

Mara and Butiama Hills Tanzania

Mid-Year Update 2023



Project status: Butiama Hills project

Year 1
out of 8

214 farmers
enrolled in agroforestry

200 households using energy-
saving cookstoves

The new phase of our Tanzania project with the Global Resource Alliance (GRA) will see the restoration of 1500 hectares of degraded forest in the Butiama Hills, in collaboration with five neighbouring communities. Families will be involved in setting up agroforestry and woodlot schemes on their farms so that they can make a forest-friendly living, rather than farming or producing charcoal which harms the forest and is what they used to do in the past due to lack of alternatives. The project began implementation in January 2023, and for the following six months most of the activities carried out were focused on preparing for and establishing these livelihood activities.

In nearby Mara, 2 141 910 trees have been planted since 2011. The participating families and institutions continue to receive follow-up visits and support from our partner in the field, GRA.



The project team's first task this year was to collect data from various stakeholders living in the project area. This will improve our understanding of the social, economic and biophysical context here, and make sure our alternative livelihood schemes are relevant, efficient, effective and sustainable. GRA's Monitoring & Evaluation Officer is seen here interviewing Mr. Lubale James (33) during the survey of 53 households in 5 villages.

In March the new agroforestry staff held a capacity-building workshop for the nursery staff and community members from the participating five villages. One farmer from each village was also trained as a lead farmer for the agroforestry scheme. These lead farmers will ensure that each farmer's agroforestry system is set up correctly, visiting their group members monthly to collect data on germination and mortality rates, as well as providing direct support on pests and disease, soil or water issues.



The trees supplied by the Mara project have touched the lives of people in many ways. Planting fruit trees has helped improve family nutrition regardless of economic status. Women who used to travel long distances to collect firewood, like Asha P. (70) here, can now collect it closer to home, thanks to the provision of fast-growing trees that can be sustainably harvested.



Alongside supporting the neighbouring five communities to take up forest-friendly livelihood activities, the Butiama Hills project focuses on nurturing back forest on these hills (above) and creating community-managed forests with a legal status. Forest restoration will be through assisted natural regeneration and will improve water catchment by rejuvenating dried up springs.

In Mara schools, boys and girls are assigned to take care of trees, learning at an early age that tree planting and management benefit everyone in many ways – the most immediate being the shade they can now enjoy in their school yards! These students from Kitenga Girls Secondary school are picking out seedlings at Utegi nursery.



What is agroforestry?

Agroforestry combines agriculture and forestry: trees and shrubs are grown around or among crops or pastureland. It plays a critical role in successful forest restoration by:

- reducing the pressure on forest resources and incentivising sustainable forest management by alleviating poverty;
- compensating the loss of access to forest resources;
- ensuring reliable incomes to fund sustainable forest management.

The value of an agroforestry system is in its diversity; selecting and distributing a variety of environmentally and socially appropriate tree species. In Tanzania,

our programme grows between 45-70 species each year that have specific uses.

Some trees, such as timber, are harvested sustainably and replaced. Planting fast-growing species in dedicated woodlots reduces pressure on the natural and degraded forests we are working to restore. Others, such as fruit and nitrogen-fixing trees, are pruned year after year providing food, soil fertility and numerous other benefits. Of course, all the types of trees sequester carbon as they grow.

Please visit our [What We Do](#) webpage for more information.



You'll receive an annual update in March. Meanwhile, stay up-to-date with our interactive [Mara](#) and [Butiama](#) maps, and check out the photos on Flickr: [Mara](#) | [Butiama Hills](#)

You can find an overview of all communications assets and guidance on how to communicate about your partnership with WeForest here: [Mara](#) | [Butiama Hills](#)