

GREEN4LIFE ECOFARM PROJECT REPORT 2023

By Joachem Nyamande



a) Total number of trees planted in 2023: 478

71% were indigenous. The following species were planted:

1. Croton megalocarpus (Kenyan Croton)	60
2. Acrocarpus fraxinifolius (Kenya coffee shade tree)	30
3. Syzygium cordatum (waterberry)	50
4. Afzelia quanzensis (pod mahogany)	50
5. Cassia spectabilis	10
6. Strychnos spinosa (monkey orange)	50
7. Azanza garckeana (snot apple)	15
8. Melia azedarach	10
9. Uapaka kirkiana (wild loquat)	5
10. Erythrina abyssinica (lucky bean or flame tree)	20
11. Acacia sieberiana (paper bark thorn)	10
12. Sclerocarya birrea (Amarula)	30
13. Leucaena	100
14. Kirkia acuminata (white seringa)	7
15. Adansonia digitata (baobab)	5
16. Flacoutia indica (Indian plum)	15
17. Ziziphus mauritiana	11

b) It was most encouraging that, despite the excessive heat, which nearly decimated the trees, 65% of them survived and are coming back to life after the recent rains. The growth rate of the Kenyan coffee shade tree, *Kigalia africana*, *Acacia sieberiana* and *amarula* is encouraging. The agroforestry concept of planting crops like groundnuts, cow peas and maize alongside trees works well. The thicket of the tree restoration site is now an impressive sight for viewing by the community. The trees are now starting to provide nectar for the bees.



Kigalia africana rejuvenated
after the recent rains



The *Kirkia acuminata*, a new tree species introduced at Ecofarm



A healthy croton Tree



The amazing Kenyan coffee shade tree



Cassia spectabilis, like the coffee shade tree, has proved to be fast growing.



The fascinating EcoFarm tree regeneration site

c) New insights from the project include:

- i) the fact that some trees, like *Strychnos spinosa*, can be easily planted in situ. We are experimenting with the Kenyan coffee shade tree, croton and *Aapaka kirkiana* to establish if the experience will be same.
- ii) Creation of fire guards is a good way of protecting planted trees from veld fires.



Strychnos spinosa trees planted in situ

- d) Trees that were planted in the community the previous year are growing well although some were affected by veld fires near to the EcoFarm.

At the Sacred Heart Primary School the trees at the recreational site are aiding in the beautification of the school environment, with learners, parents, teachers and authorities excited with the initiative. At both Fern Valley and Sacred Heart Primary Schools trees that were planted are well kept with Sacred Heart expecting to get some fruits from the orchard in the near future. At Fern Valley Primary the school is encouraged that 5 bee hives have been colonized. This is an income generating project for the future and a learning resource for students and community.

e) Future plans for the EcoFarm include:

- iii) planting 600 trees of different species,
- iv) holding an open day as a look and learn experience for the community members and stakeholders,
- v) deepening the borehole,
- vi) planting blue basil flowers for the bees.



Planting indigenous species like amarula, *Syzygium cordatum*, and *Azelia quanzensis* will be prioritised



Distribution of seedlings in the community will continue to be a major project activity in 2024



At EcoFarm, 10 bee hives have been colonized. In time, the number is expected to steadily increase. The harvesting of honey will be deferred for another year, so that the multiplication of bee colonies is not disturbed.



The tree nursery



During the dry season, bees are fed with water using tyres supported by tree branches.



Blue basil flowers have proved to be a good source of food for bees throughout the year. The project is planning to grow more of this species to entice more bees to occupy the hives.