male and 26 females. During these workshops, farmers were made aware of the rate of deforestation that is taking place in their area and the need for land restoration. They were also introduced to the concept of farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR) by watching a documentary video created by Tony Rinaudo, a staff of World Vision International. We also distributed 200 posters containing information on how to practice FMNR and 400 brochures containing more details about the project to the farmers. The posters and brochures were used to create awareness among the wider community.



Figure 1: Some of the photos taken during the first sensitization workshop © Jjemba, 2020

2.2 Activity (2) Training on Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR)

After sensitisation, we selected 21 farmers to act as champions in the implementation of FMNR on their farms. Out of the 21 farmer champions, 14 are male and seven females. We conducted five demonstration training events within Gogonya Village to train the 21 champions on how to carry out FMNR on their farms. The training involved practical steps which included site selection, identification of live tree stumps and naturally growing seedlings, selection of multipurpose tree

species for regeneration, thinning of sprouts on live tree stumps, protection of sprouts from livestock, and pruning of coppice shoots.



Figure 2: The project leader and some of the farmer champions during field work © Jjemba, 2020. Figure 3: A male farmer champion pruning a naturally growing shoot of *Albizia* spp. using a pruning shear while others are observing carefully © Jjemba, 2020.



Figure 4: A female farmer champion pruning shoots on a stump of *Markhamia lutea* while the field assistant is supervising her © Jjemba, 2020. Figure 5: A male farmer champion thinning sprouts of *Albizia* spp. on a farm of beans © Jjemba, 2020.

3. Challenges encountered:

- Some of the regenerating trees in crop farms have been sprayed with agro-chemicals such as herbicides during site preparation for seasonal planting.
- There are few fruit trees growing on the sites selected for farmer-managed natural regeneration, yet they play a critical role in rural livelihood and biodiversity conservation.
- Some tree stumps have a low sprouting ability especially those cut at an excessive height.

- There are some parts in the village which are heavily degraded and have no natural regeneration to begin restoration with farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR).



Figure 6: Some of the sites under-going restoration by farmer-managed natural regeneration in Gogonya village © Jjemba, 2021.

4. Future plans:

- We plan to continue sensitising farmers from the village about the possibility of practising this low cost technology of land restoration.
- We are going to promote cultural methods of weed control in parts of farms that are under restoration by FMNR.
- The farmers are going to be encouraged to embark on collection of seedlings from the wild for fruit and multi-purpose trees to supplement farmer-managed natural regeneration.
- Some of the tree stumps with poor sprouting ability will be removed and replaced with seedlings collected from the wild.
- We shall continue supporting the farmer champions in the carrying out farmer-managed natural regeneration on their farms and also identify learning sites that will be used in future to train more community members.

5. Conclusion:

Generally, the project is going on smoothly despite the few challenges that have been experienced.