

Mazingira Bora

English Version

TIST is an innovative, time - tested, afforestation program led by the participants.



www.tist.org



Photo by: Alice Kabura

Kingo TIST Cluster meeting Held on 24/2/2021. Attendance 18 men 6 women Total 24, Trained about TIST Eligibility Requirements and seed collection.

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2020 was a Year a Mixed Year for TIST.

The Year 2020 has been considered as a difficult year for many people across the globe. The outbreak of Coronavirus that spread like bushfire affected many people's lives and their livelihoods. Many families have lost their loved ones while millions of people have contracted the disease. It has been a painful experience for so many people.

Opportunities.

As Governments all over the world together with World Health Organization (WHO) continued to put in place measures to halt spread of the virus, public transport was particular targeted. Air, sea, road, rail transport systems were discouraged and to greater extent prohibited especially across national geographical borders. In some countries people were asked not to move from one city to another. Communication was hugely impacted.

TIST like many other organizations, decided to stop field quantifications as well as Cluster meetings as a measure to protect TIST family members.

However, during this time, TIST became very innovative. We worked on new and challenging projects that continue to bear fruits for the farmers.

TIST Achievements during Covid.

a) Zoom Calls and Whatsapp Groups.

During Covid, TIST global leadership found a new way of holding meetings via Zoom. Zoom is an internet based applications that allows people to meet virtually via video conferencing. TIST was able to hold seminars with Quantifiers as well as holding weekly meetings. Members of TIST Leadership in India, USA, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda hold a weekly meeting discussing important policies and decisions concerning TIST.

Whatsapp groups became working groups. Different work Teams that we normally call Task Forces were able (still doing this even now) to work together and find solutions or a Best Practice to a particular issue. Today, TIST has benefited from the work done by various Taskforces.

b) Missing Baselines catch-up

When quantification was stopped as a measure to protect our Cluster Servants from contracting covid-19 virus, TIST continued to engage them while they were still at home. One of the things Cluster Servants did was to collect missing Baseline information that was necessary for the groves to qualify for carbon business. Thousands of groves were catch-up and eventually became eligible to be included in Project Documents (PD). Project Document is a requisite for groves to participate in carbon business.

c) Answer Desk

TIST began another exciting communication channel. Answer Desk call number was established so that farmers could call a certain number and get their questions answered.

d) Commcare surveys

During this time, TIST also discovered a very important online survey tool – Commcare survey tool. Commcare has been used extensively by Cluster Servants and members of leadership Council. The surveys we carried out helped immensely in improving TIST. We have become better following commcare surveys exercises.

**e) TIST Learning Center.**

This is perhaps the most important innovation for TIST. We now have an online application for TIST that is found at “Google Play”. This application has become so useful that people wanting to join TIST are now able to access TIST information, Trainings, Policies (such as Small Groups eligibility criteria). TIST Learning Center is a tool that offers “One Stop shop” for TIST’s information, Training, and News!

f) Virtual verification

Because of travel restrictions across the globe, TIST was lucky to have their Verifiers allowed to carry out a Virtual Verification. We are grateful that we passed this Verification. This means Clean Air Action Corporation (CAAC) will have enough carbon tonnes to sell on behalf of TIST farmers.

g) New Groups joined TIST

During a recent Seminar for Cluster Servants at Gitoro Conference centers (done with strict conformity to covid -19 rules and guidelines), it was reported over 150 new Groups joined TIST during Covid-19 pandemic period. Cluster Servants were able to share TIST “gospel” and many new farmers joined TIST. Many new groups continue to apply to join TIST.

h) New Clusters added

Many new Clusters have been started since coronavirus pandemic. So far over 30 Clusters have been established. Today, TIST Kenya has 365 Clusters. Most of these Clusters are active Clusters with Cluster Leadership and a Cluster Servant.

i) Profit Share payments done

TIST Kenya as well as TIST Uganda made a profit in the year 2019. The profit share for the farmers (70%) began to be distributed to the farmers even during Covid times. Cluster Servants worked so hard to ensure eligible groups receive their vouchers (still adhering to Ministry of Health Guidelines) and eventually their payments.

j) Verra Exceptions

Verra is a global body that regulates the carbon business under Verified Carbon Standards. It set rules that projects like TIST doing carbon must adhere to for us to qualify to participate in carbon business. One of the rules says, **TIST trees must remain alive for 30 years or more.** Another rule says that **a grove must be baselined/quantified within 5 years since being registered as TIST carbon project grove.** This rule about baseline quantification has really affected hundreds of TIST groves thereby denying many farmers a chance to participate in carbon business. Some of causes of these groves missing out in carbon business is where a Cluster has no good Cluster Servant and therefore many groves fall off this “5 year rule.”

TIST Leadership in USA went to Verra and made a request that we be given a chance to baseline those groves. Our request was granted. This is indeed “Good News” for TIST.

We encourage Cluster leaders and members to help us recruit new Cluster Servants. TIST need as twice Cluster Servants we currently have in order to fully quantify every groves we have in Kenya.



Growth in TIST: Is your Cluster and Small Group Growing?

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TIST Vision is to empower **Small Group members to reverse the devastating effects of deforestation, drought, and famine through** identifying local sustainable development goals that include tree planting, sustainable agriculture, health education and nutrition. TIST also strives to provide long-term revenue for the Small Group participants through the sale of greenhouse gas credits (GhG).

The individual growth of a Small Group is paramount. It is the desire of TIST to see each individual member of a Small Group reap TIST benefits that help raise their livelihoods and income. Through tree planting, a number of TIST farmers have reported to have earned more income, or made household savings through selling of fruits, firewood, fodder for livestock, honey, increased soil fertility and biodiversity, and improved water level in our streams. In practicing Conservation Farming, a significant number of farmers have witnessed increased crop harvest, more soil fertility, reduced soil erosion, and less farm labour, among other benefits. Health and nutrition education has helped many household take preventive measures against diseases and nutritional deficiency issues. Further, through TIST energy saving jiko, many families have made significant savings in wood fuel, as well as in reducing indoor smoke pollution.

Growth in your Small Group?

Your Small Group should now sit down and evaluate its growth since joining TIST. How many trees have you planted? How many of those trees are fruit and indigenous? How many farmers in your group have practiced Conservation farming? How were the results in comparison with conventional farming? How many members have the TIST clean and energy saving jiko? Have any of your group members done a raised seed-bed? How are the results?

What goals do you have for this coming rainy season? How many additional trees are you going to plant? How many plots of CF are you preparing? How many raised-seeds and seedlings do you require for this coming rainy season and the next? What other goals do you have?

Remember, for a Small Group to be profitable for its members, it should plant more than 5,000 trees within the first five years of joining TIST.

Please prepare your Small Group report and present to other groups in your next Cluster meeting. Ask for help and ideas from other Small Groups to improve your **Action Plan for growth with goals (Conditions of Satisfactions - COS)**.

Growth in your Cluster?

At your Cluster meeting, please evaluate your growth as well. How many trees does your Cluster have? How many Small Groups have been registered? How many additional trees have been planted each year? How many CF plots have been done this and last season? How many farmers are doing CF, honey, riparian, fruit trees, stoves, raised-seed beds?

What are your goals for this year? How many additional trees, CF, energy saving stoves, raised-seed beds, fruit and indigenous trees? What other goals do you have?

In Quantification, how many of your Small Groups have been quantified in the last 18 months? What are your plans to get every Small Group quantified within 18 months period?

In Small Group payments, how many groups have received tree incentives? How many are qualifying for tree incentives, having achieved more than 1,000 trees, has signed GhG contract agreement form and has been quantified in the last 18 months? How many are not qualifying? What are the reasons for not qualifying? How are you going to help or encourage those not qualifying? What are your Conditions of Satisfactions / goals in Small Group payments?

Cluster leaders are requested to work with your Cluster Servant to prepare a report and an **Action Plan for growth with goals (Conditions of Satisfactions - COS)** and present it in the next Cluster meeting and further to the GOCC.



TIST: The Importance of Trees.

Trees are very important for environmental and material reasons:

A. Environmental improvement:

- Trees cover soil, which protects it from wind and water erosion.
- Leaves and twigs fall to the ground and provide the soil with extra nutrients.
- Trees increase soil moisture by covering the soil and hence reducing evaporation.
- Tree roots help bind the soil and therefore reduce erosion.
- Tree roots also help water to enter the soil and improve underground water circulation.
- Trees improve local weather conditions by increasing the amount of water vapor in the air (increased humidity).
- Trees improve air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen.

- Trees provide shade and shelter.

B. Material and nutritional value:

- Construction materials (furniture, posts, fences, rope etc.)
- Fuel wood.
- Medicine.
- Food/fodder.

These benefits are really valuable for farmers and for the world. A recent survey of TIST farmers in Kenya showed that the value of fruits, nuts, fodder, and firewood from trees they have planted in TIST and improved yield from using Conservation Farming averaged almost 37,000 shillings per farmer. It's harder to put a value on the benefits of cooler, moister soil, cleaner air and some of the other benefits of the work we do in TIST, but we feel it on our farms every day.

Promoting tree planting is of great importance to the community. Imagine what we can do when we plant more together!

TIST: Controlling Mosquitoes.

During wet seasons, malaria infections become common. Mosquitoes, which are responsible for the spread of malaria pathogens, breed fast. It is important to look after your homes to reduce the presence of mosquitoes.

These steps can help:

- Clear your compound of any unwanted bushes or grasses.
- Drain away any stagnant water near your compound; stagnant water provides breeding ground for mosquitoes.

- Clear away any leftover food over-night.
- Keep rubbish outside the house in a covered container or rubbish pit.
- Sweep your house and compound daily.
- Remember to use mosquito nets when possible.



The Rains Have Come - Time to Plant Many More Trees.

Preparing seedlings for transplanting (Hardening Off).

Now that the rains have come, seedlings need to be planted out. It is important this month to make sure that seedlings will be ready to be moved from the nursery and planted in the field.

Seedlings first need to be prepared for the harsher conditions of the field. If seedlings were properly looked after in a nursery, they may have received more water and shade than they would have, once they have been planted. Gradually reduce the watering and expose the seedlings to full sunlight to make this transition successful.

Characteristics of good seedlings.

As a general guide (remember different species have different characteristics) good seedlings for planting out have the following characteristics:

- ✓ The shoot should be twice the length of the roots or the pot.
- ✓ The stem should be strong and woody.
- ✓ The seedlings should have many thin roots in addition to the main roots.
- ✓ Many seedlings will achieve these characteristics two months after germinating.

Transplanting.

- Transport the seedlings in an upright position.
- Mark out a circle with a diameter of 30cm in the field.
- Remove the topsoil and place in a pile.

- Remove the next soil layer to a depth of 30cm and place in a separate pile.
- Put in a 5cm layer of grass (dry grass in rainy season, fresh grass in dry season called mulching). Some groups add manure as well.
- Remove the seedling from the polythene bag; do not break the earth-balls around the roots.
- Place the seedling in the hole.
- Replace the topsoil first, then the second soil layer.
- Some groups do not fill the hole completely, but leave a gap of a few cm. This helps the rain-water enter the hole and infiltrate the soil.
- This can be especially helpful in dry areas.
- Any remaining soil can be placed in a mound on the downhill side of the seedling. This will help trap any rainwater and divert it into the hole.
- Water the seedling.

Also, remember that to give your seedling the best chance of survival you should plant them 3m-4m apart. If you plant them closer together then the seedlings will not get all the water, or soil nutrients, they need because there is much competition. They will become weak and may die, so follow the best practice of a spacing of 2.5-3m.

Where trees are closely spaced, TIST does skip count with a spacing of 2m. In tightly spaced trees, (less than 2 m), it is advisable for the farmers to continue thinning trees for firewood, or fodder, as trees mature and canopies get thicker.

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TIST

The International Small Group & Tree Planting Program
www.tist.org

Kimereu Version

TIST is an innovative, time - tested, afforestation program led by the participants.



Photo by: Alice Kabura

Mkutano wa nguzo ya Kingo TIST Uliofanyika tarehe 24/2/2021. Mahudhurio 18 wanaume 6 wanawake Jumla 24, wamefundishwa juu ya Mahitaji ya Ustahiki wa TIST na ukusanyaji wa mbegu.

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