

Project Update: August 2014

Activities: Forest tour and Cassia garden establishment

Forest tour

In an effort to determine the extent to which *C. fikifiki* exists in the project communities, a 3-day tour was taken in the forest, covering 6.2 km. Seventeen *C. fikifiki* trees of varying sizes were counted; all located in community forest of different types ranging from secondary matured to farm bush. No sapling was seen in the secondary matured forest, except in a farm bush near the district headquarters town (Garpue Town) of the project communities. The young pods or fruits are eaten by rodents and squirrels, making it difficult for *Cassia fikifiki* seeds to survive in middle of forest.

Garden establishment

Two separate sites, one for each of the project communities have been selected for *C. fikifiki* and other useful trees garden establishment. Selective brushing has commenced and five saplings of *C. fikifiki* were extracted from the farm bush along with eight saplings of assorted timber tree species and planted in one of the sites (Pohoe Town). Trial of stem and root cuttings to facilitate sprouting is also ongoing in one of the project sites. Interestingly, two young *C.fikifiki* trees growing from an old trunk were discovered in Zanway Town during selective brushing of cassia garden site.

Next activity

Expansion of garden; continuation of search for cassia and other useful trees saplings and planting into the garden.

Attachment

Three photos are attached; one showing selective clearing of *Cassia* garden sites; another showing planting of *Cassia* sapling in the garden while the last shows cuttings on nursery in bamboo pots that are used to substitute polythene bags.



Left: Planting *Cassia* sapling. Middle: *Cassia* cuttings. Right: Clearing for *Cassia* garden