

Sustainable Soil Management Project in Bulucheke and Bukalasi Sub-Counties in Bududa District, Eastern Uganda

SDF is working with development partners in Uganda to reduce the humanitarian and environmental problems caused by the 2010 mudslides in Eastern Uganda. The overall goal of the intervention is *to improve* the livelihood of the farming community in Bulucheke and Bukalasi sub-counties through sustainable land use by 2013.

The three year project aims at engaging farming communities of Bulucheke and Bukalasi sub-county living on the slopes of Mt Elgon in tree planting, soil conservation practices and construction and use of energy saving stoves. These communities are living on the high slopes of Mt Elgon which are prone to natural disasters for example; landslides and flooding. This is attributed to degradation of tree cover for human activities such as fuel wood, charcoal, poles and timber for construction and more so poor soil management practices.

A baseline survey undertaken by CDF in the month of March 2010 revealed that 26 homes, 12 bridges and 72 plantations of bananas and coffee were washed away to river manafa, sakusaku and wanagongi and loss of over 350 persons due to mudslides that occurred in Namesti and Bushiyi villages in Bukalasi and Bulucheke sub-counties respectively in Bududa District. Mudslides disaster has forced 8130 people mainly survivors and from neighbouring villages to take refuge at the Mudslides People Camp in Bulucheke sub-county with a lot of humanitarian challenges.

The District field Assessment Report of 28th March 2010 by Community Development Office attributes poor farming methods, loss of tree cover and human settlements along steep slope of Mt Elgon to one of the factors that contribute to the occurrence of mudslides, hail storms and floods. The Report further asserts that although mudslides are caused by natural forces, human degradation of the environment is blamed for its intensity, claiming many lives, and loss of property and livestock worthy millions of money. The Report further indicated encroachment on the Mt Elgon Forestry Reserve by the neighbouring communities due to population pressure on limited farm land for forestry products namely; poles, timber, firewood, charcoal, bamboo and cultivation thereby increasing the intensity of degradation of the natural resources. It pointed weak monitoring and control of the tree cutting by the District Forestry Office thus leading to extinction of the natural tree species in the District. Cultural beliefs that forests belonged to the community and therefore should have access to forestry resources further exacerbate the pressure on the forest reserve.

The project is seeking to mobilise more than 200 farmers from the sub-counties for training in Agro forestry practices, tree planting, soil conservation and construction and use of energy saving stoves. Farmer Demonstration gardens will be established at the Sub-County headquarters for distribution of free tree seedlings to target project beneficiaries and providing an opportunity to other farmers to learn agro forestry tree species, setting up of tree nursery beds and soil management practices.

The project will also reach out to five primary schools namely; Bumwalye, Hope Education centre(The Mudslide Displaced Children's Primary School), Bushiyi, Bukalasi and Bubiita primary schools, targeting children from upper primary and their teachers through environmental education focusing on agro forestry, soil conservation and fuel energy saving practices through construction and use of energy saving stoves. A Total of 750 children will benefit from this project, in which each school will avail 150 children from Upper Primary.



With sufficient funding SDF through its development partner, CDF hopes to:

To build capacity of targeted farmers and five primary schools with knowledge and skills in sustainable soil management and domestic energy fuel consumption practices. The project activities include; Community mobilization and training workshops for farmers and school children in agro forestry, soil management, and energy saving practices as well as distribution of tree seedlings to farmers for planting. The project will provide hands on training for targeted farmers on construction and use of energy saving stoves.

To ensure effective implementation of planned activities through monitoring and evaluation, the project activities will include; support supervision by CDF to targeted farmers in the implementation of planned activities, Review meetings with project staff and other community stakeholders on the project processes, feedback linkages with the Development Partner on the progress of project processes.



Kusolo Fred Walimwa the project Leader constructing the Nursery bed sheds at one of the demonstration sites in Mbari District

Networking and collaboration with other actors such as the Bududa District Production Department, Local councillors and other CSOS in ensuring effective implementation of project activities, submission of activity progress and final reports o the Development Partner on the project implementation

It is expected that the project intervention will mitigate the increasing pressure on the natural tree species and Mt Elgon forestry reserve for fuel wood, charcoal, poles and timber of construction activities by the increasing population in the these communities. The project will scale up agricultural production as result of better soil management practices from knowledge and skills acquired from the Capacity building training activity for target project beneficiaries. ■ 2010