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## BRIEF STATUS OF TREE PLANTING PROJECT IN MALIBA

by Robert Bwambale

The tree planting project in Maliba Communities and other parts of Kasese District Rwenzori Region is ongoing. We aim to cover a wide range of areas in many communities with trees, on every smallholding, on riverbanks, in valleys, on slopes, and on mountains and bare land. We are not planting trees for leisure but for protecting human beings, protecting land, providing food and improving the local micro-climate. Many people did not know why flooding occurred so often! But when the floods started being very severe and destructive both to human beings and land and nature, then they started realizing how very important trees are.

We have worked with many community organizations and explained why flooding is a problem associated with climate change. Many people now realise that cutting trees for timber and firewood and interfering with nature has made the land bare and thus contributed greatly to flooding. The permanent solution is to plant trees in large numbers and to protect them so that they grow and cover the land. We want to have forests once again that provide fruits and habitat for birds and animals.

Bumbura Maliba members committed themselves to work with many other farmers to train them to plant trees and thus to make an impact in our local communities of the Rwenzori Region, Kasese with the support of Discover Germany. Everyone can see the negative impacts that climate change has caused in the entire region. We have suffered many disasters. People have lost land, houses and their dear ones because of climate change. The cutting down of trees has contributed to the problems of prolonged droughts and flooding, which in turn caused landslides. One consequence has been malnutrition in young children because the floods destroyed the crops.

Bumbura Maliba Organization proposes to plant thousands of trees of different species, mostly indigenous trees, in the coming years to restore our beautiful land from being wasted because of poor practices. We have given farmers tree seedlings to intercrop with other food crops, each farmer is given 100 tree seedlings and to those with enough land we increase the number of seedlings. Schools and churches also receive seedlings.

The tree planting project status by December 2021 is well advanced and being enjoyed. We can see the benefits already. The climate is changing positively; it is not like it was before. Tree seedlings already planted are growing well, others are being planted and the survival rate in my community this year is 98%. The 2% failure rate is because seedlings planted in rocky places became too dry, or they were destroyed by animals. Such challenges are always encountered!

I am very happy that my goal and dream for this year 2021 has been realized.



A healthy one month old Musizi (*Maesopsis eminii*) tree.



*Khaya anthotheca* tree seedlings being loaded in a box taken to the farmland for planting today December 8, 2021.



Two young schoolboys receiving trees that they are taking to the farm for planting. My hope is that these young boys will grow up with a love of trees. They have started seeing the problem of cutting trees when still young and they will encourage many others to care for trees when they see the benefits.

A 6 week-old plant growing in fertile land is very healthy and doing well mixed with other crops.





A 6 month-old mvule (*Milicia excelsa*) seedling. We planted ten plants planted at our local church. They make good timber when they are 20 years old but here it has grown fast and healthily because of the soils.

An avocado tree growing on the farm with other trees and plants.



A 14 month-old jackfruit plant growing well in the farm with many other different plants, herbal medicines and shrubs.



Healthy plants growing well in the farms in Maliba communities.



This seedling was planted 3 days ago with high hopes of surviving because it is getting water all the time as farmers have love this project.



Seedling planted 4 days ago. These are trees planted by farmers who recently visited Salem Uganda in Mbale District for a four-day study tour. They were given trees to plant on their land.

Salem Uganda plants trees in big numbers to re-establish forests on Mount Elgon. They supported us with 100 tree seedlings of *Khaya anthotheca* (red mahogany).

We shall transform this world when we work together and become faithful to the work we are doing! Only local people can make it happen when are trained and supported with trees.

We wish to establish forests. It requires money, but with determination we shall succeed. Helping farmers with seedlings, providing training and having tours for exposure all are ways of supporting farmers to understand the importance of trees and to develop the skills to plant them, maintain them and benefit from them.

