

Tree Planting Monitoring Exercise

Robert Bwambale, Maliba, Kasese, Uganda

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Assessing the impact of drought on the trees we have planted.
How farmers have adjusted to the situation and
how they are coping with the many challenges.

It is my routine that every month I have a special day for visiting my farmers, talking to them and hearing their stories and the challenges they have in managing trees. We discuss how we can solve them and move forward. I also meet with members of Bumbura Maliba to find out what they are doing in their communities. Rain has started falling and many farmers are busy planting crops and preparing their vegetable gardens that were damaged by the prolonged drought. They are thinking about what to plant in these gardens and how to get seeds.

During my visit to Maliba communities, I met Kabugho Siriwayo, a 30-year-old woman who is married with three children and lives in Maliba village. Kabugho loves farming and especially trees and other crops. In the dry season, she makes sure that all the trees she has are well watered. She carries water from a river for this purpose. She farms three fields in different places. She visits these fields at least every day to find places where more trees can be planted.

Early last year she received 80 tree seedlings and planted them in the three fields. Of the 80 tree seedlings only five did not survive. Two withered and the other three were either eaten by animals or the soil wasn't really suitable for them to thrive. She takes great care of these plants, and I have noticed that her trees do not dry up even during droughts. The mulch she uses protects them well so they don't wither. I was impressed with the good job she does in caring for the trees. These trees are in gardens where she also grows vanilla. So while she is taking care of her vanilla, at the same time she also takes care of the trees.

Here in Maliba people love growing vanilla, coffee and bananas because they provide food and money by selling them. I asked her why she loves trees. She told me that trees have many benefits for a woman who is responsible for the family. When a tree is very old, you can cut it down and get firewood and timber, its leaves make the soil fertile, and other plants can grow very well there (she was talking about agroforestry). Others provide medicine for common diseases.

In her gardens she has many types of plants: Neem, Aloe Vera, Chili, Warburgia, Prunus, Musizi and Markhamia and Vanilla, as seen in the pictures below.



Kabugho Siriwayo takes care of her Warburgia tree.



A Warburgia tree.



Kabugho Siriwayo supports her musizi tree with another strong piece of wood.



She ties the musizi tree to a support pole so the wind won't break it.



Prunus trees well mulched and protected from animals that could destroy them.



Prunus trees with mulch, which protects them from dry sun and maintains the fertility of the soil. I was very happy to meet this woman in her garden during my monitoring work.



An aloe vera plant.



A young neem tree. She planted this neem tree as a medicinal plant.



A chili plant in the same garden. Kabugho has decided to spend her life growing food and medicinal plants. In the trainings of Bumbura and other organizations, the women learn more than the men and immediately put everything into practice.



A young Markhamia tree.



A vanilla stalk in the garden of Kabugho.

Farmers who planted trees in Maliba communities have been busy preparing their gardens since it started raining. The drought has affected agricultural work. Everyone is farming to be able to feed their families. In these rural areas, farmers are trying their best to get crops through, but the weather is causing them a lot of trouble. Therefore, 70% of the people want to plant trees to find a solution to climate change and at the same time improve their situation in a sustainable way.