The TREE is a monthly newsletter Published by TIST Uganda, a project area of The International Small Group and Tree Planting Program.

Mission statement:
TIST Uganda is a community initiative dedicated to empowering small groups of subsistence farmers to combat the devastating effects of deforestation, poverty and drought.

Objective statement:
Combining sustainable development with carbon sequestration, TIST supports the reforestation efforts of over 25,000 subsistence farmers. Sales of carbon credits generate participant income while TIST today also addresses agriculture, HIV/AIDS, nutrition and fuel wood challenges.

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Greetings from the TIST Family in the United States. Representatives from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania had an opportunity to attend an award ceremony, which was awarded to Ben and Vanessa from the American University for Environmental Leadership. The function took place on 30th March 2017 in Washington, DC.

It was a big event which attracted many people all over the world. It was a great honor for Ben and Vanessa, and a big achievement for the TIST program in Uganda since 2003. As TIST Uganda, Staff, LC members, quantifiers, trainers and farmers we want to congratulate Ben and Vanessa for receiving this award which has marked TIST as a success. We continue to thank everyone who participated in organizing this function.

Representatives from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania had an opportunity to attend an award ceremony
KANUNGU DISTRICT RECEIVES CARBON PAYMENTS

Carbon payments of one hundred and fifty thousand (150) Uganda shillings have been paid to Kanungu TIST farmers. Farmers were excited and eager to sign their vouchers from the different Cluster meetings of Rugyeyo, Rutenga and Kanungu Municipality. This was a successful procedure where TIST farmers were involved in the signing with the assistance of the Cluster leadership.

One farmer from Rutenga Cluster had this to say, “I thank TIST management for bringing the payment of vouchers closer to our homes in a walking distance. It was always expensive moving longer distances which incurred a lot of costs. Now that the service is closer, we hope that the coordination of TIST will be easy with the hope of more new farmers joining the programme.

We expect our Cluster leaders to always give us reports on our Cluster and groups performance, not always waiting for the TIST office. We request more farmers to form more groups so that more money is allocated to our District.

*It’s what you saw that you ripe*
I AM PROUD TO BE A TIST TRAINER.

My name is Calpeters from Kamuganguzi Kabale. I have been a TIST farmer and also TIST Trainer for more than five years. As a trainer, I work on a voluntary basis with the TIST programme to protect our communities from Environmental degradation and climate change challenges.

As a trainer, I have been involved in several activities. These are:

- Mobilizing farmers, training them on what TIST is and encouraging them to plant trees
- Talking about the best practices and benefits from TIST
• Coordinating and linking farmers and quantifiers for tree counting
• Reporting about farmers and their trees performance to the Office
• As a nursery operator, I have been able to train farmers in tree nursery establishment and management. Other trainers are experts in other fields, so they do training in health issues, nutrition, conservation farming and construction of energy saving stoves.
• We have carried out demonstration/exchange visits to learn some TIST best practices. These are mostly Conservation farming and energy saving stoves.
• We have rotational leadership during our meeting. This has given each trainer a chance to be a leader. It gives us confidence during their work.
• We also identify new farmers and groups, and present them to TIST administration for follow up.

TIST farmers buy tree seedlings from my nursery beds and this is a source of income for my family. I was given the opportunity to work with the TIST expansion team to sensitize farmers in Northern Uganda. I don’t regret being a TIST trainer because I have benefited a lot from TIST, that why I am proud of this work.
TIST MITIGATES CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH
CONSERVATION FARMING (CF).

TIST Uganda is one of the most successful programmes that has been able mitigate climate change through CF. This method involves the digging of potholes that are approximately 15cm wide and 35cm long in a 15cm deep and space holes at least 75cm of apart. Seeds are directly planted along with some organic manure. Crop residues are retained and staple crops are rotated and/or intercropped. Conservation Farming has been a promising means of increasing yields conserving soils and water resources.
CF is a farming system that has been practiced by more than 4 million farmers for more than 10 years and has proved to increase food security in an environmentally sustainable way. In relation to the fertility of the soils, CF increases the fixation of carbon in the soils and this has an impact on the greenhouse effect. CF fields can act as a sink of carbon and reduce emissions in the atmosphere.

CF is more effective in terms of soil conservation, yield stabilization, reduces machinery use, and lowers the cost compared to other tillage systems. TIST farmers have noticed a positive influence on crop yields, soil fertilization, soil fertility and erosion.

TIST farmers are proud to inform you that smallholder farms using conservation practice have contributed mitigation against climate change. Nevertheless, the system increases the household food security and economic and social wellbeing.