

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**AGENCY FOR INTEGRATED
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

AGENCY FOR INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

AFIRD has been engaged in promoting ecological farming methods (organic Agriculture and Permaculture) among smallholder farmers and schools in central Uganda since 1997. Community capacity building through trainings to improve food security, household incomes and environmental protection has been the core in AFIRD's operations.

Generally, 125 farmer groups, 30 Primary schools and 5 prison institutions were involved in the interventions. In order to ensure effectiveness, AFIRD evolved approaches like a farmer-led extension system that empowers farmers to find own solutions to their challenges. Currently, 26 Farmer groups, 13 school communities and 3 prisons are supported through project activities. Women, children and the youth are prioritized in AFIRD's programs to tackle gender equity in the communities.

AFIRD, 2022

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACSA	Advocacy Coalition for Sustainable Agriculture
ADA	Australian development Agency
AFIRD	Agency For Integrated Rural Development
BftW	Bread for the World
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CAS	Cassava Variety
CBO	Community Based Organization
CDO	Community Development officer
COU	Church Of Uganda
DEO	District Education Officer
DLC	Development Link Consultants
DPO	District Production Officer
FG	Farmer Group
FLD	Farmer Led Development
FRA	Food Rights Alliance
IGA	Income Generation Activities
ILUD	Integrated Land Use Design
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MOH	Ministry of Health
NaCRRRI	National Crops Resources Research Institute
NARO	National Agriculture Research Organization
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
PELUM	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management
RUCID	Rural Community in Development
SA	Sustainable Agriculture
SAP	Sustainable Agriculture Practices
TA	Technical Adviser
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
YARD	Youth Association for Rural Development



MESSAGE FROM CHAIRPERSON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Joseph Kasule
Chairperson

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I am pleased to present this Annual Report of AFIRD for the year 2022.

During this period, we were able to achieve a number of successes among our target groups.

This was possible due to the combined efforts of various stakeholders, including AFIRD's leadership, field officers and the entire AFIRD staff, partners and donors. Each of them played a role in ensuring positive changes in the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

We would like to thank our development partners and donors for their continued support. These include; Misereor, Tudor Trust, Bread for the World and Horizont3000 (through the Austrian Development Agency and DKA) who have continued to stand with us at all times to ensure that development is achieved in our areas of operation.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to our local partners, including Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM), Advocacy Coalition on Sustainable Agriculture (ACSA), Food Rights Alliance (FRA), Schools and Colleges Permaculture (SCOPE), Uganda Water & Sanitation NGO Network (UWASNET), and Resources Oriented Development Initiatives (RODI) Kenya, with whom we have networked to promote livelihood improvement.

Last but not least, we thank the Government of Uganda for consistently providing a stable and peaceful environment in which to work.

For God and my country.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Eustace Sajjabi
Executive Director

AFIRD is grateful to present to you the results and achievements of its work in the year 2022.

Partnership and teamwork were among the strategies used to achieve these results in support of smallholder farmers who are the main food providers in our country.

AFIRD's work has continuously contributed to improved livelihoods in Wakiso and Mpigi districts. This has been achieved through the provision of appropriate technologies as we promote organic farming.

These technologies have been used by beneficiaries to efficiently use and benefit from natural resources for improved food security and income, as well as better health and environmental protection

Despite these achievements, farmers continued to face challenges such as pandemics and their effects, which negatively affected economic development at local and national levels. Farmers also continued to experience the negative effects of climate change.

AFIRD also helped to create strong platforms that enabled farmers to adopt sustainable agricultural practices to become resilient to the changing environment.

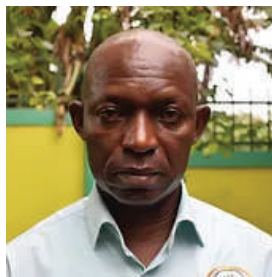
I express my sincere gratitude to our partners, the Executive Committee, farmers, government and staff for their contributions to our success in 2022.



OUR TEAM



Eustace Sajjabi
Executive Director



Musimenta Julius
Head of Programs



Dr. Kirembe Gerald
Animal Specialist



Nyakato Verah
M & E Officer



Renee Moreaux
Technical Advisor



Kirya Joseph
Accountant



Musisi Alipio
Administrator



Wasswa Faizo
Youth Empowerment
Program Officer



Lukwago Nicholas
Farmer-led Development
Program Officer



Kizza Justine
Advocacy & Lobbying
Program Officer



Kabugho Jesca
Ass. Accountant



Kizito Grace Francis
Volunteer



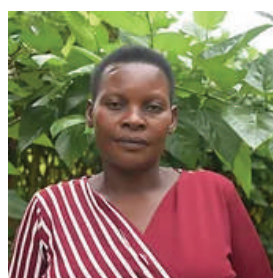
Nakiwala Gloria
Ass. Program Officer



Nabunnya Daliah
Ass. Program Officer



Buchana Emmanuel
Ass. Program Officer



Nambiro Fatuma
Ass. Program Officer



Bwambale Joseph
Farm Technician



Miyingo Anthony
Farm Technician



Mbabazi Margret
Welfare Officer



Lukwago Edward
Office Assistant



INTRODUCTION

Agency For Integrated Rural Development (AFIRD) is grateful to share the interventions carried out, achievements made, lessons learnt and challenges faced during the implementation of the projects with the beneficiaries in 2022. These include; smallholder farmers under the Sustainable Agriculture Project; teachers, parents and school children; and the prisons and ex-prisoners under the integrated Land-Use Design-ILUD/ Permaculture Project.

During this period, AFIRD completed the implementation of a three-year sustainable agriculture project, working with over 650 smallholder farmers organized into 26 groups, divided into new and medium groups.

There were 16 new farmer groups that had been supported for three years and 10 medium farmer groups that had been supported for six years to implement sustainable agriculture activities. These farmers were spread across Mende, Masuliita and Kakiri sub-counties and Gombe Division, all in Wakiso District.

AFIRD also promoted Integrated Land Use Design (ILUD) and permaculture with communities including youth,

mothers and prisoners. In this area, AFIRD implemented two projects with the support of Bread for the World (BftW) and Horizont3000.

In the same year, AFIRD also completed a project supported by ADA and DKA through Horizont3000. This was a two-year Sustainable Agriculture (SA) livelihood project implemented among school communities in Mpigi District covering four sub-counties (Kituntu, Nkozi, Buwama and Kayabwe Town Council). A total of 480 people (315 females and 165 males) directly benefited from the project through five primary schools, five youth groups and five mothers' groups. These included mothers, youth, children, teachers and school management members. In addition, a total of 3,665 people (1,850 women and 1,815 men) were expected to benefit indirectly from the project results.

On the other hand, the project supported by Bread for the World (BftW) was implemented for the second and third year. Eight primary schools, 32 households and 3 prisons in Mpigi and Wakiso districts directly benefited from the project.



AFIRD continued institutional development with support from Tudor Trust to address funding priorities in order to become a relevant and dynamic organisation addressing challenges arising from its agroecology work.

AFIRD also continued to work with a Technical Advisor (TA) under the Horizont3000 technical cooperation programme. The TA work supported the development of the social enterprise. This includes; training services and products, advocacy and public relations.

Different interventions were carried out under the different projects. The results achieved contributed to the successes achieved by the beneficiaries and to a large extent to the achievement of the strategic objectives of the organisation.

During 2022, AFIRD also completed the process of developing its new five-year strategic direction 2023-2027. The strategic direction focuses on four main strategic areas: farmer-led development, youth empowerment and advocacy, which are outward-looking, and institutional development, which is inward-looking and supports the achievement of the organization's mission.



INTERVENTIONS & ACHIEVEMENTS

1. FARMER LED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (FDP):

Improvement of sustainable crop and livestock production practices, as well as smallholder farmers' access to markets, for food security, household income and environmental conservation.



1.1 About the farmer led development program (FLD).

Farmer-led extension approach:

This applies to the medium farmers' groups. Medium farmer groups are a category of farmer groups whose capacity for sustainable resource management was built in the first phase of the three-year project. They benefit from the second phase of the three-year project, which uses the farmer-led extension approach. Each group identifies two farmers to be trained as farmer trainers. They work to further support farmers within their groups to learn sustainable farming practices based on their skills and specific challenges.

Farmers are central to the project at all levels, including planning, implementation and evaluation.

Farm planning builds on local knowledge and farmer innovation. NGO staff (AFIRD) work as facilitators and also as providers of information/advice from research. Farmer trainers are key to extending the reach of extension services and ensuring that farmers learn from their peers.

Under this programme, AFIRD works with smallholder farmers in the promotion of sustainable agriculture for better livelihoods. This is done by building smallholder farmers' capacity to manage natural resources for improved food security, income generation and environmental conservation. Farmers are trained to use locally available resources as inputs, such as indigenous or farmer-preferred seeds, crop and animal wastes for fertiliser and pesticides.

AFIRD works with two types of farmers; the new and the medium farmers. The new farmer groups are a category that are directly introduced to the different aspects / practices of sustainable agriculture in the first phase of the three-year engagement. The medium farmer groups are a category that is at a higher level than the new farmer groups and are in the second three-year phase.

They have knowledge and skills on aspects, concepts and practices of sustainable agriculture. They are being introduced to the farmer-led approach, where each group elects two members. These are trained by AFIRD to work as farmer trainers in their groups.

1.2 Major interventions and achievements under FLD

AFIRD supported farmers in implementing sustainable organic farming. New farmer groups were introduced to the key aspects (concepts) of sustainable/organic farming through training and support with starter inputs.

Intermediate groups already had the knowledge and skills and were supported through the farmer-led approach to take ownership of what had been achieved and to sustain it. Through this approach, the farmer trainers supported the farmers in their groups and beyond to practice sustainable agriculture.

The detailed interventions that were carried out under this programme are described in the following sections in three areas: crop and livestock production, access to markets, and environmental protection.



1.2.1 Crops Production

Planting materials were provided to a total of 16 new farmer groups. Focus was placed on beans, cassava and bananas. These varieties were selected for their ability to resist or tolerate common diseases.

Description of achievement:

As a result, the farmers were able to establish multiplication gardens for each of the crops at the group level, as shown in photos below.

Beans, cassava and banana suckers were multiplied by the farmers. Members of the groups have had access to and have been able to share the multiplication material and many members of each group have been able to establish their own gardens for different crops.



Ms. Maria Kitaka standing beside a group multiplication garden of Naro case 1 for Buwambo farmers group



Ms. Nabukera Margret of Bbika men and women farmers group in her newly established cassava garden using the planting materials from their group garden

During the dry season, farmers experience high temperatures. This reduces the amount of water in both the soil and the atmosphere. This impacts both crop and livestock growth and production. As a result, the amount of water available for livestock production decreases, and so does livestock production. Farmers were therefore supported to set up three demonstration sites for harvesting runoff water for both crop and livestock production. In addition, the farmers were provided with simple and hand-operated pumps to assist them in the irrigation of their crops. This enabled them to continue production during the dry season.

Vermiculture; a technology used to manage waste and produce organic manure was introduced among new farmer groups. Here, they were supported to establish a total of eight units at group level. These were used as demonstration sites for the technology and to multiply the worms so that other group members could access and use them to establish more units.



Ms. Nakalyowa Sarah of Biyinzika farmers group showing the worms in her vermiculture unit to AFIRD staff

Ms Nakalyowa Sarah; one of the Beneficiaries of the vermiculture unit says s able to harvest vermicompost and vermi tea from her unit. She uses them to improve the fertility of her farm.

To improve farmers' access to seeds, AFIRD has supported farmers' communities to maintain bean seed banks. The farmers are in charge of the maintenance and exchange of the beans among themselves. In addition, 32 bean seed varieties were conserved in a backup seed bank at AFIRD. This included 11 varieties that were selected from the farmer-led research done in a past project and 21 varieties that were carefully chosen from the three communities where seed bank was promoted.



In the picture above is some of the seeds being maintained at the AFIRD backup farm

1.2.2 Animal production



In the midst of climate change challenges, farmers face challenges in accessing feed for their animals. They experience animal feed shortages during the dry season.

During the year, Farmers in the medium groups were supported in the acquisition of knowledge and skills to make use of the resources available to solve their challenges.

For example, fodder is plentiful during the rainy season, but very scarce during the dry season. The farmers learnt that they can harvest and store the fodder during the periods when it is abundant, and use it during the periods when it is scarce. They were then supported with tools that they could use to make silage and hay. These tools for harvesting, preparing and preserving fodder were used by the farmers at group level.



In the picture above, Ms. Joy Katabire showing how she uses the pasture chopper to prepare Napier grass for silage making.

1.2.3 Improved Access to Markets by Small holder farmers

When it comes to marketing their products, smallholder farmers face challenges. They never have sufficient information about prices and quality, and they are unable to produce the quantities required by the market. In order to support these farmers, AFIRD intervened in the following ways

Support for an exposure visit to the National Agricultural Show in Jinja for farmers from the 26 farmer groups. As a result of the visit, the farmers were able to acquire knowledge on various technologies. They were able to make contacts with potential buyers of their products

The farmers also participated in local exhibitions where they showcased their various products and services. AFIRD also supported farmer trainers through practical training in agro-processing knowledge and skills. As a result, 20 farmer trainers have been able to learn how to make a range of products from the produce they grow. These included Wine, Juice, powdered vegetable and Yoghurt. After the training, there have been an increase in the number of Farmers who are able to add value to their products.

Figure 8 Farmers produces displayed during a local exhibition.



1.2. 4 Environment conservation

Each of the 16 new farmer groups received training to help them acquire the knowledge and skills to make and use energy-efficient stoves. As a result, the farmers are now using this knowledge to make and use energy saving stoves in their own homes. Farmers report that they are now using less firewood for cooking than they did before the introduction of the stoves.



Farmers from Mpegwe using their already established energy saving stoves

2. YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (YEP)

Catalyzing mindsets and strengthening capacity of youth in Uganda to engage in agriculture as a viable livelihood option



2.1 About the YEP:

AFIRD recognizes youth as an age group with high potential for transformation of the Ugandan economy.

However, such a significant labour force still struggled with high rates of unemployment. Over 92% of employed youth were poor. They represented one of the largest cohorts in terms of extreme poverty (ILO, 2015a).

The Youth Empowerment Programme emphasizes strengthening the capacity of youth in and out of school, including those in prison, to value and engage in agriculture as a viable and profitable livelihood. The programme uses the permaculture approach to address the unnatural behaviors of the disadvantaged youth, and to provide them with opportunities to learn ecological farming skills and gain experiences that will contribute to a more positive lifestyle and enhance their ability to make healthier life choices.

The programme is also based on working with relevant institutions that include schools, prisons and governmental agencies involved with the young people. We were able to work with key stakeholders such as: teachers, parents (women and men), local leaders and prison officers.

The tools used to concretize and find possible solutions to the factors and conditions that hinder meaningful youth participation in agriculture used included the Integrated Land Use Design (ILUD) and the Restorative Prisoner Rehabilitation (RPR) approaches..

2.2 Major interventions in 2022

Capacity building in permaculture and ecological farming

A total of 110 people (62 women and 48 men) from 5 school communities were trained as permaculture community facilitators. Parents, teachers, youth and children were among the trained community facilitators.

As a result, the trained community facilitators have empowered their respective schools to transform their school environments through the creation of functional gardens, tree planting, the establishment of waste management points, the construction of pathways and the planting of living fences.



Supported schools and prisons with starter inputs

Over 2100 trees of local species were planted in 5 schools (St Francis Xavier Jalamba, St Kizito Ggolo, Kataba CU, St Charles Kibanga and Nakirebe P/S) and one prison (Kitalya Prison). Our focus was on conserving traditional/local varieties because of the nutritional and environmental benefits they provide. Thus, a total of 30 multipurpose tree varieties, 6 vegetable varieties, 5 herb varieties and 5 African yam varieties were planted.



To improve access to planting materials, 8 community tree nurseries were established in schools and prisons. A total of 1000 children (520 girls and 480 boys) were trained to save, multiply and plant tree seeds. In addition, 60 prisoners (49 males and 11 females) have been introduced to tree nursery skills as a business they can take on outside prison.

Trained beneficiaries on use of biofertilizers and biopesticides



Children learn to make Bokashi biofertilizer

A total of 933 beneficiaries (686 female and 267 male), including youth, parents of children and inmates from 13 schools and three prisons, were introduced to biofertilizer technology for soil fertility improvement and pest and disease control. The beneficiaries are already using the technologies in their fields and are able to grow healthy food in a more sustainable way.

Capacity building on energy conservation technologies.

A total of 250 households and five schools were sensitized and trained in energy conservation. Appropriate energy-saving stoves (Lorena and Fire Rocket) were demonstrated for community adoption. Each school was provided with one of the institutional stoves designed to save energy.

Carried out nutrition education among schools and affiliate farmer families.

The intervention included the promotion of indigenous/traditional food crops: In order to increase access to scarce indigenous planting materials in the communities, ten groups (5 mothers and 5 youths) were supported with a variety of traditional/indigenous starter crops. These planting materials benefited a total of 200 females and 50 males.



Mothers and youths during cook day

Each school also organized cooking days. Raising awareness among mothers and the community about child nutrition was the focus of the cooking days. Topics of discussion included food and nutrient preservation, tasting and nutrition in relation to child health. A total of 100 people (70 females and 30 males) from five schools took part in the five sessions.

Diversified income generating enterprises among the youth:

A total of 250 beneficiaries (200 females and 50 males), including youth and mothers, were trained and coached in entrepreneurship skills, including business idea identification, business start-up and management, business plan writing, business investment fund raising, as well as resilience. Skills in branding, packaging and promoting marketable products were also built. Beneficiaries later received financial support to boost their businesses.

Facilitated ex-prisoner reintegration process

A total of 90 inmates (11 women and 79 men) were trained in permaculture while still in prison. They were later awarded a certificate, which serves as a tool to build the self-esteem of ex-prisoners. Reintegration began with psychosocial support and counselling in each of the three prisons (Kitalya, Butooro and Sentema).

After the release of the inmates, twelve reintegration meetings were held among the ex-prisoner communities to ensure the successful reintegration of the ex-prisoners. In addition, the ex-prisoners have been supported with inputs for the establishment of model permaculture centres.

Description of achievements:

There's increased adoption of sustainable farming practices among schools and affiliate farming communities: Five target schools are demonstrating organic farming practices; the formerly bare/dusty land is being used for food production, providing a conducive micro-environment and also contributing to hands-on learning. 36% of school children were able to transfer knowledge to their households. 60% of targeted youth and parents adopted and applied at least 5 organic farming practices at household level.

As a result, more households were able to eat different foods, children had access to a meal twice a day, and children had access to solid foods at school.



Enhanced the usage of fuel-efficient cooking stoves among schools and affiliate farmer families: Mothers reported positive changes in their lives as a result of the energy-saving technologies, including spending less time preparing meals while using less firewood, children attending school on time instead of collecting firewood before school, and engaging in other productive activities such as business because of the time saved in preparing meals. The Lorena stoves are cost effective as all the materials used are available locally at the community level and the skill is very easy to learn. Schools also reduced firewood costs by 30% through the use of energy-saving stoves.

Contributed to increased incomes among households

More than 200 households benefited from agribusiness and enterprise development skills. In general, 52% of the targeted mothers and 70% of the youths were able to improve their financial status compared to their previous situation.

Created a second chance for the ex-prisoners to live a dignifying life again

The restorative approach to prisoner rehabilitation has enabled ex-prisoners to reintegrate positively into their communities and reduce reoffending.



3. ADVOCACY & LOBBYING PROGRAM (ALP)

Promote and advocate for conducive agricultural policies and access to services that affect livelihoods of small holder farmers.

3.1 About Advocacy & Lobbying Program

AFIRD continued to strengthen community members' capacity to build consensus on issues related to agricultural policies and development programmes that affect their lives, supporting them to develop grassroots positions and a unified voice, building their confidence to engage relevant officials, and amplifying their voice at the national level through partnership with other like-minded network organisations working in this area.

3.2 Major Interventions and achievements

Community Land Issues awareness seminars in Mende, Masuliita Sub counties and Gombe division

A total of three community consultation meetings were held in three sub-counties of the Kakiri, Mende and Gombe divisions. The community members participatively aired the problems they were facing with land, including: landlords failing to keep their promise to give land titles to tenants after agreeing to share, lack of knowledge about land rights, invisible landlords to their tenants who only show up when they evict people and deliberately inflated prices charged to obtain land titles from tenants which are unaffordable to the tenants.

On behalf of the community, selected community representatives participated in the paper development and dialogue meetings with relevant sub-county leaders. They took the information gained from the dialogue meetings organised by AFIRD back to the community members from their local leaders.



Farmer representatives presenting community land issues to their sub county leaders during the Dialogue meeting

Enhanced access to advocacy information.

Developed, produced and disseminated information, education and communication materials to improve farmers' understanding of organic farming. From the IEC posters, farmers learned about the key advocacy issues for organic agriculture. This provided farmers with guidance on which issues to focus on.

Enhanced networking with government and other institutions for increased visibility

Farmers were supported to participate in various exhibitions at different levels. These included the Indigenous Food and Seed Fair organised by PELUM Uganda and the National Agriculture Show in Jinja.

Locally, AFIRD organised a Farmers' Exhibition and Grand Open Day for its Permaculture Resource Centre, which was attended by many technical, political and opinion leaders from Wakiso District and showcased a range of organic farming technologies.

Furthermore, as one of the key stakeholders in developing the ACSA Seed Advocacy Strategy (2022-2024), we were pleased to share our rich experience in managing seeds from selection to the final stage in the value chain..



Key stakeholders in the development of the ACSA Seed Advocacy Strategy (2022-2024) at the 6TH National Annual Organic Research and Innovation Symposium



Chairman LC 3 of Mende sub county inspecting farmer stalls during the Local Farmer Exhibition Organized by AFIRD.



The district Community Development Officer Mr. Kyejusa Simon officiating the Grand opening of the Resource Centre for Permaculture at Nkoowe-Wakiso which is acting as an information Centre for Organic farming



Showing vermicomposting technology to schools during AFIRD Centre Open day

Enhanced advocacy for children's right to food

Awareness raising on the right of the child to access Food has been promoted in schools and households. Sensitisation trainings on nutrition and children's right to food have been organised among the beneficiaries with emphasis on the Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy, National Child Policy.

Advocacy exchange learning visit

32 group leaders undertook a learning visit to Bidhampola Community Development Association in Mayuge District. The aim of the visit was to exchange views on BICODA's advocacy agenda and how they are able to influence their lower-level local leaders to lobby for support from various government programmes. After the visit, the groups came up with their own advocacy agendas, which they will put forward as they engage with their local leaders.



BICODA team with AFIRD staff and farmers in one photo at the Association's Office



During experience sharing between BICODA team and AFIRD farmers

4. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ID)

A relevant, dynamic and inspiring organisation that increasingly and flexibly lives its principles is the Institutional Development's main objective.

Developing internal capacity for organisational sustainability is the main focus of Institutional Development.

This strategic area aims to build on the progress made over the last five years to further strengthen the organisation's management systems, in particular the review of governance policies, human resource development, financial management, resource mobilisation, knowledge management, monitoring, learning and evaluation to ensure institutional sustainability.

Activities in this area focused on achieving the key result areas described in the following section;

4.1 Governance structures are functional and effective at all levels.

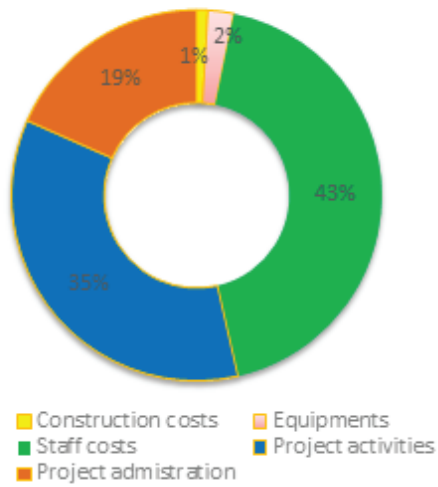
At the institutional level, AFIRD developed a strategic direction for 2023-2027, integrating issues recommended in the baseline and gender studies. Among these were: gender response to climate change adaptation, institutional gender budget schemes, increasing access to agricultural information and gender equality. AFIRD was also engaged in developing a Safeguarding policy to help the organization protect the vulnerable and do no harm in its activities.

4.2 Financial management systems strengthened for effective and efficient management of resources.

SUMMARY EXPENDITURE 2022

ITEM	AMOUNT
Construction costs	9,068,000
Equipment	21,610,000
Staff costs	411,040,898
Projection activities	334,664,969
Administration Costs	175,034,773
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	951,418,640

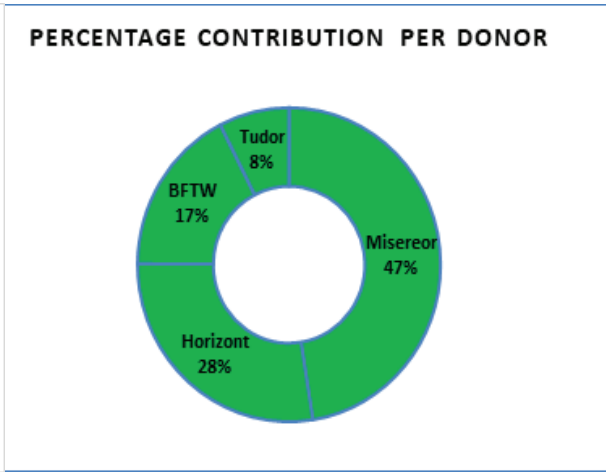
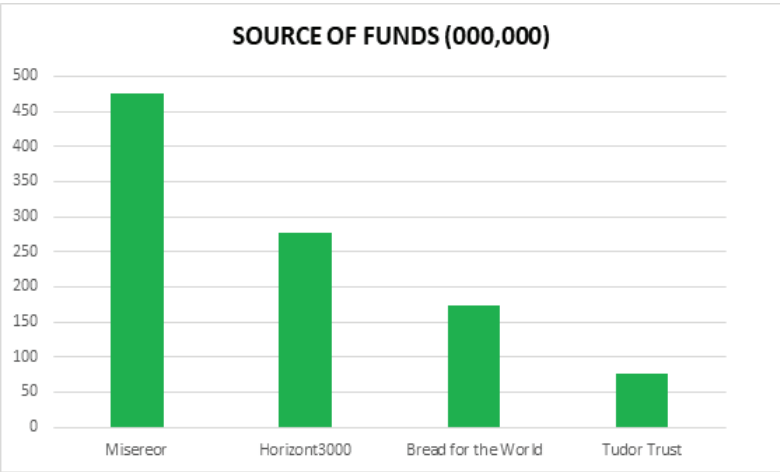
PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURES FOR 2022



4.3 Resource Mobilization is intensified for adequate and regular supply of resources from diversified sources.

During the year 2022, AFIRD was supported by the following donors.

FUNDING INFORMATION (SOURCE OF FUNDS)



4.4 Knowledge Management strengthened to increase staff knowledge, improve efficiency and retention of critical information; A number of interventions were carried out under this area as described below;

Capacity Development and Knowledge management (including KNOW-HOW3000)

Five staff were trained in knowledge management, including case study development, website upload, capacity development sharing, Microsoft365 and institutional development. In addition, 15 staff members were trained on Microsoft365 (Outlook, Teams, Calendar, One Drive and Forms) as one of the tools for proper knowledge management.

Four project staff were also facilitated to participate in the resource mobilization under the KNOW-HOW3000 agreement, which resulted in the creation of a new social enterprise unit to help the organisation generate its income as a sustainability plan.

AFIRD hosted participants from YARD, Caritas Tororo, RUCID and St. Jude Masaka for a workshop on learning centres. Eight AFIRD staff members also benefited from the experiences of various partners on how they operate income generation. This experience will be used to develop the AFIRD learning centres into a social enterprise.

Three AFIRD staff participated in an online gender training under the KNOW-HOW3000 agreement where the knowledge has been used in developing gender sensitive activities and reports.

Gender awareness campaigns were organized among school communities. A number of IEC materials were developed and disseminated to beneficiaries and partners during the project. Among these were:

- *To increase access to knowledge for school communities, training manuals on nutrition and permaculture were produced.*
- *T-shirts have been printed in support of gender awareness campaigns in school communities.*
- *Project brochures have been produced to disseminate information about the project to partners.*



AFIRD participated in the KNOW HOW experience capitalization where we shared two 'good practices'. These included the permaculture / ILUD approach and the use of bio-fertilizers. It is our hope that these practices will be of benefit to other organisations active in similar fields.

During the period we managed to increase our visibility using a number of methods including

- Organisation of a knowledge sharing open day at the AFIRD resource centre for farmers in Wakiso and Mpigi to learn about agro-ecological practices.*
- Dissemination of information through AFIRD's social media platforms i.e.- WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.*
- Pictorial documentation of AFIRD's history, which was later displayed on our Centre's boundary wall to help people learn more about AFIRD*

4.5 Public relations are strengthened with publishing and sharing activities done within networks in order to build its brand reputation. A number of interventions were done as shown below:

Networking and co-operation with relevant stakeholders

Annual subscriptions to partner networks in sustainable agriculture and permaculture were paid to PELUM, FRA, SCOPE, and ACSA.

In addition to the main projects, AFIRD received €20,000 in additional funding to improve its learning centre to contribute to the development of a social enterprise with the aim of contributing to improved livelihoods of smallholder farmers in Wakiso with long-term environmental and economic sustainability.

The objective of the project was the improvement of smallholder farmers' knowledge and skills in agro-ecological farming technologies in Wakiso District, Central Uganda. The expected outcomes were;

- Completion and optimization of the Agroecology Learning Resource Centre,
- Improvement of the permaculture garden and demonstration structures of an organic farm
- Design and provision of training and learning materials for smallholder farmers on permaculture practices.



CHALLENGES AND LESSON LEARNT .

CHALLENGES

- Some damage to crops at school by factors like stray animals, Unpredictable weather patterns such as long dry spells, and uneven distribution of rains affected crop growth. This at times affected the yield and harvests. However, schools have mitigated the challenges by; fencing off , applying micro-irrigation (drip bottles), mulching the gardens, and timely planting. Furthermore, water harvest is among the areas of concern handled by the school management and the PTA. Repair of old water tanks at school was one action to be prioritized by schools.

- Gender inequalities to some extent affected project implementation. At times some women were denied by their husbands to attend training. Some women have no control and access to land utilization which affects the adoption of sustainable farming technologies. Some girls still face the burden of the role at their homes which affects their attendance.

Awareness campaigns on gender equality were done to reverse the situation. IEC materials with gender equality information were disseminated. However, more deliberate actions toward gender equality are required. Our follow-on project has taken this issue into consideration.

- Outbreaks of pandemics such as COVID-19 and Ebola to some extent influenced our original planning. Some activities that required gatherings were always rescheduled in compliance with the SOPs. In addition, the disease outbreaks had some negative impacts on household food and income.

- Climate change brought about negative effects that resulted in reduced crop and animal production. Climate change led to calamities like prolonged drought with high temperature, hailstones and floods. Along with this came epidemics, pests and animal diseases.



LESSONS LEANT

- Ensure high levels of acceptance and sustainability of projects by empowering the school community to design their own working solutions.
- The availability of alternative options at the community level will contribute to the sustainability of community projects. This was the case with school water tank systems that broke down, but water moisture was conserved through micro-irrigation with plastic bottles, mulching of gardens and the use of live mulching plants such as legumes.
- Flexibility in programme approaches is important, especially when working with new stakeholders. It helps projects move faster.
- Understanding of the best tools to reach target groups even in times of constraint such as the COVID 19 situation (for example; use of ICT - social media such as WhatsApp) is important to facilitate communication during times when movement is restricted.
- Visiting learning centres/farms is very important as it helps farmers to adopt technologies faster.
- Diversification of crop and livestock enterprises is a strategy that could address uncertainties arising from the effects of climate change.
- Farmer trainers are community resource people who do training beyond their groups.
- Smart phones are a powerful tool with benefits for wider village documentation, and also help farmers to share and access knowledge on farming technologies and solutions to challenges.
- Strengthening farmer groups requires ongoing interventions.
- Hands-on training increases adoption of technologies
- In the midst of challenges such as pandemics, the use of technology (social media) to deliver services to farmers is necessary.
- Farmers' knowledge of research into solutions to their own challenges is key.
- The local contribution of the farmers creates ownership of the project activities by the beneficiaries.



- Exchange visits are an important method for transferring knowledge and technology and allow for rapid adoption.
- Agroforestry is very important and will require more efforts to reduce the impact of climate change at the household level.

ANNEX

ANNEX 1:

A case study: Using sustainable agriculture farming practices to improve farm production.

Mrs Maria Kitaka is married and a mother of three children. She was born and raised in Kampala City and has a diploma in law. She was unable to find work in the legal profession and had to resort to farming.

Having grown up in the City, she did not know much about farming. Her perception of farming was to do it on a large scale to get profit for her needs. Her attempts at mono-cropping were not enough to meet her needs.

In 2020, her farmer group (Buwambo farmer group) was selected to receive a three-year sustainable agriculture project (2020-2022).

According to her, the project helped her change her mindset from extensive and monocropping to mixed and organic farming. This has enabled her to grow food and earn a stable income to provide for her family.

She attended many agricultural trainings where she gained knowledge and skills on various sustainable farming practices when AFIRD started working with her group. These include; digging trenches in her garden to control soil erosion from water run-off, managing waste, controlling pests and diseases and raising animals on the farm to provide fertilizer for the garden.

Maria started using the knowledge and skills she acquired and was able to achieve benefits that included a better microclimate, improved family nutrition and is able to support her children at school.





Maria with visitors at her farm showing how she has integrated animals on her farm

Maria grows bananas and keeps goats and rabbits on the farm. She keeps the animals on a zero grazing system and this helps her to collect the dung. To improve soil fertility, she uses the manure from these animals. Because of the good soil fertility in her garden, she is able to harvest large clusters of bananas. She sells them and has a ready market for her bananas from the farm. Her clients say that they prefer bananas from her garden because they are soft and tasty. This is due to the fact that she produces her bananas using animal manure from her zero grazing units for animals. Unlike before, the bananas she used to harvest from her garden were small, hard and not tasty.



Ms. Maria Kitaka in her cassava garden showing the impact of use of lime sulphur biopesticides



Maria collects and use animal urine as fertilizer in her garden



ANNEX 2:

A case studies. THE HISTORY OF CHANGE: A case of former prisoner Proscovia Nakavuma

Proscovia Nakavuma is 52 years old and a mother of 2. She is a former prisoner at Sentema Prison. Before her imprisonment, she lived happily in her home in Namusera, a town on the outskirts of Kampala. It was not until she was involved in a land scam that she ended up in Sentema Prison. As an inmate at Sentema Prison, "I was fortunate enough to have been selected as one of the thirty inmates to benefit from a permaculture rehabilitation project run by AFIRD," says Proscovia. She was trained in eco-friendly agricultural practices, including: designing ecological land use, recycling waste, managing soil fertility and setting up micro-green enterprises.



Proscovia (middle) with AFIRD staffs during a psychosocial support visit

After serving her sentence for a year, Proscovia says that "a lot has changed". Some of her property has been confiscated and the area has become overcrowded - "I had nowhere to go! said Proscovia.

Nevertheless, Proscovia wanted to use her prison experience to transform the livelihoods of the poor, and the permaculture knowledge she had gained was all she had. In an effort to use the knowledge she had gained during her time in prison, Proscovia decided to sell the rest of her possessions and buy land in Kanoni Butenga sub-county in Bukomansibi - a more rural district in central Uganda. She began by planting bananas and also started building a house to live in.

Proscovia's aim is to form a group of women and train them in organic farming, using her house as a learning centre. She also intends to train women in the production of detergents as a simple source of income.

AFIRD has already helped Proscovia to reintegrate into her new community. She is one of 18 ex-prisoners who will be supported to demonstrate permaculture in their communities.



Proscovia giving a testimony at the AFIRD Open day



APPENDICES LIST OF FARMER GROUPS WITH AFIRD IN 2022

NO.	LIST OF FARMER GROUPS	DISTRICT	SUB COUNTY	VILLAGE
1	Kirwanira Women Group	Wakiso	Gombe	Matugga
2	Nasse Youth Association	Wakiso	Gombe	Nasse
3	Akwata Empola Nabalanga Farmers	Wakiso	Masuliita	Katikamu
4	Abakadde Twekembe Farmers	Wakiso	Masuliita	Katikamu
5	Lwemwedde Self Help	Wakiso	Masuliita	Lwemwedde
6	Twezimbe Farmers Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Lwemwedde
7	Akwata Empola Wanjeyo	Wakiso	Mende	Wanjeyo
8	Balandiza Kimeze Farmers	Wakiso	Mende	Kaliiti
9	Muzanganda Farmers	Wakiso	Mende	Banda
10	Mende Development	Wakiso	Masuliita	Mende
11	Manze Busawa Twamanyirawo Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Manze
12	United We Stand Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Katikamu
13	Mujamiati Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Masuliita Kyalo
14	Nezikokolima Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Nabalanga
15	Kamu Kamu Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Bbale Mukwenda
16	St. Balikuddembe Parents Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Gombe	Kiziba
17	Biyinzika Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Kiryagonja
18	Bbika Men and Women Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Bbika
19	Agali Awamu Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Kikoota
20	Mpegwe Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Kakiri	Mpegwe
21	Women We Can Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Gombe	Katalemwa

APPENDICES LIST OF FARMER GROUPS WITH AFIRD IN 2022

NO.	LIST OF FARMER GROUPS	DISTRICT	SUB COUNTY	VILLAGE
22	Tusubira Nakatunda Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Nakatunda
23	Sosolye Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Gombe	Katalemwa
24	Buwambo Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Gombe	Buwambo
25	Maranatha Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Masuliita Town
26	Tusubira Farmers' Group	Wakiso	Masuliita	Bbale
27	Nabusanke Organic youth	Mpigi	Nkozi TC	Nabusanke
28	Nabusanke Sustainable Agricultural Development Group	Mpigi	Nkozi TC	Nabusanke
29	Masiko Youth Development Group	Mpigi	Kituntu	Masiko
30	Twukulakulanye Masiko Mothers Group	Mpigi	Kituntu	Masiko
31	Kitakyusa Youth Organic Development Group	Mpigi	Kituntu	Kitakyusa
32	Agali Awamu Sustainable Mothers	Mpigi	Kituntu	Kitakyusa
33	The triggers youth agricultural rural development group	Mpigi	Nkozi Rural S/C	Ggolo
34	Kyosimbonanya Organic agricultural women's group	Mpigi	Nkozi Rural S/C	Ggolo

LIST OF SCHOOLS COMMUNITIES THAT WORKED WITH AFIRD IN 2022

NO.	LIST OF SCHOOLS GROUPS	DISTRICT	SUB COUNTY
1	Nabusanke Primary school	Mpigi	Nkozi Town Council
2	Masiko C/U primary	Mpigi	Kituntu
3	Kitakyusa Primary	Mpigi	Kituntu
4	St. Kizito Ggolo Primary	Mpigi	Nkozi Rural S/C
5	St. Francis Xavier Jjalamba primary	Mpigi	Buwama S/C
6	Galatia CoU Primary School	Mpigi	Kiringente
7	Arch. Bishop Kiwanuka Memorial School	Mpigi	Kiringente
8	Besania CoU Primary School	Mpigi	Mpigi Town Council
9	Kataba CoU Primary School	Mpigi	Kammengo
10	Kikunyu CoU Primary School	Mpigi	Kammengo
11	St. Charlse Kibanga Primary School	Mpigi	Kammengo
12	Bujuuko UMEA Primary School	Mpigi	Muduuma
13	Manyogaseka Primary School	Mpigi	Muduuma

LIST OF PRISONS THAT WORKED WITH AFIRD IN 2022

PRISONS	DISTRICT	SUB COUNTY
Kitalya	Wakiso	Namayumba
Butooro	Mpigi	Kammengo
Sentema	Wakiso	Kakiri



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