

Project Update: August 2021

Introduction

Since October 2020, the activities of the project have been going on smoothly within Gogonya village of Kitenga Sub-County, Mubende District, Uganda. We are still implementing activities in line with our goal of raising the awareness of farmers about farmer-managed natural regeneration and equipping them with the necessary skills to apply the technique on their farms. Currently, most of the activities are implemented by the 21 farmer champions but we also ensure that the wider community gets informed.

Activities done

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

Activity (1) Sensitisation of farmers from the village

The farmers who attended our sensitisation workshops are continuing to sensitise other community members through a multiplier effect using project awareness material (posters and brochures). Field reports indicate that each farmer sensitises at least five farmers from the village each month through informal contacts.

Additionally, the project field assistant is continuing to sensitise other community members during farmer groups' meetings and other social gatherings. He also composed a song in local language that he uses to spread the message on nature conservation within the community.



Figure 1: A naturally regenerating tree of *Albizia* spp. as observed in October 2020

Activity (2) Training on farmer-managed natural regeneration

The project team is still monitoring the 21 farmer champions and other farmers from the village who are implementing farmer-managed natural regeneration and providing technical support to them where necessary. We also organise short training courses during monthly meetings on tree management practices and other land restoration techniques. We have also noticed a significant increase in size of some of the regenerating trees on the selected sites (see figure 1 and 2 below).



Figure 2: A naturally regenerating tree of *Albizia* spp. as observed in July 2021.

Challenges encountered

- The project area is experiencing a dry spell which started in mid-May 2021, and this is affecting our regenerating trees.
- Some sites have no or less natural regeneration, so farmer-managed natural regeneration needs to be supplemented by afforestation.
- Also, the country is experiencing the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, and due to this, we no longer hold field meetings, and this has increased transportation costs to and within the field.



Figure 1: Regenerating trees of *Makhamia lutea* on one of the FMNR sites. **Figure 2:** A female farmer pruning a coppice of *Makhamia lutea* using a pruning shear.

Future plans

- We are going to continue with providing of extension services to the farmer champions and other farmers who develop interest in our project activities.
- We will go on with encouraging farmers to look for tree seedlings from other sources to supplement farmer-managed natural regeneration.
- Monitoring and evaluation of field activities shall also continue within the project area.

Conclusion

Generally, the project is going on well despite the few challenges encountered and it is expected to achieve the intended goal.



Figure 3: One of the sites where the natural regeneration is greatly affected by the dry spell. **Figure 4:** One of the sites with less natural regeneration.