

Project Update: January 2016

In our last project update, we announced the planting of more trees of varied species in the community seed bank. Coincidentally, this period happened to be the planting season having all the necessary favourable weather conditions to enhance the survival rate of the newly planted trees. Above all, the tree saplings in the three community tree nurseries were equally ready for planting. Community members on the other side had equally completed the fence surrounding the seed bank. Furthermore, the over 32 interested women farmers who were selected to cultivate the site before desired trees are planted out had as well completed their own task.

Complementing planned activities with action, we succeeded to plant out a total of 3,644 trees in the seed bank belonging to 11 different species and all acquired from the three community tree nurseries.

Taking a retrospective look on the precious activities carried out during the first Rufford Grant, we were able to provide two additional follow-up training to farmers on market development skills and modern bee farming especially with the acquisition of a honey strainer which is intended to be used in improving the quality of honey. Farmers in the different communities were also supplied with 100 additional bee hives which were all installed in the different community catchment areas. They have equally been linked to some buyers in nearby towns to market the different honey products especially bee wax and honey drink.

Also during this period, members of the Community Agroforestry Seed Bank and Management Committee were trained on tree seed identification, community mobilisation skills, conflict management, and leadership skills. As a fallout of one of these training courses, they were able to mobilise other community members in the different villages to carry out fire tracing around their various water catchments and more especially in the community seed bank site.

In the coming months, we shall be evaluating the impact of the project to the beneficiary communities in terms of livelihood improvement resulting from either the sale of tree seedlings or the sale of honey and byproducts to changes in crop yields as a result of the trainings provided on the different agroforestry practices.

Additionally, other adjacent communities to the watershed are expressing interest for project activities to be extended to their communities. In our next proposal, we shall be upscaling activities to cover all the eight different communities around the watershed with the intention to improve the general vegetation cover around the degraded watershed through the adoption of sound and best agroforestry practices. More farmers shall be trained on the different techniques of adapting to changes in climate and enhancing food production through the production and application of organic fertiliser otherwise known as “Bokashi” or fast compost on crop farms. This will likely reduce the use of agrochemicals in the watershed which eventually leads to water pollution.



From left to right: Honey Strainer used to improve the quality of honey; Indicating to participants how the agroforestry seed bank will eventually look like during the training of members of the management committee; Newly planted moringa oliefera in the agroforestry seed bank; Planting of live fencing along the plank fence at the seed bank; Transportation of bee hives to the different communities; Tree planting in the community agroforestry seed bank and Women carrying out fire tracing at the seed bank