

AFRICA FARM FORESTRY PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS CONFERENCE



Pre-Congress Exchange Visit Report by African the Team Implementing the Forest and Farm Facility in Africa (5th to 7th of June 2015).

Report on FFF Africa team Exchange Visit to Kenya

1. Introduction

The FFF Africa exchange visit took place from the 5th to 7th of June 2015 prior to the African Farm Forestry Producer Organizations Conference held at Laico Agency Hotel, Nairobi. It involved participants from the four African countries taking part in the FFF Programme- That is Kenya, Gambia, Liberia and Zambia. The exchange trip was organized in conjunction with FAO Kenya, Farm Forestry –Smallholder Producers Association of Kenya and Kenya Forest Service. By all standards, it was a successful venture where participants got to learn, share experiences and compare with each other on different issues.

The team visited Nakuru County in Kenya's Great Rift Valley where it met 6 groups undertaking different activities in farm forestry. It also had an interactive meeting with groups from Nakuru and the County Government at a Nakuru Hotel. The exchange programme also included a whole day workshop at Kenya Forest Service where different presentations were from the Government through KFS, WeEffect, FAO and FFF followed by discussions by participants.

2. Nakuru County Profile

Nakuru County is one of the 47 counties of the Republic of Kenya. The county lies within the Great Rift Valley and covers an area of 7,495.1 Km². It is located between Longitude 35 ° 28` and 35° 36` East and Latitude 0 ° 13 and 1° 10` south.

The main topographic features in Nakuru County are the Mau Escarpment covering the Western part of the county, the Rift Valley floor, Ol Doinyo Eburru Volcano, Akira plains, Menengai Crater, elaborate drainage and relief system and the various inland lakes on the floor of the Rift Valley where nearly all the permanent rivers and streams in the county drain into. These rivers include river Njoro, Makalia which drain into Lake Nakuru, Malewa which drains into Lake Naivasha and Molo River which drains into Lake Baringo among others. The land topography in Naivasha and Gilgil Sub-Counties is characterised by mountain ranges and savannah vegetation cover that support various species of wildlife



The Great Rift Valley: View of Nakuru County

The climate of Nakuru County is strongly influenced by the altitude and physical features. There are three broad climatic zones (II, III and IV). Zone II covers areas with an altitude between 1980 and 2700 m above the sea level and receives minimum rainfall of 1000mm per annum. This

zone covers Upper Subukia, Rongai and Mau Escarpment. Zone III receives rainfall of between 950 and 1500 mm per annum and covers areas with an altitude of between 900-1800m above sea level. This zone covers most parts of the county and is the most significant for agricultural cultivation. Zone IV occupies more or less the same elevation (900-1800m) as Zone III. However, it has lower rainfall of about 500-1000mm per annum. This zone dominates Solai and Naivasha.

The total population of Nakuru County stood at 1,756,950 in 2012, comprising of 881,674 males and 875,276 Females as per the projections of Kenya National Population and Housing Census of 2009.

3. Sites Visited

Group Name	Group Details
Smallholder Integrated Tree Producers Association (SITPA)	<p>SITPA is an association of farm forestry farmers that is affiliated to FF-SPAK.</p> <p>Vision: Improved farmers livelihood through farm forestry Mission: To sensitize, educate, build capacity and support farmers to engage in farm forestry, value addition and marketing of tree and non wood products</p> <p>Objectives;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoting on-farm tree growing through establishment of tree nurseries and supporting farmers to grow trees in their farms. 2. Support farmers to add value and market 1. Tree products 3. Encourage farmers to establish non wood product enterprises, add value and market them 4. To proactively engage in social and policy issues <p>Activities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sensitize and raise awareness on the potential of farm forestry among farmers 2. Supporting tree nursery establishment by farmers by farmers 3. Provide technical backstopping to farmers in tree growing 4. Organize exchange programmes for farmers to learn and share experiences in farm forestry 5. Organize tree farmers and support them to add value to tree products 6. Support farmer to engage in marketing of tree products

<p>Community Food and Environment Group (COFEG)</p>	<p>Located in Molo area of Nakuru, COFEG is a group affiliated to FF-SPAK that brings together farmers undertaking farm forestry initiatives. COFEG's mission is;</p> <p>-To promote effective and sustainable management of forest resources for poverty alleviation and socio economic development in West Mau region in Kenya</p> <p>The group has an ongoing initiative titled;</p> <p>“ Domestication and Utilization of the African Plum (Prunus Africana)”</p> <p>The project aims at exploiting the medicinal properties of the Prunus Africana that for a long time has been used in Africa as a cure for a variety of human and animal diseases. The bark of the tree is ground into powder and consumed as a health drink which provides body immunity to and resistance to diseases. The group promotes sustainable harvesting of the bark to preserve the tree for use by future generations.</p> <p>The initiative aims at invigorating the establishment of mixed woodstands on the farms and forest estates with indigenous tree species like Prunus Africana, Olea Africana, Hagenia Abyssinica, and African Cedar among others</p> <p>Initiative Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attain sustainable management principles of prunus Africana such that it can be put off the CITES treaty • To ensure that the income of the local farmers is improved and that there is constant supply of food supplements and herbal tea to the market.
<p>Nakuru County Tree Nursery Association (Lake Elementaita Self Help Group)</p>	<p>The Nakuru tree Nursery Association (NCTNA) brings together varied groups and individuals engaged in tree nursery business in Nakuru County like Lake Elementaita Self Help Group. It was established as a result of a clamor by these farmers for a representative body to champion their interest in line with the new devolved system of governance.</p> <p>Vision: To be the umbrella body for the development and promotion of tree nursery entrepreneurship in Nakuru.</p> <p>Mission: To highlight, promote, protect and champion the interest of stakeholders in the tree nursery business within Nakuru County.</p> <p>Eligibility to the association is pegged on the ownership of a tree nursery within Nakuru County. Categories include individual membership, Group membership and Corporate membership.</p> <p>The Association has the following mandate:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizing capacity building seminars/conferences for members 2. Facilitating field workshops for practical technical and technological training 3. Organizing market campaigns, trade fairs and exhibitions 4. Developing entrepreneurship programs for schools and colleges in the county 5. Facilitating networking platforms for members at both local and regional levels 6. Fostering mutually beneficial partnerships with other organizations 7. Representative participation in important public and private sector events
<p>Menengai Crater Bee Keepers Organization</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Menengai Crater Bee Keepers are a community based organization started in 2008 and was registered in 22nd July 2011. It is located in Menengai forest, Nakuru County. Since its formation and registration, it has been operational with the support from community development trust fund through Menengai Community Forest Association The organization has 11 women, 8 men, and 2 youth totaling to 21 members.</p> <p>The organization’s main activities have been establishment of an apiary, wax processing and eventual honey extraction and packaging. Operational area/ where the activities are carried out are within Menengai forest where the apiary is located.</p> <p>To date the organization has acquired 20 longstroth bee hives of which 10 have been colonized. However, despite receiving support from the community forest association (CFA), the organization face a challenge in acquiring more bee hives, semi processing units and packaging materials among other requirements</p> <p>Main objectives and mandates</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. To improve community livelihood through establishment of income generating activities ii. To support the community forest association in forest protection and conservation iii. Capacity building <p>The group has a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, vice secretary, coordinator and treasurer</p> <p>Menengai crater bee keeper’s group is composed of: The chairperson who chairs all the meetings, vice chairperson, secretary, vice secretary, treasurer, coordinator and 15 members.</p> <p>Menengai crater bee keeper’s has been operational since 2008. The main activities are bee keeping and forest protections/ conservation. To date achievements’ include establishing of apiary, honey processing, wax</p>

	<p>production, packaging and selling. So the Menengai bee keeper's produces 200kg of processed honey annually.</p> <p>The Menengai crater bee keeper's organization through the Menengai Community Forest Association (CFA) is working in conjunction with the Ken Forest Service (KFS) and Ministry of agriculture and livestock development department</p>
<p>Elburgon Bridge Self help Group</p>	<p>Elburgon Bridge Self Help Group is engaged in community development initiatives, in particular, environmental conservation and promotion of sustainable energy. It has been engaged in the mobilization of community members towards environmental conservation, while at the same time promoting the welfare of the members through table banking financing. In addition, the organization is engaged in production of charcoal briquettes at small scale. Through this initiative, the organization has helped reduce the pressure on natural forest for fuel wood extraction while at the same time helping reduce the cost of household energy.</p> <p>Main objectives and mandates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main objective of Elburgon Bridge Self Help group is enhancing adoption of energy conservation though charcoal briquetts made from sawdust. • The main mandate is to recycle sawdust to produce charcoal briquetts thus reducing pressure on natural forest for extraction of fuel wood <p>The Group is composed of 8 women and 8 men. In addition, the group management committee is also gender balanced, with each gender taking more than 1/3 of the positions. Both gender are actively engaged both in decision making and implementation of group activities. Furthermore, the beneficiaries of the project cut across the gender and it is representative of youth and other vulnerable members of the community.</p> <p>The organization is managed by a team of committee members who are democratically elected by the group members. The management committee is elected during the annual general meeting and serves for a period of two years. The organization does not have staff currently since all the labor is provided by the group members.</p> <p>The organization has been in operation since 2011. It started the production of charcoal briquettes in 2012. However, the production work has been hampered by lack of modern equipment.</p>
<p>Friends of Mau Water Tower</p>	<p>Participants visited the FOMAWA school greening program and commercial tree growing site.</p>

4. Participants Impression of the Exchange Visit:

- i. Participants were greatly interested in Trees on farmlands and intercropping the same with crops
- ii. Some of the groups visited were dominated by one individual hence difficult for participants to discern their empowerment. This is an indicator of poor group organizational capacity
- iii. Participants liked the KFS model of monitoring forest products from farmlands through issuance of movement permits
- iv. The FFPOS visited were at different levels of development hence experiencing unique challenges
- v. There is a disconnect between production of forest products from farms and marketing hence more needs to be done to assist FFPOs carry out more profitable market linkages
- vi. Farm forestry improves both the aesthetic and economic value of landscapes in Kenya
- vii. The eucalyptus electricity transmission poles market faces eminent collapse as the Kenya Power and Lighting Company is utilizing cement poles to transmit electricity in Kenya
- viii. The participants greatly liked the nice land demarcations, farm layouts and intensive land use system in the sites visited. This has greatly minimized soil erosion from the farms
- ix. It wasn't clear to the participants how women, single mothers and youths control the land resource in Kenya
- x. The emerging farm forestry sector in Kenya presents a great opportunity for the creation of farmers platforms aimed at engaging government on policy issues
- xi. The recognition of farm forestry as a commercial activity in Kenya was a great lesson for participants from the other FFF implementing countries
- xii. The school greening program in Kenya also presented another opportunity to green landscapes in schools. This also inculcates into the young generation a culture of tree growing
- xiii. Participants observed that Kenya has made great effort in organizing the charcoal trade through formation of charcoal producers Associations and promotion of efficient charcoal kilns,
- xiv. The alternative livelihood projects implemented by community forest associations were quite impressive, but the scale of production needs to be increased in order to make economic sense to members, the participants liked the honey processing machine which added value to raw honey at Menengai Bee keepers group.
- xv. The participants appreciated the FFF baseline reports in Nakuru and Laikipia counties as they gave wider understanding of challenges affecting FFPOs in Kenya
- xvi. The secure land tenure is a great incentive for the development of farm forestry in Kenya and it was the opinion of participants that other African governments should emulate the issuance of land title deeds to farm owners
- xvii. Participants noted that Kenya's natural forest areas have a lot of exotic tree species. This poses a great risk incase of disease outbreak. There is need to encourage farmers to invest in planting indigenous tree species on the farms
- xviii. Particiapnts concluded that Nakuru is a County with great potential, but the small. Medium and large scale tree growers are not properly organized. There is need to bring all actors together in farm forestry in a platform both at the county and the national level.

5. Lessons Learnt from the Exchange Visit

i. Activity Scheduling

The team planned to visit too many groups within a very short time thus leading to a lot of fatigue among participants and rushing of activities. As a result, participants did not have adequate time to interact with communities/professionals and get all the information they needed.

ii. Government Support

There is government support available both at the national and county levels. However, most farmers fail to access this because they are not very well organized and lacking proper information on the same. For instance, the government may have programs running to support groups but the groups are not aware.

iii. Capacity of groups

There are many groups/organizations addressing issues of farm forestry on the ground. However, their institutional capacity is low and needs to be enhanced for better service delivery.

iv. Access and utilization of Credit

Groups can utilize credit very well so long as they have the appropriate training and relevant enterprises. Kenya Forest Service gave its experiences on the same where it was shown that groups that had benefited from funds provided had repaid their loans well. However, as it is, most groups have challenges in accessing credit due to low capacity in generating relevant business ideas and writing bankable business plans.

v. Policy support

While efforts to support farm forestry by the government of Kenya have been minimal to non-existent in the past, this is changing especially with the enactment of the forestry Act of 2005 that established the Kenya Forest Service whose mandate extends to promotion and support of Farm Forestry. Indeed from the discussions, Kenya was seen as a role model as compared to the other countries. The government is doing considerably well in working with associations, groups and individual farmers to formulate policies and see them through.

vi. Farm Forestry-Smallholder Producers Association of Kenya.

Though doing a commendable job in organizing and providing services to farmers, has low visibility and coverage. The Association needs to get out and create visibility in order to expand membership and its reach while expanding the array of services provided.

vii. Types of groups in existent

In Kenya there exists different registration status for producer groups as defined by law. These range from Common Interest Groups, Cooperatives, Community Based Organizations, Associations, Companies and so forth. However, only a cooperative and a company are legally mandated to do business. That is they can sue and be sued and can partake in tendering processes. Still, most groups have not reached this level and operate at lower levels which hinder their capacity to do business. For instance, statistics from the relevant authorities show a very high number of groups registered as Common Interest Groups and Self Help Groups. Few are registered as Cooperatives meaning their capacity in terms of information, Production, Marketing and even lobby is minimal.

viii. Inadequate synergies and Cooperation among groups

Although there are many different groups operating all over the country, few have come together to create partnerships that could be beneficial to them. For instance, there are very few product based associations that are in existent. An example of Nakuru County can be given where there is an association of tree nursery producers that has been recently formed. Such associations have the potential of creating many benefits especially in the lobby and Produce/product marketing aspects. There is therefore an opportunity to mobilize and organize these groups under FFF to place them in a better position for income generation and livelihood improvement.

ix. Inadequate extension Services

Due to the history of inadequate support to farm forestry and the existing low capacity of extension personnel in the field, most farmers experience difficulties in getting the right information, skills, and inputs needed to produce effectively and run their businesses. The government through Kenya Forestry Service and Ministry of Agriculture has few personnel who are overwhelmed by the wide areas and high number of farmers to serve.

x. Low levels of value addition

There are very low levels of value addition among groups and individual farmers producing timber and non wood products. Most of the trees sold by farmers are sold in raw form as trees or rough timber. This is the same for other products like honey, mushrooms, and others. The effect of this is that farmers earn relatively low amounts of income compared to other players along the different value chains. Therefore, this is an area that needs addressing by equipping groups to produce high value products for increased incomes.

EVALUATION REPORT

Exchange visit objectives

The main objective of the exchange visit is to enable Africa FFF countries to learn and share experiences from forest and farm producer organizations (FFPOs) and the enabling environment in Kenya. The specific objective is to exchange, learn and discuss with delegates of FFPOs of the respective countries on topics related to the following areas:

- Enabling policy and institutional framework in support of farm forestry
- Socio-economic benefits and incentives for farm forestry and community-based forestry
- Organizational structure and governance of FF producer organizations
- Implementation arrangements
- Capacity development strategy
- Challenges and opportunities for FFPO's
- Linkages /partnerships with related programmes and organizations
- Sustainability strategy of FFPOs

Expected outputs

The expected outputs of the exchange visit include:

- Exchange visit video, short stories with detailed experiences and witnesses of participants, and overall report with lessons learned
- African FFF facilitators and partners' network for information sharing and learning.

Participants

A total of 15 participants from the 3 FFF pilot countries (Gambia, Liberia and Zambia)

Evaluation Results

1. Information package

<i>Was the information provided prior to the exchange visit adequate?</i>	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Total
	4	10	1		15

2. Logistics

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Total
<i>How was the hotel accommodation?</i>	10	4	1		15
<i>Meals?</i>	5	6	4		15
<i>Transportation?</i>	8	6	1		15
<i>Overall facilitation?</i>	7	7		1	15

3. Field Visits

What was the most interesting site?

- Community Food and Environment Group (COFEG) – 8
- Menengai Crater Bee Keepers – 3
- Fomawa School Woodlot – 3
- Charcoal briquetting - 1

What was the least interesting site?

- Richards Farm – 4
- Menengai Crater Bee Keepers – 3
- Nakuru tree nursery – 1

4. Lessons learned

What were the key lessons learned?

Summary:

- Information sharing
- Enabling policy framework in support of Farm Forestry in Kenya
- Community involvement and participation
- Introduction of woodlots in schools to train young framers
- Value addition of honey
- Entrepreneurship skills of some farmers
- Linkage of livelihoods to forest conservation
- Use of saw dust in Charcoal briquetting

5. Comments on the Presentations at KFS

- Most groups have inadequate business skills governance structures to operate as a business oriented entity
- While the community groups have business ideas, they need capacity building to transform their ideas into a bankable proposal
- Policy and legislation reforms for creating enabling business environment for small-scale producers
- Innovative technologies in transforming business transactions is the way forward
- Most groups operate at local level and there is need to facilitate them to aggregate to access better markets and credit facilities
- The lessons learned in various countries are valuable and need to be replicated; however, there is need to contextualise the models to suit the local situations.

6. General comments/suggestions for future exchange visits?

- Involvement of traditional leaders in the exchange visits
- More time should be given to producer organisations to present their experiences
- Proper arrangements to be made for picking participants at the airport
- The field programme should be limited to a few key sites to allow more learning and avoiding rushing from one site to another
- Information package should be very detailed to prepare the participants
- More exchange visits to other countries for experiential learning

Annex 2

List of participants

No	Country	Name	Organization
1	Liberia	Ethel Wion	Farmers Union Network (FUN)
2	Liberia	Edward Kamara	Forest Development Authority
3	Liberia	Richard Dorbor	NACUL
4	Liberia	Julius Bass	Managing Director FUN
5	Liberia	Kolly Allison	Zambia FFF Facilitator
6	Zambia	Davies Kashole	Forestry Department
7	Zambia	Ignatius Makumba	Director Forestry Department
8	Zambia	Makweti Sishekanu	Zambian National Farmers Union
9	Zambia	Vincent Ziba	FFF Facilitator
10	Zambia	Julius Muyinda	President District Farmers Association Mwinilunga
11	Gambia	Kanimang Camara	Gambia FFF Facilitator
12	Gambia	Ebrima Camara	All Gambia Forestry Platform
13	Gambia	Alhagie Mboge	President National Farmers Platform Gambia (NFPG)
14	Gambia	Jainaba Badjie	NFPG
15	Gambia	Cherno Gaye	Forestry Department Participatory Forest Management
16	Kenya	Geoffrey Wanyama	Farm Forestry – Smallholder Producers Association of Kenya (FF-SPAK)
16	Kenya	Edwin Kamua	Farm Forestry – Smallholder Producers Association of Kenya (FF-SPAK)
18	Kenya	Oscar Simanto	Kenya Forest Service HQ
21	Kenya	Mary Nyamu	Kenya Forest Service, Nakuru County
22	Kenya	Emily Kioko	Ministry of Agriculture Laikipia county
16	Kenya	Judith Mulinge	FAO Kenya
16	Kenya	Philip Kisoyan	FAO Kenya
21	Italy	Sophie Grouwels	FAO Rome