To donate to the Anniversary Appeal please send a cheque payable to ITF to ITF, Crawley Business Centre, Stephenson Way, Three Bridges, Crawley RH10 1TN or go to www.internationaltreefoundation.org.

Last year we planted over 1 million trees. Help us to plant 1 million more through our 90th Anniversary Appeal. We support local communities who are working together to tackle deforestation and to make a positive impact on their environment and livelihoods.

"When I was young I could hardly see beyond a few metres because of thick forests. There were many wild animals. Now bush burning and uncontrolled tree cutting has reduced tree cover to almost nothing. I give this project all my blessings."

Wisa, an elder of Gbelinkaa, Ghana

Charity No: 1106269

INTERNATIONAL TREE FOUNDATION

IMPACT REPORT 2014
OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS ITF HAS SUPPORTED 72 PROJECTS IN 21 COUNTRIES WORKING WITH 60 COMMUNITY PARTNERS


Asia: 4 projects in Thailand, India and the Philippines

The Caribbean: 1 project in Haiti

OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS ITF PROJECTS HAVE PLANTED OVER 1.7 MILLION TREES WHICH DIRECTLY BENEFITED NEARLY 69,000 PEOPLE.
INTRODUCTION

This year is the United Nations’ “International Year of Soils”. Soil is crucial to life on Earth, taking thousands of years to develop, but easily eroded in a few decades; soil is vulnerable to human activity and development. All of us rely on soil for growing food, protection from flooding and erosion, and the regulation of our eco-system.

With soil infertility and erosion rates increasing in many parts of Africa, ITF has been campaigning for this crucial issue to come to the forefront of the political and environmental agenda for many years. Now the important role that trees and agroforestry plays in global food security is being recognised.

“In order to protect our soils, we need to protect our trees and forests. Both of these vital resources play pivotal roles in food security and a healthy environment” Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations

This report looks back at the impact of ITF’s work in 2014, a year in which ITF has continued to work with community organisations in Africa to plant thousands of trees and to support agroforestry projects to benefit local people through farming sustainably with trees.

In 2014 we supported a total of 9 projects working with our partners in 5 African countries: Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria and Uganda and 1 schools project in the UK.

Local communities planted 249,850 trees

ITF’s projects directly benefited 7,764 people and made a real difference to the lives of thousands more.

This report sets out the positive impact made by a selection of our projects. ITF would like to thank the local partners, community groups, smallholder farmers and schools for their passion and hard work planting the trees and championing the importance of forests.

“It is striking what these organisations and our other partners across Africa can achieve with quite small sums of money and it is their time, effort, knowledge and commitment that really makes the difference. It is actually a privilege for us to be able to back their efforts and to help them to grow and expand their initiatives.” Andy Egan, ITF Chief Executive

All the photographs and stories from the beneficiaries come directly from the communities.
Trees 4 Livelihoods is funded by Big Lottery Fund and is a four year programme contributing to the long term efforts in Mali to tackle the challenges of unsustainable land use practices, deforestation and declining soil fertility.

Led by local partner, Sahel Eco, and based in the district of Mopti in Mali, it focuses on strengthening local capacity to manage agricultural land and forest resources in a sustainable way through four important projects:

- encouraging smallholder farmers to adopt more sustainable land management practices
- restoring the productive potential of 55 hectares of highly degraded land
- fostering inclusive management of the Koubaye forest to enhance forest resources
- assisting women to increase their incomes through harvesting and marketing non-timber forest products (NTFPs) such as fruits, nuts, spices and medicines

Here we take a look at a couple of these projects and the progress made over the past twelve months

**SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT**

Sahel Eco have been working with smallholder farmers to encourage the adoption of farmer managed natural regeneration (FMNR). FMNR is a simple low cost farming technique which can be used by farmers to restore tree cover on agricultural land which restores soil fertility by releasing nitrogen and protecting the ground from soil and wind erosion. By pruning the mature trees, firewood is produced and the trees do not compete with crops.

In April an exchange visit was made by farmers, women’s leaders and local representatives to a small holding which was part of a former ITF funded project, “Regreening Sokura”, to see sustainable land management in action. Practical training sessions have also been given to farmers on clearing fields, encouraging tree shoots to grow, pruning and managing ploughing. For those villages where the uptake of FMNR has been slower, Sahel Eco have been holding video debates in those villages to encourage farmers to get involved.

Next year will see the launch of a competition to promote FMNR with smallholder farmers, which will be run in partnership with the Agroforestry Commission.

![Training session on cooperative law](image1)

![Demonstration visit on FMNR](image2)
MANAGEMENT OF THE KOUBAYE FOREST

An important issue for the local communities is their declining access to the Koubaye forest due to unsustainable management.

This is a long standing problem and attempts have been previously made by other authorities to produce an environmental plan which has not been adopted. However this issue was too important not to tackle, so Sahel Eco have focussed on a more inclusive management approach involving the local communities who use the forest.

To prepare the ground for the development of a new management plan for the Koubaye Forest, Sahel Eco have invested considerable time in providing training sessions for a myriad of forest users and community members.

Training sessions have been held on the forest code, woodland operations, marketing of forest produce, protected species, the decentralised management of forest resources and laws constituting the pastoral charter for the Republic of Mali. Charcoal burners, woodcutters, animal herders, non-tree forest produce dealers, community leaders and elected municipal representatives have all taken part. The next step is to work together to create a new management plan for the Koubaye Forest that ensures conservation, the sustainable use of forest resources and fair access to them by the different user groups.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 16,972 trees have been regenerated and planted with species selected in partnership with farmers for resistance to drought, fertilising the soil, providing fruits, fodder and fuel wood
- 900 people have received training sessions on FMNR and 51 farmers and women’s leaders from 17 villages made exchange visits to see FMNR in action
- 2,110 members of the community in 9 villages have taken part in video debates on the benefits of FMNR
- Substantial training sessions have been delivered on the forest code and law, conservation management of forests and forest products to a wide sector of the community and user groups

IMPACTS

- There is greater awareness and understanding of FMNR which will see the smallholder farmers adopt more sustainable land management practices, with the aim of restoring tree cover, reducing erosion and improving soil fertility, leading to greater food security and reduced poverty
- Important steps have been taken towards a more sustainable and inclusive management of the Koubaye forest which will increase the access to forest resources by the local communities who have been excluded or disadvantaged by the current system

Amadou Kassambarra from Sama village in the commune of Konna tells us his story of using FMNR:

“With my 54 years, I still practice agriculture to provide for my family... we are faced with problems that limit the efficiency of our production... low rainfall, declining soil fertility, wind and water erosion etc. With Sahel Eco we realised that the low production is also linked to our behaviour through clear cutting of trees during ploughing. Through...the project, I realised that by adopting the FMNR techniques, I could better produce and meet the needs of my family... From next year, I will be the best candidate in the contest for champion FMNR in my town.”
Over 90 years ago ITF originated in the central highlands around Mount Kenya as “Watu wa Miti” or People of the Trees. Mount Kenya and the Mount Kenya Forest is one of Kenya’s most important water catchment areas supplying water to over 17 million people downstream and it is also home to a variety of wildlife including buffalo and elephant.

90 years later ITF’s commitment to Mount Kenya Forest is as strong ever, working with our local partners Save Mount Kenya Forest from Extinction Group (SMKFEG) on tree planting and agroforestry projects. “The project will address the effect of deforestation of Mount Kenya Forest which happened in the early 1980’s and 1990’s through various illegal activities such as; unlicensed timber harvesting, firewood collection through cutting down of trees, shamba systems (small holdings) and charcoal burning. The project will also address the decrease of water volume of most rivers originating from Mount Kenya Forest. There are over 6 rivers originating from the forest. Food security in the area is also one of the problems to be solved.”

For the past three years SMKFEG have coordinated community groups, farmers and schools to tackle these problems through planting trees on deforested lands and community farms as well as undertaking agroforestry projects and raising awareness about conservation issues. With the project based in an area of such national importance, the Kenya Forest Service and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock production have also been working in partnership with SMKFEG to support the tree planting programmes. The past twelve months has seen considerable progress:

**ACHIEVEMENTS**
- Mt Kenya Forest cover was increased by planting 30,000 trees in cleared areas and along the river banks to reduce soil erosion and siltation
- 20,000 trees were planted on local small holdings and in school grounds as part of promoting agroforestry practices including alley cropping, composting and windbreaks to improve crop production and to grow fruits such as mangos, avocados and guavas
- 180 volunteers from 6 community groups grew and planted the trees; 320 school children took part by planting trees on school grounds and 1,500 community members were trained on environmental conservation awareness and agroforestry techniques

**IMPACTS**
- Soil fertility is increasing on community farms through planting nitrogen fixing trees to reverse infertility caused by the continuous use of chemical fertilizers which has killed micro-organisms in the soil
- 8 hectares of land were reclaimed through the planting of indigenous trees which will grow to provide habitat for both animals and birds
- Local people are more involved in the conservation of the forest through regular tree planting and by being encouraged to report any encroachment or illegal activities taking place inside the forest
• Tree planting in the forest and along river banks will improve water volume and reduce siltation, benefitting the community living near the forest with sufficient water for household use and irrigation as well as for those living further downstream

• By grafting and selling mangos, avocados and guavas, money is being raised which will be put back into the project to support future conservation activities.

Ernest Njue is a farmer who grows coffee, tea, yams and fruit trees. Yams are plants which need support and previously Ernest had been using dead posts to support them. Now he has planted Grevillea robusta which will support the yams and also the yellow and black passion fruit which he grows.

“Yams and fruit trees like passion need support so that they can yield more, by planting these trees to act as supporter to my yams and passion fruits; I expect to increase my yield by 50%”.

“Watering Grevillea robusta seedlings”
PROJECT:
GREEN AND CLEAN: REFORESTATION IN LILONGWE, MALAWI

Partner: Lilongwe Wildlife Trust

Malawi is one of the world’s poorest countries and is facing many environmental challenges. The importance of forests and trees to Malawians cannot be over emphasised. Forest income constitutes 15% of total household income in Malawi and fuel wood constitutes the major source of such income. It is therefore extremely alarming that Malawi now has the fifth highest rate of deforestation in the world, posing potentially catastrophic harm to biodiversity and the future livelihoods of millions of people.

In 2014 Lilongwe Wildlife Trust (LWT) has undertaken a project to engage a group of young people in creating an urban community forest along the Lilongwe River, where it flows through an impoverished urban ward of Malawi’s capital city, Lilongwe.

The project is aiming to reduce the dependency of the local community on charcoal to prevent further deforestation in the local area and at the same time re-greening and stabilising degraded river banks that are subject to soil erosion and collapse during the rains.

A major part of the project was also to empower the members of the Counselling of the Adolescent Youth Organisation (CAYO) to develop the skills required to ensure the success of the project including basic forestry skills, monitoring and evaluation, planning, negotiation and problem solving.

These skills were called upon when the project site was invaded by local farmers. Despite consultations with local leaders and the community prior to the project starting, there were misconceptions among the farmers that planting trees along the river was a deliberate move by the City Council to grab the land. A meeting was organised with the local leaders, CAYO members, City Council representatives, farmers and LWT to discuss why it was important to plant trees along the river and to ask the farmers for their support. Following the meeting, the farmers and the local community welcomed the project and to show their support they took part in the tree planting.
ACHIEVEMENTS

• An urban community forest of 1.5 hectares was established

• 986 tree seedlings were planted and which survived a terrible flood. A further 214 trees are due to be planted

• 21 young people from CAYO were trained in forestry and project management and community development

IMPACTS

• The urban forest will provide the local community with a woodlot that can be sustainably harvested for fuel wood and provide fruits

• Planting along the river banks will help to stabilise the degraded banks that have been cleared and are subject to soil erosion and collapse during the rains, which has had devastating consequences

• Through engaging with the community and their concerns, the future of the urban forest is more secure with increased support of the project from local people and farmers

• A group of young adults have acquired the skills and experience to take this project forward, to implement their own projects and train and empower others in the future

“The river was once rich in biodiversity which the forest forms part of it, but currently there are only a few trees remaining. We as the youth cannot just sit and watch things going wrong, this is why we decided to get involved in protecting our environment by planting trees along the river. Our fellow youth should emulate empathy towards the protection of our environment by planting trees, because trees are part of our life” - Pilirani Masaiti Vice Chairperson for CAYO.

Training session with CAYO group
For the past 12 months Masaka and District Landcare Chapter (MADLACC) have been working with the community on an agroforestry project with a focus on increasing productivity of the smallholder farmers’ land, increasing their incomes and training the community to produce and plant their own trees.

An important aspect of the project was to make community leaders and farmers aware about the need for trees and conservation. As MADLACC Coordinator, Mathias Wakulira explained, it is often difficult to see the benefit of trees when they are just small seedlings: “the creation of community awareness about environment conservation, planting and use of trees in agroforestry is a big achievement because the communities did now know how good trees are. They are now willing to continue to undertake agroforestry.”

Four community nurseries were established including one at a local school where 50 pupils and 4 teachers were trained on agroforestry.

However the project was not without its severe challenges. Central Uganda was hit by an unusually prolonged drought. Measures were taken to shade the seedlings in some of the nurseries and to try and keep them watered. However the drought continued after transplanting in October, which is usually the rainy season. Considering the seriousness of the drought and the relative inexperience of the community in tree care, it is commendable that nearly 60% of the 25,500 trees planted have survived.

ACHIEVEMENTS
• 14,443 newly planted trees survived the drought
• 664 community leaders and members, school children and teachers took part in growing and planting trees
• Over 500 smallholder farmers received training on how to improve their crop yields and livelihoods through agroforestry

IMPACTS
• The community are more aware about the benefits of agroforestry and have the necessary skills and knowledge of techniques
• There is an increase in farmers adopting agroforestry practices which will improve crop yields and provide food, timber, fodder and fuel wood
• With the establishment of tree nurseries the wider community has increased access to a variety of tree seeds and seedlings

One of those benefitting from the project is Mr Kikonyogo a 36 year old farmer who lives in Kasaali village. He planted calliandra, sesbania and mangoes on his small farm and has started to realise the benefits to the soil by planting nitrogen fixing tree species.

Talking about the impact of the project Mr. Kikonyogo said “My mind-set towards tree planting was negative because I was not informed, now that I have known and seen some of the benefits, I am now going to be the champion of tree planting in my community”
Tree Power is a programme for schools which combines teaching and learning about trees and forest resources, bringing the local and global together and incorporating elements from both environmental and development education.

Tree Power’s vision is a world where young people become tree explorers and tree guardians, appreciating, valuing and acting to sustain the vital role of trees and forests in supporting life on Earth.

Over the past twelve months Tree Power has been trialled by ITF’s partner Devon Development Education (DDE) in 4 schools with teachers from a further 5 schools taking part in the development of the lessons and course structure.

On evaluating the value of the project DDE said “All schools that took part would recommend this project as all the teachers felt that the children learn more in the outdoor environment and it is a great opportunity for pupils to become aware of local woodlands, land use and ultimately rainforests, linking their knowledge to the concept of deforestation.”

The Tree Power programme is delivered through eight sessions of which the woodland visit was a clear favourite with pupils and teachers as was the “poe-tree” session with pupils creating some wonderful verse.

However Tree Power, was not without its challenges. Some of the material needed adapting to make it more suitable to different age groups. Also a session on palm oil plantations saw very different reactions in different schools with some children finding it hard to consider how they would be affected personally while other pupils were concerned about the effect on wildlife.

ACHIEVEMENTS
- 175 school children taking part in Tree Power
- 9 primary schools taking part in delivering the Tree Power programme or contributing to the development of the lessons and course structure

IMPACTS
- Schools have greater access to teaching material on trees, global environmental issues and outdoor education in an engaging format that supports the national curriculum
- Through the pilot project, the Tree Power programme has been tailored to engage more thoroughly with different age groups and to make the teaching resources stronger
- Parents and schools have become more engaged with tree planting and outdoor education
- School children have been given the opportunity to become the next generation of tree guardians
MORE ABOUT ITF

ITF is one of the oldest established forestry organisations in the world, founded in 1924 by Dr Richard Baker. He began to work in forestry in Kenya after the First World War and dismayed by the deforestation taking place, he founded “Watu wa Miti” or “People of the Trees” with Chief Josiah Njonjo, a leader of the local Kikuyo community. On returning to the UK a couple of years later he established “Men of the Trees” which changed its name in 1992 to become International Tree Foundation.

Richard Baker was generations ahead of his time in terms of environmental awareness and ITF continues his work promoting and funding sustainable community forestry projects in the UK and internationally and we have been responsible for the establishment of hundreds of millions of trees.

HOW WE WORK

ITF’s mission is to work with local communities to promote the role of trees and forests in improving livelihoods, protecting the environment, and by developing the economic potential of native and traditional species.

Our four strategic aims are:

**ENVIRONMENT**: increase tree cover, promote reforestation and appropriate tree cultivation.

**EDUCATION**: foster an understanding of the amenity, ecological and economic value of trees.

**LIVELIHOODS**: enable communities to develop and restore sustainable and productive landscapes through tree cultivation.

**CAPACITY BUILDING**: build capacity in community organisations to advocate, share knowledge and implement community based forestry and agroforestry.

THE FUTURE

In 2015 we are currently supporting 20 projects including 7 community forestry and schools projects in the UK and 13 projects in 6 African countries.

2015 also sees the launch of ITF’s Centenary Campaign to plant 20 million trees in the Mt Kenya Forest leading up to ITF’s 100th birthday in 2024.

Earlier this year ITF initiated the African Community Forestry Network bringing together African community based and non-governmental organisations working in community-led forestry and agroforestry for the first time. The network will encourage the sharing and learning of knowledge and experience from each other and to advocate for improved policy and practice at both governmental and international levels.

For more details about ITF and all our projects:

**web**: www.internationaltreefoundation.org

**email**: info@internationaltreefoundation.org

You can also follow us on Facebook or Twitter

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