



Evaluation of the project “Sawlog Production Grant Scheme Phase III”

EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS

BACKGROUND

The objective of the project “Sawlog Production Grant Scheme” was to encourage private sector investment in commercial timber plantations by providing grants and technical support to private sector investors in timber crops. Initially expected to last 55 months, the project was extended twice, first due to erratic weather and later to accommodate delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Phase III aimed at increasing the incomes of the rural population through commercial tree planting by small, medium and large-scale private sector actors and the local communities themselves, while helping to mitigate climate change effects through intensive afforestation.



PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT CODE
GCP/UGA/047/EC

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE
Uganda

START/END DATE
2015 / 2021

FUNDED BY
FAO, European Union

PARTNERS
Forestry Sector Support Department, Ministry of Water and Environment (FSSD), Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA), National Forestry Authority (NFA), National Forestry Resources Research Institute (NaFORRI), Nyabyeya Forestry College (NFC) and district forestry services (DFS)



ABOUT THE EVALUATION KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation reviewed the relevance of the project’s objectives to the priorities of the country and of the donor (European Union); the extent to which planned outcomes have been delivered across the four outcome areas; and efficiency in project implementation.

EVALUATION METHODS

The evaluation used results-focused qualitative methodologies, triangulated by quantitative evidence where available, including that from inception, mid-term and periodic progress reports. Qualitative data collection methods and content analysis was used to identify, analyse and interpret evaluation findings. Fieldwork was conducted in three project clusters (Central, Western and Southwestern).

EVALUATION FINDINGS

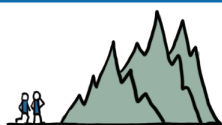


WHAT DID THE PROJECT ACHIEVE?

The project provided technical and financial support to private tree growers to establish and maintain commercial plantations to acceptable national standards, helped certify private nursery operators and forest contractors to ensure high quality inputs and management of forest plantations, and studied appropriate technologies in processing and utilization of wood products.

Its objectives and scope were found highly relevant and consistent with national and global development objectives and policies, as well as the priorities of the donor and the implementing agency. The scope and design incorporated some of the lessons learned from previous phases.

The project contributed to growth in rural economies and infrastructural development. Market opportunities will be a key determinant of sustainability for tree growers.



WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES?

Challenges included limited funding for value addition, a shortage of technical staff, and a short funding period that hindered thinning and maintenance support. COVID-19 disrupted woodlot management and equipment delivery. Conflicts arose over tree planting in Central Forest Reserves previously occupied by local communities. Implementation adjustments included gender mainstreaming, value chain research, and expansion to Karamoja and West Nile.



LESSONS LEARNED

- The project boosted rural economies with more jobs, higher incomes, and better infrastructure, benefiting communication and trade.
- Plantation forests improved microclimates and eased pressure on natural forests by providing affordable wood. Broad-leaved trees also reduced heat waves and droughts.
- Local communities gained jobs, especially women and youth, though remote areas relied on imported labor.
- Sawmills and plywood factories created fewer jobs than plantation activities.

Click [here](#) to read more in the full report.



NEXT STEPS



FAO, in collaboration with donors and the Forestry Sector Support Department, Ministry of Water and Environment should work to ensure that financial support for tree growers is staggered until the farmers start earning from the plantation.



Project management teams should put more effort in use of local advertisement media (in addition to national ones) of support for tree farmers using local means, such as community radios to encourage and facilitate participation of local community members in the process.



FAO, in collaboration with donors, needs to invest more in training and research on tree pests and diseases; as well as in laboratory facilities and equipment for pests and disease identification and management.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Office of Evaluation
www.fao.org/evaluation



Some rights reserved. This work is available under a CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO licence.

Photo credit: © FAO/Petterik Wiggers