

## Annual Report 2023



### Target of 30,000 trees per year has been reached!

Once again we can say that in the last year Discover partners in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda and Zimbabwe have planted over 30,000 tree seedlings. The majority are either indigenous trees or fruit trees.

Climate change in Africa is severe. Our colleagues have to cope with high temperatures, droughts and flooding. Although they are becoming more experienced, inevitably water cannot always be found to care for all the seedlings planted, and so the rate of survival varies greatly.

We are, however, massively encouraged by the positive feedback we receive, and by what I witnessed myself when I visited 15 partners and projects during a 3-week round tour of Uganda in September 2023:

- Farmers speak very enthusiastically about the benefits of the trees they have planted, they give shade, conserve moisture, enhance the harvest of vegetables and themselves provide fruit and even medicine. Thus the severe impacts of climate change are reduced.
- Schools benefit from their gardens; pupils and teachers learn survival skills, school life is more varied and enjoyable and the dropout rate declines. School lunches are supplemented with home grown vitamin-rich vegetables and fruits.
- The trees planted also absorb carbon. If we assume that, of the trees planted by Discover partners last year, 25,000 survive, it is estimated that, as they grow, each tree will absorb 48 pounds or 22 kg of CO<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>. That means, that when these 25,000 trees mature, they will absorb 550 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> every year.

The full 32 page photo-report can be read on our website.

### Agroforestry



Kabugho Deborah in her agroforestry garden in Maliba, Uganda



Animal husbandry is a key part of agroforestry. The animals produce dung which fertilizes the fields. In turn, the leaves of trimmed branches are fed to the animals.

In Uganda I met many farmers who were very enthusiastic about their practice of agroforestry. Their harvests of vegetables and fruit had increased, and therefore both the well-being and the income for the family. Kabugho Deborah was proud that the nutrition of her family had improved, and from the sale of surplus fruits and vegetables she was able to send all her 4 children to school.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fs.usda.gov/features/trees-are-climate-change-carbon-storage-heroes>

## Work with schools

In Zimbabwe Joachim Nyamande reports that Sacred Heart and Fern Valley Primary Schools are now regarded by the authorities as the best model schools that are promoting environmental education linked to the national curriculum.

Discover partners in Uganda have worked with many schools to establish school gardens, in which they plant both vegetables and fruit trees.

Many schools have “environment clubs”, the members of which plant tree seedlings and take responsibility for their care.



Pupils of classes 3 to 5 of the Gwengwere-Grundschule in Malawi collect tree seedlings from Nelson Moyo's nursery, ready to plant in their school grounds.



The St Francis Primary School in Karujumba Village, Uganda, is just one of many Ugandan schools that have established school vegetable gardens and are planting trees.



A flourishing school garden at the Pioneer primary School in Soroti, Uganda.



Children in Kirimya, Uganda, plant a mango tree, to enhance science learnt at school, to protect the environment and to increase the food basket

## The International Day of the Forest, 2023, on 21 March,

was celebrated by many groups and served both to raise awareness of the importance of trees in the community and to give even more schools the incentive to plant trees in their school compounds. The opportunity was taken to enlist the support of local community and political leaders.



Trees ready to be planted at the newly opened Cargill Primary School in Tema, Ghana. 70 trees were planted, a mixture of indigenous trees and fruit trees.



Teachers, parents and pupils at the Green Star Nursery School in north-west Uganda plant trees together

One solution brings another challenge – which usually means more money is required!

Kihuluka Eric in Kaliro District, Uganda, says that “one solution brings another challenge.” This is very true!!

#### Example 1, School gardens

Many partners work with schools. With teachers and pupils together, they establish a school garden, and plant trees. Discover has funded the cost of vegetable seeds, to enable the gardens to be established. But, the following year, the schools ask for fresh seeds, so that the gardening year can start again.

We have an extensive mailing list of colleagues in Africa. We put this challenge to them – how could school gardens be made sustainable. [Many suggestions were forthcoming](#). We hope the suggestions will work!

#### Example 2, Competition from sugar cane growers

Kihuluka Eric in Kaliro District Uganda and many colleagues from the local authority and the community have held many meetings with farmers to promote agroforestry. Many farmers have accepted tree seedlings and looking forward to an improved harvest. But those bordering sugar cane fields are given an attractive offer to rent their land for sugar cane – which would give them an immediate income, but no harvest of fruit and vegetables and no income from their sale.

A further round of meetings was held to persuade the farmers that to develop agroforestry is far more secure in the long term.

Example 3, Farmers like the trees they have planted – so they come and ask our partners for more seedlings!

Example 4, Land is offered for establishing a demonstration farm, the work begins, but then the landowner becomes elderly and ill and wants to sell the land.

Example 5, Training in planting trees is organised in a community through local leaders. 50 participants are expected, but only 20 turn up. Or the opposite – 150 come!

6. Holes are prepared for planting trees – then the drought comes

## Film on Tree Planting activities

Sehen Sie bitte das neue Video an, in dem einige Discover-PartnerInnen über ihre Arbeit beim Pflanzen und Pflegen der Bäume sprechen. Es ist ein beeindruckendes Dokument ihrer Arbeit.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wk7DLM5Bull>



The “Culture and Recreation Park” in the grounds of the Sacred Heart Primary School in Zimbabwe is an area for natural regeneration. It provides a pleasant environment for community meetings and even weddings.