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TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

UGANDA SMALL GRANTS PROJECT PROFILES

September 2013



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Preface

Land degradation in Uganda is widespread and significantly undermines agricultural growth. Studies have estimated that soil erosion alone accounts for over 80 percent of the annual cost of environmental degradation representing USD 300 million per year (NEMA 2005). The Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) with the financial support from the Royal Government of Norway and the UNDP has accordingly been implementing the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) programme to mitigate the hazards of land degradation. This supports implementation of the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan sub programme on "Enhancing productivity of land through sustainable management of soil and water resources."

The Ministry promotes SLM as a strategy to building resilience, adapt to climate change and improve livelihoods of communities, particularly those in the drylands of the country generally referred to as "the cattle corridor".

In the 6 pilot districts namely; Nakaseke, Nakasongola, Kamuli, Kaliro, Sembabule and Lyantonde, Environment Action Plans have been developed at District, Sub-Country and Parish levels. These have been mainstreamed in the respective Subcounty and District Development Plans. Priority SLM community initiatives are being supported under the programme. The 24 Communities initiatives in this publication are some of the case studies arising from support to investments designed, managed and owned by local communities to address identified SLM challenges. This approach has enabled piloting of Conservation Agriculture (CA) practices. This involves among others, training and mentoring of communities on how to prepare "basins" and trenches to prevent soil erosion and conserve water during dry spells, as well as on how to integrate trees, shrubs and animal husbandry in the farming system so as to trap moisture in the ground, and on utilization of soil testing kits for improved understanding of the farm inputs requirements and more effective soil fertility management.

Conservation Agriculture was promoted to tackle the widespread land degradation associated with the continuous exposure of soils under annual cropping system to address soil erosion and the low crop yields associated with low soil fertility and moisture stress.

I take this opportunity to thank the Royal Government of Norway and the UNDP for financing the SLM Mainstreaming project and the other Development Partners, particularly the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UNEP for their partnership with the SLM programme. I also extend appreciation to all the Government agencies, and district local governments, CSO's, local communities, farmers and pastoralists who supported and participated in implementation of the activities.

This document is a consolidation of experiences of the farmers involved in the SLM programme and we trust that it will encourage other communities to adopt the SLM practices.



V. R. Rubarema

Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries



Foreword

As part of its contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Uganda is currently working with Government and various partners to strengthen national capacities to manage the country's environment in a sustainable manner. Uganda still has various challenges affecting its energy and environment sectors, which include a high population growth rate, a high dependency on bio-mass for energy needs and a largely rain-fed agricultural sector among others. These factors have resulted in declining soil fertility, degradation of wetlands, rangelands and forests, water pollution and declining fish stocks. All this, in the face of climate change, and its related impacts.

Against this background, UNDP's Energy and Environment work in Uganda focuses on climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives, enhancing biodiversity conservation, ensuring sustainable land management, mainstreaming environmental issues in development strategies and frameworks, enhancing chemical safety, promotion of access to renewable energy and, increasing energy utilization efficiency. As part of its work in this area, UNDP developed the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) programme to enhance economic development, food security and sustainable livelihoods, while restoring the ecological integrity of ecosystems, contributing to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the National Action Plan on Desertification.

Currently, the programme's activities are concentrated in the cattle corridor, which covers about 43% of Uganda's total land area and is home to 6.6million people. This area is characterized by serious land and resource degradation caused by overgrazing, inappropriate agricultural practices, invasion by termites and deforestation. As such, this programme undertakes activities at three levels: a) at the national level, to create an enabling policy environment for sustainable land management; b) at the district level, to address constraining institutional and capacity issues relevant for adaptation of SLM practices and; c) at the community level, to enhance community ownership of problems, causes, and solutions, and take appropriate actions so that land degradation can be halted.

This Grantee profile is a report on the stories of 23 Community Based Organisations (CBOs) that received small grants, of not more than USD 25,000 each, to address land and resource management challenges in their communities. These profiles tell the success stories of beneficiary communities, their leaders and of local governments' involvement, as well as the challenges they have encountered as they practised sustainable land management. It is also a guidebook that other communities of farmers and policy makers can learn from.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have been involved in working with us to empower the people in these communities to use their resources more sustainably, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and District technical teams in the project areas. Finally, I would like to thank the Royal Norwegian Government and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for partnering with UNDP to fund the SLM programme. It is my hope that this report will help galvanize continued support to community-based initiatives and national investments in Sustainable Land Management.



Almaz Gebru
Country Director, UNDP.

Introduction

The project "Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Activities in Six Cattle Corridor Districts of Uganda " was conceived under the auspices of the UNDP Dry lands Development Centre, financed by the Norwegian Government and implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries in collaboration with the District Local Governments of Lyantonde, Sembabule, Nakaseke, Nakasongola, Kamuli and Kaliro. The project aimed at mainstreaming SLM into district and Sub-county development plans and to support implementation of priority SLM interventions to improve livelihoods of local communities in the cattle corridor of Uganda. Whereas it was mainly a downstream project, some barriers to SLM were addressed at the National level, including revising the National Rangelands Policy and the Pastoral Code; and finalizing the Country SLM Investment Framework (CSIF).


At the district levels, a highly participatory methodology was employed to lead to development of Environment Action Plans at Parish and Sub-county levels, and later amalgamation and further prioritization of actions proposed in sub-county environment action plans, leading to development of District Environment Action Plans (DEAPs). The DEAPs highlighted that the commonest challenges for the cattle corridor were declining soil productivity, access to water for human and livestock use in the event of drought, access to energy for cooking particularly biomass in the wake of high demand for charcoal and a fast growing population, growth of bare land patches due to deforestation for charcoal, agriculture, overgrazing and settlements, leading to enormous soil erosion.

Consequently, in order to maximize participation at community level, enhance ownership and promote farmer to farmer innovations and cross learning among the primary beneficiaries who are farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists leaving in the cattle corridor, the small grants approach was adopted for implementing the prioritized interventions. Twenty four (24) Community Based Organizations successfully qualified for grants that

were given on a competitive basis, and proposals focused on addressing issues of use of improved agronomic practices for increased and sustainable soil productivity, biomass energy production and efficient utilization including use of alternative renewable energy sources like bio-gas, restoration and rehabilitation of degraded lands, and improving rangeland management for increased and sustainable livestock production.

Community projects were broadly categorized into 4 themes, although in most cases each grantee undertook activities falling under more than one theme to take advantage of synergies and achieve holistic development results. The broad themes included:

1. Use of Conservation Agriculture (CA) as an adaptation strategy to address declining soil fertility and frequent droughts. This included tillage, soil nutrient and residue management, agro-forestry practices, crop-animal integration.
2. Restoration and rehabilitation of degraded areas: This included mainly re-forestation, establishment of erosion catchment structures and other strategies that could cause re-growth of vegetation cover.
3. Production of alternative energy sources and increasing efficiency of biomass utilization: This was aimed at enhancing climate change mitigation actions; contribute to national commitments to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and to reduce GHG emissions right at household level. This theme embraced bio-gas production, establishment of fuel wood saving stoves and production of charcoal briquettes.
4. Range land improvement as a strategy to enhance production dry land products, including livestock, milk, honey and others that can generate income to the farmers: This included establishment of valley dams, water harvesting at household level, establishment




of pasture seed multiplication centers and improvement of animal breeds, so that fewer but higher producers can be kept on the same piece profitably.

Highlights and Issues for scaling up

The small grantee scheme led to the following:

1. Capacity for CBOs built to develop proposals, draft budgets and work plans. They also learnt financial management and reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation, knowledge management and some aspects of general management (This can be replicated or scaled up by continuing to call for CBO proposals wherever there is need to implement on-ground activities).
2. Women were empowered in leadership, marketing and food security (women now lead in their own groups and also in mixed groups).
3. Women learnt to make hay which reduced the need for “night grazing”, which increased their personal safety and ensured sustainable milk production in the face of climatic changes and variability characterized by more frequent droughts (This is very easy to replicate by taking other women groups to visit Tsubira Women’s group of Nakasongola and to promote domestication and growing of grass so the farmers do not have to wait only to harvest from the wild).
4. Recognition that despite the high demand for labor at the basin preparation stage, the method of planting in basins lead to tremendous increase in yield for both maize and beans. This planting method has been adopted by the sub-county leaders and productions managers who have since chosen to continue promoting it using the National Agricultural Advisory services methodology. The methodology has also been adopted by some NGOs promoting agro-production (It is also easy to scale up given that it provides tangible results that are of interest to the farmers, and it can be done quiet fast if it is promoted through mainstream government funded programmes and established human resources, e.g., in the NAADS programme).
5. Promoted famer innovation (farmers planned their own interventions based on inherent problems in their areas) and farmer to farmer cross learning occurred on several occasions during intra-district visits (this can also be replicated –as has been done with the UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) project on Pilot initiatives).
6. Acknowledgement by the Implementing Partner and CBOs that direct transfer of funds to beneficiaries eventually yields better results than does central management of project funds by the districts. Nonetheless, the district leadership and technical team must be part of the implementing team.
7. Learning that “kraaling”, a practice of collecting several herds of cattle to spend the night in one area for a given period, to allow them dung in the same area, followed by fencing to keep away animals, actually leads to re-growth of grass on areas that had been laid completely bare. (This can be replicated but should be combined with animal disease management plans).

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8. Establishment of food stores not only increases food security but also improves household incomes because farmers can keep their produce to sell when the prices are good, but also farmers can bulk their produce so that they can negotiate for better prices.

Conclusion

There is a strong body of evidence that SLM in different contexts is fundamentally strategic as one of the initiatives intended to halt and reverse land degradation, in this era of a quickly growing population, reducing arable land per capita and climatic change and variability. Whereas interventions to mitigate climate change are important, short term adaptation strategies are crucial to fix the current needs of the communities. The adoption of such adaptation practices however depends very much on the method used during introduction, the capacity building initiatives undertaken and the results in as far as solving the major needs of the people, particularly food and income security.

This was clearly evidenced in the introduction of conservation agriculture as an adaptation strategy to address the challenges of frequent droughts (water stress) marred with scanty yet erratic rains. The bottom up approach that involves farmer identification of their own problems before solutions are suggested to them works very well, and if it is coupled with direct support to those communities to try out or pilot the initiatives together with the researcher, it works even better. Given that farmers learn better from seeing other farmers do what they do not know, the farmer to farmer learning approach, reinforced with technical capacity building greatly enhances innovative adaptation of use of new technologies and practices, attaching value to environmental goods and services and willingness to invest in sustainable land management. With growth of personal and group decision making on investment in SLM, sustainability of use of the new technologies and practices is assured.

Finally given the multiple dimensions of human development, it is crucial that scaling up activities for proven technologies are done using a multi-sectoral approach in order to lead to holistic development. For example in the case of the SLM project under mention, the sectors involved in causing the results mentioned above include: the MAAIF, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Water and Environment (particularly the Meteorology department that makes weather forecasting possible) were all involved. This leads to development of entire value chains to the benefit of the farmers engaged and makes up-scaling project results to cover more areas more holistic, at a realistic and sustainable pace, self propelling and therefore more efficient. Documentation of lessons learned during the project period is crucial because that information becomes a baseline for other projects; the major challenge that remains is the translation to large scale coverage, basing on small scale fragmented and localized initiatives tried in single institutions.

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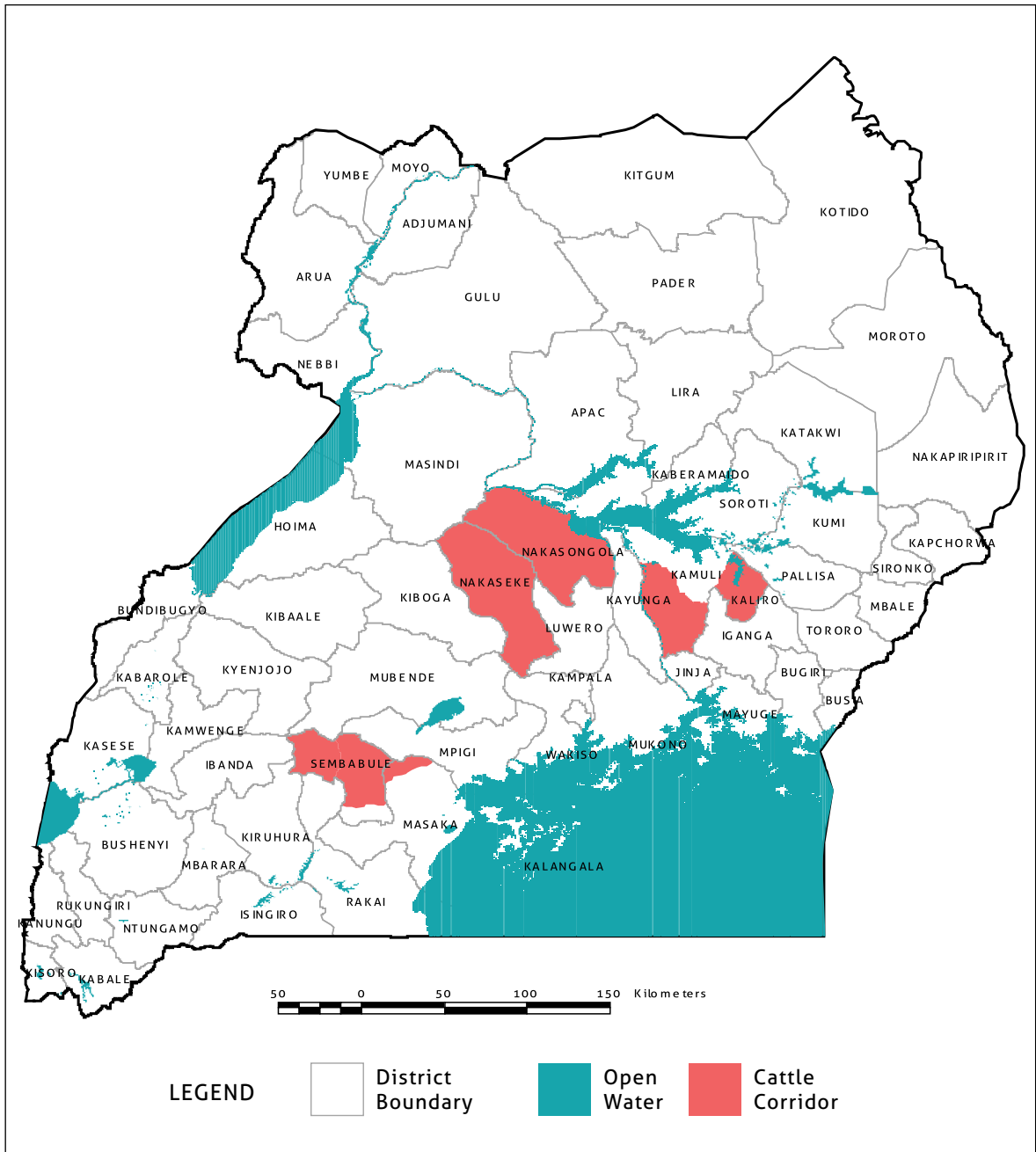


Figure 2:
Map of Uganda showing the six focus cattle corridor districts where the Mainsreaming Project was implemented.

STORY 1

Conservation Agriculture takes Root

Smallholder farmers realise their vision from conservation agriculture



Members of WACIDI pose for a group photo in their beans demonstration farm.

For a long time, inconsistent rainfall patterns and drought had caused a cloud of gloom over Jessica Nkonte who resides in Bumanya Sub-County, Kaliro district in Eastern Uganda. However, recently this changed following her practicing of conservation agriculture techniques.

With these techniques, which include careful planning and the wise use of existing local and natural resources, Nkonte has transformed a poorly performing plot of land into one where she is able to support her large family. She has also reaped her first successful harvest in over 10 years of farming. The new farming methods have increased yields without causing environmental degradation. Indeed, this comes in the wake of farmers in this region reclaiming wetlands for farming but facing the brunt of environmental degradation.


In response to this, in September 2012, Bumanya farmers were selected to participate in a rehabilitative farming effort through their

community based organization – Walwawo Community Integrated Development Initiative (WACIDI).

WACIDI is now spread over three sub-counties; Bumanya, Namugongo and Nawaikoke with over 340 members. The initiative is part of a joint project implemented by Uganda's Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), the United Nations Development Programme on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and funded by the Royal Norwegian Government.

The project is implemented in the cattle corridor in pursuit of environmental conservation alongside use of improved farming techniques for better livelihoods.

WACIDI received financial support worth UGX 55 million (USD \$22,000) from the SLM Project. The aim of these initiatives was to show that properly identified, coordinated and financed interventions



in different areas can bring change in the lives of Uganda's poorest communities in a manner that is sustainable and that can be easily replicated elsewhere.

Paul Mwambu, the UNDP programme Manager of the SLM project notes that when he arrived in Bumanya last year (2012), the community was desperate.

"The locals, though hardworking were not realising much from their sweat. A combination of exhausted soils and an unreliable rainfall had led to food insecurity at household level" said Mwambu.

"While we were training them how to grow crops in a climate resilient way, they were complaining about insufficient rain. We told them to get organized and started training them in conservation agriculture." Evidently, three months later, there was some improvement and results were visible. Augustine Walwawo, WACIDI's Executive Director, says when they received the grant, they sensitized members about modern farming techniques and then got into action.

"We would identify a group of farmers with an average of five acres and then plan with them on what to plant. Usually, it would be crops such as maize, beans, citrus fruits, agro-forestry or bananas," said Walwawo.

Thereafter, the farmers would clear the bush, make carefully measured holes called planting 'basins', apply fertilizers or manure and then plant three seeds in each basin in a particular pattern. They then applied mulching by placing vegetation and crop residues in the spaces between the holes.

Conservation agriculture uses planting basins as a way to trap water and store it. Moisture is then maintained by mulching in between the basins.

WACIDI members have now set up a 10-acre demonstration farm with maize, beans, citrus fruits and bananas. At this farm, farmers train in conservation agriculture and apply what they learn to their own farms.

Currently, the farmers are expecting over 200 bags of maize, from 10 acres of land, up from less

than 10 bags in the previous years before they practiced conservation agriculture. The proceeds from the sale of excess stock will be divided among members.

"This kind of farming brings very high yields. It is slowly improving food security and incomes in our homes. We believe poverty will soon be history," says Martin Musango, the Chairman WACIDI.

Tapeneth Mwita, 48, Nawaikoke Sub-County coordinator says: "I have seen a big difference with using this type of agriculture. Last season, I planted five kilograms of maize on half an acre of land and got a yield of 214kgs. Although there is a potential high demand for citrus fruits, they were never grown in this area until the SLM project kicked off."

Tapeneth's views are shared by many other members of WACIDI who indicate that they had altogether left farming in pursuit of other sources of income.

Through training, farmers have learnt counteractive measures against the unpredictable rainfall patterns including building water catchment basins around the farms, which can be used to store water (for use in the dry season) or to make manure.

At least 50 percent of all participants in the programme are women who are now economically empowered. WACIDI member, Grace Wambuzi notes: "I can now sell some of my produce to pay school fees for my children."

Although Bumanya farmers have greatly benefited from the project, some challenges remain; including the laborious process of digging basins in accordance with specific measurements as well as sourcing for manure and mulches for the pits.

Poor storage, transport (to get produce to trading centres) as well as a limited market are also real. This means that there is a reliance on middle-men or brokers who buy the produce at extremely cheap prices exploiting the farmers. Extended dry spells also pose a challenge threatening the effectiveness of the basins when water levels run low.

Despite these challenges, WACIDI members are optimistic and anticipate a bright future. WACIDI

Chairman Martin Musango says: "We look forward to the day we will have irrigation equipment to tame the prolonged droughts in order to increase yields. We also hope to form a strong cooperative society to help us market our crops better."

1. Profile of Walwawo and Community Integrated Development Initiative – Kaliro (WACIDI)

Name of Grantee	Walwawo and Community Integrated Development Initiative – Kaliro (WACIDI)	Project Duration	Three Months
Key enterprises being promoted	Conservation agriculture – maize, beans Agro-forestry – growing of citrus fruits Water conservation – construction of water tanks	Total of Grant Awarded	UGX 55 Million (Fifty Five Million Shillings) USD \$22,000
Name of Project	Agroforestry for Soil fertility management and increased food production	Number of Beneficiaries	95 Members
Background	WACIDI started in 1986 as a family organization under the banner of Walwawo and Family Mixed Farm developed to fight poverty through faming. The project's success attracted other community members leading to its registration as a community based organization. This later attracted funding from the International Development Association and later the Norwegian Government.	Project Challenges	Transporting mulches for conservation agriculture from the swamps is laborious Transporting produce to the market Limited funding amidst overwhelming demand Prolonged drought has affected some crop yields, especially beans Some farmers are slow learners and they slow down the project Members' products are stolen by thieves Late release of funds forces farmers to plant the crops late, which affects yields
Project Location	Bumanya Sub-County – Kaliro District	Project Opportunities	The project aims at setting up a learning centre for modern farming where they will be able to learn about modern farming techniques They plan to set up irrigation projects to help the farmers cope during droughts
Project Objectives	To prosper in farming so as to improve food security, to conserve land and the environment and increase soil fertility Growing citrus fruits to reduce poverty Increase crop yields by adopting conservation agricultural methods	Lessons Learnt	Conservation agriculture dubbed basins by farmers helps increase crop yields, soil fertility as well as conserve environment Retains water/moisture in the soil to preserve the land.
Project Achievements	Increased crop yields – especially maize and beans Established demonstration gardens of improved farming techniques Membership has increased since the grant was awarded Farmers have learnt modern farming techniques using 'Basin' farming		

STORY 2

Energy Saving Charcoal Stoves Drive Clean Environment

Bumanya farmers keeping healthy and conserving nature with energy saving stoves



Members prepare the mixture for making stoves

A group of people eagerly look on as Winfred Nabeta and Moses Kisaame gingerly craft a piece. Nabeta carefully adds water to a mixture of grass and clay soil while Kisaame molds out a round shape using a banana stem. Together, they are crafting an energy saving charcoal stove.

The easily available materials are all that is required to make a durable stove that plays a key role in the conservation of the environment by reducing the amount of energy (firewood) used and also the amount of smoke and toxins in the air.


Their fingers deftly carry on working as they talk of the benefits of the energy saving stove. Kisaame measures a banana stem carefully getting to a point where the size is suitable enough for a pot to sit upon. He then inserts a smoke exit pipe and fixes on a point where minimal amounts of firewood can be inserted. Within 10 minutes, the duo have built an energy saving charcoal stove, which will be left to dry and harden over a period of 28 days.

"These stoves cook fast because the clay walls absorb a lot of the heat and later release it slowly. They are efficient, clean and smoke free, which improves on the health of the user," says Nabeta as she explains to the onlookers.

She comments on how these stoves use little firewood or charcoal and this helps to conserve the degraded environment of Kaliro where almost every household depends on firewood.

The group of onlookers is made up of members of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) SLM project management unit and members of the Green Environment Development Initiative (GEDI).

GEDI is a community based organization that is helping the communities in Bumanya sub-county in Kaliro district (in Eastern Uganda) to conserve the environment.



GEDI received a grant of Ush 60m (USD \$24,000) from the Norwegian Government through UNDP. GEDI used the grant to build energy saving stoves as well as improve on farming techniques to increase crop yields.

The farmers' group members also pursue healthy environmental practices through conservation agriculture, afforestation, agroforestry and they establish tree nurseries in order to encourage members all over the district to plant more trees.

Wilson Kayabya Ampaire, the chairman of GEDI reveals that in 2008 concern arose over the rate at which the community was destroying their environment by cutting down trees and other vegetation for firewood and charcoal. They also used poor farming methods, which resulted in soil erosion and low crop yields that accelerated food and nutrition insecurity.

"We believed that if members came together, we could find solutions to our problems. We had great ideas but lack of funding was our biggest challenge," explains Ampaire. With the limited financial resources, GEDI had trained its members in modern farming techniques but they were not able to pursue initiatives such as making energy-saving stoves.

4 years later, in 2012, GEDI got a breakthrough when the Norwegian Government in partnership with UNDP and the Government of Uganda funded their activities. They immediately rolled out the construction of energy-saving stoves among the members and beyond the group.

The community got interested and requests for membership soared, from 6 to 41 members. "Before these energy saving stoves, I was using open fires that emitted a lot of smoke and this had a heavy toll on my health. I was weak and would feel a lot of chest pain. But these new stoves are smoke free. I feel healthier," says Nabeta.

Timothy Kunya, 46, another member of GEDI who has used the energy saving stoves says they have helped him to save some money because they use less charcoal. "I used to buy two sacks of charcoal every two months but now I use only one sack

every three months," he says, adding that he has channeled the money he used to spend on buying extra charcoal into paying school fees for his children.

As a member of GEDI, Kunya was trained in conservation agriculture. In this method, members are trained to make pits, also known as planting 'basins', for growing their maize and beans. They learn to measure the basins carefully, planting three or four seeds in each and adding manure or fertilizers to increase yields.

Kunya has learnt that the basins help to retain moisture in the land and therefore increase its productivity. Kunya mulches the land, using dry and old vegetation in between the basin rows to increase fertility and retain moisture.

He has also learnt to use herbicides to weed his garden instead of a hoe, thereby retaining all the soil fertility. He has learnt to use improved seeds that have significantly improved his yields.

"The difference between basins and the conventional methods of farming is too great. The maize I have grown in the basins is greener and has higher yields," says Kunya who has planted 70kgs of maize on his seven acres of land and expects to harvest 150 bags of maize. "In the past, I would plant 70kgs of maize and get a mere 50 bags or nothing."

In accordance with its environmental protection goals, the GEDI project has also distributed over 5,600 tree seedlings to its members. This is aimed at restoring the degraded environment in Kaliro. The members have restored over 10 hectares of degraded land that had completely become bare. In addition to this, 15 households were supported to construct water harvesting tanks in Kaliro, in the process equipping 6 men and 2 women with skills of water tank construction.

However, amidst the success, the project faces challenges. Kayabya complained of gender prejudice in the community with some men not allowing their wives to be part of the project, so they remain ignorant. Farmers are also reluctant to attend training sessions consistently yet they

learn through such trainings. GEDI plans to recruit more members and looks forward to constructing a storage facility or silo for members' harvest so that they are able to market their produce collectively at a reasonably better price all year round.

To date, over 5000 energy saving stoves have been built in Bumanya sub-county and GEDI plans to commercialise stove construction. This is however, just the start of a journey to a clean environment, which can support increased yields and ultimately self-sustaining successful farmers.

2. Profile of Green Environment Development Initiative (GEDI)

Name of Project	Amount of Grant Received
Tree Planting for better Nutrition	UGX 60 Million (Sixty Million Shillings Only)
Key Enterprises Promoted	USD \$24,000
Conservation agriculture – maize, beans	Number of Project Members
Afforestation – tree planting by setting up nursery beds	41 Members Only
Piggery rearing	Number of Beneficiaries
Agroforestry – citrus fruits (Mangoes and Oranges)	41 Members Only
Energy saving stoves – over 5,000 stoves made	Project Activities
Background	Conservation agriculture – growing of beans and maize
GEDI started in 2008 with only six members. In 2009, the group got registered as a community based organization. The group's target was to acquire better farming and environmental conservation skills.	Energy saving stoves – over 5,000 made so far
Project Location	Afforestation – over 5,600 trees planted by members
Bumanya sub-county – Kaliro District – Eastern Uganda	Agroforestry – over 15,000 citrus fruits grown
Project Objectives	Tree nursery establishment
Working together as a farming group to increase crop yields and reduce poverty	Farming and water harvesting.
Educating members to use modern farming techniques to increase profits	Pig farming and water harvesting.
Coming together to get market for their products as well as increasing bargaining power	Project Challenges
Project Achievements	Some farmers are slow learners, thus delaying the implementation of some of the farming methods
10 hectares of degraded shore area have been restored through tree-planting	There is limited land resource
Over 5,000 energy saving stoves have been made	Family conflicts among some family members where husbands forbid their wives from being part of the project
Training of over 10 households in water harvesting by constructing tanks	Inadequate funding
15,000 citrus fruit trees given to the farmers	Project Opportunities
Establishment of tree nursery in Kaliro Town Council	Recruit more members and encourage them to practice conservation agriculture
At first the group was made up of only the youth, but the older members of the community have joined in.	After harvesting the crops, members want to build a facility for proper storage of their surplus crops
Project duration	Their target is to expand to the four sub-counties of Kaliro district
Three Months	Lessons learned
Total of Grant Awarded	Energy saving stoves are cheap to make because the raw materials used are locally sourced
UGX 60 Million (Sixty Million Shillings Only)	The stoves guarantee good health for users
USD \$24,000	They use less firewood because they absorb heat, thus enabling the community to use less firewood.
	Conservation agriculture increases soil fertility leading to a bumper harvest

STORY 3

Twalibanafu Farmers Association

we were lazy and divided but now.... we are shining



John Waako, Twalibanafu's secretary shows off their citrus fruits under conservation farming

When one travels to Bukulabwire village, in the Namugongo sub-county of Kaliro district of Eastern Uganda, the eye is met by healthy farms and lush young forests.

This mainly is as a result of the collective efforts of the Twalibanafu Farmers Association. The irony is that the word 'Twalibanafu' (translated in some local dialects) means 'We were lazy' and not united. That was in the past. The present is brighter and more promising.

The 'Twalibanafu' farmers Association was initiated in 2007 and has grown to 31 members from the community who are involved in banana, maize, citrus and bean farming, as well as pig rearing. These farmers have improved their farming skills through the application of modern agricultural conservation techniques.

The skills were acquired as a result of the SLM project funded by the Royal Norwegian Government and


implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

In February 2012, the UNDP through the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) programme funded Twalibanafu Farmers Association's proposal to improve land productivity through integrating livestock.

Rose Kisakye, the Chairperson of the Association revealed that the Bukulabwire community was weak and divided due to lack of a common goal or unifying factor.

Four farmers later started this community based Association in pursuit of collective action to improve the returns of farmers from farming. Skills, resources and information, however, remained a challenge.

"When UNDP came in to help us, everything changed. They trained us in modern conservation



agriculture skills and ways in which we could conserve our environment. We learned how to maximize land use as well as increase our yields," says John Waako the Association's Secretary.

Over time, the Bukulabwire farmers picked on different farming skills. According to Waako, "in the past, I wasted land. I planted crops on a very large piece of land but got a miserable harvest."

Now, armed with better skills and knowledge on how to maximize land use and the requirements for increased yields, Waako is one of many farmers who are reaping the benefits of this project.

A key component of the project is conservation agriculture, where farmers are encouraged to use mulch, animal manure and shrubbery placed into dug-out 'basins' or pits, which surround the plants.

The basins trap, collect and retain water, while the mulch traps moisture around the base of the plant and protects soil from direct raindrops and rots to fertilise the soil.

"During the first season as I started out to practice this method, I planted just 5kgs of maize and got 450kgs. In the past, I would plant 10kgs but get about 50kgs or less," notes Waako.

The Association also bought improved cattle breeds from which they get farm yard manure and milk. Members are also set to construct improved shelters for the cows and practice zero grazing to ensure high yields.

Helen Mirembe, 30, a member of the Association, received a heifer through the project. Mirembe believes the SLM project is invaluable to poor

farmers as it gives them hope. "The poorest of the poor can also get rich. This heifer will provide me with milk and income," she says with a broad smile.

Under this initiative, whenever a cow produces a female calf, it is given to the next member. The practice continues until each member has a cow of their own. Some members have also received piglets, which they raise for sale locally but also use the manure to maintain productivity of their land.

Kisakye owns about 10 piglets in her shelter, which she hopes to fatten and sell to raise school fees for her children and also construct a house.

She is also counting on the 1,000 citrus fruit trees managed using conservation agriculture techniques in her backyard. "I hope that members will learn and translate the skills they learn into practical work," she says of the demonstration farm at her home.

The Association has made steadfast growth despite challenges like difficulty in getting mulching materials because of frequent bush burning and termites.

Their sustainability plan hinges on diversification of enterprises and sharing information. "We want to be food secure and rich. So we plan to eventually roll out these skills to even non-members to become like us," says Kisakye.

Consequently, laziness and divisionism will be kicked out of this village and the group name shall be translated from 'Twalibanafu to Tulibamanyi (We are strong)," she says.

3. Profile of Twalibanafu Farmers' Association

Name of Grantee

Twalibanafu Farmers' Association

Key Enterprise (s) Being Promoted

Piggery

Heifer/zero grazing

Citrus farming

Conservation Agriculture (Maize and Beans)

Agro-forestry

Name of Project

Enterprise Diversification for Sustainable Land Management

Background

Twalibanafu Farmers' Association started in 2007, with four members. Their aim was to practice collective farming as a group to increase yields and get competitive markets for their goods to reduce poverty. The group was growing food crops such as maize, beans, cassava with the help of National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS). However, they did not seem conversant with modern farming methods.

Project Location

Bukulabwire Village

Namugongo, Kaliro District in Eastern Uganda

Tel: +256782904869

Project Objectives

Carry out crop farming to reduce poverty

Conserve the environment through use of conservation agriculture

Acquire modern farming techniques through trainings and exchange visits

Project Achievements to Date

Got a grant of over UGX 50 million (\$20,000) from the Norwegian Government through UNDP.

Members have increased from 15 to 31

31 members have been trained in conservation agriculture

11 members have received heifers and built sheds to keep them

Each member has received and planted thirty citrus trees

Total of Grant Received

UGX 50 MILLION (Fifty Million Shillings)

USD \$ 20,000

STORY 4

Kamuli District Farmers Association

Empowering Farmers to Save Bananas from the deadly Banana Bacterial Wilt (BBW)



Project beneficiaries construct soil and water conservation structures

A long journey of saving the banana by practicing conservation agriculture and proper agronomy.

40 year old Moses Tibakuno beams with pride as he gives a tour of his young banana plantation. For many years, he supported 20 members of his family through selling bananas, with skills he learnt from his ancestors.

Bananas (Matooke) are a staple food in Uganda, which has the highest per capita consumption in the world at 250kg per person per year.

They are grown by about 70 percent of Ugandan farmers including Tibakuno, whose fortunes took a turn for the worst when the deadly banana wilt disease affected his plantation. In addition to this, was an extended dry spell, which caused food scarcity.


"We lost everything that our lives depended on. We were hit by famine and poverty," he says. To

survive, Tibakuno and many of his family members migrated to nearby urban areas; Jinja and Iganga, from the Kyeya village in Namwendwa sub-county in Kamuli district of Eastern Uganda where they had lived all their lives.

Tibakuno moved nearer to Namwendwa trading centre where he found a job as a shopkeeper but his wages were meager and could not support his family so he returned home to Kyeya village.

At the time of his return, the Kamuli District Farmers Association (KDFA) had been identified as the local organization through which the UNDP-MAAIF project would get communities to address sustainable land management issues in their area. UGX 60m (\$24,000) grant was provided to support KDFA activities.

The fundamental aspect of this project was to increase self-sustainability amongst farmers through training in conservation agriculture



methods that could increase yields in areas of limited water availability.

The underlying project theme was to conserve the environment through utilizing existing resources and preventing soil erosion and deforestation.

Tibakuno wasted no time when the opportunity to further his skills in banana planting was offered. He hoped to restore whatever had been wiped out by the banana wilt disease.

“Under conservation agriculture, we were trained on how to grow bananas under dry conditions. We were also taught to tend to a plantation and to increase yields,” he says. Tibakuno learned to dig basins and to add manure and mulch to the sucker.

He also learnt to remove the male bud quickly and plant clean materials as well as uproot all infected plants quickly and bury them.

Now, the former run-away farmer, proudly points out to the uniformly green and healthy banana suckers. He is hopeful that in three years, his 10 acre banana plantation will yield enough food and income for his large family.

In addition, to the banana plantation, he has set aside two acres for maize and bean farming to maximize on profits. These crops take less than two months to mature, which makes them ideal for commercial purposes.

“The first time I applied these modern farming methods, I planted 5 kilograms of maize and harvested over 250 kgs. Before that it was only 25kgs from 5 kgs planted,” said Tibakuno.

His neighbor, Christine Mutakubwa, 38, chose to grow groundnuts on her two acres of land. She too planted 20kgs of groundnuts and harvested 5 bags (350Kgs). “Before the basin method, I used to get less than 1 bag from the same amount of input. This is excellent farming,” she comments.

Mutakubwa adds that the biggest benefit they have got from these methods of farming is the art of conserving water through digging basins or deep pits for storage of run-off water. This helps the crops during the dry season when it is extremely hot.

“I am able to harvest 10,000 liters of water from my seven pits combined. I have used this water to irrigate my maize, groundnuts and banana suckers. Drought is now history,” she says.

The Kamuli farmers have also embarked upon building energy saving stoves, which offer a more fuel efficient way to prepare food.

Peter Balinaine, their vice chairman has made over 10 such stoves and appreciates their cleanliness and healthiness. “My wife used to inhale a lot of smoke while cooking and cough a lot. But the new stoves do not emit smoke.”

Although, KDFA has progressed well in the few months that the project has run, there are challenges like lack of a motorized briquette making machine and modern irrigation technologies, which are costly but would have greatly increased land productivity.

With the available resources, the farmers plan to construct 10 dams that will be able to hold up to 100, 000 litres of water and a storage facility or silo to handle produce during bumper harvests.

4. Profile of Kamuli District Farmers Association

Name of Project	Number of Project Members
Managing Food Security using Integrated Approaches	3,600 Members
Key Enterprises Being Promoted	Number of beneficiaries
Banana farming	3,600 Members
Conservation agriculture (maize and beans)	Project activities
Energy saving stoves	Banana growing for household and market
Project Location	Conservation agriculture (growing maize and beans)
Namwendwa Sub-County Kamuli District	Making of Energy Saving Stoves
Project Objectives	Poultry Farming
To fight poverty at household level	Bricketts making (charcoal making)
Provide food security to the farmers	Opportunities
Train farmers in modern farming methods	Setting up a modern storage centre for harvest
Project Achievements	Setting up irrigation facilities to provide water during the dry seasons
Have done soil testing using kits donated to them	Finding markets
Farmers have been trained in banana growing	Lessons Learned
They have had exchange visits that have helped them to learn from other farmers	Banana farming thrives well with modern farming techniques
Increased yields of their crops through conservation agriculture	Conservation agriculture greatly increases farmer's yields unlike conventional farming methods
The group has made over 300 energy saving stoves	If farmers are supported adequately; they are able to overcome poverty
Amount of Grant Received	
UGX 60 Million (Sixty Million Shillings Only)	
USD\$ 24,000	

STORY 5

From a simple farmer group to a model learning centre

Farmers in Kamuli use multi-media story telling in training



Members of the BANDERA farming group proudly stand behind a bumper maize crop courtesy of conservation agriculture.

Making my way through Bulongo village in Kamuli District, I came across an elderly man recording the activities on a huge farm using a camcorder.

I later learnt that he is one of the most knowledgeable farmers in the village. Most people turn to him for farming advice ranging from which crops to grow, when and how to add value to them.

George Mpaata owns this large model farm and he is also the Chief Executive Officer of Balimi Network for Developing Enterprises in Rural Agriculture – BANDERA 2000, a now fully registered national farm learning centre that was only a village Association.

The video Mpaata is shooting is part of the documentation package that he usually showcases to his trainees that come from all over Uganda and Africa. In 2011, BANDERA 2000 got visitors from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the government of Uganda.

As part of a project, Sustainable Land Management (SLM), the visitors had heard about the good farming practices that the group was deploying, and they wanted to help in rolling them out further to other groups of farmers. "The visitors learnt that despite the smooth progress we were making in farming, soil fertility management and harvesting of water were still our big problems," Mpaata explains.

They advised them to switch to conservation agriculture that involves making well-measured pits (locally known as "basins") for planting maize and beans as well as to harvest rain water for crop production and home consumption. Group members were all trained at Mpaata's farm to do all this. Now, more than 12 water tanks have been built by the group.

From the UNDP-MAAIF SLM programme, the group received Shs 60m (\$24,000) which they used to set up a 10 acre demonstration farm with maize, beans and bananas planted and managed using

conservation agriculture principles. They have also used part of that money to buy 12 heifers for production of milk, manure used for bio-gas production products, which supplement their incomes.

John Patrick Tigawalana, a member of BANDERA 2000, says he has mostly benefitted from conservation agriculture when growing maize and beans, using improved seeds and fertilizers that have improved his food security and boosted his income.

The BANDERA 2000 group has also ventured into commercial production of red chilies and ginger. According to Mpaata, conservation agriculture has made it possible for them to harvest 2kgs of ginger from a single stem- a kilogram fetches about Shs 5,000 (USD \$2) on the international market and UShs3, 000 (USD \$1.2) on the local market.

With a good crop, Mpaata can harvest about 250kgs-300kgs of ginger every eight months. The 'basins' for water retention and use of manure, he learnt from the UNDP project training have been very helpful.

I later learnt that almost all the farmers at BANDERA 2000 have an inspiring story to tell. All recorded in video and pictures.

Mpaata says that when the visitors came to their demonstration farm, they watch the video and pictures about the group members activities, and then choose what they want to see in the field.

The BANDERA 2000 farmer's project is an example of a successful farming group under SLM in which farmers have proved that they can translate what they learnt into real actions and gains.

"We have achieved this success because of the SLM project. We did not know about conservation agriculture that improves soil fertility and conserves the environment before," Luuka says.

Although the group has 200 members, the SLM project had originally targeted about 50 people due to funding limitations. However, even with those few, the impact is already visible. But this success has not come without challenges.

Mpaata says that although they have a lot of farm produce such as maize, citrus fruits, bananas or coffee, value addition remains low.

The group now plans to purchase a bigger piece of land and construct a modern farming demonstration centre. They are also eager to tell their success stories of value addition technologies to the whole world using multi-media. Mpaata's videos are only part of this ambition.



Betty Tigawalana fetches water from her underground rain water harvesting tank while Mpaata (in Kaunda) looks on.

5. Profile of Balimi Network for Developing Enterprises in Rural Agriculture (BANDERA 2000)

Name of Project

Balimi Network for Developing Enterprises in Rural Agriculture (BANDERA 2000).
An Integrated Approach to Sustainable Land Management

Key Enterprises Being Promoted

Conservation agriculture: Growing of bananas, maize, beans, ginger and red pepper
Construction of rain harvesting water tanks
Rearing improved cattle breeds with zero grazing
Bio-gas project

Name of Grantee

Balimi Network for Developing Enterprises in Rural Agriculture (BANDERA 2000)

Background

This started as a small group in 1992 and got registered in 1995 with the aim of fighting poverty using modern farming skills. The farmers also wanted to find a way of adding value to their farming products, mainly maize and beans. They also hoped to find market for their produce. However, over the years, many of their targets had eluded them, until the SLM project under UNDP started in 2011 and taught them modern farming skills

Project Location

Nalimawa Village, Kisozi Sub-County – Kamuli District – Eastern Uganda

Project Objectives

To fight poverty
Add value to their crops and find markets for them
Conserve the environment and increase soil fertility

Project Achievements

Increased crop yields
Their bananas have improved through conservation agriculture
They have constructed over 12 water tanks for water storage
Their group is a model farming centre to others
Achieved food security as a group and improved incomes

Amount of Grant Received

UGX 60 Million (Sixty Million Shillings Only)
USD \$24,000

Number of Project Members

Over 200 Members

Number of Beneficiaries

50 Members

Project Activities

Zero grazing of dairy cows.
Banana farming
Conservation agriculture (growing of maize and beans)
Construction of water tanks to harvest rain water
Bio-gas production

Project Challenges

Limited funding yet demand is overwhelming
Long dry spells affect yields
Value addition to crops is still a dream

Project Opportunities

Working at purchasing their own land to construct a learning and research centre
They also hope to start irrigation farming so that they are able to grow crops throughout the year

STORY 6

Empowering Youth to combat climate change

Reaping today and watching over tomorrow



Patrick Isanga leads members towards the group tree seedlings donated by UNDP

Many youth often finish school with high hopes of finding good jobs, only to be disappointed that they lack the skills to match what is on offer on the market.

In one village in Buyindi, in eastern Uganda, the youth have managed to beat this trend by acquiring new skills from a non-academic setting to create their own employment.

On a warm afternoon, a group of youth sat in a large compound, besides a tree seedling nursery discussing distribution of tree seedlings to members.

These are members of Buyindi Farmers' Eye, whose aim is to mitigate and adapt to climate change through conservation agriculture.

To realize their dream, the group recently applied and received a grant of Shs50m (USD \$20,000) from the government of Norway through the United

Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the MAAIF. This grant is helping Buyindi farmers engage in several activities including constructing bio-gas digesters, which basically use cow dung to generate energy.

"This is a clean source of energy. I will no longer use charcoal or firewood. This will be my contribution towards conserving the environment," says Boniface Isanga, the chairperson of the group about the bio-gas project in his backyard.

Isanga has also planted various tree species and hopes to secure his retirement income from timber sales from them. He has been trained in practicing conservation agriculture, where he is growing maize and beans.

With this method, only three seeds are planted in each hole and the spaces in between are mulched to improve soil fertility.

Sara Nantono, another member of Buyindi Farmers' Eye also testifies that conservation agriculture retains the much needed water and nutrients in the 'basins'.

That means that during the dry spells, the crops have enough water and manure for growth and that gives higher yields throughout the year,"she says.

The group also grows citrus fruits on a 10-acre piece of land in the hope that they can conserve nature, adapt to climate change and improve food production.

Very soon they hope to harvest at least five bags of oranges per tree and mangoes, pawpaws and passion fruit from the trees.

At the farm's nursery, some 20,000 tree seedlings have been planted and will be distributed by the youth. "We want to use this group farm as a demonstration centre where farmers can learn modern methods of agriculture and then transfer what they learn to their farms," Isanga says.

The demonstration centre will also generate income that will be used to grow the group savings account and lending portfolio. In addition, the group has an agro-forestry programme with over 500 trees planted to protect the environment.

But like several farmers across the country, Buyindi Farmers' Eye too faces some challenges. For instance, unreliable rainfall patterns have affected the crop yields yet most farmers in Uganda rely on rain-fed agriculture.

Rosette Mirembe, a member of the group says poverty reduction is at the core of their activities. Better incomes, she says, would reduce the practice of domestic violence. "When men are frustrated and struggling financially, they turn their rage on their wives with terrible consequences," notes Mirembe.

Wilber Kinoba, another member in the group says termites have also started attacking their crops, which used not to be the case. Meanwhile, they will rely on the youth to distribute tree seedlings and train the community on tree planting.



Members are growing trees for fuel wood and to conserve the environment

6. Profile of Buyindi Farmers' Eye (BUFE)

Name of Project	Buyindi Farmers' Eye	Project Activities	Conservation agriculture (maize and beans)
Key Enterprises Being Promoted	Citrus fruit farming Agro-forestry – tree growing Conservation agriculture – maize, beans, potatoes etc Zero-grazing for improved cattle breeds		Citrus Farming Agro-forestry Bio-gas production
Background	Located almost 4kms off Kamuli Town, Buyindi Farmers' Eye started in 2008 with the aim of fighting poverty. There was food insecurity; poverty and lack of development. Climate change was threatening to destroy the environment. Initially, even though the group was involved in tree planting and crop production, the yields were very low because of poor farming methods.	Project Challenges	Unreliable rainfall limits crop yields After mulching, termites ravage the crops Limited funding limits outreach.
Project Location	Bulongo Village, Kamuli Town Council, Kamuli District	Project Opportunities	Reducing poverty to curb domestic violence that comes with poor families or lack of food. There is a major plan to start up seed banks
Project Objectives	Started in 2008 to fight poverty through farming Aimed at achieving food security and development Combat climate change	Lessons learned	Tree planting has modified the climate and members are already experiencing the benefits through trees earlier planted. The SLM project has given them more trees to plant. There has been improvement in soil fertility through conservation agriculture where "basins" are made and the herbicides used in weeding instead of the hand hoe
Project Achievements	Group members have acquired knowledge in conservation agriculture – which is helping them to conserve the soil and protect the environment Crop yields, especially in maize and beans have significantly increased and reduced poverty Food security has been realised Planting trees has restored the degraded environment	Remarks	Buyindi is a hard working group that has a future in farming because they have tangible farming results in maize and tree planting. Another grant to the members will do a lot in improving environmental conservation.
Amount of Grant Received	UGX 50 Million (Fifty Million Only) USD \$20,000		
Number of Project Members	30 Members		

STORY 7

Kasolwe farmers determination for progress

Why the Kasolwe farmers group has a reason to celebrate



Musamba in her maize garden.

The dusty road to Kasolwe Sub-County in Kamuli District snakes through a hill, with a magnificent view of Lake Kyoga. For a long time, the community here practiced crop farming, cultivating millet, sorghum, and looking after cattle. But as time went on, environmental destruction increased soil infertility and famine. Many people abandoned farming and turned to fishing in Lake Kyoga. Others migrated to urban areas to look for odd jobs.

But when the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with funding of Ushs 55 million (USD\$22,000) from the Norwegian Government started the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) project in the cattle corridor areas of Kasolwe, a farmers group, the Kasolwe United Farmers and General Enterprises (KUFAGE), was selected among the pioneer beneficiaries.

Benefits after a year of receiving funding are evident. 48-year-old Aisha Musamba, a member of KUFAGE grows mangoes, maize, oranges, avocado,

millet and sorghum. "I was trained in conservation agriculture and given farm implements, including improved maize, beans and citrus fruits. I have experienced a bumper harvest in maize," she explains.

This, she says compared to her previous harvests is something to celebrate.

Conservation agriculture and prosperity are inherently connected. According to Musamba after planting 5kgs of maize, she harvested over 20 bags of maize.

"I have achieved food security and financial independence. In the past, we often slept on empty stomachs and we could not afford to pay school fees for our children," says Musamba.

Now she even boasts of surplus production. To maximize the project's benefits, the Kasolwe farmers have also started zero grazing. They used

part of the grant to buy 11 heifers and distributed them to different families. Once the Heifers give birth, the calves are passed on to the next farmer and the cycle continues. Eventually, all families in the group will own a cow for milk to sell and cow dung for manure.

Mr. Sezi Lubega, a member of KUFAGAFE has successfully used manure to increase his yields. "I am a serious farmer now and my earnings have improved significantly," he says.

For instance recently, he harvested 10 bags of tomatoes, largely because of using farm manure and conservation agriculture. He has used the earnings to pay fees for his children at the beginning of the school term something that never used to happen. Before that he used to plead with school authorities and pay the fees in installments.

The SLM project also bought rain water harvesting tanks for the community. During rainy seasons, few farmers plan for dry months, yet the effects of drought can be severe.

Farmers now know how to construct water 'basins' in their farms to trap water during rainy seasons, for use during the dry season.

"Even if the drought lasts for five months, I am assured of water for livestock and house hold use. What is unique about this is that the tanks

are locally made. Secondly We did not know that conservation agriculture existed until after training with SLM," Lubega noted. Farmers are applying this method to grow citrus fruits and bananas.

Florence Kasima, a member of the group learned banana farming skills that have helped her increase yields. "I was taught to establish water basins that would hold some water and also add manure to increase nutrients," says Kasima.

Today, Kasima can harvest 10 bunches of bananas (matooke) every week, from her 5-acre farm. With the income she gets from selling these bananas she has been able to support her family.

Vincent Galisansana, the KUFAGE chairperson says the project has improved their lives. "This has made our lives better. SLM came in time to save the community from starvation," says Galisansana.

"The project has given us a lifeline of citrus farming. When these fruits grow, we will not remain the same again," he says with a grin.

The challenges, however, still exist despite the successes. Farmers still need affordable irrigation technology to manage the prolonged drought.

"If we leap over to commercial farming and make our lives better, commercial farming using irrigation will be the long-term answer to solving our problems," Galisansana concludes.



Musamba points at a soil and water conservation structure in her garden

7. Profile of Kasolwe United Farmers and General Enterprises (KUFAGE)

<p>Name of Project</p> <p>Integrating Dairy production for Sustainable Land Management (SLM)</p> <p>Key Enterprises Being Promoted</p> <p>Citrus fruits</p> <p>Maize and beans farming in conservation agriculture</p> <p>Zero grazing improved dairy breeds</p> <p>Banana farming</p> <p>Name of Grantee</p> <p>Kasolwe United Farmers and General Enterprises (KUFAGE)</p> <p>Background</p> <p>In 1994, Vincent Galisansana started KAFUGE with the aim of training members to acquire knowledge on modern farming techniques to double crop yields. He also wanted to find a lasting solution to persistent drought that had affected their village. Since this objective has now been achieved, the group aims at getting a better market for their produce to improve on their incomes.</p> <p>Project Location</p> <p>Kasolwe Trading Centre – Kasolwe Sub-County – Kamuli District</p> <p>Project Objectives</p> <p>To find a solution to the prolonged drought affecting their produce</p> <p>To help members acquire knowledge on modern farming methods to improve yields</p> <p>To market members' produce collectively</p> <p>To have access to farm inputs and development experts</p> <p>Project Achievements</p> <p>Purchased over 12 heifers for group members complete with constructed sheds</p> <p>Improved and increased crop yields through conservation agriculture</p> <p>The over 50 members of the group have achieved food security and reduced poverty</p> <p>Given citrus fruits to the farmers</p> <p>Improved and increased bananas yields</p>	<p>Amount of Grant Received</p> <p>UGX 55 Million (Fifty Five Million Only)</p> <p>USD \$22,000</p> <p>Number of Project Members</p> <p>50 Members</p> <p>Project Challenges</p> <p>Drought hasn't been completely dealt with</p> <p>Termites are still destroying crops due to drought</p> <p>Limited funding to extend the project to other farmers</p> <p>Project opportunities</p> <p>A plan to set up a central demonstration farm to teach farmers modern farming methods is underway</p> <p>Members plan to have seed banks to make improved seeds</p> <p>Irrigation technology</p> <p>Lessons learned</p> <p>Conservation agriculture increases crop yields and brings food security</p> <p>Mulching improves soil fertility by increasing crop nutrients</p> <p>Remarks</p> <p>Kasolwe farmers are serious people who have proved that they can use SLM to carry out crop farming, even in the face of drought. They need to be supported further to increase food security.</p>
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STORY 8

Harvesting rain for animals' water security

Reviving Pastoralists Livelihoods by providing water



Beijuka shows a member's rain water harvesting tank under construction.

Trapping rain water improves sanitation and eliminates pastoralists long journeys in search of water for their herds

When 52-year-old Yoram Mushabe is drawing water from his new water harvesting tank, he remembers the long treks through the forests, looking for water for his animals.

That was before the water harvesting tank was installed, when he had to contend with the more frequent and severe climatic events creating acute water shortages and diminished value of his livestock.

Luckily, Mushabe was one of the many pastoralists in his community selected for support under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) sustainable land management (SLM) project.

The Buyanja community sanitation group was supported with a Ushs 50 million (USD \$20,000)

grant from the Norwegian government, through UNDP, with the aim of enabling farmers to have easy access to water for their cattle and crops, using cheap interventions.

For the father of five who had previously trekked several hours daily to find water for his cattle, this is indeed a great relief. Now that the water harvesting tank is installed in his homestead, Mushabe reminisces about how he used to spend long hours looking for water, and had little time to engage in other productive projects.

He wonders how he used to do it because now all he does is turn on the tap and the water just flows. His children too have been relieved of the burden of walking several kilometers to collect water.

"They now get to school early and their performance with school work is better. They have enough time to read their books and do homework," explains Mushabe.

She adds that his family also no longer suffers from water borne diseases since the water harvested from the rain is clean. Another 12 families have also had such tanks installed in their homes.

Ms. Jaclyn Kirabo, a member of the Buyanja Sanitation Group says that her husband used to scold her for spending long hours at the community water source.

"He thought I was cheating on him with another man yet it was just that the water source was quite far, especially if a person had to carry a jerry can of water on their head," she says.

Ms. Kirabo's husband, Edwin Beijuka explained that the tanks can store between 10,000 and 100,000 litres of water.

"We have water all the time, even during the dry season. Our cattle are giving us more milk and they grow faster. Our incomes are also higher," he says.

The group has also received 12 heifers for a zero grazing project, and milk production is on the rise. The project is intended to alleviate poverty and also encourage farmers to keep fewer but higher yielding animals than so many low-yielding breeds that cause land degradation if the stocking rate is not managed properly.

Members are also using a modern farming method called conservation agriculture. Under this model,

group members select an area and dig carefully measured holes called 'basins', add manure and plant maize, beans or vegetables in the holes. They then spray herbicides to keep their gardens free from weeds. It also keeps the soil nutrients protected. Mr. Ephraim Kamugisha, the Chairperson of Speaker of Buyanja Sanitation Group explains that this type of farming increases crop yields and protects the environment.

"Out of the 5 kgs of maize I used to plant, I would harvest one bag. With the new type of farming, I am able to harvest over five bags of maize," he says. These 'basins' retain water in the soil and help to trap all the soil nutrients.

To supplement their income, the members of the group have also set up a coffee nursery bed producing over 20,000 seedlings per season.

"This will improve incomes and reduce poverty. The beneficiaries will also be able to educate their children and also improve on the standards of their lives by building better houses," Kamugisha explained.

Looking ahead, Kamugisha says the prospects appear rewarding. One of the initiatives they are looking forward to is collective marketing of their produce. This, he says will enable farmers get better income. The future is promising.



Beijuka and Mrs. Kamugisha in their nursery

8. Profile of Buyanja Sanitation Group (BSG)

Name of the project

Buyanja Sanitation Group (BSG)
Integrated Livestock into Crop Production for Sustainable Land Management (SLM)

Key Enterprises Being Promoted

Maize and beans in conservation agriculture

Water harvesting tanks at household level.

Keeping improved cattle breeds.

Nursery bed for over 100,000 coffee tree seedlings per year

Name of Grantee

Buyanja Sanitation Group (BSG)

Background

Buyanja Sanitation Group started in 2007 with the aim of improving household hygiene and sanitation through construction of pit latrines. They also wanted to have access to fuel saving technologies such as energy saving stoves to conserve the environment.

The district council put up a competition and a reward for groups who excelled in hygiene. Buyanja BSG excelled and was given 10 water tanks, which were constructed in some members' compounds to harvest rain water. However, only 10 out of the 27 members of the group benefitted. When the SLM project was introduced in Lyantonde in 2011, the group asked for more water tanks for their members.

The group benefitted from the UNDP – Norwegian Government funding and got 12 tanks. They also received a grant to carry out conservation agriculture, start a heifer project and a nursery bed of coffee trees.

Project Location

Buyanja Village, Lyantonde District

Project Objectives

Improve on sanitation at household level

Conserve the environment

Conserve the soil and increase fertility

Increase milk production, crop yields and ultimately members' income

Maximise water harvesting

Project achievements

Over 12 rain water harvesting tanks have been set up

Improved on cattle breeds through introduction of heifers

Doubled crop yields through conservation agriculture (maize and beans)

Total of Grant Received

UGX 49.7 Million (Forty Nine Million Seven Hundred Thousand Only)

USD \$19,960

Number of Beneficiaries

27 Members Only

Project activities

Rain water harvesting

Conservation agriculture with maize and beans

Nursery bed of coffee tree seedlings

Heifer project (Improved cattle breeds)

Project challenges

Inadequate funds that cannot help all the members

Drought is still a big challenge

Project opportunities

Members plan to set up a demonstration centre to train them in modern farming skills

Members plan to start irrigation farming to enable them to grow crops throughout the year

Lessons learned

Harvesting and storing rain water has greatly improved Buyanja's sanitation and crop production

Conservation agriculture has greatly increased farmers' yields.

STORY 9

A tale of two hills taming floods

Life returns to Lyantonde hills through SLM



Tadeo Mukasa has planted pine on the hills to replace those that were cut.



The group used some of the grant funds to buy a public address system they use to sensitise the locals on environmental issues.

It's often in the news these days: 'Wetlands encroachers arrested; families homeless after a heavy down pour; floods; increases in food prices due to poor harvests'.

All this is also usually reported on a community radio in the deep valleys of Kiyinda Sub-County in Lyantonde District as it unfolds. But particularly in Kiyinda, communities live on two hills, which face each other.

When news of displaced families comes through, with reports of a flooded valley, the people on one side of the valley are the victims, telling the stories, while the ones on the other side just listen to it as news.


Often times, when it rains, the houses on one end of the valley get flooded, while at the other end, they are not affected in any way. It is just a tale of two contrasting hills, next to each other.

The difference with the two is that the hill which gets no flooding also has trees on top, while the one that gets flooded has a bare top with no trees. For years, the people of Kiyinda cut down trees on this hill and used the land for cultivation.

What they did not know was the impact of their actions on their livelihoods. Now, the community is trying to reverse this problem and Kiyinda Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited (KFCSL) has taken the lead.

KFCSL runs farming and produce marketing projects. They also have credit facilities where they lend money to members to engage in income generating activities such as commercial farming, ensuring that it does not in any way affect the environment.

With a US\$ 53 million (USD\$ 21,500) grant from the Norwegian government through the UNDP, the farmers have been able to register some



tremendous success stories in protecting the environment.

Pellegrino Kamara, 50, the Chairman FCSL says the group now has a tree-planting project and farmers have been sensitised about the benefits of planting trees.

"Each member, with a house on a hill, was given over 50 tree seedlings to plant. We hope the formerly degraded hills will soon be restored," said Kamara.

This tree-planting enthusiasm stems from a similar project KFCSL was involved in before the SLM project, where members planted a forest on one hill and today they have over 2,000 mature trees mostly fruit trees.

When UNDP, in partnership with the Norwegian Government, saw that this group was serious about salvaging their environment through tree-planting, they asked them to suggest interventions of making it even better.

A loud speaker was bought to sensitise the community on planting trees every day. KFCSL members like Tadeo Mukasa have already planted over 700 pine trees.

But as Mukasa waits for the trees to mature, he has taken on production of maize and beans using conservation agriculture techniques, after receiving training on the process through the SLM project.

Mukasa discovered that using improved seeds also increased his yields. "With fertilisers and improved seed, the maize cob is heavier and the yields are higher. Last season, I planted 5kgs of maize and managed to get over 300kgs at harvest compared to only 20kgs I used to get before I took to conservation agriculture," says Mukasa.

The group also acquired two engines to drive their maize grinding mills. At harvest time, the group makes some extra cash for grinding maize for the community at sh50 per kilogram.

This machine has also employed some group members with special needs, like 21-year-old Vincent Twinamasiko who manages the mill. Twinamasiko lost both his parents to HIV/AIDS and

was left to care for two siblings. His parents were members of the Kiyinda Farmers' Cooperative Society.

With the money he earns from the grinding mill, Twinamasiko feeds and educates his siblings. "It is difficult but as the man of the home and the first born, I must support them to succeed," he says.

The Kiyinda farmers also took on zero-grazing where each member has been given a heifer for milk production. After the cow produces, a member passes the calf to another member.

Charles Waiswa, 49, was given a heifer under the project. He is feeding it well so that he can get milk to sell. His dream is to have a healthy family. He has also learnt that apart from milk and meat, the heifer gives him other benefits like farm yard manure.

The heifer project has been supported by rain water harvesting tanks that UNDP gave to the farmers. In a region that often experiences severe drought, the heifers would have died of hunger and thirst during the dry months. Now, more than 12 tanks have been constructed to provide water for the animals and for domestic use.

Thirty eight-year-old Beatrice Tusingwire always walked for over 18kms to the nearest water source looking for water. Now when it rains instead of stationing containers outside to tap the rain water, she just sits in her house and watches the tank fill up.

The group's challenges are mainly inadequate funding and the community has no access to veterinary services, which makes caring for the heifers an uphill task.

But they have a new vision. According to its Chairman, Pellegrino Kamara, each of the 5,000 members will be encouraged to plant 1,000 trees. These will revegetate the hills to remove the glaring contrasts and the tale of the two hills will be told differently.

9. Profile of Kiyinda Farmers' Cooperative Society Ltd

Key Enterprises Being Promoted

Tree Nursery for wood lots.

Improved cattle in zero grazing

Conservation agriculture for maize and beans production

Rain water harvesting tank

Grinding mill (maize processing for members and the community to earn income)

Name of Grantee

Kiyindi Farmers' Cooperative Society Ltd

Background

The 35-member group was formed in 2002 with intentions of having better bargaining power for their produce, especially for coffee, beans and maize. At first they were growing maize and beans – but since they were using rudimentary methods of agriculture, the yields were low.

In 2011 SLM introduced conservation agriculture to Kiyindi and later gave KFCSL a grant that has improved farming in general and raised the community's awareness to protect their environment.

Project Location

Kiyindi Sub-county – Lyantonde District

Project Objectives

To get better bargaining power as a group for their products

To help widows and children orphaned by HIV/AIDS by improving their livelihood

To protect the environment from degradation by restoring planting trees on hills

Project Achievements

Distributed over 10,000 tree woodlots to members

Bought 12 improved heifers for the members

Constructed 12 rain water harvesting tanks for members

Bought a loud speaker system for the members to sensitise the community on tree planting

Set up a 100,000 tree seedling nursery bed

Bought two engines for the grinding mill

Improved crop yields through conservation agriculture (maize and beans farming)

Total of Grant Received

UGX 53 Million (Fifty Three Million Only)

USD \$21,500

Number of Project Members

5,000 Members

Number of beneficiaries

50 Members

Project Activities

Zero grazing for improved cattle breeds

Tree planting and nursery management

Construction of rain water harvesting tanks

Grind mill business

Growing of maize and beans in conservation agriculture

Project challenges

Inadequate funds that cannot cover 5,000 group members

Drought persists in the region, affecting agriculture

Lack of veterinary officers to treat sick heifers

Termites and pests have destroyed the beans

Lessons learned

Conservation agriculture has increased maize and beans yields

Construction of water tanks for harvesting rain water has given children ample time to study

and reduced domestic violence against women – because they no longer travel long distances to fetch water

Remarks

This group has done a tremendous job in constructing tanks that harvest rain water. This

water has been used for irrigation during the dry season and for cattle and domestic use. Due to their overwhelming numbers, they should be given another grant to help each of the 5,000 members.

STORY 10

One tree at a time to save a watershed

Women join efforts to save water source by planting trees on its banks and surrounding hills



Joweria supervises her group's tree nursery establishment

The once barren shore of the Kalunyiga water shed is coming alive. It is getting a fresh coat of paint in the form of trees being planted by a group of young boys.

Kalunyiga is Lyantonde district (Western Uganda) main water source and had fallen to decay after many years of bush burning, over-cultivation and overgrazing along its banks.

The boys have been called upon by the Tukwase Wamu Group (TWG), made up of women who share the common vision of restoring the environmental balance along the shores of the Kalunyiga water shed.

TWG received a grant of UGX 41.7 million (USD\$ 16,680) from the Norwegian Government and administered by UNDP. They then established a 100,000 citrus and pine tree nursery and planted over 5,000 trees in woodlots while at the same time sensitizing the community on the value of trees.

TWG currently has 50 members and aims to ensure that each member has at least 500 trees for firewood and timber.

When the trees in the woodlot mature, the group plans to harvest some as commercial timber and for construction poles. As trees are cut, others are replanted to ensure continuity. The proceeds from the trees are distributed to the members to ensure self-sustainability.

Miriam Karooma the TWG Chairperson is convinced that this initiative will help rehabilitate the watershed and restore degraded hills in Lyantonde. So far, they have planted 12,000 trees on three hills where deforestation was rampant.

"This will help to reduce soil erosion and environmental disasters that have become synonymous with these hills. We often experience mud slides and our soils are losing fertility," she says.

Once the hills are restored with grown trees, the watershed down in the valley will not be silted anymore. This will help ensure that the surrounding communities have a consistent, clean water source.

It will also help us through the drought season, which can be disastrous for the cattle-keeping community. Without water and pasture for our animals, our livelihood is threatened, said Karooma. Currently, the herdsman have to walk for long distances searching for pasture and water because the watershed was destroyed.

In the meantime, the group has planted over five acres of woodlots around the water shed. Agnes Namara, a member of Tukwase Wamu has planted trees on her five acre hill side plot. She hopes that when the trees mature, she will be able to get some money from selling them.

"Our target is to reduce poverty through environmental protection. This project would not have been possible without the help of UNDP through SLM. We are so grateful for their efforts," she says.

Namara is positive about planting trees. From them she knows she can get firewood, poles and timber. It is also a safety measure for the women in the community who sometimes encounter rapists and thieves while they are away deep in the bushes looking for firewood. "The risk is reduced if one has trees nearby in their neighborhood," says Namara.

Despite facing resistance from some community members who have yet to understand the true value of the project, TWG aims to cover some 200 acres with trees in the coming years.

Their primary focus will remain the areas along hills and the watershed in Lyantonde district. This, they believe, will save their ailing environment.

They also plan to set up a tree plantation demonstration centre where villagers can come to learn about the importance of tree planting and physically carry out planting on their farms to increase forest cover.



Members are restoring the bare hill that has been degraded. They are planting trees.

10. Profile of Tukwase Wamu Group

Name of Project	Saving Kalunyiga Watershed	Amount of Grant Received	UGX 42 Million (Forty Two Million Only)
Key Enterprises Being Promoted	Tree Planting on bare hills		USD \$16,800
Name of Grantee	Tukwase Wamu Group	Number of Project Members	50 Members
Background	<p>Four women teamed up in 2007 and started Tukwase Wamu group. Their main focus was to plant trees on the bare hills of Lyantonde so that erosion does not "swallow" their watersheds.</p> <p>However, the group struggled financially until 2011 when the UNDP/SLM programme came to their rescue by giving them a grant.</p>	Brief project activities	<p>Tree planting</p> <p>Sensitization</p> <p>Nursery bed making of tree woodlots</p> <p>Protection of watersheds</p> <p>Afforestation of bare hills</p>
Project Location	Lyantonde Town Council – Lyantonde District	Project challenges	<p>Drought</p> <p>The planted trees are stolen and cut down by greedy community members</p> <p>Inadequate funding, which is unable to cater for the entire group</p>
Project Objectives	<p>To plant trees to conserve the environment and watersheds</p> <p>To restore the degraded hills by planting trees so as to reduce soil erosion</p> <p>Forestry is a good business investment. When the trees mature, some can be cut down for profitable commercial purposes</p>	Project opportunities	There is a plan to construct a tree plantation centre to help teach farmers about the importance of trees to the environment and farming
Project achievements	<p>Planted trees on 10 acres of hills and watersheds</p> <p>Sensitized over 50,000 people on the enduring benefits of tree-planting</p> <p>Planted over 5,000 trees</p> <p>Distributed over 20,000 trees to members and non-members</p>	Lessons learned	With adequate funding, the group can be able to restore many degraded hills. They have already demonstrated this by planting and restoring trees on a degraded 4 acre piece of hill in Lyantonde
		Remarks	More funds should be given to the group to expand this exciting tree planting project to other areas.

STORY 11

Bringing a new thrill of life from using Bio-gas

Promoting the use of bio-gas for a clean environment and increased food production.



Asiimwe supervises the feeding of his Bio-gas digester

Three men are busy at work, a mixture of cow dung and water is shoveled into a concrete container leading into a decomposer. A pipe connected from the decomposer is linked to a kitchen, which lights once the gas burner is turned on.

The left over solids in the decomposer are pushed into the garden providing the soil with valuable nutrients. This is a bio-gas unit used at its most basic level in Danson Asiimwe's home in Lyantonde town.

Asiimwe started using bio-gas as a result of a project that was initiated by the Obumwe Group, which received a grant from the Norwegian Government through the UNDP under the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) project.

Asiimwe is one of the members trying out bio-gas, a renewable energy that helps to conserve the environment by reducing pollution and discouraging the cutting down of trees for firewood.

He explains the process; "Bio-gas is made through a process of aerobic decomposition of cow dung to produce methane. The methane is then transported through the pipe fixed from the decomposer into the house. It is clean, smoke free and fast. I take less than 20 minutes to cook a proper meal."

Most of the members of Obumwe Group are livestock keepers with large cattle herds that produce enough cow dung to make bio-gas daily. They have also opted to maximize the untapped opportunities in the creation and use of bio-gas. Everyday Asiimwe loads a wheelbarrow of cow dung to replenish what is used up.

Through this system, a farmer doesn't have to use charcoal or firewood. "In essence, they will be protecting the environment by not burning or buying charcoal or cutting down trees for wood," explains Herbert Rwensheshe the treasurer Obumwe group.

The community is also involved in rain water harvesting using water tanks that can store up to 50,000 liters of rain water.

Christine Kyomugisha, a beneficiary of the project used to trek for over 10 kilometers looking for water and pasture for her animals. "With the tank, my water problems are solved. I use this water to irrigate pasture for my animals so I have forage for the animals throughout the year and can produce milk consistently. I thank the UNDP through their SLM project for helping us. This is technology that would have not been possible on our own," she confides.

Kyomugisha has also installed a bio-gas unit, which will give her clean, safe and faster energy that will conserve the environment.

The group currently has 33 members and targets 25 families to promote rain water harvesting and environment friendly energy methods.

Each cattle keeper in the group is also encouraged to organize their paddocks and to keep improved breeds of cattle, which produce more milk than the local stock.

The group has also acquired a centralized milk cooler for the project, where they can market their milk as a group and have a stronger bargaining power, which will improve the milk prices from the current rate of UGX300 per litre. In addition to these activities, the group plans on diversifying into crop farming to supplement their livestock farming.

While there is excitement about the improvements that have been made, the farmers still find it a challenge to go through an entire dry season with water available before the rains return. They are however, grateful to have some kind of supply rather than nothing which was the case previously.

A challenge also lies in the marketing of their products. They are currently limited to selling in Lyantonde where the markets are limited.

Despite these challenges, the SLM project echoes well in the hearts and minds of the farmers thanks to the knowledge that has been imparted.



Rwenshenshe's house is lit-up with fuel from the bio-gas unit

11. Profile of Improving Lives using Bio gas project

Key Enterprises Being Promoted

Bio-gas production

Construction of rain water harvesting tanks

Name of Grantee

Obumwe Group

Background

Obumwe was formed in 2010 by a group of 35 livestock farmers who wanted their group to be a knowledge centre for other cattle keepers. The group brainstorms on solutions to the problems facing livestock farmers, including poor breeds of cattle, lack of ready market for their products.

These herdsmen also had trouble with finding water for their animals during dry seasons and how they could add value to their cow dung. Eventually in 2011, SLM came to their village and changed their lives with a grant of sh46.5m.

Project location

Lyantonde Town Council – Lyantonde District

Project Objectives

Find solutions to problems facing livestock farmers

Add value to their farm products such as milk, meat and cow dung

Find market for their livestock products

Set up a micro-credit facility to give members access to soft loans to help them expand their livestock farms

Project achievements

Set up bio-gas units (20)

Set up water harvesting tanks for members (20)

Total Grant Received

UGX 47 Million (Forty Seven Million Only)

USD \$18,800

Number of Project Members

33 Members

Project activities

Construction of rain water harvesting tanks

Construction of bio-gas units

Project challenges

Inadequate funds to cover all the members

Limited market access as farmers are only exposed to lyantonde.

Long periods of droughts that dry all the water sources making it a living hell for their cattle

Project opportunities

Members plan to set up a milk cooler to collect and market their farm products

Lessons learned

Bio-gas is a cheap but efficient means of energy. More funds should be given to the group to expand the project to all the farmers to conserve the environment

Remarks

An efficient group of cattle keepers who have a clear picture of where they want to go. They have constructed a tank and built bio-gas units for most of their members. This will have a positive bearing on the climate and curb environmental degradation.

STORY 12

Banking on trees for livelihood

A case of Nabajjuzi Tree Planting Group



Members hold a consultative meeting with UNDP consultants to learn about the experience and success

It's drizzling with a slight chill in the air but members of the Nabajjuzi Tree Planting Group (NTPG) in Kikomadu Village, Sembabule District in Central Uganda continue to arrive at the meeting venue under a tree. The familiar faces exchange pleasantries and the meeting begins. NTPG is made up of 23 members who today have gathered to brainstorm and discuss the progress of their recently adopted conservation agriculture project.

The project comes as a result of a UGX 50 million (USD\$20,000) grant given by the Norwegian Government through the UNDP. It aims to encourage the use of modern farming techniques, which can contribute to increased yields and better land utilization, while prioritising climate smart crop production.


Naome Kyomukama, the Chairperson of the group says her maize' leaves are uniformly green, healthy and all the seeds she planted germinated.

She adds that instead of clear digging the whole piece of land, the group has been taught to only dig planting basins that helps keep the soil structure intact.

The group has also gone through training on a series of water harvesting techniques that have helped them overcome the effects of drought allowing them to grow crops throughout year. The dry season will no longer mean reduced food availability.

Pastor Silas Basinduka a member of the group notes that a seed bank project has been initiated to help farmers have a source of income in addition to seeds that they would otherwise not be able to afford.

He adds that the money they get from selling these seeds to non-group members is paid to the members as dividends at the end of the year. Members can now comfortably pay school fees for their children as well as meet basic needs for their homes.



Each member has so far received over 100 tree seedlings to help in the afforestation effort, which forms part of the programme. Stanley Mbazira, a member of the group, believes the afforestation programme will salvage the hills and valleys from the destructive forces of soil erosion.

“We are also experiencing drastic climate changes with floods and mud slides occurring.” Mbazira says. He adds that the trees will restore the degraded swamps and wetlands, which form part of the landscape.

Once the trees are mature, the members plan to use them to generate income through selling poles to electricity companies and timber to construction companies.

Currently, farmers have concentrated their efforts on ensuring food security through growing maize and beans. They have also been given Knapsack sprayer pumps to control pests which can impact on crop yields.

The main threat according to the group is the prolonged dry spells which is being tackled through water harvesting techniques.

In the long term, the NTPG foresee an agroforestry business that will be self-sustaining. “With the SLM project, the future is bright. We shall become very rich,” Pastor Basinduka explains.

12. Profile of Improving Livelihoods through water and energy efficient practices for sustainable Land Management project

<p>Key Enterprises Being Promoted</p> <p>Maize and beans in conservation agriculture</p> <p>Tree planting on degraded lands</p>	<p>Amount of Grant received</p> <p>UGX 50 Million (Fifty Million Shillings Only)</p> <p>USD \$20,000</p>
<p>Name of Grantee</p> <p>Nabajuzi Tree Planting Group</p>	<p>Number of Project Members</p> <p>23 Members</p>
<p>Brief background</p> <p>Nabajuzi started in 2009, with the aim of farming to increase crop yields in order to reduce poverty.</p> <p>However, they could not do much due to financial limitations, until UNDP visited the area in 2011. With the UNDP's SLM project, their dream is slowly becoming a reality.</p>	<p>Brief Project Activities</p> <p>Tree planting on bare lands</p> <p>Conservation agriculture of growing maize and beans</p>
<p>Project Location</p> <p>Kikomadu Village – Sembabule District</p>	<p>Project challenges</p> <p>Drought – drying up some crops</p> <p>Limited funds that cannot cover all group members</p>
<p>Project Objectives</p> <p>Improve farmers' yields through conservation agriculture</p> <p>Fight poverty through farming</p> <p>Plant trees to combat climate change</p>	<p>Project opportunities</p> <p>Plan to open up business to generate income – agroforestry business</p>
<p>Project achievements to date</p> <p>Increased crop yields</p> <p>Planted over 50 acres of trees</p> <p>Taught farmers water harvesting techniques</p>	<p>Lessons learned</p> <p>Tree planting will do much to restore degraded land especially valleys and hills – a similar project they had in the past has restored three hills.</p>
	<p>Remarks</p> <p>This group needs more money to expand the project to other groups.</p>

STORY 13

Living by your Motto

Kawanda KwekulaKulanya "Taking the strides to move forward."



Tushabe (left) and other members tour her successful maize garden under conservation agriculture.

The motto 'Let us develop' is the driving force behind a group of farmers who are part of the Sembabule District Farmer's Association (SDFA) in Kawanda village.

Through a UGX 25.4 million (USD\$10,160) grant from the Norwegian Government through the UNDP, SDFA is living this motto as its members are empowered through the Sustainable Land Management project, which is geared at increasing crop yields.

Emmanuel Ssenyonga, Deputy Coordinator of SDFA says the group devoted the grant towards conservation agriculture, provision of farm inputs and water harvesting.

Grace Nalwadda comes from nearby Kyetume village. She is a farmer and a member of the Association. Recently, she spent two weeks training on conservation agriculture in Kawanda village where the demonstration farm is located.

She later returned to implement what she had learnt by planting 5 kilograms of improved maize seeds on her three acre plot of land. Her maize germinated well and grew consistently.

"I tried out the 'basins' and I have noticed a big change," she says. "I have since gone on to experiment with beans and groundnuts which have also done very well."

Nalwadda like many of the other members' notes that they previously farmed on large plots of land but harvested small amounts because they were using poor farming methods.

Now she is a role model for other farmers in her village who have since started adapting these farming methods. She adds, "It is a practical way to fight poverty. This is what we have always requested the Government to do to help us better our lives. UNDP has come at the right time."

Godius Tushabe is one such farmer who has utilized these skills to maximize on her five acre plot of land. Through the SLM programme, she acquired improved maize and bean seeds.

She started off by planting 10 kilograms of beans and went on to harvest over 10 bags (each has 50kgs). "I have food now. I have sold the surplus and paid school fees for my children. I am now a very rich woman," she proudly beams.

The Association utilises improved water harvesting methods, which helps them through the dry season. The most common method used is the digging of pits at various spots in the garden. These pits collect runoff water during the rainy season.

The project has encouraged farmers to ensure that at least each home should have a 1,000 litre pit for water.

While the project has rolled out well, challenges remain. These include the labour intense planting 'basin' method and the required mulch is scarce due to overgrazing or burning of grass.

These challenges, however, have not stopped the progress of the project, with plans to increase productivity as the SDFA carries on exploring marketing opportunities.



13. Profile of Sembabule District Farmers' Association (SDFA)

<p>Name of Project</p> <p>Consolidating Sustainable Land Management through use of locally available resources.</p> <p>Key Enterprises Being Promoted</p> <p>Maize and beans growing – through conservation agriculture</p> <p>Water harvesting</p> <p>Name of Grantee</p> <p>Sembabule District Farmers' Association (SDFA)</p> <p>Brief background</p> <p>SDFA was initially affiliated to Uganda Farmers Federation, Masaka branch when Sembabule was still under Masaka. However, when Sembabule got district status in 1997, SDFA was formed in 1998 and registered as a Non-Governmental Organization. Their main activity is to offer agricultural advisory and financial services to the farmers.</p> <p>They have always wanted to directly help farmers to increase yields through improved farming techniques. In 2011, UNDP through its SLM project brought conservation agriculture with a grant of sh25.4m to them.</p> <p>Project Location</p> <p>Sembabule Town Council – Sembabule District</p> <p>Project Objectives</p> <p>Increase farmers' crop yields</p> <p>Provide agricultural advisory services</p> <p>Help farmers find market for their products</p> <p>Project achievements to date</p> <p>Increased yields of farmers through conservation agriculture</p> <p>Taught farmers modern farming techniques</p> <p>Set up seed banks</p>	<p>Total of Grant Received</p> <p>UGX 25.4 Million (Twenty Five Million Four Hundred Thousand Shillings Only)</p> <p>USD \$10,160</p> <p>Number of Members:</p> <p>600 Members</p> <p>Project activities</p> <p>Maize and beans farming</p> <p>Training of farmers on modern farming</p> <p>Water harvesting through pits</p> <p>Project challenges</p> <p>Limited funding has made it hard to reach all the farmers</p> <p>Persistent long dry spells have made hindered proper crop development</p> <p>Project opportunities</p> <p>Farmers want to set up cooperative societies for easy greater marketing opportunities</p> <p>Lessons learned</p> <p>There has been an increase in the yields of the crops of the farmers through conservation agriculture</p> <p>Remarks</p> <p>This group should be given more grants. They have utilized the sh24m well for the benefit of the farmers. The new grant will help them expand the project to other members that did not benefit earlier.</p>
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STORY 14

Taking the Food and Nutrition Security Option

Empowering lives to fight poverty



Members of SAFE practice conservation farming.

A group of people is eagerly waiting for visitors they have been expecting since a month ago. As the team approaches, the women ululate and they all stand up to welcome them. The team from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is in Sembabule district paying a courtesy call on the Sembabule Agribusiness Farmers' Enterprise (SAFE) group.

SAFE is a community based organization that received a grant of sh49.9m (USD\$19,960) from the Norwegian Government through UNDP. It is an umbrella organization of two parish community based organizations, Basooka Kwavula Lyabuguma Women's Group and Kabale Maize and Beans Parish Group.


The women of SAFE group have come together to fight food insecurity. Mariam Naziwa, an Executive member of Basooka Kwavula Lyabuguma Women's Group says the grant is to bring about sustainable land and environment management.

"The underlying reason is to bring about food security and reduce poverty," Naziwa told the team from UNDP. The group has used the funds to promote conservation agriculture, planting of trees and harvesting water.

This kind of farming has given farmers a chance to use improved seeds and pesticides that they did not have access to in conventional farming.

Stella Nankinga, a field officer with SAFE has first hand experience: "The problem with using a hoe instead of herbicides is that a hoe digs out the soil crumb structure and exposes the soil to agents of erosion. So, with time, all the fertile soil would be gone," she says.

Another member Naziwa for instance planted 20kgs of maize on her two acre piece of land and harvested five bags of maize last season, compared to only one bag or 100kgs of maize she used to harvest in conventional farming. "I have seen a



remarkable difference with this kind of farming. My cobs are big and weigh more," she says.

In the past, Naziwa was burdened with her maize wilting due to drought. Today, all her maize grows uniformly green. The underlying reason, she says is that the "basins" trap water and the manure or the fertilizers help to increase the fertility of the soil – thus increasing the crop yields.

She can't believe she has achieved food security in such a short time after it eluded her for a long time. Her income and savings have accumulated.

In the same project, Justine Nakanwajji, a member of the group received a Knapsack sprayer pump that she uses to water her crops and for spraying pests.

Nakanwajji believes that the Norwegian Government and UNDP will solve some of their problems. "In the past we could not afford improved seeds or farm inputs such as fertilizers. It was almost impossible for us to afford it. Today, UNDP has solved our problems," she explains.

"When I heard that the UNDP project was to be implemented here, I was the first to register. I got training with other farmers to learn about conservation farming. My life changed with the new farming techniques," Nakanwajji says.

Now, she has set up a 5-acre farm of maize and beans under conservation farming. She hopes to harvest about 20 bags per acre. This means that she is likely to harvest over 100 bags of maize. She believes conservation agriculture is the best as all the planted seeds germinate and yield highly.

Farmers have also been taught how to locally harvest water. Deep pits are dug in their farm yards and most of the rain water is trapped there to be used in the future.

Rehema Naguja – a member of the group has traps for over 100,000 litres of water per month. This has helped to provide and maintain moisture to her crops and also water for her animals during the drought.

"Even without irrigation, we have learned that our crops can get water," says Naguja who uses the same water to irrigate the trees she got from SAFE. More than 300 of such trees have been given to the farmers in a move to protect the environment.

In the past, her village suffered because most of the trees had been cut down for firewood. Women walked long distances looking for firewood.

"Our men thought that we were out gossiping because we were away for hours in the evenings looking for firewood. This project has brought hope. We shall have enough trees for firewood and environmental conservation and to sell some for income," Naguja says

More than 600 members of SAFE have benefited from the sustainable land management project of UNDP. According to members, they have achieved food security and environmental protection.

They have also been trained in modern farming methods – like minimum tillage, fertilizer application, marketing skills; promoting conservation agriculture and growing tree seedlings in nursery beds.

The group has 20 tonnes of maize in storage and is looking for a market. Once the maize is sold, they plan to buy land and build offices.

Nankinga says that these will have a training wing for farmers in modern farming methods. "This will help us reduce poverty that is rampant. It will also improve on the quality of life," says Rose Kiwewe the chairperson of the Kabale Maize and Beans Parish Association of SAFE.

Despite their achievements, the SAFE group has challenges. For instance, out of over 600 members, less than 12 have managed to get farm implements such as Knapsack sprayer pumps.

Kiwewe requests the UNDP programme to help them with modern irrigation methods to deal with the frequent droughts.

14. Profile of Sembabule Agri-business Farmers Enterprise (SAFE)

<p>Name of Project</p> <p>Enhancing Water and Soil Quality Management for Sustainable Land Management (SLM)</p> <p>Brief background</p> <p>SAFE was born in 1992. The group wanted to improve yields through promoting modern farming techniques, getting market for farmers and access to loans. Their main crops were maize and beans. However, they graduated into providing agronomy training to farmers. They also formed farming groups based on parishes. So far, six of these farming groups have been formed in Sembabule, each consisting of over 300 individuals. Their main challenge has always been limited funding, which has made it hard for them to maximize more in terms of improved yields. However, funding through UNDP's SLM project has made it possible.</p> <p>Project location</p> <p>Matete Trading Centre/Town Council – Sembabule District</p> <p>Project Objectives</p> <p>Improve farmers' yields through conservation farming</p> <p>Help farmers get market for their crops</p> <p>Promote access to loans and agronomy farm implements</p> <p>Project achievements to date</p> <p>Increase in crop yields</p> <p>They have stored over 20 tonnes of maize ready to trade</p> <p>They have set up a nursery of over 100,000 trees annually</p> <p>They have achieved water harvesting in their fields through digging of pits</p>	<p>Amount of Grant Received</p> <p>UGX 50 Million (Fifty Million Only)</p> <p>USD \$20,000</p> <p>Number of Project Members</p> <p>600 Members</p> <p>Project activities</p> <p>Conservation agriculture – growing of maize and beans</p> <p>Water harvesting through pits</p> <p>Planting trees</p> <p>Project challenges</p> <p>Limited funding, it cannot go around to benefit all the members</p> <p>Drought is still a big problem, drying up crops</p> <p>Project opportunities</p> <p>Members plan to set up a saving and cooperative society</p> <p>There is a plan to set up a storage and demonstration centre</p> <p>Lessons learned</p> <p>Conservation agriculture increases yields, through the use of "basins" to trap</p> <p>It is possible to kick food insecurity out of rural communities. They just need to be given a push.</p> <p>Remarks</p> <p>More funds should be given to the group to spread the project to other farming members. This group is enthusiastic.</p>
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STORY 15

SLM opened our eyes

"Improved seeds yield higher and animal manure increases soil fertility"



Members hold a sensitization meeting at their village in Mabindo

Mabindo Farmers' Cooperative in Mabindo Village, Sembabule district is engaged in conservation agriculture, an initiative of UNDP's Sustainable Land Management Project whose mandate is to fight poverty using modern farming skills that protect the environment. Seated in a spacious compound set like a classroom, this vigilant group of farmers reviews their work plan and activities.

In conservation farming, the Mabindo group is involved in cultivation of maize using the "basin" method, where measured wells are dug and a number of maize or bean seeds are planted with fertilizers in it. Hawa Nanziri, the Chairperson of the group used herbicides to get rid of weeds instead of using a hand hoe that affects the soil structure deemed fertile for crops.

"This farming method is different. The "basins" trap enough moisture and retain soil nutrients. This helps our crops to grow well," Nanziri told UNDP. She had struggled with her five-acre-piece of

land to grow maize and beans. But the prolonged drought and poor soil fertility limited her. With the conservation agriculture, Nanziri is assured of higher yields because she uses improved seed, manure and chemical fertilizers, herbicides and more water is retained and available for crops to grow.

The Mabindo farmers were given Ugsh 56m (USD 25,000) which they have used to construct rain water harvesting tanks. The tanks store large amounts of water. Mabindo village is an area constrained by lack of reliable water supply, so the tanks have helped the farmers immeasurably. More than 12 tanks have been constructed to supply water for 93 members. The members hope to construct more tanks to improve hygiene and water supply in Mabindo. Willy Sebuufu reported that "with the provision of drinking water, we shall surely have fewer cases of water borne diseases". "We have lost many children to cholera. Thanks to this water, they are now safe."

Peter Mwesige, said the project has shown them the light. "Water harvesting techniques have always been around the community but our ignorance had sunk them into inactivity" he said. But after being trained under the UNDP's SLM project, they are harvesting water. Mwesige has dug a series of pits in his farm that have trapped enough water. "I use the water from the rain during the dry season for my crops and animals," he says.

The future

Hawa says the group plans to start an irrigation project to help the farmers cultivate crops throughout the year. This is to improve food

security and reduce poverty. The group plans to start zero-grazing (dairy cattle rearing) to provide milk and income for farmers.

The challenges: George Semba, a member of the group says making basins is time-consuming and laborious to dig "basins." For Mwesige, it is the fertilizers that are not enough for all the members. He hopes the project can supply more.



Members practice minimum tillage.

15. Profile of Mabindo Farmers' Cooperative Society

Name of Project	Improving productivity through increasing access to water for production	Project Activities	Growing of food crops beans and maize using conservation agriculture
Key Enterprises being Promoted	Maize and Beans production using conservation agriculture		Training in conservation agriculture
	Construction of rain water harvesting tanks		Water harvesting through construction of underground rain water tanks
Name of Grantee	Mabindo Farmers' Cooperative Society	Project Challenges	Drought is still destroying the crops
Background	The group was birthed in 2007 with the aim of fighting household poverty. They started with rearing chicken and graduated to savings and borrowing among the members. They got profits and members received dividends each year. The group graduated to a cooperative society in 2009 after being trained on how a cooperative works. In 2011, the group received further training from the UNDP SLM project on conservation agriculture. They are currently growing maize, beans and coffee. They also rear chicken and goats. In SLM, they practice digging of "basins" and mulching of the land to increase soil fertility.		Limited funding to assist all the farmers
Project Location	Mabindo Village, Sembabule District		Limited access to the market for their products
Project Objectives	Fight poverty through conservation agriculture	Project Opportunities	They plan to set up a demonstration farm
	Improve on the incomes of the members through crop farming		The members also hope to start irrigation technologies to enable farming throughout the year
	Promote credit through savings and borrowing	Lessons Learned	Water harvesting has benefited the farmers greatly
Project Achievements	Increase in the yields of the crops especially of maize and beans		Conservation agriculture improves soil fertility
	Conservation of the environment through reduction in soil erosion	Future plan	The group plans to start an irrigation project to help the farmers cultivate crops throughout the year.
	Secured food security		
Total of Grant Received	UGX 56 Million (Fifty Six Million)		
Number of Project Members	93 Members		

STORY 16

Sembabule Town Council Persons with Disability Poultry Farmers.

Disability cannot derail Sustainable Food production



Members hold a meeting with UNDP consultants to share their experience about conservation agriculture.

In the wee hours of the morning, 14-year-old Charles Luziga, lame and unable to walk properly, crawls and reaches for his crutches. Jerrycan in one hand and a stick for support in another, Luziga's begins his 12km journey to the well to fetch water.

"Life is very difficult because the water sources are far. "We do not have safe and clean water in our village" laments Luziga, an orphan, who lost both his parents to the HIV/AIDS virus five years ago.

Living in a district that experiences prolonged drought and water shortages, Luziga, the eldest of three children, faces severe challenges. However, with determination and courage, he finally makes it back home, sweating and exhausted with his jerrycan.

Unfortunately, there is nothing for him to have for breakfast, so he dashes to the neighbour's home for help. He returns with maize flour to feed the family for the next one week. Both food and water are

difficult for Luziga to access. However, Luziga and his siblings don't need to worry anymore because he is a member of the Sembabule Town Council Persons with Disability Poultry Farmers. The group recently received a grant of sh50m to construct rain water harvesting tanks and also improve on food security for people with disabilities.

Luziga is one of the grant beneficiaries. He will be able to receive a tank, improved maize and bean seeds for planting and farm implements – including herbicides, fertilizers, a knap sprayer and training in modern farming. "I am really excited. I will have enough time to go to school on time and also have food to eat," Luziga says. He planted his maize and beans on their two-acre piece of land that his parents left them. "the SLM program came at the right time". Luziga has already started a demonstration field of about 10 holes, commonly called "basins". He learnt this technique originally from the first groups in Sembabule that were practicing it before his group received funding and put it into practice.

The results are great because the maize and beans he planted are uniformly green.

"All the seeds that I planted germinated. I expect to harvest about a bag of maize from this," he adds.

He hopes to achieve food security and also sell the surplus to get food requirements for his siblings

Loyce Ryamunyonyi, the chairperson of Sembabule Town Council Persons with Disability Poultry Farmers says the project seeks to bring clean and safe water to the people. She believes the project came at the right time. In her experience, most of the poverty eradication programmes in Uganda sometimes exclude the most vulnerable like persons with disability. "This has increased the poverty gap between people with disability and the others," she says.

The new project has trained contractors to construct over 12 rain water harvesting tanks. It has also taught its disabled members how to practice conservation agriculture.

The future

Wilson Sebugawo, an elder in the group explains that they plan to set up a demonstration farm with facilities for people with disabilities to practice better farming skills.

Sophie Nabuwembo, the group's Secretary says that they plan to practice heifer farming, where improved breeds of cattle are developed or produced or purchased to get better milk and meat.

Challenges

The Sembabule Town Council Persons with Disability Poultry Farmers may be hoping for the best as they head towards implementation of the project – but several notable challenges plague them. Top on the list, the tanks are a like drop in the ocean because only 12 for over 26 members are still few.



Group members being trained in conservation agriculture

16. Profile of Sembabule Town Council Persons with Disability Poultry Farmers.

Name of Project	Improving livelihoods through increasing access to water.	Project Achievements	Trained in conservation farming and increased yields Built 20 tanks for the farmers
Key Enterprises being Promoted	Rain water harvesting tanks Conservation agriculture (Cultivating maize and beans)	Project Duration	3 Months
Name of Grantee	Sembabule Town Council Persons with Disability Poultry Farmers	Amount of Grant received	50 Million (Fifty Million Shillings Only)
Background	Loyce Ryamunyonyi says the group started in 2009 with four members with the aim of fighting poverty among the disabled people of Sembabule. Their first project was poultry farming, where members reared and sold quite a number of birds. The proceeds would later be distributed to the members. However, this was not sustainable, as the chicken feeds were too expensive for the group to afford. They, therefore, sold all the chicken and banked the money. The members borrowed the savings but many poor members could not return what they borrowed. When they were about to collapse, UNDP, through their SLM project, rescued them by giving them a grant. The group is now using the money to improve their farming skills, buy farm inputs and implements and to acquire knowledge on farming.	Number of Project Members	37 Members
Project Location	Sembabule Town Council, Sembabule District	Project Activities	Construction of rain water harvesting tanks Conservation agriculture with maize and beans
Project Objectives	Reduce poverty among the disabled persons Improve incomes of the disabled persons Conservation of the environment using conservation agriculture	Project Challenges	Limited funding which cannot cover everyone Prolonged drought continues to dodge the farmers
		Project Opportunities	Members plan to set up a demonstration farm to teach disabled people modern farming skills
		Lessons Learned	Most of what disabled people need is support which they can use to become self-sufficient.

STORY 17

SLM gives Kyasaga Farmers a better future

Kyasaga farmers reap big from conservation agriculture



John Sewambwa, 58, a disabled member of the group who had given up farming is now a successful farmer.

Just two years ago, Kalagala was an ordinary village where poverty, hunger and disease were facts of everyday life. Now, it is an experimental “food basket” since members of the Kyasaga Community Based Farmers Organization were trained in conservation agriculture to restore soil fertility, water and nutrients. However, among the many places UNDP has decided to take its ambitious Sustainable Land Management (SLM) project is a small village called Kalagala in Nakaseke District.

The main intention of this project was to lift farmers out of poverty through conservation of land and the environment. With the project’s small grants practicing conservation agriculture these techniques, the farmers’ maize is taller; farmers have acquired improved cattle breed heifers for milk, meat and higher income; pineapples are growing well and soil fertility has been restored. “We were taught to measure dimensions of the basins and advised to plant about three seeds in a certain pattern per hole. We were also advised

to make big holes so that they trap water and moisture for the plants,” explains Stephen Musisi, the Chairperson of Kyasagga Community Based Farmers Group.

With the sh51.6m from the Norwegian Government to sustain this project, Kyasagga CBFO has a mission to end poverty in their villages. The UNDP and their partners gave Kalagala farmers improved maize and bean seeds and practical ideas on conservation farming, which include planting maize and beans in holes called “basins”. The farmers were then given herbicides to get rid of the weeds. They no longer use hoes or any object that destroys the crumb structure of the soil.

Sheriff Namayanja, a group member says the maize harvest has increased two and a half times as a result of using both chemical and organic fertilizer. The question now is how to store the surplus so that farmers can sell them during the dry season when prices are high. Apart from maize, in Namayanja’s

backyard, a shelter has been built for the cow she bought from money from the project. More than 12 such heifers have been given to 12 members of the group. With this heifer, Namayanja hopes for an increase in milk and meat production, thus contributing to the reduction of malnutrition and poverty that are rampant in Kalagala.

Namayanja is grateful to UNDP: "Without this project, life would be miserable. We take some of the milk and sell some to meet the basic needs of the family." Improved nutrition means their children are healthy and energetic. For instance, recently, Kalagala village took the lead during the Nakaseke Villages Sports Day: "None of our children fainted!," Namayanja exclaims excitedly. This, to her, is evidence that the fruit of their labour is already being tasted.

At his advanced age, 73-year-old Musa Kalule had given up farming because he was getting little out of it due to poor soils. However, when the UNDP programme started in his village, Kalule participated actively and was taught how to increase pineapple yields. "I got improved varieties from the National Agricultural Research Organization and I was taught modern farming by the use of "basins". I was taught how to make farmyard manure and today,

my pineapple yields are great and the money is coming in," Kalule explained.

Last season, Kalule earned Ugsh800,000 from pineapples on a quarter-acre piece of land. Motivated by the huge harvest, Kalule has planted another two acres of pineapples. Kalule is back into active farming and minting cash after almost giving up on it due to poor yields.

Challenges

Drought is still persistent in their cattle corridor leading to crop wilt. Musisi notes that if the UNDP helps them to secure irrigation units, their problems will reduce.

The group still grapples with lack of a proper storage facility they do not know how to store their produce or add value to it, they do not get as much as they would have.

The future

Musisi is confident because he has seen a huge harvest of maize and beans. They will build a maize and beans store to keep their harvest in anticipation of a better price when supply on the market is low.



Mr. and Mrs. Musisi have constructed a shed for their incalf heifer

17. Profile of Kyasaga Community Based Farmers' Organization

Name of the Project	Project achievements to date
Improving crop yields using conservation agriculture and integrating animals	Increased crop yields
Key enterprises being promoted	Achieved food security at household level
Maize, Beans, Pineapple farming	Increased incomes of the farmers
Improved animal breed for milk production	Empowered farmers with modern farming technologies
Name of Grantee	Project duration
Kyasaga Community Based Farmers' Organization	3 Months (Three Months)
Brief Background	Total of Grant Received
Kyasaga's Chairman, Stephen Musisi says they started Kyasaga Community Based Farmers' Organization in 2008 to eradicate poverty through the power of agriculture – especially crop farming. They started with about 20 members. The group initially received help from the National Agricultural Research Organization that taught them modern farming methods. But conservation agriculture was far from the list of their menu, so yields remained poor. However, in 2011, the group landed a chance when UNDP through their SLM project introduced conservation agriculture and later a grant to boost farming. The group received improved seeds, fertilizers, knap sprayer pumps and heifers to increase milk and meat production. They have since achieved food security and reduced poverty.	UGX 51.6 Million (Fifty One Million Six Hundred Only)
Project location	Number of project members
Kyasaga Village - Nakaseke Sub-County, Nakaseke District	40 Members
Project objectives	Brief project activities
Reduce poverty	Crop growing of maize, beans and pineapples
Increase family income	Heifer project for milk and meat production
Conserve the land and the environment	Project challenges
	Persistent drought
	Late release of foods for farming
	Limited funds that cannot cover all the members
	Project opportunities
	The group hopes to build a store for their produce
	The group also hopes to add value to their produce
	They request donors to provide irrigation technology
	Lessons learned
	Conservation agriculture has increased the yields of these poor villagers and helped them achieve food security and income for the survival of the family.

STORY 18

Namusaale Youth Group's Crusade to Save their Environment

The youth spearhead the saving of Biomass



Members transplant their seedlings to the group farm

Below an early morning sunshine, two young men hold watering cans above tree seedlings in a nursery bed, watering them so that they do not wilt. Measuring almost a quarter the size of a football pitch, the nursery contains over 20,000 woodlots and citrus fruit seedlings. The seedlings are protected from intruders by a wire mesh fence and too much light and rain by a mat spread above them. This is an initiative towards environmental protection by the Namusaale Youth Group of Nakaseke District; a group of 50 youth working hard to restore their degraded environment and also to counteract effects of climate change that is threatening Nakaseke.

Solomon Ssemujju, the Chairman of Namusaale Youth Group, reveals that the project was inspired by the environmental degradation that has taken its toll on Nakaseke. "During the bush war, many trees were cut down by the rebels. After the war, the situation worsened as many people settled in forestry reserves. They indiscriminately cut

down trees and today, we have almost nothing," he says. Ssemujju is grateful to UNDP for a grant of Ugsh48.6m (USD 23,000) from the Norwegian Government extended to his group. The group used part of the money to plant trees. Members received training on the importance of trees and how to plant them. The group uses drama to educate and sensitize the public on tree-planting. They set up their own demonstration farm to teach their members and the community how the project works.

A variety of trees including pine, eucalyptus and citrus were transplanted from the nursery bed into their demonstration farm of 20 acres and the farm is doing well. "In two years' time, we shall harvest some for sell and plant more to replenish what we cut down. This will check on climate change as well as empower us economically," says Phinehas Muyomba, the patron of the group. The dividends from the trees will be shared among members so as to increase their income and improve their

standards of living. Muyomba is sad that most of the members of the group are besieged by poverty and cannot afford to pay school fees for their children. However, he believes this will soon change.

Driven by the desire to protect the environment from greenhouse gases through curbing the use of firewood and pollution of smoke into the air, Namsaale group members have also embarked on making energy-saving stoves that use briquettes rather than charcoal or firewood. The group has gone a step further to take introduce energy saving technology to the schools in Nakaseke at a subsidized rate. At market price, it would cost them sh3m to get a stove, but with support from the SLM project the stoves were made at sh300,000 each. At Kapeeka Standard High School, a huge energy-saving stove has replaced the open fire place that wasted firewood and polluted the environment with smoke, courtesy of Namusaale Youth Group.

The walls of the stove are made from clay to absorb and retain heat for a long time. A pipe is then connected to the stove to let out smoke, ensuring the users' health. Winnies Atwine, a teacher at the school, decries the challenges they had been facing from using firewood. We had been using about two trucks full of firewood, costing sh1m in two months, but with the stove, we use only one

truck of firewood and less than Ugsh500,000 (USD 200). St. Jerome Cove Primary School and Kapeeka Primary School have also exchanged the open fireplace for the energy saving stove.

Namusaale Group has not only stopped at providing the stoves, but they also make briquettes for cooking, another environment-friendly project to replace charcoal. They use paper, grass and other waste that would otherwise be harmful to the environment to make the briquettes. Using a char from invasive weeds like Lantana camara, the briquettes are moulded using cassava paste as binderm into appropriate shapes, used in charcoal stoves and other fire places for cooking. Musa Ssentongo, 22 years, a member of the group says the briquettes cook faster because they absorb and retain energy.

The future

So far, only five schools have received the stoves but the group hopes to expand the idea to more schools.

Challenges

Ssemujju also says termites and animals are threatening to wipe out the trees, so they need help to control termites.



The tree nursery bed has been fenced to protect the seedlings.

18. Profile of Namusaale Youth Group

Name of project	Restoring environment health through tree planting and saving energy	Project achievements	Constructed 5 energy-saving stoves in 5 schools
Key Enterprises being promoted	Briquette making from invasive weeds		Set up a tree nursery bed producing over 20,000 seedlings per season
	Tree planting and nursery management		Set up a tree demonstration farm (over 20 acres)
	Energy-saving stoves for schools and households		Taught members about briquette making
Name of Grantee	Namusaale Youth Group	Amount of grant received	UGX 48.6 Million (Forty Eight Million, Six Hundred Thousand Shillings Only)
Background	It was in 2004 that Namusaale Youth Group started with the aim of restoring the environment that had been destroyed, causing climate change. The group got free seeds from the government, whose supply unfortunately later stopped. After this, the young people could not support themselves, so they abandoned the project and the group almost disbanded. The group remained dormant until 2011 when SLM set up shop in their community. Among many other activities they are involved in to save the environment is the making of energy-saving stoves that are given to schools at a discounted rate and the trees are given to the members as well as to the community as a way to fight environmental degradation.	Number of project Members	55 Members
Project location	Namusaale Village, Kapeeka Sub-County – Nakaseke District	Brief project activities	Briquette making
Project objectives	Conserve the environment		Construction of energy-saving stoves
	Increase incomes for members and the community generally		Tree planting and nursery bed making
	Increase soil fertility	Project challenges	Inadequate funds to cover all the members in the project
			Persistent drought often dries many crops
		Project opportunities	Termite invasions
			Construction of modern irrigation technology to help farmers practice their activities throughout the year
			There is need to market energy-saving stoves for the youth to earn income from constructing them
		Lessons learned	Tree planting reduces soil erosion and also increases the modification of weather positively

STORY 19

Buwana Cattle Change Production Capacity

Buwana Agro-pastoralists embrace change.



Buwana members have invested part of their grant in fresian bulls to improve on their local breeds so they can have cross breeds.

In the scattered shrubs of Buwana Village, Geoffrey Mugyenyi, the Chairman of Twimukye Buwana Farmers' Group, supervises his large herd of cattle grazing, keeping special attention on the new bull.

He does not want the bull to wander away from the rest of the herd because it must mate with the local breeds to improve on the quality of his herd. "For years, I have toiled in vain to find a breed that gives better milk and meat production but due to the high costs of better breed animals, I couldn't get one, but now I do not need to worry anymore, this great news indeed" Mugyenyi confesses.

The Norwegian Government through the UNDP gave the Twimukye Buwana Farmers' Group, a cattle keeping community, sh55.3m (24,900 USD) to improve on their cattle breeds. The group has used the money well, buying over 12 out of 40 members a bull each. Bwojo Arthur, one of Twimukye's members got a high grade Friesian bull, that is already mating with the local breeds and he

awaits the mixed breed with bated breath. "This will increase the amount of milk that I get. I will sell the milk to increase family income and some of the cattle. My children will also go to school," he says.

Buwana community is buried in poverty, disease and ignorance. They are pastoralists who have been rearing indigenous cattle that produce little or no milk at all. As a result, their families have looked on helplessly as their children fail to complete their education. Many people in this community cannot afford to take their children to a health centre when they fall ill because of lack of money, but the SLM project is intending to overturn this misfortune. The project has also offered the pastoralists goats to rear. If a member does not receive a bull, they receive two goats; a male and female.

Moses Katsigazi is a beneficiary of two improved goat types. He hopes the goats will reproduce and increase in number, after which he will sell some of the offspring goats to provide school fees for his

children and improve his life. Already, his attitude has changed and he is planning to grow grasses instead of waiting for nature to provide. "I am looking at about five litres of milk everyday from my goat when it produces. I am excited about that." Moses said.

Jane Kateme on the other hand is looking at Bee-keeping as her gold mine in the future.

She is one of the farmers undertaking bee-keeping in the shrubs of Buwana. Her goal is to harvest enough honey to sell to people in urban towns and cities like Kampala for a good fortune. "A quarter litre of honey costs far more than Ugsh 15,000 (USD 7) in Kampala, if I harvest about 200 litres I will forget poverty" Jane said. Twimukye Buwana Farmers' Group provided more than 20 beehives per farmer. It is still early in the first season of the project but all the hives already have bees in them.

As pastoralists who have lived for many generations in the cattle corridor that experiences severe drought, the Buwana community almost always avoided crop farming and concentrated on cattle keeping. However, the SLM project has taught

them some ways to diversify to crop farming, using conservation agriculture. With this practice, so far, the beans on Mugyenyi's quarter-acre plot of land are doing well. For the first time in his life, he hopes to expand his project to a bigger portion of land come next season.

Challenges

Ticks and diseases attack their Friesian bulls, yet they have no veterinary officer in the village to treat them. A veterinary officer is urgently needed.

Feeding the bulls is also complicated in an area that has insufficient pastures.

Furthermore, prolonged drought is affecting the proper growth of the crops they planted.

Future

The group hopes to acquire irrigation technology to help them plant crops throughout the year and also be able to get water for their cattle.

They plan to rotate the bulls on an annual basis to the other farmers who did not get a chance to have their own.



A member sites a modern bee-hive on his farm

19. Profile of Twimukye Buwana Farmers' Group

Name of Project	Improving herd quality to reduce land degradation	Amount of Grant received	UGX 55.3 Million (Fifty Five Million, Three Hundred Thousand Shillings Only)
Key enterprises being promoted	Goat rearing Improving of local breeds of cattle using Friesian bulls Conservation agriculture with beans and maize Bee keeping	Number of beneficiaries	40 Members
Name of Grantee	Twimukye Buwana Farmers' Group	Brief project activities	Beekeeping Cross-breeding (improving herd breeds) Goat-rearing Conservation agriculture (maize and beans)
Background	The group was formed in 2010 with the aim of fighting poverty. At first members reared goats, where each member contributed one goat to the group. After each goat had produced, they would sell them in bulk and divide the proceeds among the members. This helped them to make some cash from their livestock. However, they could not expand due to limited capital. In 2011 when SLM arrived, members were given a grant that has tremendously changed their lives. Members are cross-breeding their livestock. They have also started beekeeping and conservation farming. "At this rate, we shall get rid of poverty. We are thankful to UNDP and Norwegian Government for thinking about poor villagers like us," group leader Mugyenyi says.	Project challenges	Diseases are affecting the bulls yet they lack a veterinary officer Termites are eating all the grass so there is little for the animals Prolonged drought that dries up most of their crops
Project location	Buwana Village, Nakaseke District	Project opportunities	Members plan to start modern irrigation to grow crops throughout the year – but also hope to increase their cattle heads through constant watering of pastures.
Project objectives	To eradicate poverty Improve on the breeds of cattle Get beehives to fight poverty	Lessons learned	The community is conserving the environment through beekeeping because members believe that the more the forest cover, the more the bees in their hives. The exotic bulls are helping to mate to improve on the indigenous breeds, so the farmers are expectant of high milk and meat production.
Project achievements	Distributed over 80 beehives Bought over 50 improved goats for the group Started crop farming for the first time in their lifestyle Bought 12 Friesian bulls that are improving local breeds		

STORY 20

Nakasongola Dryland turns into a Green Belt

Community participation in the greening effort in Nakasongola



George Kalema has planted grass on his five acre piece of land to increase pasture for his animals



Fully grown pasture for seed multiplication

Under an early morning drizzle, Stephen Rwakasania lives his home carrying a hoe in one hand and a machete in the other, headed to his quarter-acre piece of land where he is growing pasture for the first time. From this experiment, he hopes to get more pasture to feed his cattle and save them from starvation.

A resident of Migyera Trading Centre in Nakasongola District, Rwakasania has witnessed termites raze grass during the dry season. "My cows starved to the point that I had to sell them to avoid a double loss through their death which increased my vulnerability to poverty," he explains. However now, Rwakasania needs not to worry anymore, thanks to the Norwegian Government that has through the UNDP given the Nabiswera Farmers Cooperative Society a grant worth sh60.9m to grow pasture and undertake rain water harvesting projects. Rwakasania has planted *Desmodium* spp, a nutritious type of grass that will not only feed his animals but increase milk and meat production. He

looks forward to harvesting and storing the grass as hay to be used when it hot and dry. " In three months, this type of grass will have matured for harvesting, then I will dry it and keep it away for dry season use" Rwakasania reports.

George Kalema, another member of the group has also planted grass on his five-acre piece of land. "We have never been planting grass as herders, but we were trained on how to care, harvest and store it. It was amazing that we did not know that planting grass is possible until UNDP came, what a practical way to fight poverty!" he says. More than 50 members have benefited from the pasture growing project. To save their pasture from drying up, a 100,000 litre water harvesting dam has been constructed in Nabiswera sub-county to provide water to the farmers. The dam is not only accessible to group members only but to the community as well. Richard Kankya, the group's treasurer says the community has been affected by water shortage both for their animals and for domestic use. "But

through the UNDP programme, the dam water is now accessible, and our grazing lands can remain green for a longer time because we can water them” he says.

The future

Now that this livestock farming community has grass and water, we expect increased milk production. So we want to invest in a central milk cooling plant where they will collect milk and market as a group for high prices.

20. Profile of Nabiswera Farmers Livestock Cooperative Society.

Name of Project	Improving herd productivity through planting grass and providing water	Project Duration	3 Months (Three Months)
Key enterprise being promoted	Pasture growing	Amount of Grant Received	UGX 60.9 Million (Sixty Million Nine Hundred Thousand Shillings Only)
	Water harvesting at household level	Number of Project Members	300 Members
	Dam construction	Brief Project Activities	Dam construction for water harvesting
Name of Grantee	Nabiswera Farmers Livestock Cooperative Society		Training farmers in constructing dam and Pasture growing
Background	Group Treasurer Richard Kankya says it was started in 2010. Their intention was to collect milk in bulk as a cooperative society so that they could sell it at a handsome price. They were also looking at adding value to their milk and the crops that they grew.	Project Challenges	Pasture growing
	Since they were cattle keepers, they wanted to improve upon their breeds by going into dairy farming to increase milk production and also have a veterinary shop to help the farmers treat their animals for better health. The group started with 150 members but they have doubled to 300. They have so far achieved a few of their first objectives. However, the SLM project has made it possible to achieve more through pasture growing and a water harvesting dam that has been built.		Inadequate funds to cover all the members
Project Location	Nabiswera Sub-County – Nakasongola District		Termites and other pests destroy the grass
Project Achievements	Construction of a 100,000 litre dam	Project Opportunities	Members plan to buy a central milk cooling plant to store their milk and sell during the times of shortage for higher profits
	Growing of pasture on 7acres	Lessons Learned	Dam construction has enabled members to get water for their animals
	Trained farmers in pasture and water dam construction and maintenance		

STORY 21

Stopping Termites in their tracks

Application of indigenous knowledge in the restoration of degraded areas



Isaac Mwine, the project coordinator, (right) tours Mugerwa's farm where they are planting trees



A member of the group shows off the trees and the grass that they have planted to restore the green.

As the sun goes down in Nakasongola, so do the cows and humans retire to their rest after a long hot day. An empty kraal, fresh with green cover stands opposite a bare ground infested by termites and beaten by years of erosion. Three young men dash to the ground, planting some trees and spraying the termites with a pesticide. They remove all the cattle and fence off the bare ground.

The young men belong to Nalukonge Community Initiative Association (NACIA), a Community Based Organisation in Migyera Town Council, Nakasongola District that received a grant of sh49.6m(USD 24,200) to plant trees and kill termites that have destroyed the vegetation. The group leader, Isaac Mwine is quick to explain that "the termites that have terrorized their community were brought by over-grazing and prolonged droughts in Nakasongola, which exposed the soil to erosion and our animals do not have anything to eat. We are hoping that planting trees will help to restore the vegetation."

Due to shortage of pasture, the land has gone bare because of erosion and the animals are emancipated and some have died. Consequently, the lives of Nakasongola pastoralists who depend on cattle for everything have been threatened. They have no food and no income. However, this grim picture is beginning to look better. Through the initiative of rotating animals from one kraal to another and planting grass and trees, the vegetation is slowly being restored. Samson Mugerwa, 35 years, saw five of his 100 cows die due to lack of grass because of rampage by termites. But through this project, his grass is growing again. "I have also made sure that I rotate my cows from one kraal to another to give the other grass time to grow, but also planting trees provides adequate climate modification for the grass to grow," he says.

33-year-old Bob Sekyemuli, another group member, had his five-acre piece of grazing land all turn bare due to overgrazing and termite infestation. But the SLM project has helped him undertake afforestation

which reduces erosion. "I appreciate this project because I have started seeing the fruits. With my cattle moving to another area, it has given this grass time to re-grow," he says.

The challenges

One of the most pressing challenge to Nalukonge farmers is lack of grass to kick-start the growth of vegetation. This is because all the vegetation was destroyed.

Drought in Nakasongola also keeps everything dry and stunted. Termites are still a big menace, destroying grass.

The future

Irrigation is one of the key innovations the farmers are looking at to keep their grass green even when it is not raining. They also hope to improve their cattle breeds is the way to go because need to shift from keeping large heads of cattle to zero grazing to reduce on overgrazing.

21. Profile Of Nalukonge Community Initiative

Name of project	Addressing the termite challenge and development of bare lands	Project achievements to date	Restored over 8,000 acres of tree cover on bare lands Taught members about protecting and caring for trees
Key enterprises being promoted	Planting of trees to restore vegetation cover Controlling termites	Total of Grant Received	UGX 49.6 Million (Forty Nine Million Six Hundred Thousand Only)
Name of Grantee	Nalukonge Community Initiative	Number of project members	50 Members
Brief background	The group was founded in 2002 with the aim of adding value and finding market for the milk collected by group members. The group also wanted to build capacity in agriculture through building partnerships and to replenish the vegetation cover that had been cut down over the years.	Project activities	Tree planting Killing of termites Fencing off the protected vegetation
Project location	Migyera Town Council, Nakasongola District	Project challenges	Inadequate funding Termites destroy the vegetation
Project objectives	Restore tree cover and grass Kill termites to stop destruction of the environment Market milk and milk products	Lessons learned	Keeping low numbers of cattle help to reduce overgrazing and destruction of vegetation

STORY 22

Determined to get rid of hunger and poverty

Tusubira women ensure household food security



The group is building a storage facility to bulk their harvested maize.

Two women supervise the construction of a grain store (granary) that has reached the beam level. They are helping the builders by sending them the bricks and water, which makes their work easier and faster. "By the time we have Christmas, I want to see this building completed," one of the women says.

These women belong to Tusubira Women's Group (TWG) in Kalungi Sub-County, Nakasongola District. The work is progressing at supersonic speed, partly because the group received a grant of sh51.8m (USD 22,000) from the Norwegian Government through the UNDP and Government of Uganda to carry out conservation farming and food storage for marketing. The group plans to use the store to keep other crops such as beans, sweet potatoes, cassava, sorghum and cotton in anticipation of better prices.

Sarah Nanyombi, the Secretary of the group explained that "in our group, we are growing maize and beans using conservation agriculture, and have already seen it increases crop yields and

soil fertility," she says. Nanyombi planted 5kgs of maize in the first season but got over 550kgs of the harvest compared to 20 kilos or nothing in the past. She also planted 2kgs of beans and harvested 10kgs. Seeing that the method works, she went ahead to plant 10kgs and got a bumper harvest.

"In the first season of growing maize, I got a harvest of larger maize cobs and increased yields" Lukiya Sanya reported. The weeding using herbicides is equally amazing. "The aim is to keep all the nutrients and fertility in the soil," Lukiya says. Tusubira Women's Group hopes to have a huge crop harvest so that they don't cry about lack of food again. The surplus will then either be sold during seasons of scarcity for higher prices and the proceeds given to the members or they will keep the seeds for planting next season. They are also hope to add value to their stored produce before selling it.

Faith Nanyonyi, the chairperson of the group has started tasting the flow of cash into her pocket, thanks to the conservation agriculture. "My crops did well in the first season. I ate some and made some money from the surplus, and saved some seeds to plant in the next. In the past, my family was poor and hungry, but today, I walks with my head high as I looks forward to a bright future", Nanyonyi said.

Sanyu Mande is waiting for Grace Kateme's heifer to calve down so that she also receives the calf. Some members has received heifers through the SLM grant, but once the animals have given birth, the calves will be given to others. More than 12 such heifers have been given to the members. "We believe the UNDP together with the Government of Norway have done a tremendous thing to bring this project here. We were very poor."

The challenges

Tusubira Women's Group's biggest challenge is inadequate funds to take their project to another level so that it can benefit all the 30 members. Drought and termites also continually threaten to destroy the crops. The future

In the future

After completing the store, the group will keep their grain there and wait for the market demand to increase due to shortage in supply. The group also plans to use part of the building to house their offices so that Women of Kalungi are able to learn from them and replicate their success.



Group members proudly take UNDP staff around a tour of a pit latrine built for TWG

22. Profile of Tsubira Women's Group

Name of Project	Moving from production to food storage and marketing	Amount of grant received	UGX 51.8 Million (Fifty One Million Eight Hundred Thousand Shillings Only)
Key enterprises being promoted	Construction of grain store and their offices	Number of project Members	30 Members
	Conservation agriculture – involving growing of maize and beans with cattle for manure	Brief project activities	Cattle keeping using improved breeds Construction of crop storage house Conservation farming (growing of maize and beans)
Name of Grantee	Tsubira Women's Group	Project challenges	Inadequate funds to reach all the members Drought is drying up some crops Lack of veterinary health worker and drugs for the cattle
Background	Chairperson Faith Nanyonyi says the group started in 2005 with the aim of fighting against poverty through agriculture. They were also determined to find ways of earning money to educate their children. They initially grew crops such as maize and beans and also reared livestock and poultry. However they did not have external support and access to modern farming methods until 2011 when UNDP launched its SLM project. The group was trained in conservation agriculture and later given a grant UGX 51.8 million to improve on their farming methods.	Project opportunities	Construction of the storage house to store the crops to increase the chances of members getting better prices for their goods
Project location	Kalungi Sub-County, Nakasongola District	Lessons learned	Conservation agriculture increases crop yields tremendously
Project objectives	Fight poverty through crop and animal farming Raising money to educate members' children Conserve the environment		
Project achievements to date:	Constructed a storage house for storing produce Increased crop yields, especially maize, groundnuts and beans Bought 12 heifers for the group		

STORY 23

Putting Food Security at the Forefront

Women's collective efforts in ensuring food security



Great: The women seem to say in appreciation of the water tanks.

A group of women in Kisaliza village are on a mission to grow and produce food and save their village from hunger. They cultivate various kinds of foods like maize, beans, cassava and ground nuts to diversify their food crops and achieve food security. What is unique about these women is that they are doing this collectively as a united group and they are also practicing modern farming methods. The group, known as Tubasaliza Kisaliza Women's Group, is a Community Based Organization which got sh48.04m from the Norwegian Government through the UNDP to practice conservation agriculture and construction of modern rain water harvesting tanks.

38-year-old Jane Nabasaliza, a member of the group says she started practicing conservation agriculture in February 2011. "At first we thought it was a waste of time because we had tried crop farming but all our crops had failed. But after training, we gave it a chance. Nabasaliza prepared everything like she was taught". Within 120 days,

Nabasaliza, who had planted only 2kgs of maize harvested a surprising 118 kilograms up from the 5kgs she harvested in the past.

Juliet Mutundi, 30 years, another member of the group who planted maize and beans was all smiles. Mutundi saw a uniformly green maize farm that gave her more and bigger cobs per acre of land compared to almost nothing in the past. "This method is good because during the dry season, the crops grow normally as if it is raining. The trick is that the basins trap and retain water for long," Mutundi said.

Tracy Ndibalekera, 25 years said the SLM project means so much to her because she has received a rain water harvesting tank that was constructed just beside her house to supply water. The water is harvested from the rain and stored in the 15,000 litre tank. "With this, I am assured of a steady supply of water," Tracy said. More than 15 such tanks have been constructed for members of Tubasaliza

to provide safe and clean water for their families and also to supplement their agriculture projects. Robinah Muwanguzi, the group's leader says poor sanitation has since become a thing of the past. "Poor sanitation affected our health formerly. We always had to trek miles on end in search of water. But thanks to the UNDP and the Government of Norway, the water is just at my doorstep and I am concentrating on other matters of the family."

The future

To promote agriculture mechanization, the group plans to buy a tractor for commercial farming.

They hope to attract more women to the group, which has a total membership of 46 members so that the entire community gets better.

23. Profile of Tubasaliza Kisaliza Women's Group

Name of Project	Water and sufficient food for the household through sustainable land management	Project achievements	More than 12 rain water harvesting tanks for the group constructed
Name of grantee:	Tubasaliza Kisaliza Women's Group		Crop yields of the members increased
Key Enterprises being promoted	Rain water harvesting (tank construction)		Members trained in conservation agriculture
	Conservation agriculture involving growing of maize and beans		Members had exchange visits to learn from other farmers
Background	The group started in 2009 with only 29 members with the aim of reducing poverty through crop farming. They were also aiming at finding school fees for their children. They were involved mostly in crop farming; however, access to modern farming was still a big challenge.	Total of grant received	UGX 48 Million (Forty Eight Million Shillings Only)
	In 2011, the group joined the SLM project under the UNDP and they were trained in conservation agriculture, a practice where crop farming is carried out at the same time the soil fertility is maintained and nature protected.	Number of beneficiaries	46 Members
Project location	Kisaliza Village – Nakasongola District	Project activities	Conservation agriculture of growing beans and maize
Project objectives	Growing of crops to reduce poverty		Rain water harvesting tank construction
	Increasing of their crop yields to bring about food security		Training of farmers in conservation agriculture
	Water harvesting to cope with drought	Project challenges	Inadequate funding to reach all the members
			Drought is still a huge problem
			Mulching material is difficult to find
		Project opportunities	Members plan to set up a demonstration farm where they learn modern farming techniques
		Lessons learned	Conservation agriculture has increased crop yields, increasing food security of the farmers.

STORY 24

Escaping the hassle of night grazing

A case of Kyangogolo Women's Group

Equipping the agro pastoral women and men with knowledge of palatable pasture and multipurpose trees for hay making.

It is just 8:00 am on a beautiful morning in Nakasongola District, but the sun is already scotching hot. It is a dry season in the area and many herders have

already left the village to search for pasture and water for their animals, lest they risk losing them to starvation. However, Nakanwagi Efrance and Nakanyike Ednance her neighbor seem not to be bothered about going out to search for grasses. They have bales of dry grasses (hay) stocked in barns.



Typical Barns and shelters for Hay storage



Efrance a member of Kyangogolo Women's group says they made the hay during the rainy season when grasses were growing abundantly, and stacked it away for feeding the animals when grass becomes scarce during the dry season. When the Agency For Inter-regional Development (AFID)

identified that our problem of night grazing was stemming from our failure to preserve fodder in form of hay when grasses are growing in plenty, they mobilized us to create our awareness that the problem had a solution. We were excited.



Demonstrations of Hay storage by participating Women

Ednance, the group secretary adds that with a grant from the SLM project funded by the Norwegian Government and UNDP, AFID trained us on hay making and encouraged us to invite our husbands to the training. At that time the group had 10 members all women. Now the group has grown to 22 members.

14 women and 8 men.



Facilitators demonstrating and Farmers participating in sun drying/curing the grass for haymaking


Kiyega David a member of the group explains that their culture dictates that they have two herds of cattle, one that stays at home and one that is herded far away from the homes.

The herd that stays at home is the responsibility of the women to look after, as the men care for the herds taken afar. However in the dry season, we would be hurt to see our wives going out to herd the animals at night just to take advantage of the coolness of the little dry grasses that would be available.

“We did not know that we could plant grass and harvest it for later use, although we knew that when it is dry and there is no grass, the cows can even eat soil in order to survive. Unfortunately, under those circumstances, we would not be able to milk them at all and so we would not have any money”, Allen the group treasurer said.



Participants stacking hay into baling boxes



When members recognize a well grown grass, they collect seed from it, prepare land and plant it. When it grows well but before it flowers, they harvest from it as much grass as they can, sort out the grass species that animals like most, dry them and use a haying box to make bales to keep in stores. Members also collect grass growing wildly during the dry season and again dry it to form hay. AFID taught us to make special stores for dry grass and we make them out of blocks to deter attack by termites.

AFID is the only Non-governmental Organization that received a grant to work with farmers instead of letting farmers work independently. The main objective of the intervention was to support farmers manage dry season feeding and save women from night grazing practice.

All members of the eight groups who were reached by AFID conceded that hay is good and appropriate feed innovation to their environment. Jessica, a member of Kasookakye Women's group reiterated that "hay is especially useful for lactating cows, calves, old animals and goats which are kept at home during the dry season, adding that now they can have milk throughout the year and earn from

milk sales through the year. But more importantly, we do not have to graze animals at night a practice, which was exposing us to attack by wild animals, wild snakes, rapists and murderers especially those making sacrifices to demonic gods".

We expect to get more benefits from using hay, for example as a supplementary feed for animals which remains in homestead during the dry season. As a reliable source of feed supply during the dry season, we don't have to burn bushes which we have done as pastoralists earlier and constant milk yield was observed even in the dry season said Jessica. The only challenge we are likely to face is the size of storage space for hay because our houses are already small and if we keep hay inside, we increase the risk of loss of lives to fire.

Farmers of Nakasongola have a lot of hope in the new technology, so we need to support them especially because hay is not eaten only by cattle even goats like it. Farmers only need to learn to produce the nutritious grasses, harvest them using sickles, grass, construct appropriate houses for storage and organize water sources for the animals.

24. Profile of Agency for Integrated Rural Development (AFID)

Name of Project	Escaping the huddles of night grazing	Project achievements to date	Conservation of the environment through reduction in soil erosion through planting grasses
Key Enterprises being promoted	High grade cattle and hay making		Secured food security
Name of Grantee	Kyangogolo Women's group in collaboration with Agency for Intergrated Rural development (AFID)	Total of Grant awarded from UND SLM programme	UGX 56 Million (Fifty Six Million)
Brief Background	<p>Kyangogolo Womens group was started in 2007 with the aim of fighting household poverty. They started with marketing milk jointly and graduated to savings and borrowing among the members to enhance this business.</p> <p>They got profits and members received dividends each year. The group members started acquiring cows and engaging in milk production in addition to marketing milk bought from others. In 2011, the group received further training from the UNDP SLM project on hay making in order to address issues of scarcity of forages and water during dry seasons, which often drove them to graze animals at night, exposing them to dangers of attack by animals and rapists.</p>		USD 22,400
Project location	Kyangogolo Village, Nakasongola District	Number of beneficiaries	35 Members
Project objectives	<p>To fight poverty among women</p> <p>Improve on the safety of women involved in milk production during the dry season</p> <p>Promote sustainable production of animal forages (particularly dry season feeding) to ensure milk sales throughout the year</p>	Brief project activities	<p>Growing selected high quality pasture and grass species</p> <p>Training in hay making and storage</p> <p>Construction of hay storage facilities</p>
		Project challenges	<p>Drought is still destroying the grasses before they mature</p> <p>Limited funding to assist all the farmers in the area so that there is not unequal development in the area</p> <p>Limited access to value addition to milk products and increasing the shelf life of milk</p>
		Project opportunities	They plan to set up a market for hay and have a milk cooler
		Lessons learned	Hay making has benefited the farmers greatly as they have forages throughout the year



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