

Wales-Mbale Climate Change Tree Planting Project

Welsh Government
Wales for Africa Programme
Size of Wales Project
Mbale Coalition Against Poverty
Mbale, Manafwa and Bududa District Councils
NGOs: Salem, Bunkoko Rural Development Centre and 'Share An Opportunity'
Gumutindo Coffee Co-op Ltd
Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD)



<http://www.sizeofwales.org.uk/>
<http://www.gumutindocoffee.co.ug/index.php>

Project Background

Location: Africa, Uganda, Mbale

Date project established: April 2010

The Wales – Mbale Tree Planting Project is a public-private scheme that has been developed in association with the Size of Wales programme, which seeks to protect an area of tropical forest the size of Wales, the Welsh Government's Wales for Africa programme which encourages the 3 million people in Wales (5% of the UK population) to make an effective contribution to international development in sub-Saharan Africa and the Mbale Coalition Against Poverty which brings together District government's and NGO's in the Mbale region of Uganda. The project came about after extended discussions with local stakeholders and is based on a wider and deeper long-term partnership within which both sides have identified clear advantages from the interaction. A major impact of climate change within this region was found to be damage done to coffee bushes by increasing temperature and greater intensity of rainfall.

The Wales – Gumutindo public – private partnership will be the focus of this session. Gumutindo is a private Fairtrade Organic Coffee Cooperative. <http://www.gumutindocoffee.co.ug/index.php> with [more than 10,000](#) members

At least one million trees will be raised and planted by tens of local nurseries under the auspices of Gumutindo Coffee and other local partners. Tree species have been selected that will shelter the

developing coffee harvest whilst providing a range of other advantages, including slope stabilisation, soil improvement and increasing the range of marketable crops.

In the future, Mbale is predicted to be one of the few parts of Uganda that remains viable for coffee production, although climate adaptation action needs to be taken to ensure that the existing, high value arabica rather than the robusta variety grown elsewhere in Uganda remains a viable choice.

Tackling climate change is a key priority for the Welsh Government and it is underpinned by the Welsh Government's legal duty to promote sustainable development in the exercise of all its functions. With the Tree Planting Project, the Welsh Government also intends to communicate how such actions can assist with climate change mitigation and adaptation and demonstrate to the people of Wales how climate change is happening right now in Africa.

This project will not only provide increased tree cover but, through the associated sensitization, is likely to decrease deforestation.

Mitigation and/or Adaptation

The project is already one year in – with two further years to complete the target of one million trees in the Mbale area (Gumutindo target: 250,000).

The Gumutindo Coffee Co-operative has already planted 100,000 seedlings, established 14 nurseries and raised awareness to over 2000 farmers and over 10,000 community members about the positive impact tree planting can make both in the short and long term. They have conducted formal awareness workshops on climate change, causes, effects and solutions and also technical training in nursery establishment, agro forestry, potting and management.

The benefit from all of this development is wide-ranging throughout members of the co-operative, their families and the wider community and as the project progresses, the benefit will further embed.

It will take time for the trees to begin to prove their worth for the farmers but the practice of managing the project and truly understanding the value of it, is already showing within the community:

- Groups are empowered to take responsibility for their own trees and to utilise the project to plan and adapt it for the future.
- The project is assisting with awareness in the community as the tree planting programme is a visual and practical project that has gained the interest of local people.
- Awareness and understanding of the project has led to increased community participation in tree planting and environmental management.

Learning from year one is already being used to make improvements for the second year of the project.

Measurement

The Project Manager, works with the farmers to collect data and report monthly on developments. The 4 tree planting partners have regular meetings to update each other on progress and to discuss challenges to progress. In the first year such challenges included an extended dry season which turned into a drought and a Presidential election which saw several tree nurseries abandoned whilst whole communities participated in election rallies. These regular meetings have become an invaluable opportunity for the different groups to share with and learn from each other – thus increasing the collective knowledge base of the region. Official reports are gathered quarterly and passed to the Welsh Government and the Size of Wales project. Six monthly monitoring field visits have been conducted by the Welsh Government. The Mbale Coalition Anti-Poverty also conducts

monitoring and evaluation using the offices of the local District Councils and their Environment Officers.

Finally, each of the 4 partners conducts an evaluation of one of the other 4 each year – creating an opportunity for in depth learning which is uncommon in the region

Social Benefits

Each of the 4 tree planting partners was already working with their community groups on a range of issues including health promotion, community development and improved agricultural practice. The inclusion of the tree planting as an additional strand has strengthened the other elements and increased community participation across the board. The availability of saplings to community group members at no or very low cost has been an incentive to participate more widely.

Gumutindo employ agriculture extension workers to work closely with their 10,000 coffee growers, advising on organic methods and helping improve quality through the provision of better coffee plants. As a Fairtrade Co-operative they are committed to long-term engagement and are deeply concerned by climate change. The changing climate is already impacting on coffee yields and there is evidence that the optimum region for coffee growing is moving higher up the mountain every year.

The project does not just focus on planting one million trees but also on awareness and learning within the community. Individuals are being exposed to climate change messages through training, drama productions and the opportunity to become directly involved.

One of the community tree planting groups is planting trees to line the streets of an area of Mbale town in order to provide much needed shade in urban and peri-urban settings.

The Tree Planting Project is one that community members are aware of and brings climate change into the everyday conversation of people's lives. The Ugandan community has benefited from the widespread Welsh interest and concern, in that active measures were taken to support them on the occasion of recent landslides and the Welsh public has an increased and increasing awareness of the impacts of climate change.

The delivery of The Tree Planting Project is linked to the 'Coalition Against Poverty' that has been established between Wales-Africa Community link of PONT - Pontypridd (Rhondda Cynon Taff, South Wales) – Mbale (Uganda), founded in 2000. This community link, which has brought together the district councils from both sides, involves many local organisations on both sides including the councils, hospitals, health boards, universities, and NGOs. Hundreds of people have taken part in reciprocal visits between Pontypridd/RCT and Mbale, involving a cross-section of the community and professionals such as doctors, engineers and teachers.

Measurement of social benefits is via 'most significant change' and similar discourse-based tools, taking advantage of the range of formal and informal interactions taking place on a regular [usually at least monthly] basis between the Welsh and the Ugandan partners.

More formal analysis will be based upon the monthly and three monthly reports supplied to the Welsh partners

The Project Manager, regularly reports on social change and development, both formally and informally. The Welsh Government also funds an Organisational Development professional to work with Gumutindo at intervals throughout the year. Formal and informal reports are gathered from this work, including the measurement of social benefits.

Potential for Scaling-up of project

Currently in the second year of a three-year programme, the project aims:

- To raise awareness and capacity within a range of local communities of the advantages of and opportunities for tree-planting in the context of regional climate change
- To increase regional tree cover, usually moving toward either low-density canopy or corridor structures.
- To develop tree nurseries to supply the increased demand for tree saplings.
- Development of a clearer understanding and application of best practice for this region.

We anticipate that a further bid for funding will be made towards the end of year 2 which will enable substantial scaling up at the end of year 3. The project has, to date placed a high degree of emphasis on capacity building. We are confident that the project could be expanded to allow the planting of 10 million trees per annum within 5 years.

Potential for Replication of project

The Tree Planting Project is one that could easily be replicated across the world. The Size of Wales project has the capacity to fund the replication of this model in several sub Saharan African Countries